

GERMANY

COUNTRY READER TABLE OF CONTENTS

Carl F. Norden	1938-1939	Consular Officer, Berlin
Lawrence Norrie	1940-1954	Head of Youth Reorientation Program, Public Affairs, USIS, Frankfurt
Douglas MacArthur, II	1942-1944	Detention Camp Prisoner, Black Forest
Alfred Puhon	1942-1944	Broadcaster, Voice of America, New York City, New York
Patrick F. Morris	1944-1945	Prisoner of War, Germany
Robert E. Asher	1945	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces, Frankfurt
Louis A. Wiesner	1945-1949	Labor Officer, Germany
Anthony Geber	1945-1954	Intelligence Officer, Bonn and Berlin
Robert Lochner	1945-1955 1961-1968	USIS, Germany Director RAIS, Berlin
Edmund Schechter	1945-1946	Head of Radio Berlin, USIS, Berlin
Michael Weyl	1945-1948	Acting Head of Libraries, USIS, Stuttgart
Karl F. Mautner	1945-1958	82 nd Airborne, Berlin
Robert R. Bowie	1945-1946 1950-1952	U.S. Military Officer, Germany U.S. Military Officer, Germany
Helmut Sonnenfeldt	1946	U.S. Army, Germany
Dorothy Jester	1946-1948	Secretary and Consular Officer, Munich
Dayton S. Mak	1946-1948	Vice Consul, Hamburg
Ray E. Jones	1946-1949	U.S. Army, Berlin
Stuart Van Dyke	1946-1950	U.N. High Commission, Germany

Thomas J. Dunnigan	1946-1950	Office of the U.S. Political Advisor, Berlin
Chester E. Beaman	1946-1951	HICOG, Heidelberg
Jordan Thomas Rogers	1946 1946-1948 1948-1950 1950-1953	Consular Officer, Stuttgart Visa Officer, Berlin Trade Officer, HICOM, Frankfurt COCOM Officer, Office of German Affairs, Washington, DC
Alfred Leroy Atherton, Jr.	1947-1950 1950-1952	Vice Consul, Stuttgart High Commission Staff, Bonn
John W. McDonald	1947-1950 1950-1952	OMGUS, Berlin Allied High Commission, Secretariat, Bonn
Henry Byroade	1947-1952	Director, Bureau of German Affairs, Washington, DC
Robert B. Houston	1947-1949	Officer in Charge, Bremerhaven
Edmund Schechter	1947-1955	Chief of Radio Munich, USIS, Munich
Kenneth P.T. Sullivan	1947-1949	Visa Officer, Berlin
Anthony J. Perna	1948-1951	Air Force, Berlin Air Lift, Berlin
Dale D. Clark	1949	Civil Affairs Division, Bremen
Slator Clay Blackiston, Jr.	1949-1950	Vice Consul, Stuttgart
Edward W. Mulcahy	1949-1950	Visa Officer, Munich
Archer K. Blood	1949-1951	Displaced Persons Program, Munich
Wilbur P. Chase	1949-1951	Head of Refugee Visa Program, Hamburg
David E. Mark	1949-1951	Deputy Protocol Officer, Berlin
David E. L'Heureux	1949-1952	Displaced Persons and Visa Officer, Butzbach and Frankfurt
Stanley D. Schiff	1949 1949-1950 1950-1952	Orientation, Frankfurt Kreis Officer, Schwabischvish Hall Kreis Officer, Baden

Hans N. Tuch	1949-1952	Director, Amerika Haus, USIS, Wiesbaden/Frankfurt
Dwight J. Porter	1949-1954	Head of Office of Management and Budget, High Commissioner in Germany, Bonn and Berlin
Frank E. Maestrone	1949-1954	Vice Consul, Hamburg
Yale Richmond	1949-1951 1951-1952 1952 1952-1954	Kreis Resident Officer, Germany Cultural Affairs Program Officer, Munich Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer, Nuremburg Exchange Officer, Stuttgart
Woodward Romine	1949-1950 1950-1951 1951-1953 1953-1954	U.S. Displaced Persons Commission Assistant Land Observer, Freiberg Political/Economic Officer, Stuttgart Assistant Travel Control Officer, Bonn
Horace Y. Edwards	1949-1955	Educational Exchange Program, High Commissioner in Germany, USIS, Germany
Jacques J. Reinstein	1949-1950 1950-1951 1953-1955 1955-1958	Acting Chief, Division of German Economic Affairs, Washington D.C. Director of German Affairs, Washington D.C. Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, Washington D.C. Director of German Affairs, Washington D.C.
Jonathan Dean	1949-1951 1952-1956 1956-1960 1968-1972	Kreis Resident Officer, Limburg Political Officer, Bonn East German Desk Officer, Washington DC Political Counselor, Bonn
Charles W. McCaskill	1950-1951	Refugee Officer, Schwierfert
George Allen Morgan	1950-1951	Director, Eastern Element, Berlin
Kenneth P.T. Sullivan	1950-1951 1950-1951	Political Advisor, Frankfurt Land Observer, Tubingen
Harry I. Odell	1950-1952	Kreis Resident Officer, Frankfurt

	1954-1955 1955-1957	Visa Officer, Hamburg Economic Officer, Berlin
Talcott W. Seelye	1950-1952	Kreis Resident Officer, Frankfurt
Carleton S. Coon, Jr.	1950-1952	Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany, Frankfurt
Walter E. Jenkins, Jr.	1950-1952	Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany, Bonn
William E. Schaufele, Jr.	1950-1952	Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany, Pfaffenhofen
Moncrieff J. Spear	1950-1952	Political Officer, Frankfurt and Berlin
Joan Seelye	1950-1952	Spouse of Foreign Service Officer, Mosbach
Arthur T. Tienken	1950-1952	Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany, Schweinfurt
Henry L. Heymann	1950 1950-1952	Visa Officer, Stuttgart Chief, Visa Section, Hamburg
Frederick H. Sacksteder	1950-1951 1952	Kreis Residence Officer, Wuertenberg- Baden Information Officer, Dusseldorf
William N. Turpin	1950-1951 1951-1952	Kreis Officer, West Germany Consular/Political Officer, Munich
William A. Helseth	1950-1953	Consular/Economic Officer, Frankfurt
George L. West	1950 1951-1953	Political Officer, Frankfurt Chief, Foreign Relations Division, Bonn
Emmerson M. Brown	1950-1954	Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany, Frankfurt
William N. Harben	1950-1951 1951-1954	Vice Consul, Frankfurt Political Officer, Bonn
Albert Stoffel	1950-1955	Economic Officer, Berlin
Manuel Abrams	1950-1955	Trade and Payments Officer, Economic Cooperation Administration, Frankfurt

Alan G. James	1950	Kreis Officer, High Commissioner in Germany, Frankfurt
	1951-1956	Administrative/Political/Consular Officer, Munich
Martha C. Mautner	1950-1958	Political Officer, Berlin
Terrence Catherman	1950-1952	Kreis Resident Officer, Heidelberg & Bonn
	1952-1953	Amerika Haus Director, Heidelberg
	1953-1955	Information Program Officer, USIS, Bonn
	1970-1974	Deputy Public Affairs Officer, West Berlin
	1985-1990	Public Affair Officer/Director USIS, Germany
John A. McKesson, III	1951-1953	Economic Officer, Berlin
L. Michael Rives	1951-1952	Refugee Relief Program, Frankfurt and Bonn
L. Bruce Laingen	1951-1953	Displaced Persons Program, Hamburg
Paul K. Stahnke	1951-1953	Political Officer, Hamburg and Kiel
Henry Dunlap	1951-1954	Director, Amerika Haus, USIS, Bonn
Cecil B. Lyon	1951-1954	Special Assistant to the Commissioner, High Commissioner's Office, Berlin
John G. Kormann	1951-1952	Resident Officer, Neumarkt
	1952-1953	Public Affairs Officer, Coburg
	1953-1955	Chief Editor, U.S. Press Service for Germany, Bonn
Melville Blake	1951-1952	Displaced Persons Program, Schweinfurt
		Displaced Persons Camp
	1952-1953	Principal Officer, Bremerhaven
	1954-1957	Refugee Relief Program, Bonn
	1957-1958	Special Assistant to the Minister for Economic Affairs, Bonn
	1975-1979	Deputy Principal Officer, Frankfurt
Alexander Frenkley	1952	Set up direct Russian Broadcasts from Munich to USSR, Munich
William E. Schaufele, Jr.	1952-1953	Labor Officer, Dusseldorf

Michael H. Newlin	1952-1954	Vice Consul & Rotation Officer, Frankfurt
Gerard M. Gert	1952-1954	Public Relations Officer, USIS, Berlin
Maurice E. Lee	1952-1954	Press Officer, High Commissioner in Germany, Bremen
Norman L. Pratt	1952-1955	Consular Officer, Berlin
William G. Bradford	1952-1955	Public Safety Officer, Berlin
Robert C. Brewster	1952-1955	Political/Administrative Officer, Stuttgart
Frank Snowden Hopkins	1952-1955	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Stuttgart
Kenneth P.T. Sullivan	1952-1955	Labor Officer, Dusseldorf
Parke D. Massey	1952-1953	German Area and European Economic Studies, Columbia University
	1953-1956	Treasury Attaché, West Berlin
William Root	1952-1955	Office of the High Commissioner, Bonn
	1971-1974	Economic Counselor, West Berlin
James E. Hoofnagle	1952-1956	General Manager, US Information Program, Germany
	1961-1964	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, West Berlin
Robert A. Stevenson	1952-1957	Political Officer, Dusseldorf
Denise Abbey	1952-1960	Cultural Programmer, Amerika Haus, USIS, Mannheim
Robert M. Beaudry	1953-1955	Military Security Board, Koblenz
Archer K. Blood	1953-1955	Chief of Official Reception, Bonn
Dorothy A. Eardley	1953-1955	Clerk-Stenographer, West Berlin
Milton Leavitt	1953-1955	Information Officer, USIS, Munich
John A. McKesson, II	1953-1955	Political Officer, Bonn
Michael H. Newlin	1953-1955	Rotation Officer, Frankfurt

William E. Schaufele, Jr.	1953-1955	Visa/Economic Officer, Munich
John C. Leary	1953-1956	Economic officer, Dusseldorf
Jack A. Sulser	1953-1957	Political Officer, Dusseldorf
Philip H. Valdes	1954	Interviewed Communist Defectors, Frankfurt
Paul F. Du Vivier	1954-1955	Economic Officer, Berlin
John M. Anspacher	1954-1956	Special Assistant for Policy and Plans, USIS, Bonn
Gerald Michael Bache	1954-1956	Consular Officer, Munich
Joseph N. Greene, Jr.	1954-1956	Political Officer, Bonn
Mark C. Lissfelt	1954-1956	US Army, CIC, Germany
R. Keith Severin	1954-1956	US Army, Germany
S. Douglas Martin	1954-1956 1961-1964	Consular Officer; Berlin Desk Officer, Office of German Affairs; Washington, DC
Cole Blasier	1954-1957	Economic, Commercial, and Political Officer, Bonn
Ridgway B. Knight	1954-1957	Deputy Assistant High Commissioner, Berlin
David Eugene Boster	1954-1958	Political Officer, Bonn
Owen B. Lee	1955	Civilian Employee, U.S. Army, Wurzburg
Frank E. Schmelzer	1955-1956	Visa Officer, Refugee Relief Program, Frankfurt
William Lloyd Stearman	1955-1956	Political Officer, West Berlin
Thompson R. Buchanan	1955-1957	Defector (Soviet) Reception Center, Frankfurt
Walter E. Jenkins, Jr.	1955-1957	Economic Officer, Berlin

Charles Stuart Kennedy	1955-1958	Refugee Relief Officer, Frankfurt
Charles K. Johnson	1955-1961	Economic Officer, Berlin
McKinney Russell	1955-1962	Radio Liberty, USIS, Munich
Robert F. Franklin	1956	Deputy Director, Radio in the American Sector, Berlin
James H. Bahti	1956-1957	Personnel Officer, Bonn
James A. Klemstine	1956-1958	Refugee Relief Program, Hamburg
Dorothy Jester	1956-1958	Assistant Commercial Attaché, Bonn
James M. Wilson, Jr.	1956-1958	Director, Office of Military Rights and International Security Affairs, DOD, Washington, DC
Robert Theodore Curran	1956-1957 1957-1959	Public Affairs Officer, Berlin Executive Director: American Institute in Tübingen; Stuttgart
C. Gary Bream	1956-1959	Economic Officer, Bonn/Bad Godesberg
William C. Trimble	1956-1959	Deputy Chief of Mission, Bonn
Lewis D. Junior	1956-1959 1960	Consular Officer, Hamburg Staff Assistant to Ambassador, Bonn
Hugh G. Appling	1956-1960	Political Officer, Bonn
William Lloyd Stearman	1956-1962	Press Attaché, Bonn
John A. Baker Jr.	1957	Russian Language Training, Oberammergau
Vladimir I. Toumanoff	1957-1958	Peripheral Reporting, Frankfurt
Hans N. Tuch	1957-1958	Policy Officer, Voice of America, USIS, Munich
Lewis W. Bowden	1957-1958	Russian Studies, Oberammergau
Frederick W. Flott	1957-1959	Mixed Duties, Bonn
John A. Buche	1957-1959	U.S. Army, Germany

	1959-1960	Student, Tübingen
James H. Bahti	1957-1960	Consular/Economic Officer, Hamburg
Allen B. Moreland	1957-1960	Consul General, Stuttgart
Alexander A. Klieforth	1958-1960	Chief of Inspection Team - RIAS, Berlin
Kempton B. Jenkins	1958-1960	Political Officer, Berlin
Alfred Joseph White	1958	German Language Training, Foreign Service Institute, Washington, DC
	1959-1961	Vice Consul, Bremen
Betty Jane Jones	1958-1962	Consular/Economic Officer, Berlin
George F. Muller	1958-1962	Access Officer, Berlin
Albert E. Hemsing	1958-1964	Information Officer, USIS, Berlin
Robert Gerald Livingston	1958-1960	Economic-Labor Officer, Hamburg
	1964-1968	East German Affairs, Berlin
	1968-1970	Political Officer, Bonn
	1970-1971	Council on Foreign Relations: East Germany Study Group, New York
Kenneth N. Skoug	1959	German Desk Officer, Washington, DC
	1959-1961	Political Officer, Munich
Herbert Daniel Brewster	1959-1961	Political Officer, Berlin
Bruce A. Flatin	1959-1961	German Affairs, Intelligence and Research Bureau, Washington, DC
Claude Groce	1959-1961	Radio Operator, Voice of America, USIS, Munich
Kenneth N. Skoug	1959-1961	Political Officer, Munich
Perry W. Linder	1959-1961	Consular Officer, Hamburg
Richard R. Wyrough	1959-1962	US Army, Germany
Wade Matthews	1959-1962	Consular Officer, Munich
Paul M. Kattenburg	1959-1962	Political Officer, Frankfurt

Richard W. Boehm	1959 1959-1962	Assistant General Service Officer, Hamburg Economic Officer, Berlin
Paul D. McCusker	1959-1963	Chief, Economic Section, Hamburg
Gunther K. Rosinus	1959-1963	Director, Amerika Haus, USIS, Koblenz
Edward Alexander	1959-1964	Head of Cultural Programming, Voice of America, USIS, Berlin
Ernest Koenig	1959-1964	Assistant Agricultural Attaché, Bonn
Lucian Heichler	1959-1965	Political Officer, Berlin
Susan M. Klingaman	1959-1960 1963-1965 1973-1975 1977-1980	Fulbright Scholarship, Mainz Vice Consul, Dusseldorf Political Officer, Bonn German Desk, Washington DC
William Piez	1960-1962	Rotation Officer, Frankfurt
Walter B. Smith, II	1960-1962	Political Officer, Frankfurt
Dorothy M. Sampas	1960-1962	Consular Officer, Hamburg
Elizabeth Ann Brown	1960-1963	Political Officer, Bonn
John L. Loughran	1960-1964	Economic Officer, Bonn
Moncrieff J. Spear	1961	Berlin Task Force, Washington, DC
George Lambrakis	1961-1962	Political Officer, Munich
Peter S. Bridges	1961-1962	Soviet Studies, Oberammergau
David J. Fischer	1961-1963	Consular Officer, Frankfurt
E. Allan Wendt	1961-1963	Vice Consul, Dusseldorf
Edwin Cronk	1961-1965	Economic Counselor, Bonn
Karl F. Mautner	1961-1965	Berlin Task Force, Washington, DC
Aurelius Fernandez	1962	U.S. Army, Berlin

James A. Placke	1962-1963	Consular Officer, Frankfurt
George Quincey Lumsden	1962-1964	Economic Officer, Bonn
Clarke N. Ellis	1962-1964	Junior Officer, Munich
Paul M. Cleveland	1962-1964	Staff Assistant to Ambassador, Bonn
Edward H. Wilkinson	1962-1964	Courier, Frankfurt
Gary L. Matthews	1962-1964	Junior Officer, Bonn
Thomas J. Dunnigan	1962-1965	Political Officer, Bonn
Gerald J. Monroe	1962-1965	Commercial Officer, Dusseldorf
Emmerson M. Brown	1962-1966	Economic Officer, Bonn
Arthur R. Day	1962-1966	Chief of Political Section, Berlin
Haven N. Webb	1962-1966	Consular Officer, Hamburg
John Todd Stewart	1963-1965	Rotation Officer, Munich
Richard B. Finn	1963-1966	Deputy for German Affairs, Berlin
William E. Ryerson	1963-1966	Staff Aide, Berlin
Kenneth P.T. Sullivan	1963-1966	Assistant Labor Attaché, Bonn
George F. Bogardus	1963-1967	Consul, Stuttgart
Owen B. Lee	1963-1967	Analyst, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Washington, DC
Albert Stoffel	1963-1967	Civil Air Attaché, Bonn
Martin Van Heuven	1963-1967	Legal Advisor, Berlin
William M. Woessner	1963-1967	Eastern Affairs Section, Berlin
Thomas L. Hughes	1963-1969	Director, Intelligence & Research, Washington, DC
Maurice E. Lee	1964-1965	Information Officer, USIS, Bonn

Peter B. Swiers	1964-1966	Rotation Officer, Frankfurt
Charles Lahiguera	1964-1966	Rotation Officer, Munich
John Brayton Redecker	1964-1966	Rotation Officer, West Berlin
Albert E. Hemsing	1964-1967	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Bonn
Bruce A. Flatin	1964-1969	Public Safety Section, Berlin
Nelson C. Ledsky	1964-1969	Political Officer, Bonn
Alfred Puhan	1964-1969	Head of Office of German Affairs, Washington, DC
Allan W. Otto	1965-1967	Visa Officer, Berlin
Arthur H. Hughes	1965-1967	Rotation Officer, Frankfurt
Ulrich A. Straus	1965-1967	Labor Officer, Berlin
Gerooge Jaeger	1965-1967	Political Officer, Berlin
Raymond Ellis Benson	965-1968	Branch Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Hamburg
Irving Sablosky	1965-1968	Amerika Haus Director, USIS, Hamburg
Brandon Grove	1965-1969	US Liaison Officer, West Berlin
Arthur F. Blaser, Jr.	1965-1969	Financial Attaché, Bonn
Thomas Stern	1965-1969	Administrative Counselor, Bonn
Richard E. Thompson	1965-1970	Diplomatic Courier, Frankfurt
G. Norman Anderson	1966-1967	Russian Language Training, Garmisch
J. Richard Bock	1966-1968	Vice Consul, Bremen
Bruce W. Clark	1966-1968	Rotation Officer, West Berlin
Sol Polansky	1966-1968	Political Officer, West Berlin
Dennis Kux	1966-1969	Political Officer, Bonn

Patrick E. Nieburg	1966-1969	Lecturer/Speech Writer, Bonn
Robert L. Barry	1967-1969	Russian Language Training & US Army Training, Garmisch-Partenkirchen
David L. Hobbs	1967-1969	Rotation Officer, Hamburg
Henry L. Clarke	1967-1969	Rotation Officer, Munich
George Jaeger	1967-1970	Political Officer, Bonn
Hans N. Tuch	1967-1970	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Berlin
Halvor C. Ekern	1967-1969 1969-1973	Political/Military Officer, Bonn Political Advisor, Heidelberg
Robie M.H. "Mark" Palmer	1968-1969	U.S. Army Training Program, Garmisch
William J. Dyess	1968-1970	Chief of Liaison to Soviet Authorities, Berlin
Neul L. Pazdral	1968-1970	Science Attaché, Bonn
Paul F. Du Vivier	1968-1972	Deputy Principal Officer, Frankfurt
William V.P. Newlin	1968-1972	Office of German Affairs, Washington, DC
Gerard M. Gert	1968-1980	Chief, Radio in the American Sector, USIS, Berlin
Joseph C. Walsh	1969-1973	Executive Officer, Bonn
Owen B. Lee	1969-1973	Political Officer, Berlin
Richard C. Barkley	1969-1971 1971-1972 1972-1974	German Affairs; Washington DC Ambassador's Aide, Bonn Eastern Affairs Section, Berlin
Nelson C. Ledsky	1970-1972	Germany Desk Officer, Washington, DC
Philip H. Valdes	1970-1972	Political Officer, Berlin
George F. Ward	1970-1972	Political Officer, Hamburg
Fred Charles Thomas Jr.	1970-1972	Commercial Officer, Bonn

James E. Taylor	1970-1973	Consular Officer, Munich
Philip S. Kaplan	1970-1974	Political Officer, Bonn
Kenneth P.T. Sullivan	1970-1974	Consul General, Bremen
C. Arthur Borg	1971-1974	Deputy Assistant Chief of Mission, Berlin
Richard C. Barkley	1971-1972 1972-1974	Aide to Ambassador Rush, Bonn Political Officer, Eastern Affairs Section, Berlin
Oscar J. Olson, Jr.	1971-1974	Economic/Commercial Officer, Berlin
Thomas F. Johnson	1971-1975	Director of Information Center, USIS, Heidelberg
Albert L. Seligmann	1971-1975	Political Advisor, Berlin
Thomas F. Johnson	1971-1975	Director of Information Center, USIS, Heidelberg
McKinney Russell	1971-1975	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Bonn
Geoffrey W. Chapman	1971-1973 1973-1976	Office of German Affairs; State Department Political Officer/Liaison & Protocol, Bonn
Gerald J. Monroe	1971-1976	Deputy Civil Air Attaché, Bonn
Peter B. Swiers	1972-1973	Protocol, Berlin
Clint A. Lauderdale	1972-1975	Administrative Officer, Bonn
Jack A. Sulser	1972-1975	Deputy Principal Officer, Frankfurt
Philip H. Valdes	1972-1975	Monitored Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, Munich
Joseph A. B. Winder	1973-1975	Economic Officer, Bonn
Thomas G. Weston	1973-1976	Economic/Commercial Officer, Bremen
William Bodde Jr.	1973-1974 1974-1977	Political Officer, Berlin Political Officer, Bonn
Gunther K. Rosinus	1973-1977	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Berlin

Arthur H. Hughes	1973-1977	Political Officer, Bonn
G. Jonathan Greenwald	1973-1977	Legal Advisor, Bonn
George F. Muller	1973-1978	Political Advisor, Stuttgart
Wallace W. Litell	1974	Cultural Counselor, East Berlin, GDR
Anna Romanski	1974-1976	Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Hamburg
Brandon Grove	1974-1976	Deputy Chief of Mission, East Berlin, GDR
Wallace W. Littell	1974-1976	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, East Berlin
Francis M. Kinnelly	1974-1977	Economic Officer, Bonn
Victor Wolf, Jr.	1974-1977	Consul General, East Berlin, GDR
Walter E. Jenkins, Jr.	1974-1978	Consul General, Stuttgart
Ray E. Jones	1974-1978	Secretary, Berlin
Herman Rebhan	1974-1989	General Secretary, International Metalworkers Federation, Washington, DC
James C. Pollock	1975-1977	Media Affairs Officer, USIS, Bonn
John A. Buche	1975-1978	Counselor for Consular Affairs, Bonn
Harry Joseph Gilmore	1975-1978	Political (Internal) Reporting Officer/Liaison to Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, Munich
James Alan Williams	1975-1979	Economic/Political Officer, Bonn
Alexander A.L. Klieforth	1975-1980	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Bonn
Paul H. Tyson	1976-1978	Rotation Officer, Bonn
Edward Alexander	1976-1979	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Berlin
Sol Polansky	1976-1979	Deputy Chief of Mission, East Berlin
Gerald Michael Bache	1976-1980	Economic Counselor, Bonn

Philip C. Brown	1977-1978	Russian Language Training, U.S. Army Russian Institute, Garmisch
W. Wayne Merry	1977-1979	Political Officer, Berlin
Roger Schrader	1977-1980	Labor Officer, Bonn
J. Michael Springmann	1977-1980	Economic/Commercial Officer, Stuttgart
Vladimir Lehovich	1977-1980	Chief Internal Political Unit; Political Section, Bonn
Richard C. Barkley	1977-1979	Deputy Director, Central European Affairs, Washington DC
J. D. Bindenagel	1977-1979 1980-1983 1983-1986	Economic Officer, Bremen Germany Desk Officer, Washington, DC Political Officer, Bonn
Elden B. Erickson	1978-1979	Deputy Consul General, Frankfurt
Ralph H. Ruedy	1977-1980	Public Relations Officer, USIS, East Berlin
Richard E. Thompson	1977-1982	Diplomatic Courier, Frankfurt
Shirley E. Ruedy	1977-1980 1980-1984	Wife of USIS Officer, East Berlin Wife of Public Affairs Officer, Dusseldorf
Robert T. Hennemeyer	1978-1981	Consul General, Munich
Martin Van Heuven	1978-1981	Political Officer, Bonn
Christopher E. Goldthwait	1978-1982	Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service, Bonn
Patrick E. Nieburg	1978-1984	Director, Radio in the American Sector, USIS, Berlin
Albert E. Hemsing	1978-1983	Director, Amerika Haus, USIS, Freiburg
Richard Aker	1979-1981	Deputy Public Affairs Officer/Director of America House, Munich
Robert M. Beecroft	1979-1983	Political Officer (Internal), Bonn
Jack Seymour	1979-1983	External Political Affairs Officer, Bonn

Walter B. Smith, II	1979-1983	Deputy Chief of Mission, East Berlin, GDB
J. Richard Bock	1979-1983	Senate Liaison Officer, Berlin
William M. Woessner	1979-1985	Deputy Chief of Mission, Bonn
Ellen M. Johnson	1980-1982	Secretary to Deputy Chief of Mission, Bonn
Thomas G. Weston	1980-1982	Germany Desk Officer, Washington, DC
Isabel Cumming	1980-1984	Secretary to Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Bonn
Ralph H. Ruedy	1980-1984	Branch Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Dusseldorf
Hans N. Tuch	1980-1985	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Bonn
Mark C. Lissfelt	1980-1983 1983-1986	Political Officer, Bonn Deputy to Minister, Berlin
Bruce W. Clark	1980-1983 1983-1987	East Germany Desk Officer, Washington, DC Political Advisor, East Germany
Herbert John Spiro	1980-1989	Free University of Berlin, Berlin
Russell Sveda	1981-1982	Russian Language Training, Barmish-Partenkierechen
Gunther K. Rosinus	1981-1984	Public Affairs Officer/Deputy Chief of Mission, USIS, Berlin
Nelson C. Ledsky	1981-1985	Minister/Deputy Commandant, West Berlin
Rudolf V. Perina	1981-1985	Protocol/Senate Liaison Officer, Berlin
Rozanne L. Ridgway	1982-1985	Ambassador, German Democratic Republic
Richard C. Barkley	1982-1985	Political Counselor, Bonn
Greg Thielmann	1982-1985	Political Officer, Bonn
William Veale	1982-1985	Political/Military Officer, Berlin

George M. Lane	1982-1986	Political Advisor to the Deputy Commander in Chief of the European Command, Stuttgart
Faye G. Barnes	1982-1987	Spouse of US Embassy Officer / Co-Community Liaison Officer, Bonn
Thomas G. Weston	1983-1986	Deputy Political Counselor, Bonn
William Bodde, Jr.	1983-1986	Consul General, Frankfurt
George F. Ward	1984-1985	Chief Internal Political Unit, Bonn
Ralph H. Ruedy	1984-1986	German Desk Officer, USIA, Washington, DC
Thomas F. Johnson	1984-1988	Consul/Branch Public Affairs Officer, Frankfurt
Dale V. Slaght	1984-1988	Commerical Attaché, Munich
Robert M. Beecroft	1985-1987	Officer-in-Charge, German Affairs, Washington, DC
Harry Joseph Gilmore	1985-1987	Director, Office of Central European Affairs, Washington, DC
E. Wayne Merry	1985-1987	Central European Affairs: Berlin, East Germany and inner-German relations, Washington, DC
Pierre Shostal	1985-1987	Consul General, Hamburg
Geoffrey W. Chapman	1985-1989	Deputy Political Counselor, Bonn
James Dobbins	1985-1989	Relations with Russians, Bonn
Philip C. Brown	1986-1987	U.S. Army Russian Institute; Russian Language Study, Garmisch
Anna Romanski	1986-1987	Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS, Bonn
Robert A. Martin	1986-1990	Political Advisor, Frankfurt
James Alan Williams	1986-1990	Political Advisor, Berlin

G. Jonathan Greenwald	1987-1990	Political Counselor, East Berlin
David J. Fischer	1987-1991	Consul General, Munich
Harry Joseph Gilmore	1987-1990	US Minister and Deputy Commander of the American Sector, Berlin
	1990-1991	Principal Officer, US Embassy Office, Berlin
Ralph H. Ruedy	1987-1991	Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Bonn
Shirley E. Ruedy	1987-1988	Political Officer, Bonn
	1989-1991	Staff Assistant to Ambassador Walters, Bonn
Anna Romanski	1987-1991	America House Director & Branch Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS, Berlin
Richard C. Barkley	1988-1990	Ambassador; German Democratic Republic
John Brayton Redecker	1988-1991	Deputy Principal Officer, Frankfurt
Harold W. Geisel	1988-1992	Counselor for Administration, Bonn
Peter K. Murphy	1989-1990	Consul General/Minister-Counselor for Consular Affairs, Berlin
J. D. Bindenagel	1989-1990	Deputy Chief of Mission, East Berlin, GDR
J. Michael Springmann	1989-1991	Political/Economic Officer, Stuttgart
Anthony C. Zinni	1989-1991	Deputy Director of Operations for the European Command, Stuttgart
Helen Weinland	1989-1991	Senat Liaison Officer, Berlin
George F. Ward	1989-1992	Deputy Chief of Mission, Bonn
Jon Gundersen	1990	Regional Security Officer, Frankfurt
Shirley Elizabeth Barnes	1990-1992	Counselor for Administration, Bonn
Pierre Shostal	1990-1993	Consul General, Frankfurt
Donald B. Kursch	1990-1994	Minister/Counselor for Economic Affairs;

		Deputy Chief of Mission, Bonn
John Nix	1990-1994	Political Advisor, Berlin
Nelson C. Ledsky	1991	Participant, German Reunification Discussion, Washington, DC
Richard M. Miles	1991-1992	Assistant Chief of Mission, Berlin
Katherine Schwering	1992	Senior Economist, Germany Desk, Washington, DC
Vella G. Mbenna	1992-1993	Information Management Specialist, Bonn
Joseph R. McGhee	1992-1995	Deputy Political Counselor, Bonn
Ricjard Aker	1992-1996	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Stuttgart
John Helm	1992-1996	Regional General Services Officer (NIS), Bonn
Greg Thielmann	1993-1995	Officer in Charge of German Affairs, Washington, DC
J. D. Bindenagel	1994-1997	Deputy Chief of Mission, Bonn
Joseph C. Wilson, IV	1995-1997	Political Advisor – SACEUR, Stuttgart
Edward H. Wilkinson	1995-1999	Minister-Counselor for Consular Affairs, Bonn
Shirley E. Ruedy	1997-1998	German Desk Officer, Washington, DC
Richard Aker	2003-2006 2006-2008	Cultural Attaché, Berlin Deputy Principal Officer, Frankfurt

CARL F. NORDEN
Consular Officer
Berlin (1938-1939)

Carl Norden attended boarding school in Switzerland where he became bilingual in English and German. He served in Yugoslavia during World War II. He then received a master's degree in political science from Harvard University and worked for City Bank for six years before he entered the Service. He has served in

*Prague, Paramaribo, Havana, and with the Bureau of Latin American Affairs.
This interview was conducted in 1991 by Ambassador Horace G. Torbert.*

Q: So you went on and took the oral exams? You got into the service in July of 1938 and you went to Berlin. That was when things were going 'to hell in a hack' as far as relations were going. Would you talk about Berlin.

NORDEN: I had great difficulty whether I would remain in the service afterwards because I said I would never have anything as exciting as this again. You could really see it coming.

Q: Was Hugh Wilson still there or had he already left?

NORDEN: I think he was still there.

Q: This was a training job, was it consular?

NORDEN: The first thing they asked was whether I spoke German, which I did, I had been to boarding school in Switzerland and I was bilingual. I certainly was in a position to use my German. It was the most trying assignment that you could have had at that point. These people were fighting for their lives.

Q: These were the Jews who were still in Germany at that time.

NORDEN: It was trying because they were not the most prepossessing people that could be found.

Q: You had a certain dichotomy between the humanitarian and the interests of the United States I suppose.

NORDEN: That was a very difficult chapter because the immigration rules were not responsive. The people you had to turn down were in many cases very deserving, it was very difficult. Then there were some bad moments, you have heard of the "Kristallnacht"?

Q: That was before you got there?

NORDEN: No, I practically walked into it. On the other hand what made that post extremely interesting was that you could see the war on the horizon, or just over the horizon. I still remember when the Sudeten crisis was still hot. I remember going out and dancing with our military attaché's daughter and we were saying that it might blow by tomorrow morning. That was before Munich.

Q: Did you have any particular contacts at that time that you remember with other diplomats that you remember that were useful to you later?

NORDEN: Yes. You know my next post was Prague and because I had excellent contacts in Germany and the reason I had them was my uncle, my mother's brother, I got from him a bunch

of introductions. There were a bunch of people who had married well in Germany; they were American beer brewers' daughters and they saw to it that their daughters married well. Marrying well means titles.

Q: *Your uncle was a German citizen?*

NORDEN: No. I got introductions. A lot of these people were well connected in Germany, not always with your favorite people. I did meet, partly by accident, some very nice Germans. There was one German girl who liked to ride and I used to ride with her. German horses are very difficult to ride. We would ride before breakfast. She was well-born too. Her father had been in the German Foreign Office and her mother was a titled lady. Her uncle was the head of the German government stud - which was pretty good. I learned a lot about German psychology that way because I remember her saying, "Maybe you can explain to me, what is wrong with the Dutch?" "We don't understand in Germany why the Dutch declared war on us." I asked "Why do you object to that?" "Well, to declare war on Germany is a very serious matter." I said, "And visa versa." She said that "If the Dutch took it into their heads to invade Germany wouldn't you declare war?" She said, "Well, that is quite different because they are so small."

LAWRENCE NORRIE
Head of Youth Reorientation Program, Public Affairs, USIS
Frankfurt (1940-1954)

Lawrence Norrie was born in 1903 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and received a B.S. degree from Springfield College. He later received a master's degree from Columbia University. In 1945, after working for the YMCA, Mr. Norrie became head of the reorientation of German youth program in Berlin. In 1955, he joined the Foreign Service, serving with USIS in the West Indies, Ecuador, Austria, and Washington, DC. This interview was conducted by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1990.

NORRIE: In 1940, I was transferred to the National Council of the YMCA as Assistant National Secretary and responsible for work in the seven Pacific Southwestern states. In 1945, I was interviewed by the War Department for going to Germany, to take over the reorientation of German youth. I was assigned to Berlin and my job was to give leadership to the programs necessary to point youth in the right direction to live in a new environment called democracy.

In 1955, five years later, the State Department took over in West Germany and the Foreign Service attracted me, and I took the examination in Germany and passed.

The Army set up an educational and information program as a special branch to which a lot of civilians were recruited. Really, that was the forerunner of what later became the USIE, then the USIS.. It was called ECR -- Educational, Cultural, and Religious Affairs. I was assigned to that division. My job was the reorientation of German youth. I got into that challenge through General Clay's concern over the gangs that were developing, the destruction of government property, attacks on the government people, including civilians and military, and he wanted

something done about it to give youth another incentive. He asked American youth organizations for suggestions, and because of some experience I had had in Hawaii, that's why I was apparently asked to take over that position.

The branch was expanded to include several other responsibilities, e.g. women's affairs, adult education, etc. First of all, we had to liquidate the remnants of the Hitler Youth Organization. Actually, I think the youth of Germany had become disillusioned with their leaders and were not too happy about accepting new ones from the United States and other countries.

Under the Army, we first dissolved the Hitler-type organizations, liquidated their assets, dispersed their leaders, and gave permission for youth to organize only on a local basis. We forbade organization above the local group. We wanted them to organize around their own hobbies or interests, or just for fellowship, but have no national organization because of the tendency in Germany to look to the top for leadership. We wanted them to have the experience in determining their own fortunes and their own organizational patterns. That was the first thing we did. We forbade uniforms, marching, and military insignia.

We then set up leadership training schools. We had three of them, one near Wiesbaden, one in Stuttgart, one in Berlin. We also approved youth groups asking the Army to help them with their organizational needs and equipment. The Army was very helpful and very cooperative. They provided tents for camping, tables for ping pong, books, all kinds of things, e.g. places to meet, baseballs, etc. This was the beginning of the friendship between the military and the German youth organizations, and it grew like wildfire. In that little pamphlet I showed you yesterday, "Youth Between Yesterday and Tomorrow," you will find how fast they grew from 83,000 to a million and a half in two years, i.e., youth in democratically organized groups.

If they were a music group, they started a glee club or a band. If they just wanted fellowship, the YMCA or the Boy Scouts came in and developed educational programs. There were all kinds. The YWCA was very active in that period, too. They all sent experienced leaders to Germany at a later date, to help in the rebuilding of German youth organizations.

We also brought in a great many organizations that wanted to do something about Germany. The Friends Service Committee, for instance, came in and set up an exchange program with school youth middle grades, and they brought in work groups to help rebuild towns, set up camp in a little town and rebuild the fire station or rebuild the school. This was very effective. We had a lot of those all over Germany.

The Army helped a great deal. At one point, a little later, we were given permission to take over unoccupied castles, public buildings that had belonged to the Nazis, such as bomb shelters, safety centers, where people could go. We set up youth organizations in them, and they were very effective. The Army helped a great deal in furnishing them and giving leadership to their efforts. That was the early days.

It was probably the most important time in history where the military played a role of such importance in the democratization of another country. An edict was sent out from the military command asking each U.S. military organization in the country to get busy in helping German

youth with their organization problems. They needed places to meet, they needed play facilities, basketballs, nets, tennis rackets, and so forth. Through voluntary giving and help from the United States directly, voluntary help in the United States, they were able to supply unlimited [amounts] for these needs. Much material was transported to Germany on government ships.

At holiday times, the youth were entertained in American military homes. Skilled troops acted as coaches for basketball and other games, e.g. baseball. They acted as hosts for social events. A hall was provided for dances and things like that. It was a program involving all of the military throughout the American zone. I think it lasted and is still is going on in a way. I just had Christmas cards from the GYA retirees, who are now approaching my age, in Berlin, and they still meet. They still have their organization going. They still are promoting U.S.

The leadership training schools developed under the help of the State Department -- it started the cultural exchange program, it they sent leaders to teach. I remember Elmer Ott from Minneapolis YMCA who came over and organized a camping organization for Germany, set up camping programs with them along the American camping lines. They were democratic organizations, not military, as they were under the Nazis. Other organizations sent volunteers over to work in other programs. The Department sent them over, paid their way, in some cases, paid their salaries. They worked under our supervision and we kept close touch with them. They wrote reports and recommendations for the organizations' use and for our use.

I entered the Foreign Service in the Office of Public Affairs, whose responsibilities covered all of the American zone. But then I was transferred out of Germany after eight years, to the West Indies.

The youth activities branch became "community activities," and included women's affairs, community organization, adult education, and motion picture sections, as well as youth and sports. I took the first group out of Germany, which was a group of religious leaders, to the World Conference of Churches in Oslo. That was a great experience for them to get out of Germany and go somewhere. Then I took a group of young leaders of German youth to Williamsburg, U.S.A., for a conference with American youth leaders who came from all over the United States to Williamsburg, and sat with this group of German leaders for a week. It was a fabulous experience for them and for us, too. One of those leaders is presently in the Bundesrat, I believe; Willy Birkelbach was the head of the labor youth movement.

The policy regarding GYA relationships was worked out in HICOG, yes. But the initiative was worked out in Washington, including the Pentagon. It was my operation that presided over the breakup of the former Nazi centralized sports groups, the "Einheitsverband." . We didn't like the idea of the inclusion of all sports group under one head. It lent itself too much to dictatorial policies. We wanted a more democratic approach to sports, and therefore we urged organization at the local level. And not till some years later did we permit youth groups to organize above the local level. We provided for their leadership to emerge from the local groups.

We tried to give them as much leadership as we could by establishing leadership training schools for their personnel. That was under my direct jurisdiction and our local staff out in the field. Our staff was a branch within the Public Affairs Program.

The Army rose to the occasion on one special event that I will never forget. I think it was the precursor of European Union. I like to think that, anyway. The youth all over Europe were interested in European cooperation. You see, we established what we called Kreis Youth Committee. Kreis is a county. The Kreis Youth Committee was made up of youth groups of that county. That was the first instance of intergroup cooperation. They later developed regionally in the Regungsbezirk and then nationally. But they decided they wanted to hold a European conference in Germany, and the site was set at the Lorelei on the Rhine, famous in German lore. They came from all Europe, from Finland south. But they had to have a place to stay. The Army provided huge Army tents. They were set up like a city. They elected their own mayor and city council to control it, and the conference went on for a week. I went up there on several occasions during that week. It was not too far from where we were stationed.

The request for facilities came through us. From their needs through us to the Army, and the Army was immediately responsive without any problem. There are many other ways in which the Army helped in that endeavor. Sanitation, facilities were provided, a mess hall was provided, and so on.

There were other occasions when we needed help from the military. Once we brought together a group of the chancellors or presidents of several of the German universities. That was after the McCloy Fund had been formulated. McCloy Fund was a block of money taken from the German marks that were paid to us. -- the GARIOA fund. We called a meeting of the university rectors in Bad Neuheim. They came to the ambassador's house. Mrs. McCloy, as always, was the perfect hostess, and all of these people were there. McCloy outlined the purposes for which the money was given, and asked the rectors for their opinion as to what they would need. They all submitted papers at a later date, but discussed openly there with him their needs for the universities. Some places, they needed a new building. Some places, they needed scientific equipment. Others wanted to exchange professors, wanted to send theirs to the United States and bring someone over to lecture on some new facet of education. It was a very successful meeting, and we were able to get the money to help them in the way they felt they needed help. We convened that meeting.

One staff member from my staff became the manager of that McCloy Fund and received petitions or requests from various youth organizations and communities and schools and churches and other groups; e.g., I went with McCloy to see the damaged church at Cologne, the tower of which had been bombed out. He said, "Well, we will fix that up," and he did. He got the new dome put up there. These were the kinds of things that created public impression that we were there to help and not to just boss them around.

This fund went far and wide. There is a book published on this, a report, on the entire McCloy Fund. Unfortunately, I have lost mine. I sent it to American University of Vienna. A couple of professors there were writing a history of the American occupation and its influence on education. They came to the U.S. to interview several early participants in the HICOG staff. I was one of those interviewed.

Incidentally, in this respect, I like to think that in a way, the Free University of Berlin had at least

part of its encouragement to start right in our home. We had a program in Berlin in the very earliest days, whereby Americans invited groups of university students to meet in their homes. We had two groups meet at our home, one on Thursday night and one on Sunday. They came from Humboldt University. Humboldt University was in the Russian zone. These students were constantly hungering for more independence, more ability to pry and ask questions, but they felt they were being indoctrinated all the time. They constantly expressed a wish for a university in the American zone or the British zone or somewhere where they could attend in complete freedom. McCloy, I suppose, got the pressures from various groups and people, but eventually he did grant a building and funds to establish a Free University in Berlin, which has prospered ever since.

You know, to show how Americans react, when the access to Berlin was cut off by the Russians, in spite of the treaty agreement, the Americans set up an airlift, brought coal into freezing Berlin, and food and clothing and other supplies, one plane after another landing at the Tempelhof airport, and unloading and taking off again and bringing another load. It was a great undertaking.

DOUGLAS MACARTHUR, II
Detention Camp Prisoner
The Black Forest (1942-1944)

Ambassador MacArthur was born into Navy family; his father and grandfather were career Navy officers. Ambassador MacArthur graduated from Yale University and then joined the Foreign Service. He served in Canada, Italy, Belgium, France, and Japan, and was ambassador to Austria. This interview was conducted by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1986.

MACARTHUR: We were on the edge of the Black Forest in Baden-Baden. There were three camps in that area, one with British soldiers taken by the Germans in North Africa; another was a mixed bag of various people that had been collected here and there -- some of them "irresponsible people" or what the Nazis considered irresponsible people from some of the Eastern European countries they had overrun; and I forget what the nature of the third camp was. We were interned in a hotel. Our treatment there was correct, and we had only one extremely painful and disagreeable business when the Gestapo came down and went to work on Thomas Cassidy, our assistant naval attaché in Vichy, their brutal interrogation, and it's no fun to hear someone being interrogated, when the moaning stops, and you know they've passed out. Cassidy was being interrogated probably because he was a contact point with some of our French Resistance people. Actually he worked for Colonel Donovan's OSS organization, and obviously some French contact who had been taken by the Gestapo and tortured had given his name. So the Gestapo came down and if it had not been for the intervention of a fine young Swiss diplomat who periodically visited us -- his name is Kiya Bordier (phonetic), who was later an ambassador -- Cassidy might have ended extremely badly, rather than just being painfully abused for a couple of days.

We were taken by the Germans after the Allied landings in North Africa at the beginning of

November 1942. The Germans burst into our Embassy, although we had so called diplomatic immunity. They burst into our Embassy with tommy guns and started removing us, when the dean of the diplomatic corps of Vichy, Mr. Stukey, heard what was happening and went to Laval, and said that this would create a major scandal for the Petain/Laval Government if it wasn't stopped immediately. So Laval called the Germans off and said we would be interned and exchanged for the members of the French diplomatic Vichy mission in Washington, headed by Ambassador Henrier.

They interned us, shipped us down to Lourdes, the shrine city in southern France, of Bernadette fame, but we had been there only a very short time when Laval gave the Germans the green light, and a group of SS and German soldiers arrived and bundled us into a train and took us off to Germany to hold as hostages.

We remained in Germany from that time -- that is the end of 1942 until March of 1944 -- when, finally, an agreement was negotiated for the exchange of our group plus a few very badly wounded Americans against some Germans that had been taken by us in North Africa during the North African campaign, including Ribbentrop's niece and her husband and some other Germans that we had picked up in this country or in transit between Latin America, where they had been active.

When the agreement was finally reached in 1944 -- the end of February -- if I recall correctly part of that agreement was that we would be repatriated to Lisbon, and the neutral Swedish vessel Gripsholm was to carry over those exchangees that the Germans wanted from the United States and the others that had been in North Africa, would be brought together in Lisbon, and we would be exchanged there. So we left Germany on a sealed train that went through France, to the French border. There we were held overnight to await the final arrangements with the Spaniards for transit across Spain, and we were put in a sealed train, but no longer with the German guards, and dispatched from Confront, which is just below Biarritz on the French-Spanish border to Lisbon. Maybe it wasn't Confront. It was the border point just below Peau.

In Lisbon, after a couple of days processing, we were placed in the Gripsholm and returned to the United States.

ALFRED PUHAN
Broadcaster, Voice of America
New York City, New York (1942-1944)

Ambassador Alfred Puhan was born in Marianburg, Germany, (now Poland) of an American father raised primarily in Illinois. He was educated at Oberlin College, the University of Cincinnati and Columbia University. During World War II he was employed in radio broadcasting, first by the British Broadcasting Company and later by the Voice of America. In 1953 he joined the Foreign Service, serving in Vienna and in Washington, where he served as Executive Director of the European Bureau and Head of the Office of German Affairs. In

*1969 he became US Ambassador to Hungary and served there until 1973.
Ambassador Puhan was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1990.*

PUHAN: Before World War II or before we entered the war, I think most of us who were in the academic field were asked to sign some sort of a questionnaire asking what particular qualifications we had that might be of use in case we were in the war and I had put down that I knew German and French. I received a telegram at Rutgers in New Brunswick, NJ from something called, I think at the time, Coordinator of Information or some such name and asked to come to New York. This was in May of 1942.

I went there and that evening was an announcer in the German language over the facilities of the BBC. I had to ask what the BBC was and when told that it was the British Broadcasting Corporation I asked what it was doing in New York. I was told that the Voice of America, which this was, was in its infancy, still had no facilities of its own and was using the BBC facilities.

I moved rather rapidly from announcer to producer to scriptwriter and producer/scriptwriter and spent the next 11 years at the Voice of America.

Q: Did you go overseas at anytime? I presume this ultimately merged into the OWI, Office of War Information. Did you take any overseas assignment in the Voice?

PUHAN: Yes, my first check was paid by something called Short-Wave Research, Inc. which I believe was part of Wild Bill Donovan's operation, OSS. This was to become shortly thereafter the Office of War Information with headquarters in New York City.

Yes, I went overseas in 1944 to head the German language broadcast at the American Broadcasting Station in Europe, the acronym is ABSIE, and spent most of 1944 there. This was during WWII—the Blitz was over of course, but the V-1's had just begun, were just beginning while I was over there. I had a brief respite at home at Christmas time '44 and then went overseas again in February or March of 1945, first to London and then to head German Broadcasting from Radio Luxembourg which, as you probably know, was to become the sort of forerunner of the German post-World War II network.

I stayed there until September. In September of 1944 I accompanied three other officers in a jeep. We went to Frankfurt to look into the setting up of Frankfurt as the headquarters of the German network. And I suppose I was destined to become the head of the new German radio network under Allied, under American control.

A vehicle accident, automobile accident, in the Hunsrueck Mountains of Germany—I was sitting in the passenger seat next to the driver, two captains in the back seat and a jeep coming from the opposite direction containing a chaplain got off the side of the road and swung back too quickly and we smashed it head on. We weren't going very fast, 35 miles an hour. Otherwise, I suppose I'd have been killed. The three others were all thrown out. I was in the jeep, went down an embankment and fractured by hip. I was taken to the 97th General Hospital in Badnauheim in Germany where I spent the next three months recuperating. That ended my career as the head of broadcasting or future chief of broadcasting of German stations.

Q: I'd like to ask you a few questions now about the earlier part of your broadcasting experience. The first question I would like to ask is exactly what did you look upon as your objective? What was it you were trying to attain? Were you talking to the German troops? Or were you trying to get to the German populace and influence their thinking and activity? What was your main purpose in your broadcasting, from Luxembourg for example?

PUHAN: Well Lew, let's go back just a bit. You know the objective, of course, of the information program, the Office of War Information under Elmer Davis and Robert Sherwood overseas was to seek the defeat of the Germans.

When we went to London the idea here was, I suppose, to show the Germans that the Voice of America—not only troops there in England, but the Voice of America had moved closer to the mainland. We were not a black station, like Soldatensender, for example, which was a black station. Our objective here was to broadcast the news of the advancing of the Allied troops and German defeats or occasional German victories. In Luxembourg it soon became a matter of broadcasting to a defeated nation. So in neither case was this specifically aimed at German troops.

Now, I might add, in addition to news and editorial and so on, we also broadcast the music of Glen Miller. I was the man who taught Glen Miller enough German so he could say a few words before playing a number. My secretary was the Mistress of Ceremonies. These appealed, of course, to the young people, soldiers and younger women and so on. So in that sense we were broadcasting to the troops. But that was not generally the goal. The general goal was to address the Germans as a whole.

Q: On a more personal basis, when you made this trip into Frankfurt and perhaps around Frankfurt, did by any chance you have a man by the name of Ed Schechter with you in that group?

PUHAN: Well, I know Ed Schechter very well, but he was not in that group, no. I knew him somewhat later than that, but he was not in that particular group. He was not at Radio Luxembourg to the best of my recollection, at least not while I was there.

Q: Well, he did go to Radio Luxembourg. Whether he was there at the same time that you were or not I don't know. But he went to London in 1944 and then was moved forward when the Allied armies moved into Europe and began fighting their way into Germany. He did make a trip which later took him down to Frankfurt and then into Austria which was his native area. So I thought he might have been there when you were.

PUHAN: Well, no. I have no recollection of Ed Schechter at that point in time. As I say I know Ed very well and we've exchanged Christmas cards and so on, and I have no doubt—and it's possible that he was in Luxembourg. But you see we had a colonel, an American Philadelphia lawyer incidentally, who was the head of the station in Luxembourg and I was the civilian deputy to him.

Now, the big guns were, well, Golo Mann, the son of the famous German writer Thomas Mann, was our chief broadcaster. But I don't recall Ed Schechter at that time, no.

Q: So as you began broadcasting to the Germans as a defeated nation, your music program, I suppose, was designed to soften the attitude of the Germans for what would happen when you ultimately took over the control of the country. You said that your career in the broadcasting area terminated with your injury and your hospitalization. What did you do and where did they send you immediately after you were released from the hospital?

PUHAN: Well, I spent—the accident took place early in September of 1944 and I was not ZI'd (Z-I stood for Zone of the Interior), as they called it at the time, sent home until December of 1944. I spent some time in limbo, you might say, recuperating. I went out to Sandwich, Illinois, where I grew up, with my young wife and we stayed there until I received a letter from Werner Michel who was the Program Director and who had hired me originally, asking me to return and rejoin the Voice of America.

PATRICK F. MORRIS
Prisoner of War
Germany (1944-1945)

Mr. Morris was born and raised in Montana. Educated at Georgetown University, Mexico City College, and San Marcos College, Lima, Peru, Mr. Morris served in the US Army in Europe during World War II, where he was captured and imprisoned by the German Army. He joined the newly established Point IV program in 1950 and worked with that agency and its successors in various senior level capacities in Washington, D.C., in Paris and throughout Latin America. His final posting was in the Dominican Republic, where he served as Director of the US AID Mission. Mr. Morris was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.

Q: Where did you go overseas and when?

MORRIS: We left the States in September, 1944. The invasion of Normandy was in June of '44, we left in September. We arrived in England, did some more training in England and then we crossed the Channel, arrived in Le Havre, which was completely bombed out, and loaded in trucks and driven through France and into Belgium up on the Siegfried line in Germany. That is how far we had advanced. This was late October by that time. And we were there, in combat, static actually because the line was drawn and we had patrols and so forth but rather quiet. Well, we had a number of casualties; we had casualties from mines and a number of people were killed on patrol. But then December the 16, 1944, the Germans initiated the Battle of the Bulge.

Q: Which corps- army were you in?

MORRIS: First Army, Bradley.

Q: First Army.

MORRIS: Yes. And we were- 99th Division held a front, three regiments held a front about 15 miles long. And there were three German divisions against ours when they came through-

Q: You were in the Ardennes.

MORRIS: In the Ardennes, that is right. And three German divisions came through the area where we were and they pushed us back and they went around us, just to our south. I was in the 394th and we were on the furthest right and then next to us was the 106th Division and which had just gotten on the line three days before, and there was complete confusion. That whole division was wiped out.

Q: The whole regiment.

MORRIS: I have written this up, on December 16, the artillery, German artillery started about 5:00 in the morning. I had been on guard duty from 2:00 to 3:00 that morning and so I was still fully dressed. We were supposedly in reserve; we had been on the line and we had been pulled back. Actually we were only about five or six miles behind where we had been on the line but we had moved into an abandoned house and built bunks in the house so we were not sleeping in foxholes. And I had just gotten back to my bunk and I decided, I would just take my shoes off, and I just laid down on the bunk and went to sleep and 5:00 in the morning all hell broke loose. The artillery was coming in at a tremendous volume and we all immediately got out and went down into the basement and I took long enough to put on my shoes before I went down but a lot of the guys just grabbed their shoes or grabbed anything and just went running down into the basement. There was two feet of water in the basement. At least I had my shoes on. But that house got about four direct hits; there was nothing left of it. I do not think we had any casualties because everybody was in the basement and we all got out. But you know, whatever you had left upstairs, that was the last you saw of it.

And so then, of course, we immediately started to dig foxholes - our company headquarters was at a little railroad station - and down the railroad tracks came an infantry company of Germans and, of course, we engaged them and fought them off. They retreated and then we continued digging and then we got another tremendous artillery barrage and we expected another infantry push, but German infantry push did not come. And just as we had gotten our holes down deep enough, well you know, probably two feet, but deep enough maybe to hide in for an artillery attack, we got orders to move out. And our platoon sergeant picked me, to be first scout for the platoon. And this was about four in the afternoon. It was already getting dark. And I said where are we going? And he said they need us, A Company has been hit bad and they need us—we were L Company—A Company had been hit bad and we were needed to reinforce them. And we got out on a road and here I am, the first scout, way out, and our platoon sergeant, his name was Morgan, said just stay up there and just keep going; he said, if I want you to do anything else I will let you know. By the time we really started to march it was already dark and we just went down that road and we could hear the Germans on both sides of the road. And finally Morgan said we are going to get off the road. And so we got off the road and he said, we are going to dig

in here. You know, we could hear Germans on all sides of us but I figured he knew what he was doing.

But anyway, there was snow on the ground and the ground was frozen and we were supposed to dig in, and here we are, working with out little pick axes, trying to dig in, and you know, we must have spent two hours, three hours just trying to get through that damn cold, frozen dirt. And then we got orders to move out again. We moved out, we practically did not even get on the road before we were attacked. There were just shots coming from every direction. And we moved and to this day I cannot put that scene together. The whole day we fought; we ran and we fought and we tried to keep together and it was just complete chaos. I do not know whether anybody knew what was going on. You know, we ran across places where our troops had been because there were rations laying around. Well, you know, we had not eaten in two days and we picked up pieces of these rations and put them in our coats and moved on and fought. Every once in awhile you would see some Germans and you would open up on them and then you would run and this went on until well into the afternoon. And finally it looked as though, here are more of our guys together, and it looked like we were still a unit and we were ordered to go up on the road—we had been fighting in the forest. But this was a different road than the road we had been on. But we were ordered to go up on the road and the first ones up and the first guys up were mowed down with machine gun fire.

And so then nobody went up on the road and we moved along and we were going west. That was away from the line. We moved west and most of, well I do not know how many of our platoon had already gotten it by that time but we were still together as a platoon. We went into a little town, Moringen, where the regimental commander was and he ordered us to dig new positions on a hill overlooking the same road that we could not get on before. So we started digging and luckily the ground was soft. It was sand, it was easy digging and we dug our holes and it did not take us any time to be down deep enough. And I fell asleep.

Q: What?

MORRIS: I fell asleep. And my buddy fell asleep too, we both fell asleep; we had not slept for two days. And the next thing I remember is I heard rifle fire and it was coming from one of our holes; they were firing down on that road and sure enough, man, that road was full of Germans and they were marching along the road. That must have been a division because there were artillery pieces and they were all coming along this road and some of our guys had already started shooting at them. And so, you know, we were awakened and began shooting too. Then some of the German infantry, as soon as this shooting started, they turned off the road and came up the hill at us. We were firing back and there was a fog; the fog came up the hill faster than the Germans did and so they were completely enveloped in fog. About that time somebody said to us, we are moving out. So they pulled us out of our holes and we moved back. It turned out that during the night the whole company, actually the whole regiment, had moved back to more defensive positions and here we were, all alone, one platoon. The company had probably lost 30 or 40 guys by then but anyway, what was left of the platoon, there we were. We had a number of casualties right there and what was left, we still had a young lieutenant platoon leader and a platoon sergeant and a couple of squad leaders besides whatever privates and PFCs (Private First Class) were there and we tried to make our way back to our own lines, because the Germans had

already taken Moringen where the regimental commander had been; they had already taken that town. We tried to make contact with the company. Well, we did not succeed. We engaged in a couple of firefights with the Germans and then we were surrounded and surrendered. And we became prisoners.

Q: Okay. I would like to stop at this point because I stop at the end of a tape and explain where we are so can pick it up.

Surrendering in a combat is always one of the trickiest businesses so I thought next time I will ask you about how the surrender went. I mean, it is not easy to do. And then we will talk about your time as a prisoner of war and then we will move on.

MORRIS: Very good.

Q: Today is the 23rd of February, 2007. Pat, okay, where were you, how does one surrender? I mean, you know, this is a tricky thing. It is not an easy process.

MORRIS: No. As I mentioned, I have written this up but this was in the Battle of the Bulge, we had been fighting for four days and we were withdrawing and my company withdrew and we as a platoon were not informed. The runner for my platoon was afraid to come back to tell us and he went with the company and there we were, surrounded by Germans. Not realizing that we were surrounded we opened fire on them—we were dug in on a hill—we opened fire on them and there must have been at least a division coming up a road; there were artillery pieces pulled by horses which we were amazed at to see that the Germans were in such bad shape they were pulling their artillery pieces by horses. But a whole company of infantrymen, we were on the side of a hill, a whole company of German infantrymen came at us and only then did we get the word that we were a lone platoon on the side of that hill and that we had to get out of there. Luckily there was a fog and it moved up the hill, it covered the Germans but it also meant the Germans could not see us, so we moved out of our positions and moved back into the woods where we ran into more Germans and there was a firefight and my buddy and I separated from the others in the platoon and hid in a foxhole and stayed there the rest of the afternoon and into the night. And during that time we heard another firefight going on and we learned later that the rest of the platoon was captured.

So here we were the two of us, in the woods and we decided that we would try to get back to our lines. The way- there was artillery fire coming in and we knew that it was American artillery fire from the direction it was coming and we decided that we would walk toward where the artillery was coming from, hoping that we could get back to our lines. And we walked the rest of that night and at daybreak we ran across some scenes of terrible combat where there were lots of dead bodies and ruined vehicles and so on. And we could see a village on a hill, Krinkelt, and we thought well now maybe - but we could not see any movement in the village; this was early in the morning and we could not see any movement in the village and that was a bad sign, we thought. So we did not know whether it was occupied by the Germans or whether our troops were there. We had to cross an opening where there were no trees, cross a stream to get to the woods on the other side, which we did, and then we walked for another hour or so and again we ran out of woods. We did not want to get out into the open anyplace but there was no place to go

and by this time that village was on our right; before that it was straight ahead of us, and we decided, since we had not- by that time there was no artillery fire and there were no signs of either Americans or Germans and there was no combat, there were no guns going off. We decided to cross the road, get into a field, go through a hedgerow, get into a field which had tall grain of some kind in it. It was the wintertime but evidently it had never been harvested. Which we did and we violated one of our resolves, which was that we would only travel at night. Here we were in the middle of the day going across this field and we heard, in very good English, somebody say to us halt, drop your rifles, the war is over for you. And we turned around and here was an American .50 caliber machine gun on top of a Jeep pointing at us but with a German behind it. The Germans, of course, had captured our Jeep. And it was not the guy with the machine gun who was talking; we could not see him. But then he told us to come over to the Jeep, we had to cross the hedgerow onto the road, and there was a German colonel who spoke perfect English and he told us to get into the back of the Jeep. So we did. We left our rifles lying on the ground. And he said I am going to take you back to battalion headquarters but first I have an errand. And they drove down the road to what had been an old sawmill and which evidently had been turned into an American headquarters of some kind; there was a kitchen and a repair shop there. But the most terrible slaughter that I have ever seen in my life; there were body pieces and bodies everywhere, some with their heads off. These people had been under a very bad artillery barrage and they were all our guys. And I am afraid to say that it was friendly fire because the Germans had been moving through that area and these guys got caught.

But anyway, the German colonel walked into what looked like what had been a kitchen and came out with a sack of flour over his shoulder. And he said, "Tonight I am going to have a cake." And with that he drove us back to the headquarters and then they put us under guard. Then the next morning they moved us and we were - the first couple of nights, it was probably a company headquarters but it was a house and they put us down in the cellar. There were no lights, there was nothing in the cellar and it was damp and it was smelly and we discovered that there were other prisoners down there. Not many, there were about three or four other guys down there and a dog. Well every day, for the next couple of days, they brought the dog up to feed him and then they would throw down to us a large piece of bread and let us divide it among ourselves. So that was the beginning of my prison life.

We were- that was around the 20th, I think it was the 20th of December that I was captured and I remember by the 25th, which was Christmas Day, they had put us with other prisoners and they took us from town to town, cleaning up after bombings. And we- remembering Christmas Day, we were crowded into a shed and there must have been 100 of us or maybe a little less but it was so crowded that we could not sit down. They just locked the door. And then of course Christmas Day we did not, I am not sure that we knew exactly what day it was but when nobody came by to open the door in the morning we began to speculate that it was probably Christmas Day and they were not going to come to get us to take us out to work on Christmas Day. Well finally around noon they did come and they let us out and they gave us our ration, which was a piece of bread, and then they locked us up again. And the next day they moved us. That was the most crowded quarters that I was in but the next couple of weeks were pretty bad.

They kept moving us east. We crossed the Rhine at Bonn and then they put us in railroad cars and moved us south.

Q: How were they moving you, by truck or walking?

MORRIS: No, we walked all that way. We walked from the place that I was captured, we walked all the way, marched I guess because the further back we went the more prisoners there were and the longer the lines got. And we were strafed a couple of times by our own planes. They saw these guys see a column on the road and they would strafe us. Luckily we all managed to get off the road in time. I think there were two strafings and nobody was killed or hurt that I know of in those strafings.

Finally, at Bonn, they put us in railroad cars and took us south. I am trying to remember the name of the place; Limburg on the Rhine. And there we were processed by the Germans. They took our- got our names and our serial numbers and interrogated us.

Q: Was it much of an interrogation?

MORRIS: Well it is interesting. As I say, I have written this up and for me it was a joke and for my buddy, he claims that- because we were captured together and we had been together all this time, but he claims that they beat him up. They did not beat me up. My interrogator, I had been in the ASTP, Army Specialized Training Program, which was a program that took people who had a certain IQ and sent them to college. And that program was disbanded in March of 1944 and we were all put in the infantry so I was in the infantry from that time on. But I had a patch in my wallet from that program and that- of course they took everything from us and they took my wallet and I had had it up until the time that we arrived at this place but then they took it - and then they gave me back my wallet and wanted to know what that patch was. The guy softened me up before he started asking me any questions and I was probably tricked but you know the Army rules are you give your name, rank and serial number and that is it.

Then he showed me the patch and I said oh, that is a dead program. I said, that is just a memento of a dead program. So I explained to him what and he said, well you must be pretty bitter having to be here as a prisoner of the Germans instead of back in school. And I said, "Well, I am not as bitter as you must be." I said, "I saw artillery pieces being pulled by horses along the road. You guys are losing the war. When are you going to surrender?" And that was the end of the interview. So I went back to the barracks and my buddy said, boy, he said, you really got me in a lot of trouble with that patch. He said, "I would not tell them anything and they beat the hell out of me."

Anyway, from there we were put in railroad cars again, and these are the old forty and eights where- cattle cars- and they were about-

Q: Forty people or eight horses?

MORRIS: Right. And there were about 50 of us in each one of those cars and they locked them up and we started to move east and at stops they would pass in water but we did not get any food and I think we were on those trains for two days. And finally we ended up at a prisoner of war camp, Stalag 4B in Muhlberg, on the Elbe River, and I was there for the next five months. I had

contracted, diphtheria, an infectious disease, I am not sure on the road or after I got to the camp but I was put in an isolation ward with others who had the same thing. So for about two months I was there. I had diphtheria and for about two months I was there with others who had diphtheria and actually there were an awful lot of guys who were caught too late. They died of the disease soon after they were put into quarantine. Actually the International Red Cross brought vaccine-not vaccine but-

Q: Serum?

MORRIS: Yes, serum; they got serum into us and we were injected and that stopped the progress of the disease for me but it had side effects. And they told us before we were injected; they told us about the side effects which was that you might be paralyzed momentarily and for some time, depending upon your system and your age. Well, I was only 19 at the time but there was a Dutchman there who had been in that ward a couple days before me and he was very helpful to me because he could speak German and he could speak English so he was a good interpreter for me. He kept me aware of what was going on. But for me the serum stopped the advance of the disease. I had momentary paralysis of my throat muscles and a little bit in my hands. But that went away after a couple of days. But the poor Dutchman, he was completely paralyzed, completely. He was much older than I; I was 19, he was 32 and he was completely paralyzed. And I fed him, tried to feed him but he could not even swallow because nothing would go down. And slowly he began to recover and I took care of him as best I could and finally he could begin to swallow a little bit. I was discharged from that ward after about oh, six weeks I guess and by that time he was recovered enough that he could take care of himself, more or less. I never saw him again. Then I spent the last month-and-a-half, two months in the camp.

We were liberated by the Russians, Cossacks, horsemen, who rode horses that only had blankets on them, no saddles and they had a halter, no bridle. Most of them were Orientals and they liberated our camp and they strung up whatever German guard or any German military; we found them hanging in trees when we left the camp. And of course we went into the little town of Muhlberg looking for food because in the camp all we got was watery soup and a piece of black bread every day. I was 150 pounds with no fat on me when I left England in September of '44 and when I reached American lines I was weighed. The first thing they did is weigh me and I was 96 pounds. And that was typical. People ask, you know, did they torture you? No, they did not torture us but they did not feed us either.

Q: How about while you were in the camp; what were you doing? I mean, was it pretty obvious that you were kind of waiting for the war to be over? I mean, were things in such a thing that you all realized that, you know, this is not going to last too long?

MORRIS: Yes. We knew, I knew anyway. It was reflected in my conversation with that interrogation officer that we had all expected the war would be over by Christmas; that is what Eisenhower promised us. So we knew that the Germans were on the losing end and so it was just a question of waiting.

This camp that I was in was a very large camp; there were 20,000 prisoners. There was a large Russian section, Russian prisoners, and then there were British. And they threw us in with the

British. In this particular camp, there were very few Americans; there were less than 1,000 Americans in the camp. And I was in a barracks with British and South Africans who all spoke English, of course, and most of them had been prisoners for two or three years. They had adjusted and they had received Red Cross packages of food and I think maybe even some packages from home; I am not sure of that. But anyway, they had adjusted. We were “Johnny-come-latelies;” we had nothing, we never got anything from the Red Cross while we were there and we never got anything from home. In fact, I wrote three or four, they had little sheets that you could write on to send letters, and I sent three of those. My mother got them after the war was over; they never arrived until after the war was over. So all of the time that I was a prisoner I was just listed as missing in action.

But getting back to the prison camp, we used to see those 1,000-plane raids going over that went to bomb Dresden and we would clap, you know. These were the guys that were going to get us out of that camp. They would leave the vapor trails, just endless planes going over. And those were the planes that bombed Dresden, among other places.

Q: Well were you aware, in the group that- stories really did not come out until fairly recently about how the Germans - some units had taken because the Battle of the Bulge was one of the significant blow to prisoners.

MORRIS: Oh yes, yes.

Q: ... three regiments that they took American soldiers they identified as Jewish and put them in the thing. Was this something that you all were aware of?

MORRIS: No. We were not aware of it but there is no doubt that the Jews in my platoon, in my squad, were really frightened that something might happen to them. And as far as I know none of them were separated out but now, keeping up with the ex-prisoners of war, I have learned that some of the people in my division but not in my immediate squad or platoon or even company, in other words, individuals that I knew, none of them were taken. And I think it was a very hit or miss proposition; it was not very well organized.

Q: Well how about while you were in the prison; was it just sort of, I mean, were the Germans beastly to you or was it just a lot of boredom, the sitting around waiting or what?

MORRIS: You know, prior to being put in the camp itself I had contact with the Germans who were taking care, the guards mostly. And they were just doing their job and if you got out of line, you know, they had no compunction about not hitting you with a butt of a rifle or whatever. Except they would march us through these little towns and the people would throw rocks at us or whatever, you know, because of course the American bombers were coming over and dropping bombs on their cities and they had to take it out on somebody and they took it out on us. But the German soldiers were just soldiers; they were just doing their job. And in the camp I practically- well, I did not see any more Germans except when they had a head count every morning and every night; you had to stand out there for hours in the cold while they counted you and if there was a miscount they would do it all over again. But other than that, I did not see much of the Germans.

Q: How about when the Soviets come in. The Soviet army I mean, did the Germans all of a sudden disappear?

MORRIS: They did. They all disappeared. They knew before we did that the Russians were close and they abandoned the camp. But there were still evidently some of them around and those are the ones that got hung from trees. And I will never forget, I had gotten separated from my buddy before we ever got to the camp and then suddenly the same day we were liberated I ran into him; he had been put in another part of the camp and he said I hear that there is a big hole in the fence down in the Russian compound and we can get through it, we can go into Muhlberg. And so we went down to the big hole in the fence and we went to Muhlberg, walked to Muhlberg; it was only two miles. We were looking for food at the German houses. We would knock on doors and nobody would answer and we would open the door and go in and you would find some German in there hiding because they were afraid of the Russians and they would said ah, Americanish. They wanted us to take them with us. There we were prisoners of war, we did not have anything to protect ourselves, and when we began to realize what the situation was we decided there was not any food in this town and we were a lot safer if we went back to the camp. And then our - the highest ranking officer, American officer in the camp was a major, and he negotiated with the Russians to let the Americans march out of the camp as a unit. The Russians had already put a pontoon bridge across the Elbe right near the camp.

Q: So you were right on the Elbe-

MORRIS: We were right on the-

Q: -where the two forces, the Americans and the Russians met.

MORRIS: Exactly. Well, we were only 12 miles south of that.

Q: Torgau.

MORRIS: Torgau, exactly right. It was at Torgau that the Americans of the 69th Division met the Russians; they met at Torgau and we were only 12 miles south of there. I do not know, probably that meeting took place maybe a day or two days before the American major had the negotiation with the Russians and they let us cross the bridge.

Well, the war still was not over and the Germans had not surrendered and here we were, 1,000 Americans walking along a road; no arms, nothing. We did not even know where we were going. And I said to my buddy, "You know, this is ridiculous. We are not going to survive very long." So we took off. We went into a house by the side of the river and it was abandoned; it was a beautiful house and it was abandoned. We started going through the closets. We found medical equipment so it was probably the home of the doctor. And we went upstairs and there were these wonderful beds, feather beds, lovely things.

Q: Your eyes are lighting up as you say that.

MORRIS: And so here, man, here we are, feather beds. I had never slept in a feather bed in my life. And then we thought, we can take a shower. Well of course, we took a shower but it was cold water; the heating system was gone. But we took showers in cold water and then we slept that night in those feather beds and that was real luxury. There we are, starving but we were at least - And there was no food in the house; there was no food anywhere.

So the next morning I felt very uneasy. I said, "We have got to get out of here. We were letting ourselves in for trouble." And we got back on the road and started walking along the road and we ran into an SS roadblock, German soldiers with rifles and there we are. They must have realized that we were POWs and we were Americans and were not Russians and they let us go, they just told us to keep going. So we got through that roadblock and I, to this day I do not know what happened to the other 800 or 900 guys that were walked down that road the day before.

Then we ran into a guy, a Canadian, a French Canadian who could not speak English. I knew there were French Canadians who spoke French but I did not know there were French Canadians who could not speak English. But anyway, he had been in the Canadian army and he had been a prisoner of war in this little town, Oschatz. He said just keep going, a couple miles down the road. And he said there is food there, you can get something to eat and you can get a place to stay. You know, we got all of this by sign language and a little bit of French that we had. But he said there was a British sergeant major who had declared himself mayor of the town. We got to the town, we went to the center, we went into the mayor's office and there was this British sergeant major and he told us where to go and he said you will get a bed and you get food. So we went down and there was not only bed and food but there was all kinds of schnapps and we drank more than we should have and we got sick as dogs, we were really sick because you know, we ate too much and we drank too much and so we were sick.

But during the night an American major in a Jeep with a trailer on the back, had come in. He was from the 69th Division and their headquarters was quite a ways back to the west. And they were just out on a fishing expedition, you know. They were probably unauthorized and they were just driving around seeing what they could liberate.

Q: Liberate is a fancy term for looting.

MORRIS: Exactly. Exactly. But in the morning we run into these guys and I, right away- I forgot to mention that I had been wounded during the battle. I had gotten shrapnel in my leg and that, throughout my whole experience, had sort of limited what I could do. The fact is, because of the malnutrition it never healed, and it would just run; I had a running sore on my leg and it was infected. While I was in the camp the prisoners had organized, because we had medics, medics who were captured too, so the prisoners organized and they, the medics, regularly changed the bandage on my leg. Once a week I got a change of bandage on the leg. But here we were now, this was going on maybe a week and I had not- and my leg was really getting bad so I really wanted to get back to some kind of medical attention and so we asked this guy and he said sure, get in the trailer. So he drove us back to his, I guess it was battalion headquarters, and the first thing I said was that I'd like to see the medics and they sent me. I went to see the medics and that was the last time I saw my buddy until about two or three years later in the States. But as soon as they saw my wound and saw my condition, that was where they weighed me. I weighed 96

pounds. I had weighed 150 pounds when we left England. They just told me to wait there and they put me in a Jeep and took me to an evacuation hospital. And I was there when the war ended; I was in the evacuation hospital.

Q: Where was the evacuation hospital?

MORRIS: I really do not remember where that battalion headquarters was but it was in the area east of Leipzig, someplace in that area but I never did know exactly what the name of the town was. But anyway, I got there, it was the day before, it was May the 7th because the next day was the surrender on May the 8th. And the first thing they did, you know, they took my stinking clothes and gave me some pajamas and a bathrobe and gave me a bed and the next day there was nobody around. Everybody was gone. Well, you know, it was the end of the war, everybody went out to celebrate and we the patients, we did not have any clothes; we could not go off so we just had to wait. I guess all the Americans had a great time that day celebrating the end of the war and there we were in the hospital with no clothes to go anywhere. We just had to wait.

But within two days or three days I was ambulatory, I could walk, and so they took me out to an airstrip and there were lines of people and about every half-hour a plane would come in, the old, what were they?

Q: C-47s?

MORRIS: C-47s, the cargo planes, yes, the old cargo planes. Yes, actually the same plane as the old DC-3, C-47s. And about every half-hour a C-47 would come in and they would load, both ambulatory and litter patients. In fact, they would load the litter patients into it and then whatever room was left over they would ask for so many ambulatory. And after about four planes came in I was up in the line and I got in the plane and it flew us to England.

But I will never forget that trip. It was the first time I had ever been in an airplane. And I sat, there were no seats but I rolled up something and I sat near a window. We must have flown directly west and then north. We flew to the Rhine and then north along the Rhine across the Channel to England. I will never forget the devastation. We had bombed that place. And those planes, they flew at 2,000 feet, you know, so you could see well what was on the ground. It reminded me of a blotter, an ink blotter, where somebody had taken a pen and made large ink blots. Those were the bomb craters, all over, on both sides of the river, just mile after mile after mile of devastation. It was terrible. It was just awful. That is what war is; war is just terrible.

ROBERT E. ASHER
Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces
Frankfurt (1945)

Robert E. Asher was born in 1910 in Chicago. He attended Dartmouth, the University of Chicago and the University of Berlin. His career included posts mainly in Germany, Switzerland, and England. He also spent a year as part of the

Land-Lease Administration in North Africa. He has held several positions in the State Department and the Brookings Institution. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in November 2000.

Q: What were you during this time?

ASHER: At SHAEF headquarters?

Q: Yes.

ASHER: We were following the maps of where there were clusters of displaced persons either in camps or not. And sending out the instructions on what to do about them: keep them, wait for further instructions, send them home to France and Belgium and Holland and Norway and Denmark when they were ready to go. Asking about the health of these people. There were some that were in terrible health, although by and large I was surprised, I must say, at the relatively good condition people were in. Disease wasn't rampant, starvation wasn't. They had eaten thin rations but in the last few weeks they had beefed up a lot. It seemed a very hectic period for us because we would get these messages during the night, at all hours, "we have a group that's all ready to go, but if we send the truck, we won't have enough transportation left to get the food tomorrow." Things like that. But it somehow worked out. We got them a truck or food from somewhere. The military, while they professed to have pretty well turned over their responsibilities to UNRRA shortly after VE day, were fully cooperative. They had become heavily involved in this job before UNRRA took over and they wanted to see it finished right. As a matter of fact we took on to the UNRRA payroll some of the ablest people in our Displaced Persons Branch who were involved in this. Charles Schottland, for example, a colonel in the military displaced person's branch, who later became, under Eisenhower I think, Secretary of Health Education and Welfare. Other fine military personnel were taken onto the UNRRA payroll, more than a couple. Some were eager to get out of uniform and into some civilian capacity, simply because they thought that they would get home quicker that way. We had to hold off a bit, let them find their own level, but the Displaced Persons Branch of SHAEF was integrated, between civilians and military personnel. After VE day we continued to operate fairly well.

I moved to Frankfurt about the middle of June '45, I guess. The SHAEF offices in Versailles were abandoned and Allied Force headquarters was in the IG Farben building, one of the few undestroyed buildings in Frankfurt. I was billeted in a house that had obviously been recently evacuated by the Germans. I felt a little bit guilty when I found a wonderful library at that home, the inhabitants having had to leave without getting a chance to carry with them any of this. But war wasn't kind to people and the military, U.S. and British, felt quite rightly that they had to have some place to billet people. So, evacuate the Germans and billet the Americans and British. That's what they did. Depending on your rank, you could be pretty well billeted. They may have hired back some of these Germans, as interpreters, kitchen personnel, mechanics and so forth.

I just happen now in 2001 to have some correspondence with a professor of German at the University of Massachusetts, who apparently as a very young child was in Frankfurt and was evacuated at the time when we came in. She has relieved me, we didn't force them to leave at the time of SHAEF's arrival; their house was bombed before and they were already on the outskirts

of Frankfurt. Being an occupying power isn't very enjoyable either. Maybe some people found it so, but not those of us who really weren't wounded during the war or hadn't starved, and who moved with the troops in pretty classy ways. It just didn't sit well with me.

Q: Speaking of UNRRA, who United Nations was it at that time?

ASHER: UNRRA's headquarters were in Washington and it had a European Regional Office in London. At headquarters we had a Russian deputy. It took a long time before we got Russian administrative personnel into the field. UNRRA had missions later in Byelorussia and the Ukraine. They were not headed by Russians, in keeping with the principle that an UNRRA country mission should not be headed by a national of that country. The Russian deputy felt, and I think with reason, that he was left out of a lot of decision-making, but the Russians were very troublesome when they were left in. Terribly hard, they just saw things differently. Politics for them was the continuation of war by other means. They had a real grievance that all the Western Europeans were being repatriated while these Russians who should have been at home helping with reconstruction were still in camps, trying to get visas for the USA, Argentina, Brazil and all sorts of western hemisphere places. And getting them. A distinguished American, Herbert Lehman, had been head of the predecessor of UNRRA, the US Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations, and he was succeeded in UNRRA by Fiorello La Guardia, a colorful, brilliant, dynamic, exciting personality to be around, but erratic as an administrator. He would fire somebody in the morning and in the afternoon he would ask for that person and be told, "Well, don't you know he left?" and he'd say, "Get him back, I need him." La Guardia then was given some important post with military government in Italy I think.

His successor at UNRRA was a man named Robert G.A. Jackson, Robert God Almighty Jackson we called him. Do you know anything about him? He was a New Zealander. Very dedicated person who revved himself up for the whole war and postwar effort. In the military service he had been a commander. He thought of UNRRA as a sort of command-post job. He was here in Washington then, it was the headquarters. There was a staff meeting every morning. He usually slept on a cot in his office as though it were important that he be there between midnight and five AM. But the war was over by then. He, I thought, didn't have too good a sense of proportion. He would have on his agenda when he would get to the morning office meeting, I am getting a bit ahead of myself, that the flag wasn't flying straight and somebody should do something about that, and where are those drugs for Albania that pharmaceuticals had promised? That was obviously much more important than whether the flag was flying straight or not. His agenda always had a checklist on it that somebody important should get busy on right away.

He married a person whom I found utterly charming, Barbara Ward, a brilliant, eloquent, beautiful economist. I didn't really know her at all until well after the war, when I was a founding member of the Society for International Development. Barbara Ward came into the organization early and she was one of our most eloquent people. She'd written a book called The West at Bay, and she later got interested in the development of the less developed countries, in particular Africa. When she spoke honestly about the situation in Africa it brought a lump to my throat, tears to my eyes, a determination to do something. She was wonderful. Her husband I admired in some ways, but Barbara I loved.

Q: When you were dealing with the headquarters, were any nationalities giving you particular problems? Either because of internal politics of their country, or just being difficult to get to go from here to beyond.

ASHER: UNRRA was the first operational international agency. It had a real function in the field. Every country felt that it was entitled to have some personnel at the headquarters. They were willing to supply them. UNRRA needed to build up fairly quickly. It operated at headquarters only in English. This was probably a severe handicap to a lot of people. It was hard, much harder to build an integrated international staff of collaborative personnel, it takes longer, takes more effort in bringing out people at staff meetings, etc. The Personnel Division had people like Mel Spector, who were very aware of this, very good at trying to give us team spirit, so to speak.

I was brought back from Europe to be head of a division called Procedural Coordination to issue UNRRA's regulations and principles and so on. One of the things I tried to do, with the full understanding of Jackson and other people at the top, was to get the clearance and consent of all of the key officers in the organization before getting out some new regulation. You never could get the Russians to agree that people should be repatriated only with their consent. On the other hand, you could persuade them that this regulation was going to apply to a lot of other people, and if you don't go along you are going to slow down the repatriation of people in other countries. There was still an aura, a residue of combined forces, of having together beaten the Nazis, and it carried over a little bit to the UNRA headquarters. I had some good Russian and Yugoslav friends. It was not quite the same kind of intimacy that you got with American and British colleagues. I think that the people at the top of UNRRA were sensitive to this problem, but it's just much easier to pick up the telephone and talk to somebody in English, who will then go along with the proposed action, or want to qualify it, or disagree or something, than it is to explain it to someone brought up in another culture.

Q: The fallout if I understand it, was that you did as much as you could and then you start getting into these DP camps. When I came to Germany in '55, they were no longer DP camps but they were refugee camps. The same thing. They really didn't get rid of them until about around 1960 or something.

ASHER: It went on forever, long beyond the life of UNRRA. There was, what is it called, within the UN...?

Q: High Commissioner for Refugees.

ASHER: Yes, the IRO [International Refugee Organization] took over the displaced persons problem from UNRRA. There was a sense of urgency at home about putting an end to some of these wartime agencies.

Q: As you started this were you aware that no matter what happened you were going to end up with major residue of people who weren't going to go anywhere?

ASHER: I was, and I think others were. I think we realized that we were going to have a hard

core of persons who couldn't be repatriated but we didn't know where they should go or what should be done about it. Therefore some of these people who had suffered the most during the war were the last ones to be released from the camps. Many were never repatriated. A handful went to Brazil and a handful to Canada and some other places. Israel came into being and took on a lot of displaced persons who were Jews from the concentration camps. But war in the Middle East created a horde of new refugees. It was -- still is -- a very sad and terrible situation, as I said. Thousands of people who suffered badly during the war and had every reason to hope that at the end of the war they would be able to rejoin their families, get back to somewhere, were being held because they wouldn't or couldn't go to where they weren't wanted.

Q: Eventually, Congress passed the Displaced Persons Act. And as you say there was Brazil, Australia...

ASHER: The U.S., too.

Q: ...and other countries were looking to do this. Was this all being in the works while you were there?

ASHER: Just the beginnings of it, because I came home towards the end of 1945 to UNRRA headquarters here. I was here for a year. By that time, that late in the year, it was perfectly clear that we had this large group of persons in displaced persons camps and that those people would have to be maintained somehow. The U.S. did take in what a lot of us thought was an inadequate number, but nevertheless not insubstantial. When you look at university faculties even today, you realize how many of them were refugees.

LOUIS A. WIESNER
Labor Officer
Germany (1945-1949)

Louis Wiesner became interested in foreign affairs in graduate school at Harvard from 1937 to 1942, where he earned a master's degree and went on to do part of the work for a Ph.D. in European history. He was however unable to complete his dissertation due to World War II. He joined the Council on Foreign Relations in New York in the post-war planning unit. His career took him to Germany, Turkey, Southern Rhodesia, Canada, Vietnam, Pakistan and Bangladesh. He also served as Labor Advisor of EUR. He was interviewed by Don R. Kienzle in 1992.

Q: Could you tell us how you got to Berlin and what the stages were?

WIESNER: Yes. The stages were that the Mission was part of SHAEF, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces Europe, which were in Bushy Park, England, on the grounds of the Hampton Court Palace in a whole series of temporary buildings. The part that we were in was called the United States Control Group Council for Germany, U.S. Group C.C. I flew over there under wartime blackout conditions in a plush C-54 in December 1944. We

arrived at Prestwick, Scotland, and were marooned there for a week by fog. They have a lot of fog there. Finally, a special train, one of the King's trains, was sent up to get us and carry us . . . - There was a whole bunch of people then destined for one or another agency in London. -- . . . and carry us down to London. So I arrived just before Christmas of 1944.

We stayed there right during the V-2 period and that really was a serious thing. One V-2 over a weekend landed in a gasworks right across the street from the WAC barracks and blew the walls out of the barracks. Fortunately the women were bunked in double-decker, heavy wooden bunks, so the roof trusses came right down on top of their bunks and didn't hurt them. It scared them to death and scattered secret documents all over that end of Great Britain. I was living in a small residential hotel in London itself, and we were taken, as were most of the people in the various hotels, back and forth by bus under blackout conditions and again in heavy fog.

We stayed there until March 27, 1945, the day the last V-2 fell on London, and then went over to Versailles, France, where we were billeted by arrangement with the French Government, only in houses that had been occupied by the Nazis. I was billeted in the servants quarters of Elsie de Wolfe's Lady Mendell house in Versailles, a lovely place, but the servants' quarters had not been heated during the entire war, and they had walls of stone two feet thick. I had never been so cold in my life. We had to go into the main house, where the senior officers were billeted and which had heat, in order to take showers, but then after a couple of weeks the weather became very mild and it was really lovely. The offices were in the Hotel des Reservoirs in Versailles, our offices, U.S. Group C.C. ,while the rest of SHAEF were in the Grandes Ecuries of the Palace of Versailles, so we could walk around in that lovely area. Lady Mendell's House was backed up against a Petite Trianon, and we could just go right into those grounds. Then as General Patton's Third Army swept across Germany much faster than anyone had expected, the military ran out of Military Government Officers including labor officers, and therefore they came to U.S. Group C.C. and asked if they could borrow some of us. Paul Porter was borrowed and went to Frankfurt. I was borrowed for what became the northern half of the French Zone but was occupied by the U.S. at that time, the Saar, Palatinate, South Hesse, Trier, Koblenz area and with our regional military government headquarters in Neustadt an der Weinstrasse, the Street of Wine, or Neustadt an der Hardt. The river was the Hardt. Paul and I went together; we flew from a little airfield outside of Paris to Verdun, where the 12th Army Group was headquartered and Captain Henry Rutz, who was the labor officer for the 12th Army Group, briefed us and put us up for a couple of nights until the entire 12th Army Group Headquarters moved on one day from Verdun to Wiesbaden, some 397 vehicles on the road, tank-carriers, everything. On the way, it got lost in Metz and wound around through its own tail. The leader of the convoy eventually found the right road and got out of town. I understand he was demoted for that.

Q: Do you have an approximate date when this took place?

WIESNER: This was about mid-April 1945, before the war was over.

Q: Two or three weeks before the end of the war?

WIESNER: Yes. So I became the Assistant Military Government Labor Officer in that regional detachment in "E Detachment" it was called. We worked on among other things restoring the

Arbeitsaemter, the labor offices, which were employment offices, the Sozialversicherungsaemter [social insurance offices], all of which is described in this report [Organized Labor in Postwar Germany by Louis A. Wiesner, Washington, D.C., 1950]. After working in the headquarters to develop guidelines to do this,... Well, I want to back up a little bit. One of my first jobs outside of Neustadt was to go and kidnap a wine coordinator from Speyer, which was then occupied by the French. This report describes how, as the Nazi regime collapsed and the Allies took over, the whole of German society dissolved, and it became what I call the "atomized society." I mean the whole Nazi structure was immediately eliminated by the Allies. This was something that people, whether they liked it or not, had come to rely on as the structure around their lives. It not only included governmental structures but economic organizations, the Deutsche Arbeitsfront, the German Labor Front, which organized labor and took over all the property of the trade unions, etc., and really mobilized their lives, and women's organizations, and youth organizations, etc., including, of course, the governmental and semi-governmental structures which organized economic and employment matters. So with all of this destroyed, the people were left in a state of "psychological anomie," you might say. They had nothing to cling to except their own families and their little villages if those were intact, and they were in this region, but they needed, or felt they needed, something to reorganize their economic and social life, so that they could carry on, and one of the things they needed was a wine coordinator. This was a wine producing area, and there were wineries and so forth. There were quotas that were traditional for the various vineyards as to how much they could produce in the way of grapes and where they were to deliver them, and there was marketing to be done of the wines, the quality control, labeling, etc. The commander of the 23rd Corps, I think it was a lieutenant general, called on us to find him a wine coordinator, and I was tapped to do it. Are you interested in hearing all this?

Q: Yes.

WIESNER: We civilians had to go in of course in uniform, in full officers' uniform without rank or insignia. That was primarily to keep our own soldiers from shooting us, because the war was still going on. I was assigned the owner of a local winery there to help me, and we went in his car and went down to Speyer right through the French lines and up to this guy's winery because he knew him. It was a big structure with factories and an administration building about six floors high. We climbed those stairs and went up and knocked on the door to the owner's apartment, and he came to the door. I said in my best college German, which was pretty rusty at that time, "You have been appointed wine coordinator of the Saar-Palatinate-South Hesse, Trier and Koblenz area. You have one hour to get packed and come with us."

Q: This is how you kidnaped the wine coordinator?

WIESNER: Yes. This was in the days of non-fraternization. You were forbidden to be friends with Germans, which was a stupid policy but anyway! He was of course both shocked and delighted and at the same time did not want to leave his home. He asked if could take his family with him. I said, "No, unfortunately not." So he invited us in. He went and changed clothes and did some packing. As we sat rather stiffly in his living room . . . -- It was a nice living room. -- . . . a young boy came in, one of his sons, who could not have been more than ten or eleven, maybe twelve, and then an older boy, who could not have been more than 17 or 18, with a deep scar down one side of his face. I asked how he got that scar and he said that he had been a Luftwaffe

pilot and had been shot down. This kid! Well, the hour went by and his wife came in and tried to shake our hands, and of course I wouldn't shake hands with her, but the winery owner did. We talked a bit and the hour went by and he wasn't ready. Finally I said to the sons, "Well, we'll go out and I want to do some sight-seeing in the town. We'll be back in an hour."

We had come into this winery through the front gate and passed French soldiers. The first thing they wanted to know was, did we come to buy wine, because they were not about to let us carry wine away. We assured them we weren't and didn't say anything more, but I wondered how we were going to get this owner out through those soldiers and into the car to carry him away, because they probably would not have allowed that either. So the young boy offered to accompany us and show us the sights. We said, "Fine." He took us to the great cathedral at Speyer, which had been pretty well destroyed in the bombing. We talked with some priests there, and they weren't at all bitter. Then after about an hour, we came back, and the boy directed us to the back gate of the winery compound. There weren't any soldiers there. We went up, and he [the winery owner] was ready. He came down with us and his whole family and all of his top winery officials and so forth were gathered in the street outside. They were tearful and laughing at the same time and bidding him goodbye. We got in the car and drove away and went back to Neustadt. So we got the wine coordinator.

Well, after we had done our preparatory work about restoring the Arbeitsaemter and the Sozialversicherungsamter, it was time for me to go around to the various towns to get these things started, or if they were started, to see if they were functioning properly and were denazified. I had a jeep and a sergeant as a driver. On May 8th we came to Worms. In each case, we checked in with the local "I" detachment, the local detachment which was three officers and three enlisted men. When we came to Worms to the "I" detachment, I had a long questionnaire. They said, "Hell, man, don't you know that the war is over. We'll get your goddamned questionnaire filled out, then we are going to go out and celebrate. If you would like to stay with us, you are welcome to do it."

Q: Who said that?

WIESNER: These were the Americans in "I" detachment. So, we did that. Well, I could go on, but that's enough on that. Then in another couple of weeks, or even less perhaps, they got their permanent [people] . . . -- They already had a captain as a labor officer. -- . . . and I was free to go back to U.S. Group CC, which by then had moved into the I.G. Farben Building at Hoechst. We continued our planning working with the British and the French. On August 2nd the Russians let us into Berlin. They had come into Berlin at the end of the war in early May. In fact their coming into Berlin and the suicide of Hitler ended the war. During that period before they let the Western Allies in, they had thoroughly communized East Germany and Berlin. We can go into that, but it is all described in here [in my report]. They had thoroughly looted Berlin too, taken out whole factories, power plants, everything. Their soldiers had raped and looted and all of that. It was a terrible thing. When we came into Berlin, . . . -- It was the 2nd Armored Division that led the way, a very disciplined group of soldiers. -- . . . Berlin was utterly destroyed. I had seen a lot of destruction in West Germany, mainly from the bombing. The bombing hit city centers and factories and things like that. Mostly it was targeted bombing by the Americans. The British did pattern mass bombing. But the outskirts of cities in the west and the villages were

untouched, like Neustadt an der Weinstrasse, which was a medieval town. Only here and there were there houses missing. Berlin was destroyed all the way out to the outskirts, because the Russians had to fight their way in through this bitter Nazi resistance. So everything was gone. The first house in which I was billeted had a third of the roof shot off, and it was raining. It was the rainy season, and it was pretty miserable. There were bodies floating in the canals, and the Germans, of course, were much more miserable. So there again the first job had to be . . . -- and the Russians hadn't done a damned thing to provide food or anything else for them. -- . . . was to restore the economy and get things going and get the people fed.

Q: What were your duties as Labor Advisor?

WIESNER: I was the Labor Attaché, and my job then was to help in restoration of . . . Well, the decommunization to the extent we could do it. . . . of local government on the labor side, although we couldn't. The agreements for the Control Council for Germany and the agreements on the zones of Germany, which put Berlin deep inside the Soviet Zone, all provided that decisions of the Allied Control Council and the Berlin Kommandatura had to be unanimous, so there was no way we could throw out this government that the Russians had installed. What we could do and what I immediately set about doing with some of my friends in the Manpower Division was to find anti-Communist trade unionists, Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, etc.; establish contact with them, which we did despite non-fraternization rules: and encourage them to organize against this massive apparatus that the Russians had installed. They had brought in a complete government headed by Wilhelm Pieck as President and Walter Ulbricht as the Head of the Communist Party and the . . . -- I forget his title, but he was the real boss. -- . . . and with people all the way down the line, who had been exiles in Russia during the war, in the Soviet Union. They brought them all in and installed them in positions including the trade unions, the Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund as they called it, the FDGB. Do we want to go into all of that or do we want to rely on the book?

Q: I think a little bit would be helpful. How did you go about contacting the Social Democrats and were there ones who stuck out in your mind as particularly helpful in the process?

WIESNER: Yes, actually during those years that I was with OSS and working on the Social Democrats and the trade unionists, I had compiled quite a sizable biographic file of people that we knew to be alive in the underground and exiles including Willy Brandt, who was then in Sweden; Ernst Reuter, who was in Turkey; and others. They came in . . . -- Reuter just a year later . . . -- Willy Brandt and others came in at the same time the Allies were permitted in. Willy Brandt was in the uniform of a Norwegian Army major, and he was their press officer. There had been a debate within our own offices as to whether the Western Allies should encourage and facilitate the return of democratic exiles in their own countries. By and large we were pretty cautious about that on the assumption that if we did that the Russian would bring in the Free Germany Committee and everything. That was kind of naive on our part.

Q: They had already done it.

WIESNER: They had already done it and we delayed in bringing in some of the democratic people from the West, although OSS had contact with them all, including Hans Jahn, for

example, who was in Britain and who had been head of the Railway Workers Union and came back to head it. I knew a number of these people while we were working in Britain. I'd gotten acquainted with them in part through the Social Democratic leaders there and in part through the International Federation of Trade Unions, the IFTU, which was preserved in Great Britain with its headquarters there. But in Berlin, it was really a matter of their finding us, the people who were the opposition leaders.

Even in the West, in Neustadt, for example, I was approached almost as soon as I got there by a middle aged man -- whose name I have in this book, but I have forgotten it at the moment -- who was badly crippled, and he explained that that had happened during his stay in a concentration camp. He said he wanted to set up a trade union organization. Our instructions, which I had helped to write, were to permit local trade unions, and so we did. And the same thing we found elsewhere in that region, that there were democrats who had come forward, trade unionists, mostly Social Democrats but some Christian Democrats too, who spontaneously set up trade unions, usually on the basis of one big union encompassing all the crafts and all the industries. Then they would spread out. There was none of this building from crafts and industries to a top. They did it from the top down, and that's the way the Russians established the FDGB too. It was a unified thing and they spread it throughout all of Berlin and all of the Soviet Zone.

We got into a prolonged battle within the U.S. Military Government between those of us who were the anti-Communists and wanted to permit this restoration of trade unions as rapidly as the people were capable of doing it and a group of pro-Communists. They were scattered all through U.S. Military Government. This was the period when it was U.S. policy to get along with the Russians. So Communists and "fellow travelers" were taken into Military Government. This was a struggle which lasted a number of years, roughly until 1947. These people insisted on the formation of trade unions "from the bottom up" as they put it. First, shop committees, then organizations which were inter-shop and inter-factory on a local basis by industries, and then the creation of local federations and so on up through the Laender, the states. In the course of that, they did everything they could to see that German Communists and "fellow travelers" got these positions of leadership, particularly in shops where shop stewards had from the time of the 1918 Revolution always been the centers of radical activity in factories. Well, eventually we won and the book here tells how we did it.

Q: Did you screen the labor volunteers for the denazification process?

WIESNER: Yes, everybody was screened for that.

Q: Were there very many who were former Nazis who tried to present themselves as democratic labor leaders?

WIESNER: No, not in the trade union field, not in the political party field and the reason for that is that the real anti-Nazis had already identified them and excluded them. They knew who their people were. Many of them had held together during the entire Nazi period in little cells and so forth, which had been repeatedly betrayed and destroyed by either Nazi infiltrators or by Communists. So those who survived knew who their enemies were, and they did the denazification really on their own. In the Manpower Division, for example, there was a young

lieutenant by the name of George Silver, who had come from the Jewish Labor Committee in Philadelphia originally. He had come through Army Intelligence, and he was a Socialist. He knew enough German that he was really a pioneer in finding the right people, whom he always began to call "Du", the familiar "Du", rather than "Sie" from the very beginning. He was one of the really authentic heroes of the reestablishment of the labor movement, and he, like so many of us, took up with a German lady whose name Hanna Bornowski. She was half Jewish and a Social Democrat, who had been hidden by non-Jewish friends all during the Nazi period. Between those two, he got CARE packages sent to him and anything else that his friends back in the States could send through the mails, and she set up a kitchen, so to speak. They founded the Wilhelm Leuschner Institute. Wilhelm Leuschner had been the leading trade unionist in the July 20th 1944 conspiracy that almost assassinated Hitler and had been found and killed. Then later as the Freie Universität was established, and that was fairly soon, she set another kitchen there. Between those two, they literally preserved the lives of many of these democratic leaders.

Q: Did they also screen for Social Democratic bona fides?

WIESNER: Yes, indeed, and he knew how to do it. I was more on the political side dealing with leaders who emerged in the Social Democratic Party. Don't forget that my mandate was national, so I had not only Berlin but also all of West Germany, the three zones of West Germany. So I quickly got acquainted with, for example, Kurt Schumacher, again a concentration camp survivor, who became the leader of the Social Democrats, even though political parties were not legal at that time, but they organized anyhow, and he was the recognized leader. Then a whole bunch of them were in Berlin. Jacob Kaiser was the leader of the Christian Democrats. I forget the names of others. Ernst Lemmer was the leader of the Liberal Democrats. All of these became my friends, and I entertained them at dinners and other parties in my home.

We were billeted again in Berlin in whatever housing we could find that was suitable. I quickly moved out of that place with a third of the roof shot off and was moved in with three others into the smallest of the town houses of the von Siemens family, the big electrical manufacturers, and we stayed in that house, which was magnificent, a lovely place with lots of servants and all of that, until the blockade of 1948 started, at which point coal was cut off and power plants were curtailed and we as Allies got six hours of electricity in every 24. The Germans got four hours. The Air Lift, by the way, brought in a whole power plant in pieces. Well, this was an all electric house, and so we had to move out of that into another place.

Q: Was the fraternizing relaxed by that time?

WIESNER: Officially it wasn't relaxed until about 1946, but one of the things about the American Foreign Service is that it's traditional that you make friends with the people who are your contacts and you entertain them. Now they could not entertain us because they had nothing, but they willingly came to our parties and of course during that time various delegations of the AFL and the CIO and Congressmen and this, that, and the other thing were coming into Berlin and we would include them in some of these parties and receptions as well. But basically what I was doing and my colleagues in the Political Division -- because I was part of the Political Division of US POLAD, which in turn was part of OMGUS, as U.S. Group CC became OMGUS, Office of Military Government U.S., -- we all did this and were led in doing so by

everybody up to Ambassador Murphy himself, who, because he was so close to General Eisenhower and then General Clay, was not permitted to violate the non-fraternization policy, but he thoroughly approved of what we were doing and his deputy, Donald Heath, for example, the DCM. . . . -- He wasn't called DCM, but he was his deputy. -- . . . then Jimmy Riddleberger and a whole series of political counselors, wonderful people, approved of what we were doing. We also worked very closely with the British Political Division, which had a more liberal policy and a lot more resources than we did. And then we worked, to the extent that we were permitted to, with the U.S. Information Service Division, which rationed newsprint and things like that to publications. That was crucial for publicity, and we kept pressing them to allot more to the democratic elements because the Russians overwhelmed their puppets with all these goodies, all these resources, and they were winning the battle to stay in power and to maintain their organizations. Well, I don't need to go into all the details as to how gradually within the Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund in Berlin these democratic elements began to assert themselves and to clamor for democratic elections which were never held.

The Russians forced through a merger of the Social Democratic Party in Berlin and in the Soviet Zone with the Communist Party and that was called Die Sozialistische Einheitspartei [The Socialist Unity Party], the SED with the "D" standing for Deutschland (Germany). The Social Democrats forced a referendum on that issue in Berlin, and in the Soviet Sector the merger went through of course. In the Western Sectors it was overwhelmingly defeated. Some of us political officers in the Military Government including myself in full uniform without the rank insignia went into the Soviet Sector to observe the referendum there to be sure that it was, to the extent to which we could see, carried through fairly. I was arrested then by the Russians and held for about four hours. I was arrested again later during some other elections. What I did was to storm at them and say, "You can't do this to a fellow Military Government Officer" and so forth, and I eventually got released. It was a very, very tense and difficult situation, which eventually resulted in splitting the city and splitting the country.

Q: And splitting the labor movement as well?

WIESNER: And splitting the labor movement as well. Then gradually after we had, with the help of Joe Keenan by the way, who . . . Does that mean anything?

Q: Could you just say a few words about him?

WIESNER: Joe Keenan was the Secretary-Treasurer of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. He had been in the War Production Board as a Deputy to . . . I forget who was head of it. He was selected by General Clay to come over and be his Labor Advisor. When he came the first time, these Communists within the Manpower Division got a hold of him and convinced him that the "bottoms up" approach was the right way to go. Of course his was a very, very powerful voice, and Sidney Hillman backed him up.

Q: Could you tell us who Sidney Hillman was?

WIESNER: Sidney Hillman was the President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, I believe, and had been a very powerful CIO leader. He had also served in the War Production Board or

some such place in the administration, and he was one of the founders of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Sidney Hillman came on delegations, and he backed these people up, and Joe Keenan did too. He was taken in by them. Well, then the AFL . . . -- In the meantime all of us had been in touch with the AFL, Irving Brown and Zimmerman of International Ladies Garment Workers Union and others like that. -- . . . and they called Joe Keenan back to Washington for consultation. He stayed there, I think, a couple of months, and they really lit into him for what he was doing. So when he came back again in 1946, he . . . -- I'm not sure of my dates but they are all in here. -- . . . he was a completely reformed man, and then he led the fight to get trade unions organized throughout the Western Zones, the U.S. Zone and federated with those in the British and French Zones and in Berlin. He was a tower of strength in that fight, which eventually split the Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund in Berlin with a non- Communist offshoot call UGO, Unabhaengige Gewerkschaftsorganisation [Independent Trade Union Organization]. We all helped in that. Just how we did it is all described in this book.

Q: Is that the point at which the decision was made to have 17 or 18 large industrial unions in the Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund?

WIESNER: Yes, it was really done in the British Zone through the organization there headed by Hans Boeckler, who became the first President of . . . -- I forget which union he came from. -- first President of the DGB, die Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund [The German Trade Union Federation]. But in the U.S. Zone as well, one thing . . . I have to go back a bit. In pre-Nazi Germany in the Weimar Republic, you had union organization by party and by religious confession. You had the ADGB, die Allgemeine Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund [the German General Trade Union Federation], which was largely Social Democrat; you had a Christian trade union organization; you had a separate white collar organization, which was rather right wing. One of the things that was decided, and curiously enough almost unanimously in both the underground and among the exile groups, was that that would not be perpetuated in the new Germany. There would be one non-partisan, non-confessional trade union organization, and that in fact is the way they were set up. As I mentioned earlier, in West Germany the tendency at the beginning was to set up just one organization and then divide it by industries, and that of course was killed by the "bottoms up" approach. They were required to organize first in the shops and then by industries. In the British Zone, none of that took place. They didn't have a bunch of Communists there, and so they organized again from the top down and with these 16 industrial groups and that was the pattern that eventually prevailed in the West. Again, even with the industrial groups, it was highly centralized. The DGB was much more centralized than either the CIO or the AFL in the U.S., but gradually in later years of course the industrial unions have come to the fore as very, very powerful, like die Metalarbeiter [The Metal Workers' Union], for example, and the Public Service Workers and all of that. They do their own bargaining, and they do their own striking, if necessary. I can go into all of that too because one thing that emerged during those years was a movement toward what was called Mitbestimmungsrecht, co-determination in the factories, the worker representation on the boards of directors of companies.

Q: Did that occur in the period from 1945 to 1949?

WIESNER: Yes, it did, even though General Clay opposed it, and Ludwig Erhard who was the Economics Minister, first of the Bizone and then of the German Federal Republic, opposed it,

but it went through and exists today. It's a very strong element in "industrial governments" so to speak in Germany.

Q: Could you say a few words perhaps about Irving Brown's role during the period?

WIESNER: Irving Brown's role was minimal. I got acquainted with Irving Brown through the periodic Labor Attaché conferences that were held mainly in Geneva and became very close friends of Irving. Irving paid little attention to Germany. His primary interests were France, where he was the leading force behind the creation of the Force Ouvriere and Italy, where he and Tom Lane were the leaders in the organization of CISL [Confederazione Italiana Sindacate Lavoratori], the democratic trade union federation there. He came into Germany now and then, but he played little role in these events that I'm describing. For some reason, he is not mentioned at all in the book, whereas Zimmerman and of course Joe Keenan and many others were.

Q: But Irving Brown did support the "top down approach" of the Social Democratic forces?

WIESNER: Oh, yes, certainly, but as I say, he had no real role because he was fully occupied with France and Italy and north Africa. He was very active in supporting the independence movements in north Africa. A wonderful person, as I say, but he wasn't much involved in this.

Q: Did he know most of the personalities in the Social Democratic ranks in Germany?

WIESNER: I guess he did. I doubt if he knew them very well. For one thing, he didn't speak German.

Q: He didn't?

WIESNER: Oh, no. He spoke French and some Italian and so forth, but he didn't speak German. These others did. Not Joe. Joe never learned any other foreign language. Neither did Sidney Hillman. Victor Reuther was very helpful to us.

Q: Could you describe his role?

WIESNER: Well, Victor at that time was, I guess, the International Affairs Chief of the UAW, the United Auto Workers, and he was one of the very few CIO people who were anti-Communist and supportive of democratic trade unions and the Social Democratic Party.

Q: Would you like to comment on the effect of the Cold War and McCarthyism?

WIESNER: Yes, obviously we were part of the Cold War. The interesting thing is that we won the Cold War in Germany including West Berlin by purely political action, not by military action, not by the threat of military action, except of course during the blockade the Allied and U.S. military were used through the Air Lift to bring things into Berlin, but the fight that I have been describing and is described in this book was political. It was a "people's war" so to speak without weapons. We on the advisory side did not have weapons, and more particularly the German democrats didn't have weapons, whereas the Soviets did have weapons, and they

arrested many of my friends and took them off and some of them just disappeared for ever. I am trying now, and one of the things I'll do on this forthcoming trip of mine [to Berlin], is to find out what has happened to some of them. They went into concentration camps, or they were killed. The Soviets had the power, the military might and they used it. The Western Allies didn't use their military might. They didn't have to defend their own zones, because the Russians never tried to invade them, but they did have to in the sense of the Air Lift into Berlin. It was the German democratic people, the forces of their leaders and of their followers, who won this war in Germany.

Q: Were the exiles who returned as effective as the those who had stayed?

WIESNER: Yes, they were. I had been afraid that they would not be well received, because they had not gone through all of the sacrifices of those who stayed and endured the concentration camps, but in fact there was none of that. They were received joyfully. Willy Brandt I have mentioned. Ernst Reuter, who became the Oberbuergermeister [Governing Mayor] of Berlin; Max Brauer, whom I had known in New York, who became the mayor of Hamburg; the whole group from England, Hans Jahn on the trade union side, Eric Ollenhauer, who became the Secretary-General of the Social Democratic Party and others from other parts. They were received and integrated very quickly.

By the way, I have used that as an argument for trying to entice the Afghans in the United States to go back to Afghanistan now, because I am on the Board of the International Rescue Committee, and we have had programs among the Afghans both in Pakistan and in Afghanistan for years. They are very hesitant to do so, and our people in the field in Pakistan and Afghanistan say they would not be well received, but that was not the case in Germany. They were welcomed. They climbed as their abilities enabled them to to positions of leadership and particularly in the political parties and to a lesser degree in the trade union movement.

Q: Did the Weimar experience have enough roots to provide the structure later on for a viable trade union movement?

WIESNER: Well, as I say, the Weimar experience was politically divided and confessionally divided trade unions. That they abandoned. That they decided they would not repeat. It would be a unified trade union movement bringing in everybody and not affiliated with any political party. By and large that has been preserved to this day. That was a fundamental difference. The book describes some of the planning that was done by the exile groups and by some of the underground groups.

Q: They learned from their past experience?

WIESNER: The learned from their experience. Their divisions within the trade union movement had been a primary cause of its failure in the face of Hitler, also lack of militancy and that was particularly true of the Social Democrats and the trade unionists, both of which had large bureaucratic and property interests that they were determined to uphold by one concession after another to the Nazis. They became bureaucratized and hidebound and above all wealthy, and that again is described [in the book]. They didn't have the militancy, so the people who developed the

new trade union movement were determined A) to be unified and B) to be militant in defense of their interests and of their beliefs, and they sacrificed an awful lot for that.

ANTHONY GEBER
Intelligence Officer
Bonn and Berlin (1945-1954)

Anthony Geber was born in Hungary in 1919 and served in the U.S. Army in World War II. He joined the Foreign Service in 1949 and served in Germany, Austria, Indonesia, France, South Korea, and Washington, DC. Mr. Geber was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 1993.

GEBER: After my basic training I was sent to the Hungarian language at area studies at Stanford University which I didn't think was particularly needed in my case. Next I was sent to the Army's intelligence training center at Camp Ritchie in the Catocin mountains. In 1944 I was shipped over to Europe and ended up in a counterintelligence corps detachment attached to the 94th division of the American Army which was to surround the German pockets around Lorient and St. Nazaire in Brittany. We would have stayed there until the end of the war except that the Battle of the Bulge called for reinforcements. The division that was to be thrown into that battle was torpedoed in the Channel; they replaced us in Brittany and our division was sent into the battle of the Bulge. We got there toward the end of the battle but it was still a rather grim situation in the winter of 1944-45.

I experienced the end of the war in Düsseldorf and shortly after that I was transferred to the headquarters of the U.S. Control Group for Germany -- first in Versailles and then in Höchst outside of Frankfurt. Finally the headquarters moved to Berlin and became the Office of Military Government for Germany, U.S. (OMGUS). Before moving to Berlin I was sent for a short period to London where there was a special intelligence detachment. There I and my colleagues had the interesting task of reviewing the files of Heinrich Himmler, the former head of the German SS.

The documents were referred to as HFFH -- Himmler's files from Hallein. Hallein was a small town in Austria and the files were stored in nearby salt mines. Two things in those files remain vivid in my memory. Several papers documented how criminal the top leadership of Nazi Germany was. I found those even more impressive than all the gruesome sights that we have gained from pictures of the concentration camps. One could assume that concentration camp guards were sadists, but it was high level policy people who put on paper plans to exterminate the Poles, the Jews, to reduce the biological strength of the French by collecting dark haired and brown eyed French children and send them ostensibly on vacation to Finland to be drowned in the Finnish lakes. Other interesting documents dealt with conditions in Soviet Union under German occupation.

Of interest from today's perspective was a paper which described the joyful reception of the German army in the Ukraine as liberators from the Stalinist oppression; only the brutality and incompetence of the Nazi occupation leaders turned the population into fierce partisans in less

than a year.

I should explain how I became a civil servant from being a military man. I arrived in the devastated Berlin on October 1, 1945. I was close to being discharged from the Army and being sent back to the United States. But having gotten this far, I was very anxious visit my parents who survived the Nazi occupation and the Soviet conquest of Budapest. Initially at that time the Soviets did not give entry permits to Hungary for American army personnel on furlough. But at the very end of 1945 they opened up for compassionate leave cases, such as visiting close relatives. For various and sundry reasons my trip to Budapest from Berlin took two months rather than two weeks. I said goodbye to my parents leaving with the belief that I would be returning to the United States. When I got back to Berlin, a army officer working in the office of Ambassador Murphy and whom I had approached earlier because I heard that he had planned to go on an official trip to Budapest, called me that he was now ready to go and am I still interested in going. I said, "Well, I just got back half an hour ago. My superiors are very anxious to ship me off to the United States, but if you can negotiate my release for this trip, I would be very pleased to go."

I was given two options either to sign up for another six months in the Army or become a civilian employee of the military government. The choice was not very difficult to make and I became a civilian employee of the military government. That is the way my actual bureaucratic career started.

Our task in the Office of the Director of Intelligence, OMGUS, was to write analytical reports independent of the operational offices governing occupied Germany. I became economic analyst.

To describe what we were doing at that time: first of all we kept an eye on what was going on in the Soviet zone. We found that Soviet policy was aimed at a very systematic destruction of the economy of the zone through large scale dismantling of the industries there. The unrestrained printing of German currency by the Soviet authorities also helped the plundering of the zone; furthermore it undermined the economic functioning and stability of the Western zones of occupation. Furthermore, the Soviets intended to gain a command position in the economy of their zone through nationalizing most private enterprises and then bringing all major industries under joint Soviet and German ownership. Their central economic command system with its artificial and distorting price structure, though not specifically aimed at the weakening of the economy, made for a very inefficient economic structure.

The French were also eager to dismantle German industrial machinery and transfer them to France as reparations. Still, one must admit that the French were much more adept in melding with the Germans than any of the other occupation powers. They did not build conspicuous PX-s, Commissaries, housing quarters, as did the Americans.

In the US and British zones, which were soon joined in a joint administration, we discovered fairly early that we had a choice either to follow the Morgenthau Plan's goal of turning Germany into an agrarian economy and take on a tremendous economic burden of sustaining a German population even just above the poverty level, or change policy and make Germany viable and self-reliant.

We soon realized that the dismantling of German factories was neither in the interest of Germany nor particularly in our interest. With this realization we began moving on a collision course with the Soviets regarding the objectives of our occupation policies in Germany. The creation of an economic vacuum in the center of Europe would be positively harmful for us and for our Western allies in Europe.

I can claim that I played at least a minor role in reversing our policy regarding the dismantling of German industrial capacity. Being more detached and more independent in the Office of the Director of Intelligence than the operational offices, our reports carried more influence with Washington.

But I also had another avenue to influence policy. I had a good friend in the British military government, Fritz Schumacher, who was the senior economic advisor to the British Military Governor. Fritz was a non-Jewish German refugee from Nazi Germany who went to England shortly before the war. He became quite famous later with a little book entitled "Small is Beautiful". He and I had shared views on how counterproductive our dismantling policies were. I discovered how poor the documentation was on which our dismantling policies were based. We were relying on translated documents on German industrial capacity and there were mistakes in the translations, mislabeling of technical terms, etc. I could feed this information to Schumacher who reported directly to his Military Governor.

In retrospect it was ironical that Germany gained from having its old, technologically somewhat obsolete industrial plants dismantled and replaced with much newer equipment.

As I already mentioned, the Soviets created much of the monetary overhang by printing German money and thereby were at least partly responsible for the inflation and the severe disruption of a functioning monetary system. How bad things were I can illustrate with two stories. In Berlin I knew a high ranking economic official who, when we established the joint economic administration in the US/UK zones in Minden, had to move there. Shortly after I met him in Minden and he told me of a problem he was facing with his family. His children needed shoes to go to school and he got rationing coupons with which he could acquire wooden soles. Ingenious as he was, he was going to make sandals -- not the best in winter, but better than nothing -- by detaching the leather straps from the school bags of his children. At that point he was stumped because he couldn't get any nails with which to attach the leather straps to the soles. Mind you, he was a high ranking official of the German economic administration.

Around that time in 1947 my mother visited me in Berlin from war torn and Soviet occupied Budapest and she was absolutely appalled how little merchandise was available in the shops compared to Budapest. It was a cigarette economy where a pack of American cigarettes sold on the gray market for the equivalent of a full month's pay of a skilled worker. If you worked in camera factory or a textile factory you were given a monthly bonus of a camera or a bolt of textile which you could exchange for something useful, such as food to supplement the starvation rations. But if you were a steel worker or worked on the railroads, you could not very well take home a steel ingot or a rail to trade in for something else.

Finally, the Western occupying powers, in coordination with the German authorities, decided to institute currency reform. It was a great success and the beginning of the "German economic miracle". That it pretty much coincided with the launching of the Marshall Plan for Western European economic cooperation and the massive infusion of American aid also helped. But the reform which gave the Germans a hard and stable currency changed practically everything like a touch with a magic wand. Some people suffered some hardships initially, but suddenly from one day to another, all the hidden goods that were stored somewhere in warehouses or basements and attics appeared in shop windows and the German economy recovered very rapidly.

In the short run, it caused the Berlin blockade. We tried to persuade the Soviets to join us in instituting the currency reform. But they procrastinated and when we decided to go ahead without them with currency reform in the Western zones, Germany became divided and remained so for forty years. The Soviets retaliated with an economic blockade of West Berlin. We responded with economic sanctions against the Soviet zone and with an airlift to bring in essential food, fuel and other necessities into beleaguered Berlin. We, in the Office of Intelligence, played a major part in assessing the requirements and effectiveness of the economic sanctions directed at the Soviet zone.

We had exceptionally harmonious relations with the German authorities, with the legendary Mayor Reuter in Berlin and his very able staff, and also with the German authorities in West Germany. And the friendship extended well beyond official relations. We had the warmest support of the population and there gratitude for what we were trying to do for them. Nowhere else in my subsequent posting did I experience that kind of friendship and cooperation, with the possible exception in Austria in the late 1960's and early 1970's, where the gratitude and good feeling toward America lingered on.

These were anxious days in Berlin. We didn't know whether our policies would or could succeed. The Soviets had it in their power to tighten the screws of economic strangulation around Berlin, to interfere with the planes of the airlift or even to take over Berlin militarily. The airlift was a major heroic undertaking and somewhat of a gamble, but it did provide the city with the minimum requirement for sustaining its population. It also meant considerable hardship for the people of Berlin to survive on the basis of the reduced supplies, and it was a question how long that hardship can be endured. In the end the West won and the Soviets lifted the embargo on Berlin. What changed their mind was the successful perseverance of the Western Powers and the Germans, and even more so, the realization that their blockade of Berlin speeded the political and security integration of West Germany into the Western alliance.

During those early years in occupied Germany I gained several valuable insights into what makes for successful international trade. We, the American occupation power, were making strenuous efforts to promote German exports. Later in my career a good part of my duties consisted of trying to promote American exports to the countries of my assignment. In Germany at that time we were distributing CARE packages to German miners as incentives to increase their production and exports of coal. The economic editor of the leading German daily remarked to me then that Germany would succeed as a major trading country not when it exported one or two major commodities but when its trade structure consists of millions of individual transactions of such items as ballpoint pens. Translated to my later experience, this meant that

important as it was to secure the deals on such big ticket items for American companies as airplanes and nuclear power plants, that alone would not make America into a major trading country.

Let me tell you another anecdote which became part of my learning experience. A friend of mine from Chicago, who then worked for a major manufacturing company, came to visit Germany. He was exploring the possibility of importing industrial abrasives from Germany. He found a couple of potential suppliers. But he said in the end, "You know, I found suppliers in Germany whose product was excellent, perhaps better than what we have in the United States. Their prices were quite competitive. But that is not enough. Sitting in Chicago it is much easier to call up your supplier in Kalamazoo. For most Americans dealing with foreign exchange, customs, filling out forms, etc. are bothersome, not to speak of the fact that it means traveling to a foreign country where they speak a different language, eat different food, etc. It is much more convenient to order something from Kalamazoo." Nearly fifty years later much has changed in the attitudes of American businessmen, but the point is still valid that, contrary to the claims of the theorists of international trade, quality and price are often not the only factors which move goods across international borders. The large and generally homogeneous American market has structurally favored domestic trade over foreign trade. It also provides the more export oriented foreign countries incentives to concentrate their efforts on the American market.

Lastly, still another story from those early days I spent in Germany which reinforces the lessons I just described. I was called upon to accompany a high level mission of American industrialists, mostly from US steel companies, to advise on the allies dismantling policies. At one of the major steel plants in the Ruhr the Americans were surprised to find three or four rolling mills side by side; in America a similar plant would only have one. They asked the German managers why they needed all those mills. The Germans explained that they were an exporting country to all parts of the globe and they needed that kind of capacity to service their clients to the specifications they wanted. The Americans were quite amazed. They said, "Well, we export too, but we tell our clients what we have and if they like it they can take it; if they don't, they don't." Even to this day we hear complaints from potential buyers of American products why American exporters cannot provide the right plugs for their electric appliances or right hand steering wheels for cars to countries where they drive on the left.

Let me just finish briefly my account of my activities in Germany during the last few years I spent there. In 1948 after the Berlin blockade started, the Office of the Director of Intelligence was moved from Berlin to the American zone, first to Nürnberg and then to Bad Neuheim, in the vicinity in Frankfurt. Then in 1950, I was transferred back to Berlin to an outfit called the Eastern Element which was set up to do peripheral reporting on the Soviet zone of Germany. I became the head of the economic section. The Eastern Element was part of the State Department office in Berlin. Those were still tense days. Although the blockade was lifted, the Soviets and the East German government continued to harass West Berlin and the economic viability of the isolated city was at stake. Our major weapon was still economic sanctions against the so-called German Democratic Republic (GDR). But I must confess that I began to wonder whether economic sanctions really were an effective tool. In the earlier days, I was one of the really Cold War warriors against the Eastern zone. I thought sanctions were very effective, partly because the East's economy was so closely tied to the West and it was difficult for them to switch over

rapidly to other sources of supply. Also, the Western allies, in close collaboration with the German authorities, had effective control over the movement of goods from the West to the Soviet Zone. As time passed these factors diminished in making sanctions effective. By the time I was assigned to Vienna in the late 1960's I became very dubious about the usefulness of our export controls. We tried to maintain more stringent export controls against the Soviet block countries than our European allies which meant that on many items on our export control list there were adequate alternative sources of supply. Also, by then a huge network of trading connections had developed, often illegal but difficult to control, in response to lucrative incentives aimed at evading the American restrictions.

During my assignment at Eastern Element I had the dubious pleasure of having to read every morning the Tägliche Rundschau and the Neues Deutschland, the East German equivalents of Pravda and Izvestia. They were so obviously mendacious, so boring, so devoid of any redeeming literary virtue, that I concluded that no half sane society could endure for long the imposition of such daily fare of news. It is a tragedy that it took nearly forty years before this unnatural state of affairs came to an end.

In 1952, I was again switched from Berlin to Bonn and there into the political division where John Patton Davis, one of the old China hands, was the head of the office. He was a brilliant officer and perhaps more unjustly than any of his colleagues involved with China policy at the end of the war, became victim of McCarthyism. He came to Germany from the Policy Planning Office of the Department and found that there had not been much long-term thinking about Germany. He assembled a small group of people to analyze the underlying political and social forces shaping the likely development of Germany. I was tasked to write about what makes the German business community tick. I wrote a report, the gist of which was that the German business community had been and continued to be rather apolitical unless its immediate interests are at stake.

Also, I was put in charge at the Bonn end of Berlin affairs, and also of the Saar problem. In fact, I was sent to the Saar briefly because the State Department became suspicious that the reporting on the Saar from our Consulate in Strasbourg which was overly biased in favor of the French. Under the guise of some economic expertise to assess the economic interdependence of the Saar with France and Germany I was to gauge the political and economic trends in the Saar. I rapidly came to the conclusion the French policy of retaining the Saar by every means within the French orbit was not going to last very long and that the Saar would revert to Germany. The elite of the Saarlanders, though trying to be loyal to the French authorities, resented the heavy handed methods of the occupying power. Economic questions were very secondary. The only mistake in my report was that the Saar reverted to Germany sooner than I expected.

As Berlin "desk officer" in Bonn the most significant event I witnessed was the 1953 uprising in East Germany, the first which periodically racked the Soviet orbit -- on June 17. Our response was a very clever scheme; we were offering CARE packages to East Germans who would come to West Berlin to pick them up. It turned out to be a huge propaganda success. The East Germans came in large droves thereby giving a vote of confidence to the West with their feet. But by the end of the summer it became clear that this project reached a point of diminishing returns. School buildings in West Berlin which were used as distribution points had to be vacated, and,

much more importantly, the East German government was taking increasingly effective countermeasures, endangering the life and well-being of the brave East Germans. When I was asked to report telephonically to Eleanor Dulles, who was the leading force in the Department behind this campaign, that both of the West German government and the allies felt that time has come to end this campaign, she gave me a tongue lashing. But the campaign was ended; Eleanor and I remained friends for years after. At the end of 1953 I left Germany under a cloud. Perhaps I ought to say a few words about that.

My parents were still in Budapest and there the extreme Stalinist regime raged. One of the many cruel things they started against their "class enemies" in the early fifties was the deportation of those from Budapest to miserable, impoverished villages. My parents were to be among them. But shortly before that happened, my mother impressed the Dutch Minister with her determination to resist that danger just as she and my father resisted the perils of the Nazi occupation and the Soviet "liberation". He offered them to move into an apartment in a building belonging to and adjoining the Dutch Embassy. After my parents lived there for nearly a year, the Dutch Minister wrote me that I should try to find some way to get them out of Hungary. He expected to leave Budapest shortly, and he preferred not to pass on the problem to his successor. Furthermore, if the Hungarians were to request officially their extradition, he would have no choice but to comply.

My search for ways to get my parents out of Hungary turned up various rumors and missed opportunities. Only one avenue seemed to be open and that was to entrust their fate to a man, then living in Vienna, who engaged in smuggling people out of Hungary. To make a long story short, I left the decision up to my parents. When the man contacted them, my parents were disinclined to undertake the risk, which would have meant marching through fields in winter, but agreed to meet with the man once more before giving their final answer. Evidently the man was caught by the police before that second meeting and was never heard from again. The police must have gotten the names of the people he had contacted, and my parents were arrested on their way to visit my father's brother who just then suffered a massive stroke.

A few months later I received in Bonn a rather suspicious letter, presumably from a lawyer who offered to help my parents but needed to meet me somewhere in the West. Nothing came of this and it turned out that it was the Hungarian intelligence service which tried to contact me. This information was obtained from a high level police officer who defected and was interrogated by our intelligence services in Vienna.

These were the days of Senator McCarthy in Washington. Although every step I had undertaken in connection with my parents' misfortune I had reported to my superiors, and it was clear that I would resist any blackmail by the Hungarian authorities, our security people were nervous and they first restricted me to the handling of unclassified material and shortly after I was dismissed from the Service as a security risk.

I came back to Washington and was offered leave without pay allowing me to look around for a non-sensitive job in Washington. Just about that time I received news that my mother had died in jail ten days before she would have been released and that my father had completed his jail term. With this new information, the State Department undertook to review my security status and the

final and favorable decision was taken by no less a person then Mr. Scott McLeod, who was the great security “honcho. “

This did not quite end my problem. I had to find a job. From about March until about late June 1954 I had a number of very attractive offers from various agencies. But each time I was turned down because one agency of the government was not willing to accept the security clearance of another agency. Among these offers was one that would have sent me to Indonesia as the program officer of our foreign aid mission there. But the security people of FOA turned me down. Couple of months passed when I got a phone call from Howard Jones, who had been the head of the American High Commissioner's office in Berlin when I was stationed there. He told me that he is going to Indonesia as the head of the American aid mission there and asked me if I would be willing to go as his program officer. I told him that that job was offered me earlier but that I was turned down by the security people. He obviously knew that and after I told him the whole story I was sworn in two days later as program officer and went off to Indonesia. Thus began an entirely new world for me.

ROBERT LOCHNER
USIS
Frankfurt (1945-1955)

Robert Lochner was born in 1918 in New York and moved to Germany at the age of five when his father became chief of AP in Berlin. He attended a German school and learned German. After he earned his German Abitur, he attended the University of Chicago where he earned his BA and MA. He returned to Germany with an ad hoc organization of the War Department: the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey. Following that he began doing USIA work and became head of the newly created news service for all US zone stations. He then became a control officer in Frankfurt until Radio Frankfurt was turned over to German management in 1949. He then became Chief Editor of the Frankfurt edition of the Neue Zeitung newspaper and later became head of the press section of the US High Commission in Germany. He also served in Vietnam from 1955-1957. Mr. Lochner was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1991.

LOCHNER: When we changed from military government to High Commission, it was just a change in titles. The top man became PAO before USIA was ever created. McCloy had as his equivalent of the colonel who had been director of ICD--he had a public affairs officer under whom all operations like radio, newspapers, etc. were gathered together.

Q: Who was that individual?

LOCHNER: That for a brief time only was a very distinguished elderly publisher from Louisiana, Ralph Nicholson who unfortunately spoke no word of German. After General Clay had had such a magnificent relationship with the press, both foreign and German, Mr. McCloy had a very poor start with the press because this man Nicholson was not qualified to advise him.

So some kind of cry for help went out and within six weeks, Shepard Stone, up until then Deputy Editor of the Sunday Edition of the New York Times, a real top pro who spoke fluent German, because he had taken his Ph.D. in Germany, was sent as Deputy PAO. Within another six weeks, Nicholson went home and Shep Stone became the PAO.

Because as a side line I first had been General Clay's interpreter and then Mr. McCloy's interpreter, I observed from close up that Shep Stone was really the most powerful man in Mr. McCloy's "cabinet," if you wish. McCloy had nominally a Deputy High Commissioner, but Shep Stone was really the most powerful man and he was active in fields quite beyond USIA. For instance, he would arrange dinners that McCloy had with leading German businessmen. I remember once interpreting for eight hours straight through such a lunch and dinner--and Shep Stone had arranged it all. Anyway, that was the PAO setup which essentially was the same that we had when we then had the changeover from the State Department to USIA. It really meant no practical change in Germany at all.

Q: I would like to go back a minute to the time in 1945, early '46, when you were setting up RIAS. Who were the people who actually set up the mechanics of the station itself and got it underway?

LOCHNER: There were only a few Americans and they got a hold of German experts. By that time many of the politically clean Germans who had worked for the Russians were sick of working for the Russians, so there was no difficulty getting qualified personnel. I am not sure whether Bill Heimlich was technically the first head of RIAS, but I think he was. Then there were a succession of other Americans--Ruth Norden, Ed Schechter who later was the control officer at Radio Munich. It was hierarchically an American-controlled operation. I don't think they ever had more than five or six Americans. During my seven and a half years as RIAS Director I had six other Americans. But de facto it was always a joint American-German operation, built very much on trust, and the actual working positions at the station were all filled by Germans. We essentially acted as controllers, supervisors, whatever you want to call it.

Q: I gather your next really major function was the Neue Zeitung so why don't you pick it up from there and go on.

1945: Birth Of Radio Frankfurt And Eventual Turnover To Germans

LOCHNER: First, let me go back for a minute to Radio Frankfurt time. Very early on General Clay pressured us all to turnover the actual radio functions to Germans. So I had started out in Bad Nauheim which is north of Frankfurt to where the Nazis had evacuated Radio Frankfurt because of the air attacks. Under very primitive conditions we built up this news service for the four US zone stations. Since the end of the war these four US controlled radio stations had received their news from ABSIE, American Broadcasting Service in Europe--Radio Luxembourg after the liberation. General Clay, as I say, wanted the operations to be turned over to the Germans. So I was hired to set up a news room in Bad Nauheim for the four US zone stations and it was pretty hopeless at that stage in the Fall of 1945 to find clean Germans with any kind of journalist experience in a small place like Bad Nauheim. I had a terrible time in the beginning. I sent out a cry for help and so they sent down several of the staffers from ABSIE, which I think

was being dissolved at that time. Among the prominent ones I got was the son of Thomas Mann, Golo Mann. For the first few weeks we really had to do all the shows ourselves because it was so difficult to find qualified Germans.

We finally moved back to Frankfurt and then, during the next three years, we turned over all the functions to the Germans. One interesting aspect at Radio Frankfurt was that the brilliant chief editor was a known communist. In 1945 when we looked for German personnel the only criterion was that they hadn't been a Nazi. This man was Jewish and had lived in Switzerland in exile. He was a brilliant man, in fact, I would call him the most brilliant German I ever met-- Hans Mayer is his name. He is still active although he is in his 80s. He became our chief editor because he was extremely well qualified. Everything worked well until in March, 1947 he came to me with an evening commentary on Tito having shot down an American plane. He came to me as control officer who had to technically okay all political manuscripts with a commentary which entirely took Tito's side. We had a very good relationship. I said, "Look, Dr. Mayer. We are a US controlled station now, you can't possibly ask me to pass this. Can't you, and I tried to give him an out, really not comment but explain this is the American point of view, and this is the Yugoslav point of view?" He pouted and said, "Well, I thought you were supposed to teach us how a democratic radio station works--free expression and all that." It was the only act of censorship I ever applied. That was a commentary I couldn't pass.

Q: Did you know he was a communist?

LOCHNER: Yes, of course. We knew from the start when he was hired. He never made any bones about it. And it worked fine, as I say, from the fall of 1945 to the spring of 1947. It then turned out that he really wanted to have an excuse to break, because he went from there to Leipzig and for many years was one of the most impressive intellectuals the communist regime had.

We had two other prominent communists who also went to East Berlin, but until the day they left we really never had any problems with them.

Radio Frankfurt was the first station turned over by General Clay to German management in January of 1949. I was in a kind of personal race with Ed Schechter who was control officer of Radio Munich. He wanted rather desperately to have the honor of having his station turned over first. I went to General Clay, whose interpreter I was during his whole period as Military Governor and said, "General I have never asked you for a favor, but now I am asking you for a favor, namely to turn my station over to the Germans first." Which he did. I stayed on a few weeks, at General Clay's request, to head the new station management team. The station manager was in place--we had selected him long before--but the turnover to German control meant that under the land law of the State of Hesse, which set up Radio Frankfurt, the name was changed to Hessischer Rundfunk (Hessian Radio), they had a radio council and an administrative council and I accompanied them the first few weeks to help break them in. That was the end of our role in Radio Frankfurt.

1949-52: Lochner Sets Up And Manages Neue Zeitung Frankfurt Edition

It so happened at the same time the Neue Zeitung, the official organ of military government, a newspaper in the German language, with editions in Munich and Berlin, was to open a new edition in Frankfurt. Up until then its distribution had been purely within the US zone, but General Clay, or somebody else, I don't know, decided that with the American and British zones merging more and more, we should also distribute our paper in the British zone, which was okay with the British, and that couldn't be done from Munich. Therefore a new edition was set up in Frankfurt and I was selected to be the chief editor. Again it was fairly difficult to recruit a German staff, but from then, something like from '49 to '52, I was chief editor of the Frankfurt edition.

Q: Did the French object to the distribution of that paper in their occupation zone?

LOCHNER: No. The main thrust was the British zone, but we did cover the French zone as well out of Frankfurt because in terms of train connections it was much easier to get to Baden- Baden and all these cities whereas from Munich you would have had to cross the mountains. So we very definitely also distributed it in the French zone.

Three years later the two editions, Munich and Frankfurt, were merged in Frankfurt partly as an economy measure because the Neue Zeitung was always a money losing proposition. It had no advertising and under the difficult accounting rules of the U.S. Government income from the sale of the paper was not credited to the Neue Zeitung, but went into general funds so the paper showed up as a horrible deficit.

When the papers merged Hans Wallenberg, who was both publisher and chief editor of the Munich edition came up to Frankfurt.

Like so much in early military government, the Neue Zeitung was a rather strange animal. It had three editions and they were very largely independent of each other. We had our own editorials in Frankfurt, we took or did not take those offered by the Munich edition, but the Munich edition was the principal one in the sense that we received as mats all the pages on art, literature and so on that could be prepared a day before hand. We in Frankfurt prepared all the news pages, of course, our own editorial page, and then we had special regional pages for the four editions--the British zone, the French zone, the larger area of Hesse and the city edition for the city of Frankfurt. But I must say that you would think this was a built-in catastrophe to have three chief editors, but on the whole it worked very well. We did have our disputes once in a while, but it worked well and the Neue Zeitung was respected by the German fraternity of journalists as a model paper. It could be that only because it had the kind of independence you would normally not attribute to a paper put out by a military government. I suppose behind that was, among others, the liberal attitude of General Clay who was brilliant enough to know that if papers like that were to be a model for the Germans they must not be kept on a short leash by the military government.

Q: I want to ask about the content of these papers. Were you just basically dispensing news-- you did have an editorial section--were you trying to get across some of the themes that the Occupation and later the High Commissioner wanted to get across to the German population? Were you doing a...I don't want to use the word propaganda, but I think you know what I mean.

LOCHNER: The Neue Zeitung was from the start to be a model of what a new post Nazi free German newspaper was to be, so it was a complete newspaper with all the sections, with the structure that a German paper had, and, of course, it had the advantage, particularly in the earliest years, of being able to attract the cream of non-Nazi German journalists, if for no other reason than we offered a warm meal. That was in the early Occupation up until the currency reform and the take off of the German economy in '48. It was a very major criteria. So we were at a great advantage compared to the newly licensed German newspapers.

We never were under any pressure from anybody to be a propaganda organ. We were told to be a model for the German press so, of course, we didn't go out of our way to offer criticism of US policy. That we avoided. But we didn't do the reverse. We didn't try to sell things. I will give you the only incident where I was personally involved where you might say the Neue Zeitung was used as an official organ. That was when after we got into the Korean War there was this sudden change of attitude toward German rearmament. There was, rightly or wrongly, the feeling that the Germans, too, had to contribute. So, Shep Stone, who was my immediate superior, asked me to have a long session with him, Mr. McCloy and some military expert. On the strength of that he asked me to write an article which went into the paper unsigned with three stars. The lead said, "The following article is based on conversations with leading members of the US High Commission." In essence I tried to explain why the Germans had to rearm. It caused a sensation at the time, because for three years we had tried to tell the Germans that they must never bear arms again. So this was a real switch and the fact that it appeared in the Neue Zeitung was, of course, recognized by German politicians as reflecting US policy, despite "the following article is based on"--I mean, they were not stupid. They knew this was... That is the only occasion that I can recall in my three years where you might say the Military Government used the Neue Zeitung. I know no other case. Anyhow this was, as far as the journalistic form was concerned, perfectly proper and reconcilable with an independent newspaper. You might call it a scoop we had. It was not an abuse in the sense that the paper advocated it as an editorial. It was not written up as an editorial, but as a big four column story on the editorial page.

Q: What was the general reaction of the German public to that article?

LOCHNER: Very considerable discussion in the German press. A lot of expressions of dismay that after such a short period we urged rearmament, after all it was just a few years since the end of the war. It was recognized as a signal from the U.S. McCloy was asked at press conferences and he sort of toned it down. The whole thing was kind of a trial balloon and was one of many steps to prepare the Germans, more or less, gently, I would say less gently, because this was rather direct and caught them completely unaware. Later you had speeches by the Secretary of State, etc. that if the Germans wanted us to protect them, they had to contribute to their own protection and all the familiar arguments. But in that sense, it hit the German public really quite unprepared.

Q: Do you think they were unhappy about that arrangement, about the turn of American policy or potential turn?

LOCHNER: Yes, at the time there was very little stomach from Adenauer on down for building up any kind of, be it ever so modest, German military force again. But, in the end I would say they accepted the reasoning and then came NATO and everything else. But this transition was rather abrupt.

Q: At what point did the Neue Zeitung go out of business?

LOCHNER: Only two more years, I am not clear now on the exact date, after I left and became head of the press section at the High Commission. The paper folded altogether and there is a very good reason for it. Let me say first, that the British zone official paper, Die Welt, still one of the major German newspapers...

Q: How do you spell that?

LOCHNER: W-e-l-t. It means world. That was the official organ of the British military government like Neue Zeitung was ours. That was turned over to Axel Springer, a very prominent German publisher [he died about four years ago]. He was interested in it because Die Welt was a viable paper from the commercial point of view. It was concentrated in cities in the Ruhr, in Hamburg, etc. The Neue Zeitung could not be turned over even as a gift to any German private publisher because from the distribution point of view it was an absolute nightmare. We had a total circulation of one or two hundred thousand scattered to the extent that in many villages there were four subscribers and you just couldn't make a commercially viable paper out of that. We tried like the British. A lot of German journalists who respected the Neue Zeitung very highly would have been delighted to take it over, but when they came to take a look at the commercial side of it, it was utterly hopeless. It was scattered throughout the whole Western three occupation zones. Die Welt, by contrast never tried to expand into the American or French zones.

So that is why it was closed down in West Germany. In Berlin it went on--there again you will have to check with somebody else as to how long--for some time, but not terribly long either.

Q: Was there ever any reason from a policy standpoint, not wishing to turn what had clearly been an American newspaper over to the Germans? Was there anyone who really wanted to take it over, say in Berlin?

LOCHNER: In Berlin I am not clear because it was not my field. I understand that the circulation was very small by the time it closed down--but I am not sure.

Let me say this. The Neue Zeitung had outlived its function, because by that time there was an excellent post war independent German press. Our licensing system, I should say, worked overall splendidly.

Q: Could you just give a few words about the licensing system because Ed Schechter mentioned it in his interview but didn't describe it too completely?

LOCHNER: At the end of the war, of course, all newspaper publishing ceased. Nobody would have dreamed of letting any paper continue under the name it had in Nazi time, even the famous Frankfurter Zeitung which was the most prestigious German newspaper before the Nazi system. So what we did in all three Western occupation zones was to license people to publish a new newspaper. It was very hard to find qualified licensees because anybody who had worked as a journalist under the Nazis was obviously out. You had a few people who survived in other countries, like our Dr. Mayer in Switzerland--a highly trained journalist who became our chief editor, Radio Frankfurt. So in most cases they took clean politicians who had been in jail, or people, like Adenauer wasn't a publisher himself, but President Heuss for instance started out as one of the newspaper licensees. These were people who were politically clean because they had been in jail or had emigrated. They did find a few qualified journalists but those permits to publish a paper didn't seem like a big deal at the time. Only after currency reform did they turn out to be very valuable property. In effect, the licensees became the proprietors of the new newspapers.

One of the very interesting things we did, i.e. the U.S. Government did, and I was personally involved in it during my time as head of the press section of the High Commission, was to help the newly licensed papers after currency reform when the process of denazification had run its course and many of the Nazi owners of printing plants, into which we had simply put these new licensees--where there were printing plants that were intact we hadn't asked who owned them, in fact just because they were Nazi owned we put the licensees in and nobody worried about it for the next three years--began to return. It dawned on us that the independence of these new licensed papers was going to be jeopardized if the publisher became again the old Nazi owner of the print shop. So we set up a revolving fund called the GARIOA Fund. GARIOA stood for Government and Relief in Occupied Areas--that preceded the State Department, that was already done during the US Army period. Into this revolving fund all licensees had to put a modest sum which in the valueless Reichsmark time, before currency reform, didn't hurt anybody. That was to be a fund out of which loans were made. But it became important only after currency reform. I don't know through what tricks we managed to convert our GARIOA Fund at much better than the official exchange rate of initially 100 Reichsmark for 6 ½ new D-mark. I literally do not know how we did it, but we managed to save all our GARIOA funds. I wouldn't swear it was one for one, but I had a very nice kitty to operate from. During this time I became the head of a committee consisting of myself and four prominent German publishers and we allocated low interest loans on a revolving basis to newspapers who were threatened because they didn't have their own print shop. Through this device we saved the independence of some of the top newspapers still in existence today. I think it was among the most productive things we did in this period.

Q: Did the publishers of the new papers then set up their own print shops or did they buy them from the Nazi owners?

LOCHNER: Both. Sometimes they bought out the Nazi owners, sometimes they set up new printing plants. These loans were extremely important to them because they couldn't ever get a loan from a bank. They had nothing. They had no collateral and the banks charged a very high interest. We, of course, required no collateral and I think we charged 1 ½ percent--I am not sure

of the exact figure, but it was like a gift. And it was on a revolving fund basis, so as they set up their independence, others would get a chance.

I can't give you the total number of papers we helped, but what I can mention of interest is that in the whole period there was only one case which went sour and that was quite interesting. It was a paper in a smaller town in the American zone call Fulda. The licensee was anything but a communist, but despite our loan, he was in financial trouble. So at night, with curtains drawn, he printed some communist pamphlets on a job printing basis. He had nothing to do with it politically. The political situation was such that when that became public it was impossible for us to continue. We had to yank that particular loan back. It is the only case that went sour. I can name specific big papers, Frankfurter Rundschau, Tagespiegel in Berlin, the Sueddeutsche Zeitung in Munich, all of which got loans from us, all of whom acknowledge that this saved their independence. So I would say among the productive things we did during the High Commission times, that, in my mind, stands out.

Q: When the Neue Zeitung went out of business, where did you go?

1952: Neue Zeitung Ceases Publication; Lochner Becomes Head Of Press Division, Public Affairs Office Of HICOG; Functions Of Division

LOCHNER: I became head of the press division of the Public Affairs Office of the High Commission in Bonn, directly under Shep Stone, who was the PAO. Our work then was, of course, much larger than that, say, of a press attaché in an embassy, because the High Commissioner still in many ways ran the country. Not as much as Clay had. By that time you had, of course, Adenauer in as Chancellor, but we were still in a position where the High Commission was much more than an embassy. I had, I think, something like 80 employees alone in my press section. To list what we did--we prepared the wireless bulletin, of course; we had a feature service called Amerika Dienst, America Service, a regular feature service in various fields which we distributed to the German newspapers.

Then we had a very high class publication, monthly I believe, analyzing East European documents on a very scholarly basis--translating key articles into German. Then we put out a daily summary of the press for the political section of the embassy, of course. We put out some special pamphlets in various fields. Off hand I can't think of anything else, but it was a pretty large operation.

Q: Did you have an established magazine publication at that time?

LOCHNER: Only this analysis of East European publications. It was called Eastern Europe.

So that went on for three years and more or less by coincidence I left Germany at the end of the technical occupation period in 1955 and was then transferred to Saigon where I was first deputy PAO and then PAO.

1961: Assignment To Copenhagen Aborted; Assigned As Director, RIAS, in Berlin

Q: After that you went back to Europe and you mentioned that you had been studying Danish first thinking you were going to Copenhagen.

LOCHNER: I had three months of Danish language training at the Sands school. Eight hours a day and I hated every minute of it. I was supposed to go to Copenhagen as PAO. All preparations were made: we had our plane tickets, we had given up the house, I had paid my courtesy call on the Danish Ambassador in Washington. The day before our scheduled departure, I was called into the Director's office and told to hold everything as I may be going to RIAS. What happened was that when the new Democratic Administration came in everybody thought that Henry Loomis who was an avowed Republican would be out and Barry Zorthian would become head of the Voice. Well, Henry made his peace with the new Administration and stayed. Barry didn't want to continue as number three and asked for a transfer to the Foreign Service. At that time at least, I don't know how it is today, the position as program director, as that of division chiefs, had to be filled by Foreign Service officers, but they had to have radio experience and there weren't that many around. Under the circumstances there were only two possibilities.

One, unfortunately I can't remember the name, had been the head of the Asian division of the Voice and had just recently been transferred to Hong Kong and it was feared that if he were called back that Rooney, or somebody else with his usual heavy humor at the annual budget hearing would say: "Now I see here you sent, costing so much, Mr. X with family and furniture to Hong Kong and six weeks later you pull him back. Now what kind of personnel management is this?"

The other possibility was Alex Klieforth, the Director of RIAS, who providentially was due to come home on home leave, but home leave only because RIAS was not a position where you rotated people out after two years. He was tagged, but the head of the US Mission in Berlin, the State Department man, of course, Alan Lightner for a whole week bitterly resisted this transfer of Alex Klieforth. He later told me that he didn't know me, it wasn't anything personal. He knew a good man and knew that a position like RIAS director shouldn't be rotated routinely every two years. It took a whole week during which time I was under ironclad instructions not even to mention to my closest friends what was going on and that I might be going to Berlin. This put me in a very awkward position. I reported at 1776 for work after having said goodbye to people. It wasn't very long after the McCarthy period and people wondered why I was still around. I would mumble something about a short delay. So it was an awkward week but well worth it. Needless to say when it finally worked out Lightner had to give in to the political requirements at the Voice and Klieforth was made Program Director of the Voice. RIAS was such an infinitely more attractive assignment to me than being PAO in Copenhagen. In retrospect that week was a very small price to pay.

I arrived in April of 1961 and within six months was to experience one of the highlights of my career, the Wall going up and, of course, the visit of Edward R. Murrow.

Q: I would like you to go into some detail on this because we only have one other person who had reported on this situation, and that is Al Hemsing and I would like to have a pretty extensive discussion of what went on.

LOCHNER: Ed Murrow's arrival in West Berlin late in the evening of August 12, 1961 was taken then and is still taken today by many Berlin politicians and media representatives as proof that the United States knew about the Wall going up. This played a big role in Berlin at the time because Germans would have felt even more betrayed if they had been convinced that the US knew about it and did nothing about it. I would, of course, protest to my contacts that it was pure coincidence that Ed Murrow arrived a few hours before the Wall went up. That he was due on a routine inspection trip of what was after all the biggest overseas installation of the US Information Agency. But they would meet that with snickering remarks such as, "C'mon now. Ed Murrow, the man who was known always to be where the action is, he arrives accidentally the night before the Wall? Don't give us that."

I will digress here for a moment to show how important this issue was. Another so called proof besides Ed Murrow's providential appearance at that moment was supposedly John McCloy's--by that time Director of the World Bank--meeting with Khrushchev on the Black Sea a few weeks before the Wall and being tipped off. That is another rumor that spread all over Germany as proof of our duplicity in a way--that we knew about it.

Years later--I had been McCloy's interpreter for three years and had such a relationship with him that I know he would never lie to me--when we were alone I asked him about it. He said flatly that there is not one word of truth in the rumor.

So all these alleged proofs of our having known about the Wall collapsed. There is, of course, no proof. We in the US Mission certainly had the feeling that the Communists had to do something to staunch the ever increasing flow of refugees. In the last week it went up from 1,000 a day to 3,000 a day. You might say in retrospect that the East Germans sensed more accurately than we that something drastic was about to happen because why did they in panic leave their country in those increased numbers.

Anyhow, back to Ed Murrow. We had picked him up at the airport and took him to the guest house and talked over the plans of the next day with him. I had proposed, and he gladly accepted that instead of going to the US Mission, it being a Sunday anyhow, and going through a dreary briefing which always consisted of some army major in front of some charts with a lot of arrows showing what the US forces would do if the Russians invaded, etc., that we meet at my house with an English speaking young East Berlin teacher for a two-hour talk about the situation in East Germany. Well, that of course was out. Since he had arrived very late I did not get home until ten minutes to twelve and was just undressing when on the direct phone I had to RIAS I was alerted at one minute past midnight that the East Berlin radio, which of course RIAS monitored, had started to announce, not the wall as such, but that communications within the city were cut. Within fifteen minutes I was down at the station as were all of my American colleagues and leading German staff. We immediately changed the program, in fact the announcer had done so after the RIAS midnight news, to serious music. We carried news every 15 minutes also. And three times during the night I went over to East Berlin because my Germans, of course, couldn't go. It was a very warm summer night, but because we didn't know what reception we would get I hid a tape recorder under a coat. There was nothing heroic about it, at worst they would have turned us back too. I was going in a State Department car and as they didn't that first night try to control any papers, when they saw the license plate they waved us through. So three times during

the night I went and simply drove around and recorded on tape what was going on, i.e., reported from the Eastern side and it was broadcast.

The most unforgettable and depressing sight was on the third trip about 10 in the morning. I got out of the car for the first time at Friedrich Strasse Station, which later became the cross over point both for Germans and foreigners who did not enter by car, and the vast waiting hall was full of thousands of people milling around with desperate faces, cardboard boxes, some with suitcases. On the staircase leading up to the elevator train, the black-shirted Trapos, Transport police, who vaguely reminded me of the SS, they had virtually the same uniforms, stood locked elbow to elbow blocking access to the staircase going up. As I was standing there observing the scene, a pitiful old woman timidly walked up to one of them, they were standing about three steps up, and asked when was the next train due for West Berlin. I will never forget the sneering tone in which the guy answered: "That is all over--you are all sitting in a mousetrap now."

Later on we found that among these desperate people milling around there were innumerable cases where so as not to make it too obvious say father and daughter had taken a train--that is all it took at the time to defect--on Saturday and mother and son were due to follow on Sunday. Innumerable families were separated that day and in some cases it took years before with Red Cross intervention they were reunited. I have never seen as large a group of miserable human beings as these thousands of people. Most of them had not heard the radio and came to the station thinking they were taking the train to West Berlin.

Q: Had any construction on the Wall begun at that point?

LOCHNER: Oh, yes. The Wall, of course, started with work crews tearing up the street and laying rows of barbed wire.

Q: That had started the night before...?

LOCHNER: Beginning midnight, but these people coming to the station were not aware of that.

Q: My question, I guess, is when was it that Ed Murrow got out on the scene and was watching the beginning of the construction?

LOCHNER: Ah, that came later in the afternoon. I am still in the night when the Wall went up--my third visit at 10 in the morning.

Now to return to Ed. The plan of having the East German come to my home was obviously out. Ed said he would like to go over and have a look for himself. In the early afternoon, Jim Hoofnagle, who was the PAO from Bonn, Al Hemsing, who was the Berlin PAO, and I took Ed in a State Department car to East Berlin and drove around. At his request we ended up at the Adlon Hotel which had been very famous before the war right next to the Brandenburg Gate where he had been many times as a correspondent with my father, among others, who was head of the AP office in Berlin. We sat down in the only surviving rear wing of the Adlon Hotel, the rest had been destroyed in the air war. As we sat there drinking lousy warm East German beer, Ed reminisced a little about his early experiences in Berlin. Through the open window we could

hear press hammers tearing up the street and see the construction crew members, each with a soldier with a gun behind him to prevent him from defecting, tearing up the street and laying these rolls of barbed wire. On the other side, one yard away--West Berlin--hundreds, if not thousands, frustrated West Berliners shouting their outrage and demanding that the wire be removed. We could hear such shouts clearly and I translated some of them for Ed Murrow. That was a very discouraging situation to be in.

One of those little details one remembers, Jim Hoofnagle tried to pay in East German money for the beer and that first day, already, they started collecting only in West Marks.

From Berlin we drove to the reception given by either Minister Lightner or PAO Hemsing, I can't remember which. It was the usual reception given for a man of cabinet rank like Ed Murrow with all the leading politicians, etc. from Berlin. What is most memorable to me about that reception was that at one stage Ed Murrow asked me to arrange for his calling the President. The security people took him upstairs to the bedroom for the call. In reports over the years since then I have heard from people like American history professors, (I occasionally give talks in Berlin to such groups) that apparently historians are pretty much agreed that that phone call from Ed Murrow was really the first one to alert President Kennedy to the full seriousness of the situation. Not seriousness that a Russian invasion was threatened, but the devastating impact on the West Berliners' morale. I have also heard it said that in that phone call the idea was born that six days later Kennedy sent Vice President Johnson and more important to the Berliners, General Clay, the hero of the airlift, to Berlin. From my own participation I know that that was very effective indeed in sort of stopping the erosion of morale among the West Berliners. Of course it was combined with the gesture of sending an additional brigade up from West Germany. It was above all the appearance by General Clay who several weeks later was sent back by President Kennedy to be in Berlin with the Berliners for a longer period that was most reassuring to the Berliners. It was a rather peculiar situation for all of us to have General Clay, a four-star general, formally in Berlin as the adviser of a two-star general. This is probably unprecedented in the annals of the military--a four-star general being an adviser of a two-star general. We all knew that General Clay was pulling the strings, but he stayed completely in the background during the few months he was in Berlin.

The second very important aspect of this reception was that at one stage Ed Murrow pulled me over into a relatively quiet corner and said: "I am curious how RIAS treats all this. Have you heard from Washington for instance?" I said: "No, it didn't even occur to me." "How do you handle a crisis like that without big reflection?" I said: "Well, at RIAS it is like the New York Times slogan, 'all the news that is fit to print', with us it is 'all the news that is fit to be broadcast.'" He looked out of the window for a moment and then said quietly: "I guess that is as good as any." Now this I could get away with only with a director like Ed Murrow, a long time newspaper man, a man of such stature that he quickly sees the role of RIAS in Berlin. With later directors I would piously profess, of course, that we were getting guidance from Washington. In effect, they generally arrived a day or two late at best and we were amused to find out what we theoretically did wrong. But RIAS could never have operated effectively if we had been subject to the same restrictions as the language services. As so often happened during my three years at the Voice, if there was something really ticklish involving the White House then invariably we were told to wait until there was an official announcement by the White House. But RIAS was in

a highly competitive position in Berlin and never could have been as effective as it was up until the day of German reunification if it hadn't had that virtually total independence.

If you wish you could also say it wouldn't have worked if there ever had been during all those years a real conflict in political terms between the US and Germany, because by that time RIAS was German financed and only formally under American control. Of all the seven and a half years I was at RIAS, I could not single out any particularly important development event up until the very end--of course, there was the Kennedy visit, but my role there as interpreter really had nothing to do with my USIA position.

Q: I want to ask a couple of questions. I used to hear Ed Murrow talk about the crew of RIAS being out covering the construction of the Wall as it was going up. If that were the case, what was being broadcast on RIAS? Did you actually have a crew out there when the Wall was going up recording the scene?

LOCHNER: On the West Berlin side, sure. But as I mentioned, I alone went to East Berlin three times during the night because none of my German staff could do so--it was years incidentally before things quieted down and really not until the Four-Power Agreement of 1971 when circulation became easier. Of course, we had reporters out observing the construction of the Wall on the Western side.

Q: Was this being broadcast in to East Germany?

LOCHNER: Very much so. All during the night; we were the only station on live all night long at that time. Most German radio stations carried canned news during the night and so many West German stations didn't carry the news of the Wall until their first live news in the morning, say at 6 am. Of course we carried live news every 15 minutes in the hope then that it might still help some people to escape. It turned out that the cutting of the city in half was so effective a measure that they started breaking up the streets simultaneously at all the points where later the Wall was constructed.

Q: When Ed said that it was probably the only thing you could do, had you already been broadcasting?

LOCHNER: Yes, but nobody had ever checked up, I had only been there three or four months....

Q: What I am talking about is a matter of hours. This happened at the reception which took place the night after they started building the wall.

LOCHNER: I should have said that on our drive through East Berlin he asked me to give him a briefing on RIAS. With the quick mind he had, I think he saw much more quickly than other people, the necessity, if you wish, of leaving the staff at RIAS alone--that they had more or less only to obey their professional consciences. It didn't seem to worry him when in effect I said: "We are on our own." His remark: "I guess that is as good as any" was the end of that discussion. He never followed up asking why RIAS wasn't getting the guidances in time, etc.

Q: How widely was RIAS heard in West Germany?

LOCHNER: In West Germany, not at all, but in West Berlin. Its mission always was to address the East German population. That was its reason for existence. It was still true that without question more West Berliners listened to RIAS than their own station, SFB, which came into existence much later and was the outcome of the British having an outlet in West Berlin. They did not broadcast in 1946, as I earlier described as we answered a Russian challenge by creating RIAS, the British contented themselves with having an office, so to speak, in Berlin as part of their chain in West Germany called NWDR, North West German Radio. The Berlin radio station, SFB didn't come into existence until several years later.

Q: If I am not mistaken it was Al Hemsing who reported in his interview a stage of the construction of the Wall in the first day or two in which, I think, Russian tanks rolled up to the border. He and Lightner went over into East Berlin at that time. Do you remember anything like that?

LOCHNER: No I wasn't involved in that. Al and I only accompanied Ed on that trip I mentioned. Other than that I was too busy at the station, so I am not aware of that. It may well have been.

To get back to my years at RIAS. Very pleasant and productive as they were they were unfortunately destined to end in a very negative way. By early '68, Leonard Marks was the USIA Director and apparently, whether pressured by President Johnson or not, I don't know, was evidently determined to cut back on expenses. Among others, RIAS stood out as the most expensive operation. We on the US side were still paying 60 percent of the RIAS budget. The German government, Ministry of All German Affairs, was paying 40 percent of the budget. Leonard Marks sent me a so-called adviser named Alex Buchan, who was a friend of his and an owner of several small FM stations in the US. He didn't speak a word of German and had no background on European politics. He came for several months and pressured me and the rest of the American staff to find ways for drastically reducing the RIAS budget.

Among other arguments he would say to me: "What do you need 500 people for? In my stations the disk jockey plays the platters and on the full hour he tears off the AP ticker and reads off the news. So why do you need 500 people?" He never acquired any understanding for the totally different role of a European radio station, the need to have our own orchestra, choir, etc. I resisted these efforts among others by arguing with Buchan: "How can we sit here on the American side and contemplate these drastic reductions without so much as consulting our German partners who after all are paying 40 percent of the budget." He absolutely prohibited that but given the close relationship of confidence I had with my top German members, it was inevitable that I informed them of what was going on. They were aware of it because this guy would go around in the building and look through the window of a studio and then ask one of the other American members accompanying him--I refused by that time to go around with him--"What are they doing? Is that really necessary?," and then pull out a piece of paper and ask for the names stating that those jobs could be eliminated. A lot of our German staff understood English so it naturally got through the house very quickly that here was some weird guy going around to determine which positions could be eliminated. My top German staff were aware of

what was going on and I couldn't prevent them from reporting to the Ministry. But the Ministry never did anything about it.

Apparently Marks got impatient because Buchan reported to him how obstreperous I was so he came to Bonn himself and wound up with Minister Herbert Wehner a very prominent SPD politician who at that particular point was Minister of All German Affairs. Apparently, I wasn't there, they had a rather bitter exchange and Wehner said to him, using the same simile that Brandt and others had used before, that the two pillars of the American presence in Berlin were the American troops and RIAS. Wehner said to Leonard Marks, "Over my dead body will we consent to the emasculation of RIAS. If it is money you need, no problem." The upshot was that the 60-40 financing was changed to 10-90--10 percent on the American side which I think before the reunification had diminished down to something like 3 or 4 percent.

Hand in hand with the change in financing went a change in the structuring of RIAS. Until I left there were seven on the American side which was reduced to two. The title was changed from "RIAS director" to "chairman" reflecting about the equivalent of the position of the radio council at German radio stations where a manager is in charge of the day-to-day operations and there is a supervisory organ. From then on the top German was given the title "Intendant," station manager, which he didn't have before. So in effect the US withdrew to a supervisory role, but that too worked without difficulties for literally decades.

Q: A word about the Kennedy visit to Germany?

LOCHNER: General Clay, whose interpreter I had been for the whole period he was Head of Military Government, recommended me to President Kennedy, so a few weeks before his visit I was called to Washington and McGeorge Bundy asked me to prepare a few simple phrases in German and to try to rehearse those with the President. So on a typewriter with large letters I prepared a few very simple sentences. McGeorge Bundy took me into the Oval Office, there was nobody else there, and presented me. I gave one copy to the President and slowly read out the first sentence in German and asked him to repeat it. When he did and looked up he must have seen my rather dismayed face because he said, "Not very good, was it?" So what do you say to a President under those circumstances? All I could think of was to blurt out, "Well, it certainly was better than your brother Bobby." He had been to Berlin and tried some sentences in German and had butchered them in such a fashion that one couldn't possibly guess what he was trying to say. So fortunately the President took it lightly, he laughed and turned to McGeorge Bundy and said, "Let's leave the foreign languages to the distaff side." Of course, everybody knows that Mrs. Kennedy spoke fluent French. So he had not intended to make a single statement in German and that is why it is relevant to what happened later to give this background.

I interpreted for him the whole three days that he was in Germany starting at the airport in Bonn. The receptions in Bonn/ Cologne, and Frankfurt were as enthusiastic as you could wish, but the one in Berlin overshadowed everything that we had experienced in Western Germany. We started out in a big open car. Kennedy and Adenauer sitting in the back, Willy Brandt and myself sitting on jump seats. There was a glass partition between us and the front. We had hardly driven 20-30 yards when President Kennedy, noticing there was a bar on our side of the glass where one could hold oneself, suggested that they stand up to be better seen. So Willy Brandt and I pushed

back our jump seats and I crawled through the legs of Adenauer and President Kennedy and sat in lonely splendor on the rear seat. Of course I wasn't needed at all and felt very unhappy. For all the years since then at the USIS office in Berlin there has been a picture showing the three gentlemen standing and me with a very unhappy face in the rear because I felt totally useless--as we were driving I couldn't get out.

When we stopped for his major speech and walked up the stairs to the City Hall, he called me over and said I want you to write out for me on a slip of paper "I am a Berliner" in German. We first went to Willy Brandt's office while hundreds of thousands cheered outside. I quickly, by pencil, wrote it out in capital letters and he rehearsed it a few times. And that is really the whole story. I am assuming it was in English in the original text. There have been all sorts of stories about the manuscript, etc. I can only tell my part.

After the speech we came back for a little while to Willy Brandt's office where there was a short reception with some of the top politicians and, of course, I had instructions to stay close to the President in case he talked to some Germans. So I couldn't help overhearing McGeorge Bundy saying to him, "Mr. President, I think that went a little too far." So, McGeorge Bundy, like myself and many others, instantly realized that his making this statement in German gave it that much more weight than if he had said it in English. I find this theory confirmed by the fact that the President seemed to agree and thereupon and then and there made a few changes in his second major speech later on at the university, changes that amounted to making a few more conciliatory statements, if you wish, towards the East. I only describe my own personal experience. I conclude from that that he agreed. It didn't have any affect on the famous statement, of course, but it is interesting to me that McGeorge Bundy like myself had this instant reaction that the statement was that much stronger for having been made in German and millions of German since then have repeated his "Ich bin ein Berliner" while they probably would not have quoted "I am a Berliner."

Q: President Kennedy may have anticipated that and did it purposely.

LOCHNER: Yes, and that is probably why he did it. My own personal conclusion is that this overwhelming reception by the Berliners, which was so incredible, even after the enthusiastic receptions in Bonn and Frankfurt, made him feel he wanted to do something even stronger. That is my assumption. Why else would he have done it?

All my experiences with President Kennedy were very pleasant and, of course, as an interpreter when you are close to somebody like that for three days you see a lot of things. In the Cologne Cathedral when he attended mass together with Adenauer I was sitting in the row behind. In the mass you have to kneel repeatedly and I could see how his back was obviously causing him great trouble--all the more remarkably I never once saw him lose his temper or say one angry word to anyone. This only re-enforced my hero-worship.

The very opposite is true in my experiences with then Vice President Johnson. When he came to Berlin six days after the Wall with General Clay, he was picked up at the airport by Mayor Brandt in an open German convertible. That was just the way Johnson loved it. It was a beautiful day, he got out of the car baby kissing, etc. Our first stop was at McNair Barracks where he had

lunch with the American soldiers. Of course, Willy Brandt left. When Johnson came out after the lunch there was the closed Cadillac of the US Mission. He was furious. He asked who was the transportation officer and some poor snook captain or major stepped forward and he bawled him out in front of everybody. He said he was outraged and demanded an open car. The military does not go in for convertibles as official cars so they couldn't provide any better transportation. So by the next day when the major trip through the city was scheduled, there was still the closed Cadillac. In the front were the driver, myself and a secret service man, in the rear at the left was Willy Brandt, in the middle Ambassador Dowling, a career diplomat, and Johnson on the right. We had hardly driven a hundred yards when Johnson suddenly ordered Dowling to kneel on the floor of the car. Johnson opened the door and asked Dowling to put his arms around Johnson's left leg. He stood up half leaning out of the car with his right leg dangling outside of the car while waving with his right hand and holding onto a bar in the car with his left hand. Dowling for the rest of our trip through Berlin was squatting in the back of the car with his arms around Johnson's left leg. I did not dare turn around because I could imagine how mortified Willy Brandt must have been seeing the American Ambassador representing the President squatting on the floor. During one brief moment when we went on the autobahn where no crowds were allowed, poor Dowling was allowed to sit down again. But Johnson was still in an aggressive mood. Suddenly he turned to Brandt--of course I didn't have to do any interpreting because of Brandt's fluent English--and said, "Mr. Mayor, I understand you have some very beautiful porcelain here." "Yes," said Willy Brandt, "the Imperial Porcelain Manufacture." Johnson said, "Let's go there." Willy Brandt said, "Sorry it is Sunday and the store is closed." Johnson flared up and said, "What good are you as the mayor of this city if you can't get a store opened for the Vice President of the United States." Well, what happened was that over the car phone there was some furious phoning by the secret service man and they dug up somebody and we went there and Johnson selected a set of dishes for his ladies. I must say the contrast in my observations--it was also about three days with Vice President Johnson--couldn't have been more extreme.

The worst moment for me came during his major speech to the City Parliament, which, of course, was being broadcast live on television and radio. I did it more or less sentence by sentence and at one point he said something that I literally didn't understand. There was a key word which he half swallowed. It was embarrassing enough that I had to ask him to repeat the sentence, but in one of the worst moments in my career as an interpreter, I didn't understand it the second time either. By that time I had observed him enough to be sure that if I asked a second time for him to repeat it he probably would have screamed for a competent interpreter. Later on I checked the tape. What he had said was in terms of defiant statements toward the communists--"We will not be bullied," but with his Texas accent he kind of swallowed the word making it sound like "We won't be brrred." Given the context I translated it something like "we won't be provoked" which was near enough. But I mention it because of this horrible feeling that split second, "My God, this is going to be a major public scandal." It was difficult to be interpreter for Johnson because you never knew whether he would explode over something that wasn't even your fault.

Q: It was difficult to be near the man in any circumstance because no matter what you did something was bound to go wrong and he would explode into these usually profane expletives.

LOCHNER: That I must say I did not hear him do. But I think those two examples I gave were sufficient.

EDMUND SCHECHTER
Head of Radio Berlin, USIS
Berlin (1945-1946)

Edmund Schechter was raised in Vienna, Austria and attended the University of Vienna. After the Nazis took over Austria in 1938, he escaped to Trieste, and ultimately to Paris. After serving in the French Army and in Casablanca, he emigrated to the United States. Mr. Schechter served in Luxembourg, Austria, Germany as Policy Officer for the European Area, Italy, Bolivia, and Caracas. This interview was conducted by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1988.

SCHECHTER: I was a civilian under Army control, and I got orders to go to Berlin. The orders were specific, with the task to establish an American-controlled radio voice in the shortest possible time. So I got to Berlin either at the end of November or the beginning of December 1945.

It was one of these incredible during-the-war, post-war situations. Berlin was a four-power occupied city with four sectors, approximately the same as Vienna became later. The original Radio Berlin, the big German propaganda station, was in the British sector. But because the Soviets had entered Berlin first, they took possession of Radio Berlin and never, never returned Radio Berlin to four-power control, as the agreement stipulated, despite the fact that it was physically located in the British sector. It remained in the British sector for months and months. General Clay negotiated with the Soviets to get all four occupied powers into the running and the control of this Radio Berlin, which was a gigantic radio station. It didn't work.

So when I was sent to Berlin to establish an American voice, an American radio station; these were my orders. It wasn't as much the belief that we were really going to establish a radio station, but rather as additional pressure on the Soviets. "If you don't let us in, we are going to create a station." But the Soviets decided differently. They decided not to ask the British or the French to share control of Radio Berlin, but to go to the maximum to prevent us from creating a radio station of our own. So it was one of these situations in Berlin where there was still, on the one hand, a great deal of fraternization with the Soviets, where in the evening you met with your Soviet counterparts and had innumerable toasts and drinks. During the day, however, the Soviets would tell you that secret Nazis, or the "werewolves", as they called the young Nazis that were in hiding, were sabotaging our efforts to build this new radio station. I was one of the first to point out that, "I just don't believe it." I just didn't believe it, because in all of Germany, there were hardly any acts of Nazi sabotage against the occupation. The Germans formed a sullen sea of humanity which had not recovered from their superiority complex -- and the sudden full, total defeat. There was no food, incredible destruction -- but hardly any sabotage. Why should there only in Berlin have been attempts of sabotage?

We found out that what happened was that radio in Germany, was always under the authority of the general post office. There were never private stations, even in the Republic. The post office headquarters were in the Russian sector, and we needed all the wiring and everything else from them, and they were under Russian directions.

So we had to scale down our first proposition, and what we did was a set up Drahtfunk. I cannot explain it technically. Funk is "radio," and Draht is a rather primitive sort of radio transmission. It was called RIAS, short for Radio in the American Sector. What RIAS was doing first was acting as a lifeline to the German population in the American sector.

We got an old office, half destroyed, in some building in the American sector, where we took over as a building for RIAS. Under pressuring by our Army, the German post office slowly got what we needed, and we opened on February 7, 1946. We opened the broadcasts which, as I said, first included the proclamations, regulations, ordinances, instructions of military government for the population in the American sector -- rationing, curfews, where certain food could be gotten, what was permitted, what was not permitted. An American voice giving the U.S. military government the possibility to contact with the 2 or 3 million people who lived in the American sector.

We got on the air after repairing an old transistor. Since I came to Berlin the end of November 1945, the beginning of December, it was not really a bad job. When we went on the air on February 7, I received -- and I treasure this -- a letter from General McClure, (he was the head of the ICD) in appreciation for this. So I am the founder and the father of RIAS. And it is still going on today, 40 years or so later. It is very rare.

I stayed there until May '46. I headed it through the first few months of its existence. In May, I left RIAS and finally got back to New York..

MICHAEL WEYL
Acting Head of Libraries, USIS
Stuttgart (1945-1948)

Michael Weyl was born in Switzerland and received his secondary education in Göttingen, Germany. He graduated from Princeton University in 1937 and was trained as a de-nazification expert and interrogator of troops. Hans Tuch conducted the interview in 1988.

WEYL: I came to Germany with the troops early in the Spring of 1945 and was trained as an interrogator of prisoners of war at Camp Ritchie. But since there were no longer hardly any prisoners of war I interviewed "Werewolves." But then I got into the de-Nazification work. And I was in charge of the interrogation team at one of the large internment enclosures near Stuttgart. This was work that simply didn't sit well with me. So I tried to get out of it, and succeeded; I got into the Information Control Division of military government. First, simply to get a job in it, I acted as theater control officer in one part of Baden-Wurttemberg.

But a few months later the lady in charge of what we then still called the American libraries in Baden-Wurttemberg, had an accident in London. Both her legs were broken by a taxi. So I had to take over what were then still called the American libraries in that land.

At that time we had five of these libraries in Baden-Wurttemberg. When I quit this work two years later we had six and we had opened about 14 branch libraries in Kreis resident towns.

Their purpose was simply to inform the German population about American civilization, American culture, science, across the board. To begin with almost all our books, I would say even all our books, were English language books and some magazines.

We were starting in late 1946. We were very poorly staffed. We were poorly equipped. My main concern as I took over these libraries was to get coal for them to heat up our rooms. The winter 1946-47 was an absolutely miserable winter.

Beginning in the fall of 1947 suddenly the pendulum swung in military government policy and it swung from the emphasis on de-Nazification, to an emphasis on reorientation, re-education.

These terms never sat well with me. But whatever we did under these terms I found absolutely first rate, very worthwhile and very much needed. So our libraries suddenly became America Houses, major American cultural centers. In Stuttgart we moved. In the other cities we enlarged. We suddenly got a lot of books. There was a team of people back in Washington who selected books for us. And then we started with exhibits. We started with lectures, with discussions, the whole gamut of programs while it still basically ran under the heading of re-education and reorientation. It basically was what it used to say on the USIA Building for years. It was "to tell America's story" with the special emphasis of what made this American society run and what was relevant in this society for the state of development Germany was in. So we certainly stressed democratic procedures, a lot of emphasis on education, on child education and things like that.

We ran our own newspaper, the Neue Zeitung. We ran our newspaper which was a first rate paper. We ran our own periodicals. And there definitely the cultural input was considerable. The Neue Zeitung was the newspaper in Frankfurt. The periodical Der Monat came later -- the American Review, a monthly. And we had radio. After all when I was in Stuttgart we controlled Radio Stuttgart.

I should say this brings me to one activity that turned out to be very important. I didn't invent it. But I ran it. Namely a series of monthly programs which we took to "Kreis" capitals or county capitals which ran under the title "The People Ask, Officials Answer." We combined a team of American military government officials with German officials, partly from the land government in Stuttgart and partly from the Kreis government. The Kreis governor (Landrat), for example, was usually on the panel. And people could ask questions. It was run on the basis of a very popular U.S. radio program at that time -- the "town meeting of the air." The Americans, some of them at least, needed an interpreter. So we took an interpreter along. And this became very popular. I recall towards the end usually the military governor of our land came along, a very

fine man, one of the La Folette family, a former Congressman from Iowa. These town meetings were always broadcast over Radio Stuttgart because it was all basically in German though some of the American contributions to it were in English and then translated by a very capable and somewhat aggressive interpreter. This way a lot of false rumors could be removed. And also simply a technique could be introduced representative of an open society.

Library activities were for the first time American activities in another country which did not have anything directly to do with our conduct of our official relationship. It was a new element. But it was important. Two elements I should mention. One is that we began to put a lot of German language books on our shelves -- translations or by German exiled writers that had been published outside of Germany during the Nazi period. And since I was in Stuttgart, several times I went either with a convoy of trucks to Switzerland or went to Switzerland by other means and brought back railroad cars full of German language books that had been printed largely in Switzerland and in Sweden by known German authors. So, for example, Kafka was utterly unknown in German at that time. But this was important.

My predecessor was an American of Norwegian descent -- the lady who ran the library. She was a trained librarian. Incidentally, you said the two roots and I think basically you are right. The Cold War and military governments in Japan and Germany, Austria with its emphasis on re-education. But there was also already before the war and certainly during the war we had our relationship with Latin America and had a cultural program there, the Rockefeller Program.

And during the War, we had the Office of War Information which was important. Actually the first people in our sort of work in Germany came out of the Office of War Information. My predecessor had worked for OWI and was still in OWI when she started this work in Stuttgart in the summer of 1945 and then was absorbed by Military Government. Now the name comes to me, the Information Control Division of Military Government took over this function that had already been in the hands of the OWI. The OWI had an office, I recall, in April 1945 in Bad Hamburg. I visited them in Bad Homburg. I was in Mainz just across the river. I visited them in Bad Homburg. It was still OWI, Office of War Information.

I think we had to learn to behave like a world power. It needed an informational and cultural dimension. So that grew in a way out of OWI; we had doubtlessly a library right away in Paris and Rome, etc. and in London in Lyon even.

In the spring or summer of 1947. It was decided to give our operation the name Amerika House rather than American cultural center or something. But it came with the sudden emphasis on this part of the occupation policy. The American Kreis Resident Officers, the ones I still knew when I came to Germany in 1945 and 1946, were truly administrators. But now they became re-educators.

I was there at the speech by Secretary Byrnes in Stuttgart in September 1946 which was really the announcement of the Cold War in a way. It was putting down the gauntlet that we had a problem with the Soviets that had grown out of the common, out of the allied control council. And that also meant that we became much more -- we, the U.S. military government became much more interested in democratization, in reorientation, in creating a positive alliance already

then with the German people. It was the announced change of US policy. We had felt it before. I must say I sat in there and said, Mr. Secretary of State, you are not telling me anything new. And I thought this was interesting. Because we had felt it in our bones. There was a real change in policy from treating Germany as a defeated occupied enemy into a potential ally.

A further step that came later was the Berlin Airlift. That created a real sense of friendship that spilled over from Berlin into the western parts.

We started with five libraries. I ended with six. We opened a sixth one in Heilbronn. Also, I ended with 14 branch libraries. We opened branch libraries in Schwabisch Gmund and Schwabisch Hall and in Aalen, etc. The five libraries were in Stuttgart, Heidelberg, Mannheim, Karlsruhe and Ulm. There were similar programs, similar institutions in the other Laender [states].

And we had meetings. I remember we had a lovely meeting in Bertchesgaden. And afterwards we all went up to that vacation place up in the mountain where we played poker for a whole weekend. The first head of all Amerika Hauser was someone called Cecil Hedrick. He was the one who settled with us on the term America House. He succeeded him by Pat Van Delden who was in some respects my boss. And I had, of course, also the boss in Stuttgart -- the Commanding Officer for the Information Control Division, Military Government, Stuttgart, or rather Baden-Wurttemberg. He was a colonel who did not speak a word of German but a gentleman and a man of good will. The amazing thing is how much I was on my own in those days. There was very little direction. Pat began to take the reigns into her hand and took a much keener interest in the content of the program. Up to that time we were largely on our own. Then one guy began to appear in our life; I read now about him. That was Peter Harnden. He did the exhibits. And now I read about him as the husband of Missy in the Berlin Diary.

He went to France and worked for what then became ERP -- the European Recovery Program. And then he went on his own. He was in Berlin with military government. And he came to Stuttgart with a fairly big exhibit on TVA that was hard to place in our house in Stuttgart.

I felt I had enough of occupied Germany. It was a very difficult and trying life. It was terribly ambivalent. It was fascinating. We played a real role in opening doors for people who were interested to know what had happened and what was happening in the world. At that time, Germans were still absolutely isolated within their country. They could not travel. So it was important what we did then, what we brought in for anyone who wanted really to know. You dealt with the most interesting people. And you had close personal contacts with these people.

When we were still American libraries, I happened to be one of the first Americans who lectured to German audiences. It sometimes worked well. But I sometimes stepped right into it and had a terrible time. I was attacked and so on. I still remember one lecture that was built up very much. I talked about how an American feels about post-war Germany, trying to stress the positive but also leaving in some critical things. But then all the questions came from refugees who had come in. The ethnic German who had come from Romania, from Poland, etc. They wanted to go back to their homeland and asked: "Why don't you get us back and make our part of Europe part of Free Germany." I stood there and was utterly unprepared for this sort of question. I knew that it

was a lost cause. I tried then to tell them: "Look. Forget about it. You have got to try to settle here in what is now Western Germany. Don't ever think that you can go back to Romania or to the Volga or to Silesia."

I attacked the issues from the psychological, cultural point of view -- not a political one. But I don't think they even listened to that. They had come to find out whether they could go back to the Volga.

But then I had other meetings very early I think already in the fall of 1946, I talked to Germans. When I took over the American libraries, our resources were relatively limited -- e.g. the books that we got came out of Army libraries. You scrounged them in a way. The OWI had made some available. The Army had published excellent books in a pocket book format for the GIs -- excellent titles. That was mainly what we had. We got a few periodicals. It wasn't much. Then one day appeared a guy on an airplane who came out of the civil affairs division of the Department of the Army by the name of Tom Simpson. He now was an emissary from this division I didn't even know existed to tell us that they were selecting books and to find out what we needed. Tom and his staff -- a few people actually in Washington.

After that, Tom selected books for us. Suddenly there appeared by the APO mail a great big list of titles. And presently these titles appeared. Tom had written a ringing declaration, forward to this list of books, on how we wanted to present untrammelled freedom. These books were a very good job of what Tom and his staff had selected. The books arrived. In addition we got funds to supplement them with German language books. Circulation of the German language books was usually ten times as frequent as the English language books. That was in the nature of the beast. After all this is 1946 to 1947 let's say, 1948 -- early 1948. There weren't all that many Germans whose English was really good enough to read a book in English. So the German language books were what really sold, as it were. We also got suddenly periodicals. We got about 100 subscriptions to periodicals.

I want to make a second point. Ours were open-shelf libraries. I, of course, was dealing with librarians in the southern part of Germany who fought against the concept -- also public librarians fought the open-shelf. The Baden-Wurttemberg library system at that time still had a system if you took out one novel you had to take out one non-fiction book. Sometimes an 18 year old took out a novel or asked for a novel and the librarian would say: "This I cannot let you read." So it was a highly controlled, closed-shelf library system. The librarians fought the open-shelf library system. But they have now come around to it. But it took many, many years.

Even today universities as a rule do not have open shelf libraries in Germany. There had been a few open shelf libraries before Hitler in Bremen and Hamburg. But in South Germany the libraries were truly closed libraries. The librarian controlled the reading of her public.

So ours was a very important contribution. I would sit in meetings -- librarian meetings. It was a tough concept to defend. They predicted that we would lose all our books. They would disappear. They would be stolen. And we can't control the reading of our public; we must educate our public.

Let me now turn to lecture program. When we were still an America library -- small -- we simply picked up whom we could. For example, Bernie Taper lived in Stuttgart. He became later quite well known as a staff member of the "New Yorker." He represented the Fine Arts Division of Military Government. Bernie Taper has written some books. He had written one about Balanchine. He had written a book about Casals. And he was on the staff of the New Yorker. Bernie Taper had a real interest in Kafka. I simply said: "Bernie, let us have a seminar on Kafka." There were German intellectuals who knew about Kafka but had never read Kafka but wanted to find out. So this was an incredibly interesting thing.

We had another well-known person. Newell Jenkins who was music control officer in London and Baden-Wurttemberg; later he became the Director of the Clarion Concerts in New York. So he has a name. There are a lot of recordings that Newell Jenkins had made. Newell and I organized "the Friends and Foes of Modern Music." We got musicians from the Stuttgart Orchestra to perform contemporary music -- more American than non-American -- we would meet maybe four or five times a year for music lovers. A difficult piece they might play two times that evening. But this was simply a local initiative.

I knew the editor of what had been during the occupation a Danish underground paper Borge Outze. Somehow, I think together with Frankfurt, we invited him to come from Copenhagen to Germany in late 1946 to lecture about the resistance in Denmark. His German was quite good. It had to be because he had some tough scrapes with the Gestapo in Denmark and he simply got out of it by talking good German, posing as a German. He was a very courageous and amusing man, pretty sharp -- we simply invited him. It was our initiative. Berlin -- our headquarters -- didn't even know about it. I don't think even Colonel Hill, my boss, knew about it. We simply invited Borge Outze. He was, of course, interested in coming to Germany. It was an exciting time. But at the same time it got to me and it got to Margareta, my wife. Because after all we lived in an utterly destroyed and still in many respects utterly demoralized country. It was tough to operate there, to live in this country. Because we spoke German, we had a lot of Germans come to our house. So we were involved in the post-war German scene. Margareta worked in the bunkers in Stuttgart where they had the refugee families. It was very tough on her. It was tough on me.

KARL F. MAUTNER
82nd Airborne
Berlin (1945-1958)

Karl Mautner was born in Vienna, Austria in 1915. He attended school there and entered the Army in 1935. During the Nazi occupation of Austria, Mr. Mautner lived in Hungary with relatives until 1940, when he emigrated to the U.S. He applied for U.S. citizenship the day after he arrived, and was immediately drafted into the U.S. Army. He has also served in the Sudan and various other posts in the Department of State. Mr. Mautner was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 1993.

Q: Well, telescope things until the end of the war. You were with the 82nd when they were our first troops into Berlin?

MAUTNER: They weren't really the first troops. The first troops were the 2nd Armored which went in on the 4th of July. They were relieved very shortly after by the 82nd Airborne as an occupation force.

Q: Now the 82nd Airborne didn't stay there too long, but you did stay. Would you tell us how that happened?

MAUTNER: Well, the 82nd went home in October and let me see. Somebody...one of my friends, Colonel Jim Kaiser...yes, that is where I got tied in with the Foreign Affairs establishment. This is a fairly complicated thing. My sister had a job after she arrived in the United States as a governess for a couple of little girls. They were the daughters of Ed Kellogg, a friend of my brother, who had visited us in Austria.

Q: Who was later a distinguished Foreign Service officer.

MAUTNER: He died recently. He eventually became Consul General in Dusseldorf. Great family. So I was a bit acquainted with Ed Kellogg. Somehow, I don't know anymore how, I found out that Ed was in Berlin. I looked him up and he introduced me to some of the people in the State Department offices there. I got acquainted with some of the young ladies there, Joan Clark among them.

Q: Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs?

MAUTNER: Yes, and with Jean Phillips, later married to Merritt Cootes and Frances Nichol, later married to the unforgettable Wendell Blancke, and other Foreign Service people. But prior to this, the 82nd ended the war in Mecklenburg, meeting the Russians there. On the way there, we were hit by a flood of German refugees and soldiers wanting to surrender. Among them were some mounted units in perfect order, every man shaved, even if they were dusty. They were Hungarians. I knew that my old friend Jim Kaiser, Commander of the 3rd Battalion of the 505th, was a horseman, and he was the one I could get on the radio. So, I radioed Kaiser and told him, we got horses here. He said: "Send them over." So, we were able to separate out a number of horses as well as a Hungarian captain who was a very fine rider and Colonel Kaiser and his friends somehow were able to hang on to those horses and bring them to Berlin. I got into that horsey group because I was a rider and we kept up this friendship. Later, through my acquaintance with those State Department contacts, I introduced Kaiser to the then Military Attaché, Colonel Hohenthal who hired him. In other words, Kaiser stayed, and when the Division left, so did I.

Q: So he and you stayed behind from the 82nd?

MAUTNER: I decided I'd stay behind too. German speakers were in demand. I had little to gain in the United States. I had no job, no degree or anything, and going on photographing dogs didn't appeal to me too much. Another introduction this whole group developed when one of my sergeants came to Berlin. He was a bassoonist and was looking for a teacher. He found one, a Viennese named Rothensteiner, a bassoonist from a bassoonist family and member of the

Philharmonics who also played the piano. Some of the girls wanted to study piano and for some reason asked if I knew anybody to recommend. Rothensteiner was a good piano teacher and so they linked up. That was a great success. They loved him dearly. He was also very good at making "apfelstrudel." Anyway, that got me even better into this group, and I got acquainted with more and more people whom I found congenial (and vice versa I suppose) in the Berlin Foreign Service establishment.

Q: These were people in the State Department?

MAUTNER: And eventually, the interviewer, too.

Q: Yes. Now, moving on, when you arrived in Berlin, did you think that we would be able to get along with the Russians?

MAUTNER: Yes.

Q: That was the policy of course.

MAUTNER: Partly that. I really thought we would get along. We were still fighting Germans, after all. I remember, we had a couple of rough times in Mecklenburg when we met the Russians. There were great drunken brawls of course and all kinds of things like that but we ignored that. Coming into Berlin I remember clearly seeing that big Russian tank standing on the Potsdamer Chaussee and I remember as we were coming up in a jeep saying: "As long as this stands here, there will be peace." It was an illusion but that's what we thought.

Q: What was our relationship with the German population at that time in '45?

MAUTNER: Well, there was strict non-fraternization, not necessarily needlessly...but it went to the point where it was really pretty absurd -- kitchen garbage being doused with gasoline so the Germans wouldn't take it and things like that. They were down to so many calories and weren't supposed to get more than that.

Q: We didn't want them to pick up the extra calories from our garbage presumably. Now all this was done while we were setting up a military government for our sector of Berlin. You became acquainted with some people in the State Department. How did the U.S. military government relate to the State Department at that time in Berlin?

MAUTNER: I don't really know. I had at first little contact with military government people. The military government I'm talking about is the Berlin Sector, Colonel Howley being Director. OMGUS, the higher headquarters...

Q: OMGUS meaning Office of Military Government United States?

MAUTNER: Yes, for Germany. It was a very big headquarters and I didn't really know much what was going on. My own activities concerned mostly screening refugees in a refugee camp and funneling them to people who would interrogate them.

Q: And you were of course looking for senior Nazis, influential or not?

MAUTNER: That was at the beginning, but it didn't last long because most had left Berlin long ago. Very soon we found out that we weren't getting information of what was going on in the east and we had begun to be interested in what happened there, or our superiors became interested.

Q: What was happening in the east?

MAUTNER: Well, there were tremendous groups and "Trecks" (convoys) of refugees still filtering out of the east in very poor condition, usually, starving children and abused women. We didn't really have a clear picture of what was going on there. We were aware of the fact that the Soviets were just moving everything out, cattle, horses, machines, and everything, and living conditions in the area occupied by them were very bad.

Q: Moving it back to the Soviet Union?

MAUTNER: Yes. Then, there were rather gruesome stories out of the Polish-administered territories of mistreatment of people, etc. Of course, at the same time all kinds of stories from the German concentration camps were surfacing. So there was still a certain balance in that.

Q: So, at that time, you were not yet working essentially in what would be called the foreign policy field?

MAUTNER: Not really, no.

Q: And how did that develop, that you got into the body politic, shall we say, of the Berlin city government?

MAUTNER: Well, let me see. When the division left, I began working for the military organization G2, Colonel Heimlich...

Q: Intelligence in other words.

MAUTNER: Yes, and did pretty much the same, i.e., interviewing refugees, etc. Then again one of those things where interplay began. We had this riding establishment with Hungarian horses and a couple of captured German horses. Colonel Kaiser and I struck up an acquaintance with Colonel Howley who had a good horse which he acquired somewhere in Germany. So we got acquainted and then sometime in the summer of '46 an Army horseshow team was put together and sent to Switzerland for a tour. It was a haphazard affair, none were top riders and even I got on that team. We went to Geneva and Bern, and performed creditably but not very successfully, with some of those horses we had in Berlin. Our Hungarian instructor came along and it was rather fun. While on that tour, Howley found out that I could get along well in German. He asked me if I wanted to join his staff as liaison officer to the Mayor because he had somebody in the job who didn't speak German, and who was going to go home anyway. I gladly accepted, of

course.

Q: So you became liaison officer to the Mayor of Berlin?

MAUTNER: Yes, but it took a while. There were elections in Berlin on the 20th of October 1946. German-speaking officers were sent out as observers. It was quite interesting. My interest in German politics was high because I was now reading the German newspapers. We had already at that time the Tagespiegel and the Neus Zeitung (which was American-run) both excellent papers. These elections were very important for Berlin and for German-Allied relations.

But a bit of context, first: in late 1945 the communists in the East had decided to form a merger of the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party (SPD), because they thought they weren't going anywhere alone. This forced merger went reasonably smooth in the East with the defection to the communists of SPD leader Otto Grohwohl, but in the West a group -- including Franz Neumann, Swolinski, Germer, and others -- resisted and were able to force a referendum for all Berlin SPD members which blocked the merger for Berlin. Thus you had in West Berlin an unimpeded SPD. The party continued to function in East Berlin too but under constant severe pressure. In both parts of the city an SED (Socialist Unity Party) emerged as cover for the communists. In the Soviet Zone of Germany, the SED was the unified, merged, communist-dominated existing party.

The momentous decision of the Berlin SPD against the "merger" showed a great deal of courage. West Berliners often had to attend meetings in East Berlin. They never knew if they would get back safely. Some were abducted, some lost their bicycles which had got them there. It was dangerous to engage in politics not favored by the communists and the Soviets. In my opinion this was the first real eye-opener for many of us, showing us that Berliners had civil courage and were democrats. The October election, thus, became a bitter political struggle for the democratic elements in Berlin and when the non-communist parties won by a great margin our respect for these forces grew.

Among us election observers were some military German-speakers, mostly from Colonel Heimlich's staff. One of these, Peter Beer, also a paratrooper who had come in with us, was an interesting man. He was born in Vienna, in fact his mother was at the same time a communist city councillor, but he was fiercely opposed to the "merger" in Berlin and very active on his fairly low level (he was a captain) in assisting the SPD, as were others on the lower level.

I did not have the feeling that our higher echelons were interested in helping one way or the other. It seemed a neutral stance was policy. I may be wrong. Certainly Irving Brown, the CIA/AF of L representative was permitted to engage vigorously in favor of the democratic forces. He was an important man. Our friends needed help. The Soviets supplied the SED with food, cigarettes and transportation and security, and things not readily available for the SPD. The relatively little help they got from our lower level was very important.

Q: It's interesting to me, if I may interrupt, Karl. Here you talk about our friends and yet this is within a year after they had been our enemies. How did they come to be our friends? Can you comment on that?

MAUTNER: Well, I think I go back to these merger days in early 1946 when it turned out that the German democrats, the leftovers of the Weimar Republic, were people you could rely on to do the right thing. But of course, other things happened in between. The Russians, or the Soviets, were getting more difficult, slowly but surely. We noted that the Russian-appointed city government which the elections were to replace had a mayor who was a total figurehead, an architect name Werner, but the real power was his deputy, Karl Maron, a communist. That same pattern applied throughout the districts the western allies took over. There was always the Moscow installed deputy. The mayors were replaced first but the second in command was harder to remove, elections or no elections.

Q: And they were the communists, the second men usually?

MAUTNER: Yes, and there was a great deal of obstruction in the labor union field which the communists attempted to dominate also in the West. Slowly the atmosphere had begun to deteriorate. By the time the merger episode had played itself out, I think those of us on the working level had concluded the Berliners, certainly the Social Democrats and also the other democratic parties, could be considered our friends.

Q: That answers my question in that regard. Our friends were not being helped in the same way that the communists were being helped by the Soviets?

MAUTNER: Certainly not as massively.

Q: How did that change over time, or did it change?

MAUTNER: You mean did we help them out?

Q: Yes. You referred earlier to the higher levels of our government and at that time that was represented by General Clay who was our military governor in Germany. Was it hard for General Clay to accept socialists since so many of our pre-war army officers had been so conservative in their background and in their pronouncements?

MAUTNER: I don't think so, really. I think General Clay followed pretty much the trends of the time. If you look at his writings and everything else, it seems he was convinced he could get along with the Russians for a long time, until it became clear during the 1947 Moscow conference that things weren't going the way he thought they should, and General Marshall came to the conclusion that we just weren't getting anywhere with the Soviets on an all-German solution, and, therefore we had to stand on our own.

Q: You mentioned the Soviets of course in their sector of Berlin, and the British in passing, but the French were also there. How did the British and French factor in and did they work closely with us in this opposition to the Soviets?

MAUTNER: The French actually were quite obstructionist, very difficult. Later on, we came to appreciate their sturdiness. At that time they were just plain difficult. Not that of course we didn't

notice as much on our level as on the higher level, the Berlin Kommandatura, and of course the Allied Control Council.

Q: The Kommandatura being the governing body for the city of Berlin and the Allied Control Council the governing body for Germany. When did it become clear to you that the Soviets had no intention of agreeing to four-power rule in Berlin?

MAUTNER: Well, let me go back. After those elections, after the new Magistraat took his seat...

Q: What is Magistraat?

MAUTNER: The Magistraat was the governing body of Berlin, let's say the cabinet of the mayor running the city.

Q: So, we should think of that as a Cabinet then?

MAUTNER: Yes. First of all, there were three mayors elected at that time. One of them was a Social Democrat, Mr. Ostrowski; second one was a Christian Democrat, Dr. Friedensburg; and the third one was an SED man, Dr. Heinrich Acker. And under them was a cabinet of various functions: finance, building and housing, food and agriculture, etc.

Q: You mentioned three mayors. Was one a senior mayor, a governing mayor, or were they all equal?

MAUTNER: The senior one was the Social Democrat because the Social Democrats had gained the majority.

Q: That would have been Ostrowski?

MAUTNER: In fact, was it a majority or a plurality, I'm not quite sure anymore. I think it was a majority.

Q: But there was one mayor over the other two? Deputy mayors?

MAUTNER: Yes. One was a bit more than first among equals. Now, you asked before when it became clear that the cooperation was becoming difficult. That was January, '47. That's when I started in the City Hall. Initially, I was nominally the deputy to Colonel Kaiser, because it was a Colonel's job and I was barely a Major then. But Colonel Kaiser left things pretty much to me and was transferred very soon and I took over the job. One of the first things I ran into was of course what I was going to do down there. Kaiser and I had replaced a Lieutenant Colonel who was a very nice man but didn't speak German. He told me when I took over: "Now, don't forget you represent the General who represents the President. You call the mayor and the mayor comes in and you make him stand at attention, etc." which of course I was able to change very quickly.

Q: You're already sliding into the diplomatic way of doing things?

MAUTNER: Well, there were really very few instructions for me what to do. In my predecessor's view, you just transmitted orders, and that was it. But I very quickly considered the job as something going in both directions and started writing little reports. Somebody would come in the office, maybe Dr. Friedensburg, and would tell me about some development. Then without really understanding very clearly what was behind the things he told me, the intrigues, and machinations, I wrote it down and reported it to Colonel Howley. That in turn irritated people in Colonel Howley's political section, Captain Biel especially, whose prerogative it was to cover this kind of thing and he confronted me. I was smart enough to gang up with him from that time on because he knew much more about the local scene, and we became good friends, and still are.

Q: Dr. Biel never doubted his own ability as I recall?

MAUTNER: By the way, I remember an incident that is of interest. It was in August, I believe, the 21st or 22nd of August 1945 and I think it was the first concert of the Philharmonic after the Americans had moved into Berlin. It took place in the Titania Palace in the American sector, an old movie theater which served as a concert hall. The conductor was a young man named Borchard. I believe he was a White Russian. His sister, by the way, Madame Kudriavzev, had served for many years as a receptionist in the American Embassy in Berlin. Unfortunately, Borchard lived in the British sector, and somebody who had a car took him back into the British sector. In those days we still had border guards between the American and British sector and the U.S. border guard tried to stop him. But the car did not halt and the guard shot and killed Borchard. It was of course most unfortunate. It was a man from the 82nd Airborne Division. General Gavin was called on the carpet and was asked what happened. "Well, I taught my people to shoot and kill and why do we have those stupid borders between the British and American sectors anyway. Let's eliminate them." And from that day on they were abolished.

Q: A point of interest. Were there still border guards between the British and French sectors?

MAUTNER: I don't think they continued after that incident.

Q: So the only border guards would have been between the three western sectors and the Soviet sector?

MAUTNER: Yes, but I don't really remember if anybody was stopped in those days on these borders, but it could be.

Q: That was an unfortunate incident, but I gather from then on there were many incidents that happened, but generally it involved Germans and Soviets, or westerners and Soviets?

MAUTNER: Yes, but fortunately, not as prominent people as Mr. Borchard. By the way, you might be interested to know that I was able to save the Philharmonics more or less because Mr. Rothensteiner needed reeds for his bassoon section. The Russians had used his supply for fire kindling. He tried to get some through the military government and the ones our music officer got him weren't flexible enough and didn't work. When I went on a skiing vacation to Switzerland early in 1946, he gave me an address where I could get some reeds, and I brought

back enough to keep the bassoonists functioning.

Q: So the reeds section of the Philharmonic was saved?

MAUTNER: Yes. Interesting that we had a "music officer", presumably in order to teach the Germans how to play Beethoven.

Q: In the meanwhile you were encountering increasing problems in your job as liaison with the city government. Not so much with the Germans as with the obstructions from the Soviets, I gather, to what the western powers wanted to do?

MAUTNER: We were talking about the Ostrowski crisis, I think. Ostrowski was the elected Social Democratic mayor. He was a big tall, rather impressive looking man with a bald Mussolini like head but he called himself "neither an Ostrowski nor a Westrowski".

Q: A pun on the German East-West division.

MAUTNER: Yes. Of course it didn't go down too well because in the meantime it was quite clear that the Social Democrats sided with the west, whereas the SED, a minority party, sided with the east. So the Social Democrats voted him out of office for consorting with the SED, saying, "You are no longer our mayor, our representative at the Magistraat," and voted in Ernst Reuter in his stead. That brought on a real crisis because Reuter had been a prominent communist in the 1917 revolutionary days. He had been a prisoner of war with the Russians since 1914.

Q: In the first World War.

MAUTNER: Yes. He had even helped establish the Volga German Republic in the Soviet Union. Then disillusioned with the Bolsheviks, he came back to Germany, and eventually joined the Social Democrats. He became a very successful transportation expert. For example, in Greater Berlin, he was instrumental in getting the U-bahn and the S-bahn coordinated.

Q: The U-bahn being the subway and the S-bahn being the above ground rapid railway?

MAUTNER: Then he became mayor of Magdeburg. In the Nazi days, he was for a while in a concentration camp, then emigrated to Turkey where he taught in the university in Ankara. After the war he was induced to come back to Germany, arriving in Berlin right after the elections of the new Magistraat. In April, he was elected to succeed Ostrowski. That created a crisis situation, because the Soviets insisted he could not become mayor unless his election was approved by the Kommandatura. That required a unanimous four-power vote and they were not willing to endorse him. It went back and forth. I don't remember the details anymore, but although we kept insisting that an election is an election and we needn't approve this kind of elected high official, the Russians were adamant. It moved up to the Control Council level and I think a "compromise" was reached. In other words, we just relented, and Reuter was not made mayor. Louise Schroeder, a Social Democrat, was moved up instead as Acting Mayor. I'd like to talk about her later. So the city struggled along. Reuter was really de facto mayor. He ran a lot of the show, but

he was not acknowledged as the mayor. That was one of the first overt signs of problems with the Soviets.

Q: In the city, yes.

MAUTNER: In the meantime, things kept getting a little more difficult. There were incidents of obstruction on the scrap iron front. The railway system throughout Berlin was under the control of the east, and suddenly unauthorized trains of scrap iron started moving out of West Berlin into East Berlin and things like that. There was constant interference by the previously appointed communist underlings in the functioning of various cabinet departments. Very difficult situations arose in the case of the education department where an old-time communist was the number two man, Wildangel, who spoke French and therefore was also favored by the French, as well as the Russians. Another elected official named Nestriepke couldn't get anything done in his department and was constantly attacked by the Russians in the Kommandatura. There was one day when we had a new Commandant General, Cornelius Ryan...Howley, mind you, was director of the military government of Berlin, but only later became Commandant, a two-star job. Until then, he was deputy to the Commandant who was appointed by General Clay. General Ryan came from the military government side throughout the war. A very nice man. He acquitted himself well later in the McCarthy days but he was really not up to the problems that arose in Berlin. One day in a Kommandatura meeting I happened to attend, the Russian brought up another of his usual charges about some bad things one or another of the Social Democratic elected cabinet members had done. In this case, it was Dr. Nestriepke, who was the education counselor. He had allegedly done something the Russians considered insubordination. Whereupon General Ryan suddenly spoke up and said: "Then I'll propose we dismiss the man."

Q: Without inquiring into the details?

MAUTNER: Yes. Well, details were given by the Russian. But the British had a new General Herbert who wasn't really quite sure what was going on and the French didn't like Nestriepke, they favored Wildangel because he had lived in France. So, bingo, suddenly Nestriepke was dismissed. Howley was there tearing his hair and we were all upset.

Q: The decision had been made.

MAUTNER: The decision had been made. There were all kinds of things of that nature. In the Kommandatura one day the Soviets complained that Reuter, who was in charge of public utilities, had distributed ration cards number one to his friends. Ration cards came in five classes. One was for heavy workers, top artists, and the like. Two, a little less good, was for government officials and so down the line to five which was just about starvation level for nobodies like housewives and widows. In our military government, German employees got one ration level higher than they normally would have gotten under the German regulations. Now, there was only a limited number of class one ration cards available, and the Soviets accused Reuter of having favored some of his political friends with them. So Reuter was called on the carpet by the public utilities officer. We in the Kommandatura had a very nice man in public utilities who ran a gas company in Kansas but was not terribly up to snuff in international politics. Reuter, however, was very articulate and spoke good English. He explained that he had taken away ration cards

giving more household gas and electricity to prominent communists who had not contributed anything to the city's functioning and given them to people who were working hard as officials of the gas company. That saved Reuter from being censored.

Q: Incidents like that make you wonder how people keep their temper at times and their good sense.

MAUTNER: Yes. Well you yourself remember some of the things at the Kommandatura. It was not an easy battling ground.

Q: Now, we are of course coming on to the approach to the blockage period of June '48. There was a bit of a build-up which I'm sure you'll recall?

MAUTNER: Well, let me see. Already in the fall of '47 there was an indication of problems ahead. Suddenly, during a rainy period, a whole big load of potatoes were dumped at one of the American sector railway stations.

Q: Potatoes destined for all of Berlin?

MAUTNER: It was a delivery from the east of an agreed-upon allocation. But the next day you saw in the Taegliche Rundschau, the Soviet-sponsored German paper, that "Americans are neglecting the feeding of Berlin, they let potatoes rot in the rain." The east had not notified anybody the shipment was coming, and no storage space was readily available -- everything was bombed out. Meanwhile the food councillor, under tremendous pressure by one of his communist deputies, came to me wailing that we had to do something to get those things stored away. (His name was Fullsack, by the way.) There was a big empty factory-type building in the American sector which was requisitioned by the U.S. Army but not being used. Can I get that for him quickly? I went to Howley, who immediately was very forthcoming. We got it the next day and moved the potatoes, which were very important for feeding of Berlin. That kind of thing happened more often.

Q: Devilish tricks, in other words?

MAUTNER: Yes, little things here, little things there, and gradually getting more difficult to handle. There was a blockade of postal deliveries to Berlin, with the East press claiming the Soviet zone being "impoverished and sucked out" by the west by smuggling, etc. Nothing could go into the west by parcel post. It was also blocked from going to West Germany for a while. At first the Allied reaction was that this was something for the Germans to handle, which of course it wasn't, and it began to build up, more and more. In the chapter on Berlin I wrote a book titled "Witnesses to the Origins of the Cold War," I went into more detail about those things.

Q: These pinpricks kept getting worse until the breakup of the Control Council which governed Germany?

MAUTNER: The Control Council broke up on the 20th of March, 1948. I think the Soviets concluded after the 1947 Foreign Ministers' Conference in Moscow, that they were not going to

get their way in all of Germany. They began to work in the direction of two Germanies. Well, it's a very difficult judgement call. There are always people who say that it was our fault that Germany was split apart. I think it was our fault, only in that we didn't give in to the Soviet demands.

Q: That's called revisionism, I believe?

MAUTNER: Yes, revisionists make a strong case, but I think they are wrong. Looking back, I think the turning point of our attitude toward Germany and our relations with the Soviets dates from the speech in Stuttgart by Secretary of State Byrnes.

Q: That was September 1946?

MAUTNER: October or September, yes. That was when it became clear that western interests in that part of Germany, where the West had influence, had to be maintained. But how this worked out on the higher level, of course, is another story.

Q: You pointed out that two key events on the diplomatic front, Secretary of State Byrnes's speech in Stuttgart in 1946 and Secretary Marshall's visit to Moscow in early 1947, were turning points in determining our policy towards Germany after the war. How did you see these things being reflected at your level, that is in the Berlin city government? And another question: tell us what you can about the lead-up to the famous Berlin Blockade?

MAUTNER: Well, I don't think we saw much of anything reflected from the Byrnes visit and the Foreign Ministers' meeting on our immediate low-level activities.

Q: The Russians didn't change their policies? They didn't become any more difficult?

MAUTNER: They were difficult already. There were always difficulties about West Germany -- the Berlin transport lines. At first, of course coming to Berlin was no problem for the allied forces. We simply showed an ID card at the border and moved on. Later there had to be travel orders; then they had to be translated and it got more and more complicated. Some people called it "salami tactics"; others disagreed, saying it was just better organization of the various administrative problems. The Germans at first could move reasonably freely between the sectors into the zones, but that didn't last very long. They were always subject to searches and roadblocks and "requisition" of whatever they were carrying. Then they needed all kinds of "propusks" (passes) to go from place to place, and movement became increasingly difficult. They practically could not cross the zone border without proper permission. There would be various meetings in the west zone, let us say meetings of the Germany-wide CDU party with Adenauer presiding, and the Berlin CDU people had trouble getting there, and it was even more difficult for the east zone CDU members. There were minister president meetings and similar kinds of things and attendance got increasingly difficult. Then came another of the postal blockades I alluded to, it was some time in January 1948. Suddenly, mail to West Germany piled up in the American sector train station (which was controlled by the East German (Reichsbahn) and Soviet supervision with the East claiming the Americans were trying to censor the mail.

Q: Were we censoring the mail or was there no truth whatsoever in that?

MAUTNER: No. Then, autobahn trouble started. We and the British had aid stations half way down the autobahn to Helmstedt to aid our own motorists. The Soviets ordered them closed down.

Q: The autobahn going through the Soviet zone of Germany?

MAUTNER: Yes. Then they would arbitrarily stop vehicles in the middle of the autobahn. Car travel became more and more unpleasant.

On top of that, the Soviet claimed the bridge over the Elbe at Magdeburg had to be repaired, and closed it to auto traffic. (By the way, that bridge had been built by the U.S. Army engineers toward the end of the war and was still in use until the 1970s.)

Q: That was the one bridge on the autobahn that was absolutely essential to get to the west.

MAUTNER: Yes. Later on came incidents with the allied trains. The Soviets demanded the right to inspect them and we refused. After going back and forth on this, the Soviets would relax a little bit and let some trains through but kept coming back.

Q: But both of these on the rail and in regard to the road, these were in violation of the four-power agreements?

MAUTNER: Where were they, the four-power agreements? Apparently there weren't any really, because the only detailed written agreement about access was for air traffic where the Air Traffic Committee of the Control Council agreed to three air corridors and a twenty-two mile circle around the air traffic Control Center of Berlin.

Q: Yes, I think the rail and road arrangements were bilateral agreements between military commanders to assure access when we took over Berlin.

MAUTNER: Yes, the arrangements for access were never made formal agreements because General Clay somewhat defensively claimed later that he understood that it was a matter of word of honor and self-understood. He said that the right was implied by the fact that we were in Berlin.

Q: Now, there were these transport problems in getting into Berlin, but was it not the currency conversion actually that triggered the blockade?

MAUTNER: I think it was in a way true, although the Russian commandant, General Kotikov, walked out of a Kommandatura meeting before the currency reform and before the actual beginning of the blockade. If I am not mistaken, it was the 20th of June. That was an endless Kommandatura meeting, lasting sixteen hours or so. Howley got tired and turned the meeting over to his deputy, Colonel Babcock, and Kotikov seized on this as an insult and said, "If the Americans don't cooperate, I'll walk out," and left. That was the end of the four-power

Kommandatura. Of course, talks about possible currency reform were already going on, but more on the Control Council level.

Q: For all of Germany?

MAUTNER: For all of Germany. Not about Berlin. I came under pressure from Mayor Reuter and city treasurer Haas, both of whom said: "We know something is coming and we don't know the exact details, but we have a very good idea. Make sure that your chief (that was Howley) gets Berlin included. Otherwise we'll go down the drain." So I went to Howley who said: "They don't know anything, and I don't know anything; we're not supposed to know anything." Those working on the currency reform were completely sequestered, not allowed to talk to anyone. When introduced, the currency reform applied only in west Germany. What really persuaded Clay and the other military governors to include soon Berlin shortly thereafter, I don't know. But it didn't take very long. Berlin got the Westmark with a B stamp on it.

Q: With a B for Berlin on it?

MAUTNER: Yes. They were shipped in by plane. The Soviets did not allow the circulation of B marks in east Berlin or East Germany. I suspect we were quite happy about that because it would have syphoned off the good marks and brought in the east marks from the zone. Anyhow, with that, all traffic into Berlin from the west, except allied air traffic, stopped. The day was the 26th of June. At first, General Clay concluded that the allied forces could be supplied by air but for a while it was thought that the city population could be supplied by air.

Q: And there were about two million people living in West Berlin?

MAUTNER: About two million. It quickly became evident Berlin could no longer get electricity or food from the East anymore. Clay saw something had to be done and started an impromptu airlift with old C-47s (DC 3s) to bring in some food and other essentials. That airlift steadily expanded and turned into an enormous operation. I had no idea until much later what an effort on the national level it required, what organization. General Tunner, I think, was the organizational genius. In the end one plane every two minutes came to West Berlin.

Q: And Tunner was in Wiesbaden, as I recall?

MAUTNER: General LeMay was one who inspired this...

Q: In Washington, wasn't he?

MAUTNER: Yes. And General Clay who pushed it through Washington at the War Department -- I think it was still the War Department, or was it already the Defense Department, I don't remember, there was great hesitation.

Q: I think it was the War Department.

MAUTNER: There was great reluctance in some quarters because it was thought that Berlin was

indefensible. But Clay was really at his best at that time and insisted. Truman backed him up and we had an airlift. The airlift was one of the few clear cut victories we had in that era.

Q: Karl, if I may refer to something you said a few minutes ago, when you referred to Mayor Reuter. But earlier you'd said that he didn't become mayor because the Soviets had vetoed him.

MAUTNER: That is quite right.

Q: Would you explain that?

MAUTNER: Well, the fall of 1948 was a peculiar time. The acting mayor was Louise Schroeder, a remarkable woman. She was frail, very small, but she had been trained in the old Social Democratic school of speaking to the public without a microphone. She had a voice that carried a Hall and she was astute and capable. Although she was frequently ill, she ran the city quite well. We liaison officers once had a luncheon meeting with her. We brought her some food, a care package or so. The Russians came with a fish. I think they had a carp wrapped up in a Pravda, but anyway it was one of the last joint affairs...

Q: A fresh fish from the Russians and a care package from the U.S.?

MAUTNER: Yes. I don't remember whether it was at her place or at Dr. Suhr's, chairman of the city assembly. Anyway, she was great, but of course the real mayor, the elected mayor was still Reuter. In the meantime, the pressure intensified on those elected officials in the east sector continued...don't forget that Berlin City Hall was in the east sector. The deputies to the assembly were eventually chased out of the assembly hall, by communist goon squads and east-controlled police. So they moved the assembly to the West Sector into the Technical University building, at that time unheated and unpleasant, but at least a safe haven. Then pressure built up on the food distribution office and food councillor Fullsack had to move west. After him, the public utilities man had to move because the Russians installed their own "liaison man" to run that operation. The elected mayors in the East Berlin districts were pushed out after being accused of inefficiency -- because they couldn't deliver coal which they didn't have, and this kind of thing. By the time December came around...now wait a minute, there is something else. Before the blockade while it was still in action the Kommandatura had decided that there should be elections in all of Berlin in December...

Q: This would be in 1948 then?

MAUTNER: December, 1948. A new constitution was drafted by the city assembly, and delivered to the Kommandatura on schedule, but only recognized and okayed by the three western powers. The Soviets refused to recognize it because it made no provisions for socialization and other kinds of things they wanted. The three commandants nevertheless decided that the elections should take place and approached the Soviets about it. They refused to allow elections in December in their sector. The western commandants, in this case the French, very astutely decided to go ahead in the west sectors regardless. Those elections were to take place on the 5th of December with an open invitation to the Soviets to permit voting in their sector too. But, before the 5th of December, I think it was December 2, the Soviet sector

arranged a monster rally in one of their theaters, the Admiral Palast, of the so-called mass organizations, of course all communists. The FDGB, the workers organizations, etc., and the participants "elected" a Mayor and assembly by acclamation.

Q: *And trade union, yes.*

MAUTNER: And the women's organizations, all those front organizations...

Q: *Victims of fascism, the whole group, yes.*

MAUTNER: And the political parties too, which by then were pretty well under Soviet control. They decided to dismiss the existing mayors and elect their own Lord Mayor, and that was Fritz Ebert, the son of Friedrich Ebert, the former Social Democratic President of Germany in 1918.

Q: *So this meant two governments in one city, is that right?*

MAUTNER: Well, it became that way rapidly. Now, Fritz Ebert was an alcoholic and not very useful, but he was made mayor. His deputy was Karl Mason, the old Moscow-trained hand. We liaison officers were still based in the city hall downtown, but things were beginning to crumble because most of the city councillors or the cabinet ministers had already left. On December 2nd when Ebert was elected, the communist authorities moved him to City Hall and we couldn't do anything about it because they had physical control with their police. So we got the then legitimate acting mayor, Dr. Friedensburg, to come down the next morning (he lived in the West) and claim his office. We were all there; my British colleague, Colonel Whiteford, Captain Ziegelmaier from the French, and myself. Friedensburg arrived in his somewhat ramshackle car and tried to walk into the City Hall, but was stopped by the East guards. He said: "I am the mayor." They said: "No you're not." He responded with, "I yield to force," and went back home. We witnessed the exchange and prepared to move out of City Hall as well. The British ran into a lot of trouble moving their office because they apparently had no receipts for their furniture. We had legitimate receipts for ours and knew where it had come from. There was a very interesting janitor on the scene, a man named Mittag, who had kept track of everything on the premises and of course turned the records over to the communists. So, we had a moving out party out of the City Hall December 3.

Q: *All of which was taking place within the Soviet sector?*

MAUTNER: All of this taking place within the Soviet sector, on the 2nd and 3rd of December.

Q: *During the blockade"*

MAUTNER: During the blockade, before the elections, yes. Now, Howley said, "if they want to block you, you run them down with your car." Well fortunately they were blocking with a big truck, so I couldn't run them down. But anyway it was quite an exodus, I still have a picture from the New York Times of Whiteford, Ziegelmaier and myself. Howley put me back in uniform, made me a Major again. We moved to where the Assembly was meeting in West Berlin with whatever we got out...our files, etc. The British also had a hard time getting their files out but I

got mine out intact. Then we set up the Liaison Offices in the West. The elections took place only in West Berlin on the 5th of December. The SPD won a flat majority, some 52% of the vote. With that the Commandants recognized Reuter as mayor. West Berlin then had a real elected government: Reuter, Lord Mayor, with Friedensburg deputy. The "Magistraat" now had become a "Senat" because Berlin according to that new constitution was now a "Land" and the "Lord Mayor" became "Governing Mayor".

Q: So in a sense Reuter had been elected mayor of Berlin twice?

MAUTNER: Twice, before taking his seat.

Q: Well, that was a long digression on Mayor Reuter, but since he was such a key figure during these blockade months, I thought it would be useful to find out how he finally took his position. Now how did your job change when you moved into the western sector of Berlin, and specifically during this blockade period?

MAUTNER: It didn't change that much, because the job I had was really tailor-made to whatever was required. It became more one of listening to good advice. Reuter was an extremely astute man, very intelligent, and obviously a leadership figure, and he had many, many suggestions to make. By that time, the military government people, especially on our side, were very willing to listen to him. Clay had already made contact and respected him and Howley, of course, too. Howley was a very interesting man, a real Irishman. He had quite a temperament. He had right-leaning views but was very, very sensitive to popular moods and had good political instincts. He knew Reuter was the man to rely on, and the Berliners liked Reuter and relied on him, so the Social Democrats were okay with Howley.

Q: So, Reuter and Howley got along?

MAUTNER: Absolutely, yes. There was a very momentous day in 1948, September 9, played a role. When the currency reform was discussed in Moscow during the summer, there was some tendency on the part of Americans to give in and relax the absolute demand to have the westmark in West Berlin. And I think actually that Bedell Smith (our Ambassador in Moscow) at that time was ready to give in on that point. The matter was referred back to the Control Council on Germany which began to meet again on that issue in the Control Council building in Berlin.

Q: After six months with no meetings?

MAUTNER: Six months or more than that, with no meetings. That of course got Berliners quite upset. Reuter was quite adamant, insisting that, "If you give up the Bmark, we are gone. They'll swallow us up like a sausage." The authorities convoked a massive rally down in front of what is today the rebuilt Reichstag. How did the crowd get there? Transport was extremely poor. You had to walk endlessly because there was no electricity, and few streetcars. Yet some three hundred thousand people showed up. Reuter and Neuman spoke, and leaders from the other parties, too.

Q: On September 9, 1948, there was a big demonstration against the blockade. What was your

feeling at that time? Could the Berliners stick it out? Did you feel that this demonstration showed that the Berliners were willing to suffer and carry on their life during the blockade?

MAUTNER: Yes. That's a little bit of a leading question, but I am quite sure that was the case, because the demonstrators wanted to show that the Berliners led by Ernst Reuter did not want the currency issue to become a vehicle for turning them over to the east. They wanted to show the allied authorities that they were willing to hold out even though the coming winter would mean hardships, and that they trusted the airlift and the western allies, especially the Americans. They heard ringing speeches by Reuter, Ernst Lemmer, Neuman. I think Irving Brown spoke, too. (Irving Brown was representative of the AFL/CIO and a very important figure in supporting the free trade union movement in Berlin and Germany.) They then endorsed a document which asserted that Berlin was prepared to hold out no matter how tough the times and marched to the nearby Control Council to present it. Their action stiffened the backs of the three western allies against any sellout of Berlin. It was a very decisive moment I am convinced.

Q: You mentioned the three western commandants. What was their role during this period of the blockade, because you indicated that Mayor Reuter was a strong figure himself and apparently was taking more power unto himself and to the Germans. What role did the allies play in this? Were the commandants helpful?

MAUTNER: The commandants were certainly helpful. Reuter wasn't even mayor in the beginning, but he was certainly a dominating and dominant figure, through his personality, his intellect, and also through his reputation. The commandants by that time had begun to consult with Reuter quite frequently. The commandants were in a way the local rulers, and it must be pointed out that the French who were generally not very helpful on the Control Council, were very good in Berlin and were in favor of holding out. There was this incident with General Ganeval who decided to blow up a radio tower in his sector which interfered with air access and was controlled by the Russians. General Ganeval was important in permitting the construction of Tegel airfield, which was a miracle anyway because it involved building an enormous airfield out of a wasteland using mostly hand tools, and not terribly efficient earth moving equipment, because modern machines were too big to be easily flown in by air.

Q: Was that airport Tegel finished in time to play a role in the blockade?

MAUTNER: Yes, it definitely played a role. We had otherwise only Tempelhof and Gatow which were barely adequate for that purpose.

Q: Tempelhof in the American sector, and Gatow in the British sector. And then Tegel which was in the French sector?

MAUTNER: That's right, although Tegel was not quite fully operational, but the very existence of it was important.

Q: And the fact that the French General would blow up a Soviet radio tower to make the airport possible.

MAUTNER: Yes, it was a radio transmitter for the Russian-controlled news station. Those things were very important. They showed the Berliners that the allies were with them. The Berliners had become friends, that was quite obvious.

Q: Now, we know from history that the blockade was successful, that it ended in May 1949, and that Berlin settled into a new and freer life closely attached to the Federal Republic which by this time was becoming a force. Were there close links between West Berlin and the Federal Republic? How did the constitutional situation develop there?

MAUTNER: First of all, the Federal Basic Law, which was more or less a constitution, contained various articles, I don't recall them exactly anymore, that stated Berlin is a land of the Federal Republic. Some of those were considered not quite compatible with the Four-Power status by the allies and were suspended when the Federal Basic Law went into effect. It all took place after the end of the blockade May 12, 1949. The relationship between Berlin and the Federal Government was of course at that time still a little less close as it later became. Although Mayor Reuter...don't forget Mayor Reuter became mayor of all Berlin, nominally, but effectively of West Berlin on December 5, 1948. He pushed very much for actual inclusion of Berlin as a "land", i.e. a state of the Federal Republic. At that time, it was a talk of Berlin as the eleventh land of the FRG.

Q: The land of the Federal Republic?

MAUTNER: Yes. Berlin in the meantime had itself become a land, i.e. a state, and the Lord Mayor had become the Governing Mayor through that new Berlin constitution recognized by the western allies, but it was only to a limited extent a part of the Federal Republic. Berlin took over federal laws by a separate legislative act. Some federal laws were not permitted or were suspended in part by the allies, partly at the federal level and partly also at the Kommandatura level.

Now, Reuter's personality played of course a tremendous role, as did the personality of the higher leading persons in Germany from now on. The allies were fortunate to have people who could run the show, and the allies were also unusually intelligent enough to let them run the show. We had Reuter who knew the city in and out, and had the confidence of the population, and very fortunately spoke excellent English and excellent French and thereby was able to deal one on one with his allied partners, and really by his personality dominated the scene. Sometimes his push to get Berlin closer to the Federal Republic earned him rebuke. But running the place and making major decisions about how to advance the fortunes of the city, that was really left to him. We had people like Howard Jones, our economic counselor, who was bright enough to rely on the excellent people Reuter had brought back to Berlin. For example, people like Paul Hertz who was an emigre. He was once a Reichstag deputy and then emigrated to America and was in his sixties. Reuter brought him back because he was an excellent finance and economics expert. Howard Jones and most of the allies relied very much on Hertz's capability and let him run the economy. This is terribly important and also links in with the whole Marshall plan business because of the fact that we found excellent managers we could rely on and who could administer the American funded programs.

Q: Although their personalities were far different, it seems to me that Adenauer in West Germany played about the same dominant role vis-a-vis the high commissioners that Reuter did with the commandants of Berlin. A powerful personality could do what he wanted.

MAUTNER: Well, he couldn't do everything he wanted, but he could accomplish a lot because he had capability and a persuasive personality.

Now, Adenauer was a different man. He was far more scrappy, far more powerful in many ways, and had the good fortune to have somebody like Mr. McCloy there who trusted him.

Q: Now, as West Berlin recovered from the blockade, what was the situation in Western Germany which had its own government? Were there any links between West Berlin and East Berlin? Were there any attempts to get the city together again?

MAUTNER: I don't think there were many links at all. There was certainly no official contact on any level. There may have been on the lower level contacts, but I doubt it. There were of course a few, mostly Social Democratic deputies to the city assembly in the West who still lived in the east sector and who represented the east sector in the west sector parliament. Their luck ran out fairly soon however. They had to move into the west and that's about the size of the contacts.

Q: In other words, the conditions improved in West Berlin and did not really improve in East Berlin.

MAUTNER: No, they didn't improve there. There were some vast building projects on the so-called Frankfurter Allee which was renamed Stalin Allee. They built some typical Stalinist housing projects along the Allee for show. They built this enormous war memorial. In general I think the city was administered strictly on the Stalinist model. The big tensions arose on really serious east-west problems. Occasionally there were kidnappings. I remember the case of Dr. Linse who ran a western-oriented lawyers' organization that radiated out into the east. His kidnappings involved the KGB. It was a dirty cold war at that time. One of the really visible signs of the tension was the flow of refugees from the east to the west. They came through Berlin because access to West Berlin was still free. All they had to do was get on the S-bahn in East Berlin and go into West Berlin.

Q: You mean they could come from east Germany, the Soviet zone, right into West Berlin?

MAUTNER: They could come from the eastern zone into East Berlin, get on the S-bahn and come over. There were occasional attempts to stop them on the part of the east police, but in general there was a fairly free flow into West Berlin. At times there were great masses coming in whenever the pressure increased. With the political pressure for example to increase the work norms in the factories, and other hardships, collectivization of the farms, more people came out of the east and flowed into the west. West Berlin established refugee camps. People were screened to determine whether they were really refugees and then usually flown out to West Germany because they couldn't travel on the autobahn which was controlled by the east. That thing built up to the very high degree in early 1953 when again the pressure on the part of the eastern communists had increased. They needed higher production. They increased the

production norms and didn't increase the rations pay or anything else. That culminated in a big blow-up on June 16 and 17 when the East German workers, especially in the Hennigsdorf steel plant north of Berlin went on strike. They marched into East Berlin, demonstrated there vigorously. As Russian tanks moved in, they threw rocks at them. It was quite a show. Eventually of course it was quashed with brute force. We now know several hundred died. The demonstration extended into various localities in the eastern zone, such as Magdeburg. The 17th of June 1953 is also one of the landmarks of some importance. In fact, in West Germany it became a holiday, although the revolt was put down. Now, we had very interesting allied reactions on that. They were not terribly good, because there were some officials perturbed because the Germans revolted against an allied power.

Q: Even though it was the Russians?

MAUTNER: Even though it was the Soviets against whom the workers rebelled.

Q: Was this reflected in the attitude of Americans, French, or British in Berlin?

MAUTNER: Yes. At the commandants level where there were relatively new people, it was reflected in reactions like, "Got to be careful that we don't have a revolt spilling over into our part of the city." It was not a very nice situation. It was also made more difficult because Mayor Reuter happened to be out of town on that day. He was at an international Social Democratic rally in Austria and it became an urgent matter to get him back to Berlin as quickly as possible because the acting Mayor was an FDP man, Dr. Conrad, an inadequate substitute, indeed.

Q: FDP. What was FDP?

MAUTNER: Free Democratic Party.

Q: That's the liberal-right-wing conservative group?

MAUTNER: Yes. It was sort of a mixture of old fashioned liberals and right wingers, a funny combination. Dr. Conrad represented the mayor, he was a deputy mayor who was in charge at that time. Dr. Conrad was not a terribly effective or competent man. He was a nice person but that was about it. There wasn't too much confidence in him on the part of the allies or anybody else. They wanted Reuter back. But it required special permission to fly him home on a military aircraft, to get him on a British military aircraft flying out of Klagenfurt, I believe. But they refused to make that exception, so it took practically two days to get Reuter back and that was quite damaging. There were such problems as West Berlin Social Democrats calling for a protest rally in Kreuzberg which would have been a big rally.

Q: Kreuzberg is in the American sector?

MAUTNER: In the American sector, yes. The American commandant refused permission although the police president, Dr. Stumm, a Social Democrat, said it was perfectly safe to have it. There were on the commandants' level fears that it might spill over into the east sector and cause a lot of trouble. Anyway, the mood was not as good as it should have been, and that was

especially noticeable at the memorial ceremony for some West Berliners who had been killed in the revolt in East Berlin. It was at the City Hall, the Freedom Bell rang. The Kommandatura decided not to have the allied commandants present in uniform because that might give too much weight to the fact that the allies approved of this whole business. It was a typical reaction. Anyway, Cecil Lyon, our political advisor to our commandant, permitted my wife and me to take his state limousine with the American flag and we participated in the funeral procession and people thought this was a good show for the Americans. There was also an incident at the funeral commemorative ceremony in the City Assembly hall (the House of Representatives). There were two conspicuously empty seats where the British and the French liaison officers usually sat. I was there. I think this caused some comment.

Q: The British and the French weren't there under orders from their commandants, I assume?

MAUTNER: I assume under instructions, I don't know. Anyway, that shows the mood then.

Here I must mention RIAS (Radio in the American Sector) which had great influence in East Germany. The man in charge was Gordon Ewing. He had the responsibility of telling the people in the East what was going on. He could have been incendiary and start a blood bath. He received no guidance from his superiors in Bonn, nor in Berlin. He was able to draw on the wise (and informal) guidance of two FSO's in our Eastern Section, Charlie Hulick and Jim Ruchti and with them steered a sound path, avoiding extremist pressures. The three of them deserve much credit.

Q: If I may ask, what was the military situation? Did we have many troops there? Were they on alert? Were they on the border?

MAUTNER: The troops were certainly on the alert. I don't know how many troops we had there, at least 6,000. Of course, militarily we would have been overwhelmed by the Soviets. At the time, East Germans alone were revolting against Walter Ulbricht. What was he, he was the secretary general of the SED and the actual ruler in East Germany. In theory at least, according to four-power agreements, the allied forces could have marched into East Berlin and established order. Once the Russians countered, of course, that was no longer legally feasible. But at the time when the Germans were revolting I think the western powers had the right to do so. Of course, nobody had intention of doing that.

Q: What were the consequences of the June 17 uprising in our view?

MAUTNER: That's a good question. What were the long range consequences? Well I think it certainly shook up the East German regime. We mustn't forget that that was after Stalin had died.

Q: Yes. Stalin died in March and this took place in June.

MAUTNER: There was great turmoil, presumably in the ruling forces of the Soviet communist party.

There were rumors that Wollweber, who was the German chief of intelligence and of course a

KGB instrument, was advocating making concessions. He was removed shortly afterwards. This is all something I don't know too much about, but it was obviously of considerable importance. One of the consequences was a reinforced split of the city, because for the first time there was really a division. There were entrance/exit checks to control the refugee flow. It was not completely stopped but it was diminished, and on the part of the west, it became quite evident West Berlin had to be built up further and further. That became one of the really important issues. Reuter at that time made a remark which people didn't particularly appreciate. He said: "Now look, you got to build up West Berlin, you should really have made it a capital, but you didn't. West Berlin is the cheapest atom bomb in the heart of the eastern empire," meaning that as long as we held on to West Berlin, it's going to undermine the viability of at least East Germany, or maybe the whole Soviet empire. Reuter unfortunately died very soon thereafter, but I remember those words well.

Reuter's death was an enormous blow not only to West Berlin but also to the west German Social Democratic party where he had played a big role. It brought on new elections in West Berlin for a new Governing Mayor, and a new cabinet. It wasn't a direct election, of course, because the mayor was elected by the parliament, the city assembly. He appointed his cabinet and it was then approved by the parliament again. After a considerable struggle, Walter Schreiber, a CDU man, together with an FDP minority got together enough votes to become Governing Mayor. Walter Schreiber was also an old-time official of the Weimar Republic, a competent man, a little colorless but quite up to the job. One problem occurred. He had to appoint various FDP, Free Democratic Party people, to his cabinet. One of them was a Dr. Eich who was supposed to take over the economics department, which would have controlled the ERP, the American funded Marshall Plan programs. That was something we were very interested in and we didn't like the idea because Dr. Eich was not a terribly effective manager. So, I was able in various discussions, with of course the approval of my superiors, to talk Dr. Schreiber and all the people involved into keeping on Dr. Hertz who was from the SPD which was not in the government. Dr. Hertz did not become a cabinet member but in effect remained in control of the ERP and Marshall Plan affairs. That was terribly important because he ran the programs competently and honestly.

Q: Was Hertz by the way an American citizen or a German at this time?

MAUTNER: That I really don't know. I think he probably had dual citizenship. Hertz was really very much a key figure, honest and a very competent official. I'm not sure if Howard Jones was still there at that time, I don't think he was, but he was right in supporting Hertz. Eventually, the relationship between Berlin and the Federal Republic was enhanced. The fact that Schreiber was of the same party as Adenauer helped because there were fairly many close connections. Ernst Lemmer played a big role. Ernst Lemmer was a very interesting man, a good speaker, a good politician, very afraid of Adenauer, but he was a very important figure in the West Berlin party. Then slowly but surely, the legislative process became easier to administer in Berlin. Allied vetoes were less and less frequent. There was still a tendency on the part of some people to push for land status in the Federal Republic, but that didn't play as much a role as it did before. The next elections put the SPD in control again and Dr. Otto Suhr became the Governing Mayor. Dr. Suhr was a very nice, very honest, very straitlaced, excellent president of the city assembly, the Berlin parliament, but not a very good mayor. He was one of the typical Social Democratic intellectuals who worked much in theories and had problem administering the city. Besides, he

became very ill and died eventually of cancer. During Dr. Suhr's tenure there was the Hungarian revolt.

Q: In 1956.

MAUTNER: It played a big role also in Berlin insofar as there was a tremendous demonstration in front of the Schöenberg Rathaus, the City Hall, and some of the speakers were pathetic. I was right in the middle of the officials. Dr. Suhr's speech was intellectual, but it didn't strike a popular cord. He was followed by Ernst Lemmer who was a good demagogic speaker and did a little bit better, but by then the crowd was getting restless. Franz Neumann's speech was not very good and some groups began to call for a march to the Brandenburg Gate. Nobody knows what might have happened if they got to the border. Thereupon Willy Brandt, who was chairman of the Parliament, grabbed the microphone and made a dramatic speech quite spontaneously, hoarse as he was, and started marching the crowd not towards the Brandenburg Gate, but towards the monument commemorating the victims of Stalinism quite a distance from the Brandenburg Gate. There he led the singing of the federal anthem, "Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit," the third stanza of the old "Deutschland über alles," and people began to calm down and disperse. Some people say he may have avoided a blood bath. I don't think that is quite true but who knows what could have happened in a confrontation at the Brandenburg Gate. That episode really propelled Brandt into the big time although it was already quite clear that he was a coming man.

Q: He had been very close to Reuter as I understand?

MAUTNER: Brandt was very close to Reuter and also an important figure in the development of the SPD in West Germany because he represented, let's not call it a right wing, but a moderate wing. He was instrumental in 1958 in converting this old dogmatic rather stodgy Marxist party into something new through the Godesberger program. He had links and connections with the Catholic and the Protestant churches which was also important. It broadened the base of the Social Democratic Party so that it could finally jump over the eternal 33% it commanded.

Q: Was there any rumbling in East Berlin or in the Soviet zone during this period of the Polish and Hungarian uprisings in '56? Or were the Soviets in such control that...?

MAUTNER: I don't think there was much mood for rumbling in East Germany. The Soviets were clearly in control of the East German army and police. They controlled the situation very thoroughly. Of course, the control was exercised by the East German police, not the army.

Now, time moved on. There were some developments, again slightly closer relations with the Federal Republic. Suhr was difficult to deal with because he was rather scrappy vis-a-vis the commandants and resented the fact that the commandants still had sovereignty in West Berlin. He did not speak English very well, and no French. It was not a terribly good relationship but it worked. Then Suhr got ill, and died in August 1957. The parliament elected Willy Brandt as Governing Mayor who kept on most of the old cabinet and became a very strong figure in Berlin. He worked very closely with us, with the Americans. He established an excellent relationship with Bernard Gufler and Martin Hillenbrand, important since the relationship with Suhr was not all that happy. At that time Eleanor Dulles was already playing a considerable role -- becoming

as it were, "the Mutti of Berlin" -- by bringing into Berlin all kinds of aid projects: the Studentendorf, the Student Village, and the Congresshall, all involving conflict with the existing authorities. Gufler and Hillenbrand didn't really like her at all. She had, I think, in essence a very good effect on the American/Berlin relationship. Willy Brandt played her very well, was nice to her, and it helped. I think Berlin got the better of the deal. There was the "Klinikum" which was one of her favorite projects. It was a very good, interesting establishment for the medical profession and made it a part of the university.

There was one incident which I think was of considerable importance. That was just before I left Berlin. If I recall this correctly, an American army helicopter from Bavaria strayed into the east zone, had trouble and had to land there. There were negotiations to get it out, initially conducted by the Potsdam American military mission (each of the powers had a military mission in the other's zone). The Americans had one in the Soviet area and the Soviets had one in the American zone. The Potsdam Mission negotiations with the Soviets -- Colonel Pawel, I think, was the American -- were unsuccessful. The Soviets continued to insist we deal with the East Germans. For some reason, I am not sure at what level, it was decided, certainly not on the Berlin level, the American authorities began to talk to the East Germans and got the helicopter free. Now, there were a lot of people among us, including Mr. Gufler, who thought this was a serious mistake. The Soviets would have freed the helicopter after a while and we should not have negotiated with the East Germans. Don't forget we were very much in the cold war. The East and West Germans did not discuss things together nor did the West Berliners and the East Berliners, and western allies did not talk to the East German authorities. When I left, Willy Brandt had a little evening with us, and he was also of the opinion that it may have been a mistake to begin an American talk with East Germans. I left Berlin and had a fabulous goodbye party, a lunch given by the whole senate and the presidium of the parliament where I made a little speech. There were tears in some people's eyes (including mine); it was really a moving affair.

Q: When did this take place?

MAUTNER: It was in June 1958.

Q: So you had been in Berlin for thirteen years?

MAUTNER: Almost thirteen years.

Here I want to mention an interesting man and how his career interceded with mine. Herman Nickel was a high-school graduate, one of the first to be sent to the USA as exchange. Back in the '50s in Berlin, we hired him as a helper in my office. He went to meetings for me and reported on them and he was a highly intelligent, useful sounding board. Later, he emigrated to the U.S., eventually got a law degree, worked for some time for the NAACP, then joined Time-Life. In South Africa he was expelled in the 60s, eventually became bureau chief in Bonn and Time's diplomatic correspondent in Washington. Reagan appointed him Ambassador to South Africa where he served usefully and successfully for 5 years.

Q: And you had seen some changes in those thirteen years?

MAUTNER: I had seen many changes in those thirteen years. Berlin was still a smelling rubble when we moved in. And of course the change to real partnership. That was a genuine partnership. I should not forget, by the way, in this whole period, the important figure of Dr. Gunther Klein who was associated with Reuter and Willy Brandt. He was also an old time Weimar Republic man. He was at one time a Prussian Landrat, a high position, and a very intelligent, very shrewd man. He was strictly a "burgerlich" (bourgeois) type of Social Democrat and was very important in handling the legal relationship between the Federal Republic and Berlin. He was also someone who pushed very strongly for closer integration of Berlin and Bonn. One of his problems with the allied representatives was that he did not speak any English or French, although he knew Latin and Greek. I cannot emphasize enough how important it was in Germany that we had so many Germans who spoke excellent English, and Americans who spoke excellent German.

ROBERT R. BOWIE
U.S. Military Officer
Germany (1945-1946)

U.S. Military Officer
Germany (1950-1952)

A university professor and senior level public servant, Dr. Bowie was educated at Princeton and Harvard Universities. He practiced law in Baltimore before entering the U.S. Army, where he served from 1942 to 1946. After the end of World War II he served in Germany as Deputy Military Governor. His service with the US government included Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Counselor of the Department of State and Director of Policy Planning for the State Department. He was also Professor at Harvard University. Dr. Bowie was interviewed by Robert Gerald Livingston, Philipp Gassert, Richard Immerman, Paul Steege, Charles Stuart Kennedy and a public audience at the German Historical Institute, Washington, DC on February 19, 2008

Q-Steege: Well, first off, thank you very much for this opportunity. It's a real pleasure to be able to engage in this conversation with you. Building on this notion of Clay and Clay on the ground, as it were, in Germany, one of the things that really strikes me about your experiences is the ways in which you were going back and forth. So you were in Berlin in 1945 and 1946, then back in the States, in Germany from 1949 into the early 50s and then back in the United States. And I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about the different perspectives—how Berlin looked from Berlin; how Berlin and Germany looked from the United States. One foreign service veteran talked to me once about Clay and others—and particularly on lower levels within the military government in Germany—being afflicted by localitis—that they were too invested in the situation there and that things looked different to them than they did from the United States. So for you as somebody who was going back and forth, did the way in which Germany looked change? Did it look different in the United States? Was there a gap in terms of what people saw or understood from your perspective?

BOWIE: Well, I'm not sure I can answer it well, but anyway. When you were in Germany at that time, right after the war, you found it hard to believe the degree of disorganization and destruction and chaos. You'd go out on the street, you'd see the rubble, and you were aware that there was no transportation, no communication, no mail, no telephone, and you drove up the Autobahn, the roadway was normally in place, but every time you got to a bridge it had been blown out. So you had to go down into the valley, come up again on very improvised roads, and similarly, whenever you came across a little town, it was being run by a small detachment of maybe four or five soldiers from the Bronx, some of whom had some German. But they were running the place, and they would mobilize enough of the talent in the town to be able to try to make things go to some degree. But bear in mind, the water supply had probably been broken by the bombing, there was no collection of the garbage, no sewage, and no government, of course, and so there was a real sense of chaos everywhere. I think probably back in Washington, they didn't have any very clear picture of this. The initial directive for the military government did not seem to reflect these conditions (Clay had no part in drafting it), and it was fairly draconian. It was nowhere near as bad as the Morgenthau Plan, which had been temporarily approved by Roosevelt and was really later described as the pastoralization of Germany, really wiping out the industrial base. But Stimson and others had said to Roosevelt, he just couldn't do that, and then they adopted 1067, which was intermediate. But even that was pretty draconian, and it called for no effort at reconstruction of Germany and nothing should be done in that direction except to prevent starvation, or such a degree of difficulty that it threatened the occupation itself. So anyway, in Germany, you were keenly aware of this situation as I described. The people in Washington, I think, had a hard time visualizing this, such that to some considerable degree, you had bifurcation. There were other complications regarding policy. One was the dual source of instructions. As Deputy Military Governor, Clay reported to the Defense Department. And at the same time, he was getting instructions from the State Department. And this often created a considerable amount of tension. And the second thing that affected policy was the Potsdam meeting which was held not long after the end of the war. That was a three-power meeting, because the French were not yet included in the occupation. And the Potsdam protocol was somewhat more tempered than 1067. It provided that the recovery of Germany should not be allowed to go further than would give the Germans a standard of living comparable or similar to that of the rest of Europe, which was not very high either at that time. But nevertheless, it wasn't anywhere near so rigid or strict as 1067. The other thing which was later very important was that the Potsdam agreement or protocol called for treating Germany as a unit, as a single economic entity, because the original plans had provided for separate zones within Germany for each of the occupying powers, and each of the military governors was in charge of that sector of Germany. And the Potsdam agreement also provided that there should be German administrative organizations, agencies, for the various necessary functions, which would treat Germany as a whole. There would be no German government, but these various agencies would be jointly supervised by the Control Council of the various governors. So they would be in control in the end, but they would use these German agencies as the means of carrying them out. Very early on, Clay concluded that his objective was to end up with a Germany which would be peaceful and not threatening, and that in order to do that, it was necessary that it be sufficiently prosperous to at least be able to have a decent living, and that there should be a great emphasis on quickly restoring democracy, which would ultimately make it possible to turn over to the Germans the governing of the country. So he felt that 1067 was too constraining. And so he early

started to try to restore economic life as best he could because he thought that Germany could not possibly be peace-loving and stable if it was down on its knees. And secondly, he wanted to start right away to give Germans some experience with democracy, and so he was eager to get a framework that he could use for proceeding rapidly with both those. He tried to, in effect, interpret the instructions by writing an outline himself of what he was doing with respect to early stages in the governing of Germany, and tried to get it approved and put out. The State Department and Defense Departments said no. [To Steege] Do you want me to go on now? [Steege nods.]

Because they would not accept any modification of 1067, so he took another route. He knew Jimmy Byrnes—he had worked for some months before coming to Germany, when Byrnes was in charge of war mobilization, in the White House, and had now become Secretary of State. So he arranged with Byrnes to come to Germany and essentially wrote him a speech which incorporated his conception of what ought to be the policy. And Byrnes made that speech in Stuttgart in September 1946. Essentially Clay used that as the basis for saying this is what our policy is. So he really just circumvented the two departments back home. And, of course, in my opinion, he was the one who had a rational and coherent policy which was addressing both the early stages of democracy and the early stages of trying to get some degree of economic revival.

Q-Steege: Could I just follow up on that a little bit... I was really struck by your comment about Clay and his manipulation of the Stuttgart speech by Byrnes and wondered about how you would kind of map out causation, especially with the relationship between Clay and Germans and particularly German politicians—to what extent did they stimulate Clay in particular ways, or were they something that Clay also used to pursue his ends? How would you explain that relationship?

BOWIE: You mean, his relationship with the Germans?

Q-Steege: Yes, and the ways in which that then shaped his relationship with his superiors.

BOWIE: Well, Clay was a genuine democrat. He really believed in democracy. His father had been a senator, and he had been a pageboy in the Senate at one point. So he had a very good political instinct. So, early on, within a few months after he took over, he decided that he was going to name minister-presidents for each of the Länder (states) of his area. He named as minister-presidents people who had been in the resistance or had not been tarred with the Nazi regime. And he created a Council called the Länderrat, composed of the minister-presidents, which met regularly. He attended to give them instructions and for discussion about conditions and problems. And he formed a fairly congenial relationship because he insisted on give-and-take there, too. I mean, he sought their advice, their information, and they became very cooperative. And he also instituted having regular press conferences, where he encouraged the German press people, to their amazement, to ask hard questions about things that they really wanted to know. This was all demonstrating, as he was trying to do, what he thought they ought to remember about democracy. When we moved to Berlin, he got to know Reuter who had been a communist but who was anti-communist now, and formed a high respect for him

I think Clay was committed to carrying out the various requirements which had been set out in

1067 and also in Potsdam. Essentially there were four D's: there was denazification, demilitarization, the destruction of war-making potential, and then a deconcentration of the large enterprises, particularly in the Ruhr. And he was quite prepared to carry out those policies, but he wanted to do so in a fashion which would return some degree of understanding of democracy and also, as I say, restore a viable living standard, because the living standards were terrible. In addition to the environment which I described, there was a severe shortage, as there was in much of Europe, of food. The theoretical ration for the people was twelve hundred calories, and that was often not fulfilled because the farmers who had some grain on their farms didn't want to part with that because there was nothing to buy and the currency was no good. So it was a very tight problem with respect to food, and it was necessary to import a great deal of the food from the United States.

But coming back to the relations between Clay and the Germans, it was, I think, a very cooperative one, in which he tried to give the feeling that he respected them and that they were expected to respond, and they did.

Q-Livingston: Let's stay with the Clay period. Richard, do you have any particular questions on the Clay period? I think if we could stay, do, divide in that way, stick with one period...

Q-Immerman: Well, if you want to talk about Clay—I don't want to talk about the Clay period, so, in other words, you can go on. As I said, I actually wanted to build on that and move forward chronologically, but if you want to...

Q-Livingston: Sure, sure! Go ahead.

Q-Immerman: Well, I'm curious, building on what you just said...But first let me say how nice it is to see you again. In fact, I believe Bob and I were together last at George Kennan's hundredth birthday party, which says something about something. You've just provided us with an extremely detailed assessment of what was going on on the ground in Germany in 1946, 47, the origins of the Cold War. In 1953, you're back in Washington, and—now the biography should be corrected because I think that's important. Bob was not only director of the policy planning staff; he was the State Department representative on the Planning Board of the National Security Council, the board that was working on policy. One of these questions has to do with Solarium and things like that, and Bob was directly involved. This is a period, basically transition from the Stalin note to the elections in Germany in 1953; the proposal to establish the European Defense Community; statements about agonizing reappraisal and other things that are all going on during this period. So my question is, when you come back to Washington, to what extent does your experience in Germany, your expertise in Germany, and for that matter, anybody else's expertise in Germany, directly influence policy as it is being evolved. And I particularly will put this in the context of, let's say, the relationship between Eisenhower, who had direct experience in Germany, and, let's say, Dulles, whose experience was much more peripheral. So here you are now in the center of things. How much difference, do you think, it makes that you actually arrive in that position having been involved in what happened earlier with the negotiations over the European Coal and Steel? I mean, you're right in the middle of everything. Does the administration exploit your expertise?

BOWIE: By early in 1953, when I joined the Eisenhower administration, the basic policies toward Germany had been settled and were in progress. The Marshall Plan had recognized that German revival was essential for European recovery. A democratic government had been established with Adenauer as Chancellor. The transition from occupation to sovereignty was underway. The European Coal and Steel Community was to integrate Germany with Western Europe and reconcile Germany and France. Adenauer solidly supported this course. He believed it would lead to stable peace in Europe. And he was convinced it was the best way to achieve ultimate reunification with Eastern Germany.

The SPD, led by Schumaker, strongly anti-communist, opposed this policy. Instead, with the millions of refugees from the East, he supported making reunification the primary goal and rejected integration with the West as impeding it.

Still unsettled was the critical issue of Germany's role in defense. Adenauer had raised this question after the invasion of South Korea from the North, and reports of Soviet military buildup in East Germany. Deeply concerned about Germany's vulnerability, he insisted that the Germans should be able in some way to contribute to their defense. NATO had only limited conventional forces, depending heavily on U.S. nuclear forces for deterrence.

After debating various alternatives, a consensus developed to negotiate a treaty, based on a French proposal prepared by Monnet, for a European Defense Community. That was now up for ratification. Dulles and Eisenhower, who strongly favored European unity, sought to encourage its adoption but without success.

To return to Richard's question: I was involved in the process of completing the German policy, especially the EDC, and an alternative after its failure. But my primary activity as Director of Policy Planning and member of the NSC Planning Board was in drafting Eisenhower's Cold War strategy.

Q-Livingston: Paul, do you have any more questions on the earlier period? Or?

Q-Steege: [to Immerman] Did you want to follow up on that? [Immerman shakes his head]. The question I'd just ask, so, in 1953 the uprising in East Germany and, what has come to light since 1989 certainly is the ways in which it was not just in East Berlin but across all of East Germany, in hundreds of towns, and that this really was a massive scale—was that something that was known to you and to the Eisenhower administration at the time, this massive scale of the uprising, and, does that matter, or not? Was that a transformative moment, in terms of understanding either Germany or as a way of understanding the global strategic situation in which the United States found itself?

BOWIE: Well, this was obviously something which was a very great concern because of two reasons: 1) the Eisenhower campaign had been urging more attention to the liberation of Eastern Europe, and Dulles was particularly eager to do this, to appeal to the votes which would be attracted by the idea of the liberation of Eastern Europe. And one time during the campaign he made a speech which was rather strong about how it was going to get these people free, and Eisenhower called him and said, Look, you're perfectly free to argue for our concern about

Eastern Europe, but you must say always that any liberation would be by peaceful means. So, I mean, Eisenhower had no question about this. He was not going to have any idea that the United States was going to use force to get freedom for East Europe. One of the other basic tenets of Eisenhower was that a nuclear war would be an absolute suicidal disaster for both sides, and that therefore one of his key purposes was to see to it that our effort to contain the Soviets not lead to the possibility of direct conflict between the forces, because he felt that if you had a real conflict between the two, it would almost surely escalate, and be highly likely to go on until it got up into using nuclear weapons. And, as I say, he thought that would be suicidal for both sides. He was absolutely convinced that by threatening retaliation he could deter the Soviets from using nuclear weapons and even from a large-scale attack. Earlier, when it was discovered that the Soviets surprisingly had developed nuclear weapons much sooner than expected, Truman had approved NSC 68. This was an analysis of what this implied and concluded that when they got an adequate inventory of nuclear weapons (by 1954), they would be tempted to use them to annihilate the United States. And Eisenhower rejected this and was convinced that we could deter the Soviet Union if we made them understand the consequences of any such event. Nevertheless, he was fearful that if their regime or empire was really threatened, then it might very well cause the happening of military conflict.

So, coming back now the uprising in Germany, certain people like C. D. Jackson said, Oh, this is now a wonderful opportunity; we'll just exploit this to the full. And some people were urging that we make weapons available to the people who were carrying on the uprising. Eisenhower was opposed to this. He said, We cannot create a situation in which they think their empire is threatened and we cause actual, direct conflict between the two sides. That was also his attitude even with the Hungarian problem; it was terrible to sit by and not do something, and there were people who said we should at least take some effort to give them weapons and support, but he said, No, he was not going to jeopardize the possibility of peace, of any real conflict, that, agonizing as it was to see the Russians overrunning Hungary, for example, or the putting down of the uprising in Berlin and elsewhere in 1953, that was simply too risky, in his opinion, for the longer term, for the maintenance of deterrence.

Q-Livingston: Could I ask, Bob, at this point, what about the intermediate stage? What were Eisenhower's views, your own views, about covert action operations such as Frank Wisner and others were running against Eastern Europe?

BOWIE: Under Truman, the CIA with the cooperation of the Policy Planning Staff led by Kennan had carried on a number of covert actions with respect to Eastern Europe. They dropped agents into Eastern Europe and similar activities with the purpose of trying to create trouble. By the end of the Truman administration, the CIA wrote a report saying—contrary to what had been the premise—that we don't have the instruments and we don't have the means of carrying out any such covert actions effectively, and it was foolish to keep on doing them. Eisenhower's attitude was consistent with what I have said. He didn't see any sense in using such covert activities; he didn't think they would work. At the same time, he was quite prepared to use covert action on our side of the line where he felt that governments were being subverted, and so, in various places, he did use these, and sometimes it was rather doubtful wisdom, but nevertheless, that was fundamentally his policy. So he wasn't opposed to using covert action, but he didn't believe it was a useful way to deal directly with the Soviets, but it was a way to deal with the

threat of Soviet subversion on our side of the line. (pause) Is that it?

Q-Livingston: That's it. (laughter) OK, Richard.

Q-Immerman: I want to go back to that period, first of all, in the aftermath of the Berlin uprisings in 1953, which, in a way, you indicated, were sort of a non-event, that if anything had reinforced the predisposition of the administration before that not to take any sort of aggressive or risky behavior to support indigenous movements, and in this case, I think it was an indigenous movement...but, I'm still trying to locate the space in which policy was, to some extent, in flux. You mentioned earlier the difficulty of reconciling the integration of Germany into the Western alliance, while at the same time supporting, to some extent, the eventual unification of Germany and keeping that, which, I think we can agree, was a very difficult balancing act for decades. I wonder if you can comment, though, that just at this time in 1953, we have Kennan, for the first time, explicitly proposing the potential demilitarization of Germany, or the United States's withdrawal of Germany, in part as a way of forcing the Soviets to reciprocate, and therefore moving the Soviet forces from his view farther to the east, and that's followed almost immediately by Dulles proposing similarly a withdrawal of both Western and Soviet troops on the premise that the United States might, the West might never again be in as strong a position as it is then to basically compel some type of settlement through the middle of Europe. So I guess my question is, to what extent was there still debate in Washington as to a) the sort of deployment of US troops or NATO troops in Germany for the foreseeable future, or some sort of effort at that point to either withdraw troops, neutralize Germany, some other solution other than the one that turned out to be what was followed, and many would argue was successful?

BOWIE: Well, I think that the view of those who had been arguing that the way to deal with Germany was to integrate it was that if you tried to create a Germany which was theoretically or really neutral, there was a real likelihood that the Soviets by subversion would be able ultimately to become dominant in that whole area. After all, of course, you'd had the whole period after the war of seeing how the Soviets, when they got any real opportunity to do so, had been able to really put the screws on each of the Eastern European members of its empire. And so it was really the belief that a Germany which was neutral would play games, would try to play both sides of the street, and that, under those circumstances, it was likely to end up with Soviet domination rather than real independence, real neutrality. And so, I think Eisenhower, for example, had no interest whatever in trying to have a neutralized Germany, because he believed it would be a source of instability. So that notion was really rejected by the administration.

Q-Livingston: We've got about another half an hour, and I'd like to open it up, if the panelists are willing, to chances from the audience, let me say if you have questions, please...

BOWIE: Now, let me just tell you so you won't be misled that after you ask the question, I will not have understood it because of all the echoes, and Livingston's going to translate for me.

Q-Livingston: Right, and there are certain subjects that Bob can't address because he just simply wasn't there, for the time of the airlift, for example. So, please stand up, and, we have a microphone, don't we? And put your question directly to Bob and move forward if you want to, Peter, and make it as clear as you can.

Peter Quint: My name's Peter Quint, and I'd like to go back to McCloy and ask about the release of convicted war criminals by McCloy and ask to what extent was this a decision of his, and to what extent was this a decision that came from the higher echelons of the government? And, what did he...was this an agonizing, a difficult decision for him, or was it something that he thought was clearly correct?

Q-Livingston: [repeating for Bowie]: The question of the war criminals—what was McCloy's attitude toward that. Was it his decision, the decisions to release, pardon the war criminals, [did it] come from higher echelons of the government? Was it hard for him to do this? [To Quint] You didn't ask this but, [To Bowie]: What sort of pressures was he under to bring about these pardons? [To audience]: Bob was intimately involved in this.

BOWIE: Well, he inherited this from Clay. Clay had said he would like to deal with it, but he never got around to finishing it off. And so there were something like a hundred of these people of various sorts who had been convicted with sentences of all sorts, high, up and down: ten years on one end and death penalty on the other. And McCloy, as the military governor, had to deal with these. The pressures from the Germans to mitigate or deal with these in various ways were just horrendous. It was unbelievable! The churches urged that there be clemency or that the sentences be changed, particularly with respect to the death penalties, which were I think about a dozen or so, and they cited the fact that the Basic Law which they had adopted outlawed death penalties. And, as I say, many of the high church people were pressing very hard and some of Germans, particularly military types, tried to create the impression that he should mitigate these sentences if he expected Germany to contribute to defense. Acheson, essentially, I think, took the view that it was entirely up to McCloy. There was no instruction, as far as I know, from headquarters to McCloy. And McCloy told Acheson that he wanted to have an independent committee that would advise him on what to do with respect to these various sentences. And he got a committee of three people, I think it was three. One of them was a distinguished New York judge named Peck. The second one was a man, a New Yorker, who was in charge of paroles and modifying sentences in the New York system. And the third person was a man named Snow who had been and still was, I think, a legal advisor in the State Department. So these three people were convened to review all the sentences and to give their advice to McCloy. They studied these records. They were not supposed to go back over the testimony, but they were supposed to consider all the other aspects of the sentences. One of them did a study during the summer, and the three of them got together for about six weeks and went over all the records and came up with a report.

The report recommended that many of the sentences be modified. With respect to the death penalties, I think it was something like a half of them which they thought should be reduced to life sentences, and then with respect to the lesser sentences, they proposed a very large number be reduced somewhat. The principle reason for many of these was the disparity among the different sentences for similar offenses that had been heard by different judges, and second, that there was a general tendency for the sentences given in the early stages to be more severe than those given in the later cases. So they tried, I think, to more or less equalize them. And in the case of a number of the death penalties, they decided that it was excessive, in view of the facts found by the court on which the sentence was based.

After McCloy had had a chance to study the report and talk to the committee, he did reduce a number of the sentences in accordance with their proposals. And also changed, I guess, about half or a significant part of the death penalties. One of the sentences which was changed, which later caused a lot of press coverage and protests, was about Krupp. Krupp was the son. The father had been indicted, but it was found that he was not capable of having a trial. He was ill or something. So they simply took his son who had had a relatively minor position in the Krupp enterprise—I think he was a member of the Board of Directors or something like that. Most of these cases had involved slave labor; that was the charge. And, anyway, McCloy apparently was somewhat affected by the idea that they had simply substituted the son because they couldn't get the father. So I think that was one case where it was influenced by that condition. But otherwise, he'd largely followed the advice of the committee.

Q-Livingston: Your advice. You advised on this too, did you not?

BOWIE: I didn't advise him on the individual cases. I reviewed the Board Report, and I gave him my general impression that they had been somewhat lenient. But I think he felt the board had been conscientious, they were men of integrity, and that they had done their best. The later charges that he made his decisions to placate the Germans, in the sense that they were not based on the merits, I think is absolutely false. I think he really did his very level best as a lawyer to do what he felt was just or fair in light of all the circumstances.

Q-Livingston: Any more questions from the floor, please, would you take a microphone and get as close to Bob as you can.

Speaker: Mr. Bowie, this is about Clay and the currency reform. Did Clay have to battle tooth and nail with Washington to get the authority to execute the currency reform, or did he have to simply outfox Washington in the way that you described earlier today?

Q-Livingston: [repeating for Bowie]: The currency reform, which is, of course, after your time. Did Clay have difficulties with Washington on trying to get the currency reform put through? Did he have to outfox Washington in order to get it put through? This was the currency reform of 1948.

BOWIE: I just honestly don't know. I can't remember a thing about that. This was, I think, after you had the merger of the three zones for the purpose of administration, and they decided that it would be necessary and desirable to have a currency reform. I think the initiative for some of these things came from Erhard, and I simply don't remember a thing about whether or not Washington intervened. He did, I think, have various arguments from time to time about economic policy, which the State Department argued for, and he had a different policy. And I think there was a feeling on the part of the State Department that he was kind of difficult to deal with. But, I can't answer your question.

Q-Livingston: Do we have anything more from the floor? At all? I have a couple of questions, but, Paul and Richard? We've got about fifteen minutes left. (Pause). Well, I wanted to ask you to talk a little about something we talked about in the car coming down, Bob, which I think is

perhaps not given sufficient attention. And that is, in this period of the transition from the Allied Control Council to the bizonal and trizonal, the obstacles that the French put up. I remember you were saying the other day on the phone that in some regards, the French were more difficult in the early years than even the Soviets were, in terms of four-power administration. Could you say a little bit about that?

BOWIE: Well, I don't know that I'd say that they were more difficult than the Soviets, but the French had lively memories of the German occupation, and they had more historic memories of other fights with the Germans. And so they were inclined to resist anything which had a tendency to build up the power of Germany even in a small way. And so, in the very early stages in particular, when the Control Council began to meet and tried to keep Germany as a whole and tried to enact certain provisions that had the effect of reviving the power or strength of Germany, even in a mild way, they tended to take the initiative in opposing the decisions by the Control Council. It was pretty clear that the Soviets were letting them carry the onus of being the bad boy because as long as the French were blocking it, the Soviets didn't need to. But sooner or later, it became clear that they were at least as strong in opposing many of these actions as were the Soviets. I should say at the very beginning, Clay considered that one of his implicit instructions was to try to see if they couldn't continue the cooperation which they had had more or less during the war with the Soviets. In other words, there was a real effort to try to have friendly or cooperative relations with the Soviets. And, in fact, this was actually successful in a certain mild, human way in the first year or two. I remember, for example, in the first New Year's, we had a four-power ball, and each country provided part of the entertainment. We had some kind of a jazz contribution, and I think the French had a well-known chanteuse. The Russians, I think, had a Russian chorus. But, in any event, Bill Draper, who was the economic man for Clay, took the little group of four and took me along because I was living with him to the rest-and-relaxation facilities that the army had acquired in the Riviera. And so we spent a weekend in the Riviera. And on the way back home, the French representative had us stop in Paris, and he took us to a show at one of the café...places, and the older Russian, who was rather puritanical, was horrified at the displays, the nudity. The young man who was his assistant obviously had a somewhat different reaction. (laughter) But what I'm trying to illustrate is that we were really making an effort to have a nice relation with the Russians, it was more or less reciprocal. Because many of these people had been recruited for some of these posts from academic or other places, that is, they were not strictly party types. But after about two or three years, it began to be clear that the Soviets were not going to be cooperative. But it took the French some years before they began to recognize the desirability of trying to seek reconciliation, before they were willing, for example, to join in on the tripartite arrangements, to try to treat Germany, as provided in the Potsdam protocol, as a unit in order to make it possible for recovery. But even so, they were sensitive about the rearming of Germany. That was quite a different thing.

Q-Livingston: I've got one more thing I'd like to ask before we break unless either of you do [to Steege and Immerman] and that is to describe—which is well described in the book that you and Richard Immerman wrote together—the Solarium exercise. What that was, you know, and what brought it on, and what was the outcome.

BOWIE: Well, it started with a meeting that was held by Eisenhower very shortly after he took office, and the meeting included people like Alan Dulles, and somebody from the Defense

Department, and Eisenhower himself, and Humphrey from Treasury. Anyway, they were talking generally about what the situation was vis-à-vis the Russians. And Dulles expressed some rather pessimistic views—more or less that the Russians were doing better than we were in terms of how they were conducting their policy, and simply raised the question about whether or not we were having the right stance with respect to the Russians. So, Eisenhower said, Well, why don't we have a real exploration of this? And he said, I think we ought to have three small groups composed of qualified people from the CIA, the Defense and State Departments, I mean, diplomats, or people who knew about diplomacy, policy-making, and ask each of them to take a particular policy possibility. There will be three of them: there will be continuation of containment; drawing the line, as it was described, in which you said to the Soviets, if you use any method of getting beyond your present area, you're going to have a fight. We'll resist it very strongly; and finally, rollback. And each of the three groups was given about six weeks to make a study, and they were told to make the best case they could for this point of view, this policy, in each case. And then, they did this, each of them made a written report, but then they had a meeting in the White House for almost a whole day, in which they made their presentations, and they were supposed to explain what it was that you would do, what would be the risks and costs, what would be the likelihood of success, and so on, and particularly, the risk of war. And, so each of them made their written report, and then each of them made their oral presentation. And you had the people from the Planning Board, the members of the NSC itself, and Eisenhower, and the Cabinet. And, at the end, Eisenhower gave about a 45-minute reaction or summary of his impression of the whole thing. And amazingly, Kennan once said essentially that Eisenhower showed his intellectual ascendancy over any man in the room, and everybody was astounded; that included himself. (laughter)

Anyway, the Solarium Exercise was treated only as an input to making the strategy. Eisenhower asked the NSC adviser Cutler to put together with the help of the members of the groups the gist of what had been said and to give it to the Planning Board to use as one input in preparing the first NSC strategy paper. And this caused a little problem because when Cutler put it together, he framed it as a directive, and the Planning Board took the view that he was not supposed to be a policy-maker, and that it was not appropriate for him to be trying to dictate or suggest that this was an instruction. In fact, anticipating this, Dulles wrote me a little note saying, We did not intend what was prepared by Cutler to be an instruction. It was only intended to be an input. I expect you and the other members of the Planning Board to give us your judgment of what you feel should be the right policy. Anyway, it was only treated as an input. But Eisenhower himself told Goodpasture, who he put on the rollback panel, that he was putting him on because he wanted to be sure that somebody had good sense. (laughter)

Q-Livingston: Do we have any other questions at all here in the audience? Well, thank you all very much. Thank you, Paul; thank you, Richard; thank you, Stu; and thank you, Bob, most of all, for answering all the questions that you said you couldn't answer! Including many more. (laughter) Philipp, we're about to break up, but if you have any other questions?

Q-Gassert: Did anyone ask the Berlin Airlift question? How did it impact the political scene in this country?

Q-Livingston: He wants to ask you about the Berlin Airlift. How did it impact the political scene

in this country? You were back here then.

BOWIE: Well, the way in which the Berliners endured this and stuck with it I think impressed the public back here. It was a plus from the point of view of sympathy for the Berliners. The public was outraged by the blockading the food and all the rest. And there was considerable pride in the fact that the airlift had outdone the Soviets, and I think a considerable amount spilled over into admiration for the way in which the Germans had lived through it and helped with it.

Q-Gassert: So, it really changed the image of Germany, I guess.

BOWIE: This was one of the things also that enormously impressed Clay with respect to Reuter because when he was starting this, it wasn't altogether clear just how well it was going to work, or how much he was going to be able to ship. They were able to ship much more than they had expected, especially after he got the larger planes. I think Clay had said to Reuter, Do you think the people of Berlin will be able to manage this if we try, and he assured him absolutely that they would, and Reuter's leadership apparently was very important in making sure that the people stood staunchly with it.

Q-Livingston: Paul, do you want to ask, it was your period for your book—does that fit more or less with your impression?

Q-Steege: Well, I think that the relationship between Reuter and Clay is really important, but I think the thing that I would underscore is the ways in which Berliners played an absolutely vital role in sustaining themselves, and that the airlift never brought in all that people needed to survive. One of the interesting things is the ways in which the blockade was never total and the airlift was never total, and that Berliners played a very important role in shaping how that event operated. But I think the ways in which Clay and Reuter were very astute at creating impressions about what was going on and also of elaborating the solidarity were absolutely central to that moment.

Q-Livingston: Well, that's where your Alltagsgeschichte really does play a role. And I think the other factor about Berlin, of course, was—and that was true right to the end—it attracted the media, even though, for all sorts of reasons, and I mean, the best American reporters were in Berlin during the time—Maggie Higgins and all these people, reporting extensively, and that made a difference.

BOWIE: And, you know, it was a real success. And it was a sort of achievement by technological means and peaceful means—it made a good impression.

Q-Livingston: Well, let me thank you again for all your participation, and I guess we have little something in the other room, right?

HELMUT SONNENFELDT
US Army

Germany (1946)

Helmut Sonnenfeldt was born in Berlin in 1926. He served in the US Army in Germany during World War II and later attended Johns Hopkins University and the School of Advanced International Studies. He joined the State Department in 1952 and later worked with the NSC, returning to the State Department in 1974 as the Counselor of the Department of State. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in July 2000.

SONNENFELDT: So I got my first glimpse of all the destruction in northern France and Germany, and ended up in Marburg, Germany, where we all got off. I looked around to see what I was supposed to do next, when a guy came up to me and called me by my name. It turned out to be a man who I'd been in basic training with, in Florida. I can't remember his name. But he recognized me, and he said, "Hey! We've been waiting for you! You're going to the CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps)."

I said, "What's the CIC?" and he said, "that's the Counter Intelligence Corps."

And I said, "Well, I don't know anything about intelligence."

He said, "Yea, well, we'll make a Counter Intelligence Corps guy out of you, a special agent. You have to report to the headquarters of the CIC in Bad Nauheim, and then they'll work out your training, and then you'll get assigned, and you have totally probably ten months here before you'll be due for getting home again."

So I went through all of that, reported, and was sent to Oberammergau in Bavaria, which had some months earlier been turned into what was called the European Theater Intelligence School. It was an old "Luftwaffe" (German Air Force) base or something like that. I was to be there for six weeks of training. We're now getting into maybe late November or December of 1945.

So I got put into some unit; the class was just forming. The first couple of weeks were supposed to be about Germany: the Nazi party and history of it, the different sub-units of it (the Army had manuals for this); and also the general policy of the U.S. about how you try to hunt down people above a certain rank in all these organizations and arrest them for further examination. A lot of these arrests had already happened, because this is six months after the end of the war. I found the classes (there were about 30 people) boring and ill-informed. The manuals were okay, although I obviously knew a lot more than the authors of the manuals.

Q: You knew a lot of it.

SONNENFELDT: So I approached a few people there, none of whom I knew. Some German-born people had somehow gotten into this program and into this school. I said, "How would you guys like to sit down in the evening with the manuals, and I'll go through those with you, because I think I know more than these captains or sergeants who are teaching the course?"

Gradually, I think we put together maybe ten or twelve men, and we sat around in one of the

classrooms, and - based on the manual, but also on my own recollections - I just essentially went through all this material. A lot of these men, particularly those who had been born in Germany, had some knowledge of their own. So we had a seminar. One day, a lieutenant came past there, stood in the doorway, and listened. After it was over, he put on a monocle and said, "You, Sonnenfeldt!"

I said, "Yes."

He said, "Well, I'm Lieutenant Kraemer, Fritz Kraemer. You have a remarkable gift for teaching! We really ought to have you come to this school and teach."

I said, "Well, I...you know...you'll have to fight that out with the headquarters of the Counter Intelligence Corps because they've got me assigned after this is over."

Then a day or two or three later, he came back and said, "Well, assignment is assignment, but I want to see more of you because you obviously have something to offer. You're just like a guy that I became very friendly with in the 84th Division when we were still in Louisiana, and then he came over here to Europe, and his name is Henry Kissinger, and I want you to meet him because he is also a very gifted man."

Q: [Laughter]

SONNENFELDT: So that's where that connection was made, in late 1945 or early '46. Anyway, that particular training was over after a few weeks. We learned how to investigate people, how to establish informants, how to arrest people, and interrogate, and so on. I think they actually cut the training program short because they needed people in the field because of the rapid demobilization of our forces.

Q: Yes.

SONNENFELDT: I went back to Bad Nauheim and was assigned to a sub-region of the CIC in Fulda, right near the Soviet Occupation Zone. It was famous later because of the Fulda Gap [a break in the mountains through which, it was feared, the Soviet Army might attack westward]. So I reported there, and they assigned me as the number-two CIC agent in a county seat, a "Kreis," Kreis Lauterbach.

I was to replace a guy who had been in the CIC for much longer (and had been in it already when the fighting was still going on), and he was due to go home. So I got quick on-the-spot training and more about the techniques of operating a CIC office in a place like that. There was a Military Government team there also, a very small team. So I really had several challenging and fascinating months. I was transferred to several county seats during the time that I served there.

In this early phase of the occupation, we tried to find whatever people in what was called the "automatic arrest" category who were still missing. The term was from the basic occupation directive and referred to individuals above a certain rank in the multiplicity of Nazi organizations. We got instructions from higher headquarters to look for a particular individual

whom they had also tracked through intercepting mail and telephone calls, and so forth, who was wanted for some major war crime or other serious offense. So I did Counter Intelligence Corps work.

But then, by about January or February of 1946, the Cold War had really gotten started, and particularly in the areas bordering the lines between the U.S. Zone and the Soviet Zone. The U.S. Military Government initially had relied very heavily on Communists to help them administer these rural areas, and also to tip them off if there was a hidden Nazi somewhere in the system. I think by maybe January of 1946, we were ordered to be very cautious with Communists and, in fact, where they had formal positions, to dismiss them now because they were likely to be Soviet agents or Soviet spies.

So my job began to change from being totally focused on “the three Ds” (denazification, democratization, and demilitarization, which were the goals of the early occupation), to include, also, alertness about Soviet agents or Soviet espionage. We actually had liaison with Soviets on the other side of the zonal border because we were transferring a lot of returning POWs (prisoners of war) who wanted to go to their homes in the Eastern [Soviet] Zone, and we were still doing some things more or less cooperatively, such as cracking down on black-marketeering, smuggling, and other crimes. So there was somewhere, up far above me, a team for liaison with the Soviets, and the Soviets also had one across the border.

Q: Were you involved at all with the forced repatriation of Polish persons - you know, people who were being sent back to the Soviet Union?

SONNENFELDT: No, not where I was working. I had no Soviet POWs that had fought with the Germans-

Q: Vlasov.

SONNENFELDT: -with the Vlasov people in the counties that I worked in. In my area, there were two problems. One was that we had several DP (displaced persons) camps run by the UNRRA [United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration]. These camps were used to house and take care of the refugee stream that was still coming from the East, people from all over the place. By and large, the Jewish people who came into these camps - survivors from concentration camps, or survivors (broadly speaking) of the Holocaust; some of them had been underground - wanted to go to Palestine. Whether they were really Zionists or not, I don't know - it's hard to tell. They weren't under our jurisdiction unless they somehow got outside the camp; and that created a problem because they were black-marketeering, they were doing all sorts of prohibited things. That did get into our jurisdiction because we had been taught that black-market rings could also be agent rings, could be ex-Nazi subversive rings; and therefore, we needed to pay special attention to that.

Now, there was a lot of activity by different Jewish groups from Palestine or from wherever - the Stern Gang, the Haganah, and others. They were trying to recruit people, Jewish people, anywhere, but especially in the UNRRA camps. The UNRRA camps weren't guarded like concentration camps. On the contrary, everybody was trying to be very careful not to replicate

that atmosphere, although camp is camp; so it isn't exactly paradise. But the recruiters did manage to get quite a few people by just wandering in there, or acting as refugees themselves, and then getting out of these relatively unguarded places, and trying to get them down to Trieste or some other place, where they could get on a ship and go off to Palestine. I think they were even taking some overland. That was something we were supposed to stop and prevent, on orders from our headquarters, due to the British prohibitions of immigration into their Palestine mandate area.

So I had some heart-rending encounters with Jewish refugee groups that were picked up by some of our troops and sometimes by German police, and brought to my office; or I went to see them - 10, 20, 30 people - that had been picked up during the night. They had noticed my name, and figured that I was Jewish. They were appealing to my conscience or my solidarity, or my compassion (whatever the right word is) to let them go. And, you know, I had orders to stop them! The upshot of it was that I had to have our Military Police (what little we had left of military people - but I made sure that it wasn't German police) take these Jewish people back to their camps. They may have escaped again later.

So I had that problem. I think in some instances, there were suicides; I didn't have that, fortunately, but it was a painful dilemma.

Incidentally, as for the German police, they had been screened and re-trained by my predecessors from the CIC and the early Military Government troops. They were mostly local residents, and the population, by and large, respected them. But the people who had recently come to the region had run-ins with them.

Q: It was a very difficult period then.

SONNENFELDT: Yes. Our second problem was quite different: that is, Czechoslovakia had been restored by that time, and the Czechs were expelling the Sudeten Germans. This is still an issue in Germany now. In one of the counties where I was the CIC agent, every two weeks we got 1,800 people who had been expelled from the Sudeten area, and the local Hessian peasants were not exactly hospitable to them.

Q: No, no.

SONNENFELDT: The local people didn't want extra mouths to feed; they didn't want people to stay in their houses, and so on. So we had problems getting the locals to accommodate these people. Of course, the Sudetens, were frightened and uneasy. They weren't sure whether they should try to go home or what was going to become of them; they certainly weren't received with hospitality. So that created a lot of friction and tension in the population. Also, we saw a potential feeding ground for whatever residual Nazi groups might still be there to recruit people into an underground movement. So from our standpoint, this was not just a humanitarian issue, but also a security issue.

Q: Well, the Sudeten Deutsche were sort of a breeding ground for at least the right wing, and they later -

SONNENFELDT: Later, they organized. They're still around, and they're still active. This issue drags on and on, because a lot of these immigrant groups or their descendants are in Germany, and they want the so-called Benes Decrees [mandating their expulsion from Czechoslovakia] abolished. And they want to be compensated like other refugees by the Czechs. I think the Czechs have agreed to do some of that, but they don't want to let these people or their descendants come back. Some of the Sudeten Germans want to claim their parents' or grandparents' properties in this rim around the present Czech Republic. So this remains both a domestic German and a Czech-German political issue. At that time, it was essentially humanitarian and potentially a subversion issue. So those were problems that posed dilemmas back in 1946.

Q: Well, it's a very complicated world. By 1955, I was a refugee relief officer, and you certainly got a full feel for all these various movements that were happening within, well, Germany and elsewhere.

SONNENFELDT: Yes.

Q: Had the "Fragebogen" (questionnaire of the Allied military government used as a basis for denazification) been started at that time?

SONNENFELDT: The large-scale use of the "Fragebogen" came later, and was used by the German authorities as they became increasingly responsible for administering what became the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). I think the first batch of "Fragebogen" were sent out in early 1946, and eventually covered practically the whole German population in the Western occupation zones.

When I was in Hessen, in 1945-46, we had a denazification program which was essentially administered by the Military Government, but the Military Government was so thin when you got out to the rural areas that my colleagues and I in the CIC around there participated in this effort. Above all, our job was to exclude individuals with active Nazi involvement from positions of authority.

As I mentioned, we picked up people who were of a rank which were required to be picked up – the "automatic arrest" category. We then sent them on through our military channels to internment camps. The "Fragebogen" system was the German denazification system, with the five levels of complicity. It was fully implemented after my time. We basically operated a) on the basis of captured lists of people to be automatically arrested because of their ranks and level of leadership role in the party system and its affiliated organizations; and b) we acted on information tips from whatever source that somebody in our jurisdiction had been a very active Nazi or had been involved in persecution activities. Those people we arrested and put into our chain of command. Sometimes the local German police helped us find these people and get them, but they were in our chain of command during my time there.

In our zone, we were aiming to have elections for municipal councils and mayors by February or March of 1946. After that, we expected to have Kreis, or county, elections.

Under the system used in most of the German “Laender” (states) that became part of the German Reich in 1871, the county manager, the “Landrat,” for centuries was part of the central administration of the provinces within each “Land.” The Landrat tended to be appointed; but even when they were elected (as they are now), they were also subordinate to what now is the Interior Ministry in the German “Laender.” In 1946, we didn’t have that kind of structure because the higher-level administrative structures were not yet in place.

In any case, we were in the process of starting a bottom-up exercise in democracy. We were, therefore, also authorized to license political parties at the local level. This I think got speeded up because of the installation of the Communist regime in the East. Our effort was to devolve onto the Germans increasing, although still modest levels of authority in local places. So I really spent quite a bit of time preparing for these elections, which happened at the town level while I was there.

We clearly did our best to keep former Nazi activists out of the lists of people we cleared for political and administrative roles! We used German informants who had helped us with making personnel choices earlier. By mid-1946, we no longer used Communists as informants, because of concern that they would try to place pro-Soviet people into the system.

We also licensed some relatively simple newspapers so the population could be kept informed about the preparations for elections as well as other news. (In larger towns and cities in the Western zones, dailies, weekly magazines, even illustrated ones, and monthlies gradually appeared, but distribution to rural areas was at best spotty.)

As I said, these developments in the West were pushed along because the Soviet zone was being steadily turned into a Communist-run outpost of the USSR. The Cold War, in other words, was in its early stages. My role, apart from still hunting down fugitive Nazi war criminals and big shots who were traced to our remote farmlands, was to support the effort to devolve modest but increasing levels of authority to qualified Germans via local elections and appointments.

I can’t remember now whether we also did this at the county level by the time I left. But doing it at the town level was both instructive and challenging for me. We also had to re-start the school system. This meant doing something about the textbooks that were totally polluted with Nazi material - even the mathematics textbooks. And we needed teachers who had not been Nazi activists. Fortunately, some teachers had been trained in the 1920s. We also appointed men who had returned from American POW camps.

Q: I would have assumed that you would run across the thing that I certainly observed - and that was...you know, sort of a switch...within the German population. They had been sort of trained to tell on people if anything went wrong, and they were quickly ready to point the finger at...

SONNENFELDT: Others, yes.

Q: I mean you got a lot of that, didn’t you?

SONNENFELDT: Yes, well, we had a lot of informants. Some proved reliable, others less so. And some who had Communist backgrounds or affiliations were helpful at first, but as I already noted, later on were suspected of being Soviet agents. Also, as you know, the Germans were meticulous document-keepers of official orders. But some of our informants were engaged in vendettas, and our rules indicated that we should use more than one informant when we were clearing someone for a significant job.

Q: They had the Berlin Document Center.

SONNENFELDT: By the time I got there, a lot of our local documents had been pretty much gone through by the Military Government and my CIC predecessors. But if we had people that seemed to have moved to the area after the war, we had to go through the Berlin Document Center - for example, if we got some tip or the mail-intercept system produced something suggestive that there was another story from the one the person was telling us. When we started the school system, we were looking for teachers.

Some came forward and said that they were teachers. They had documents showing that they were trained teachers. But then our informants sometimes said, "That guy was really one of the most poisonous Nazis." We had to judge whether some of these charges were the result of old feuds, and make judgments regarding their validity.

You know, there was quite a bit of that. In a rural place - I had maybe 70,000 or 80,000 people in the first county where I was assigned - to get things started, to get food supplies into the towns and also to other places that had in the past relied on food supplies from the region, to get schools started, to get a hospital started, to get physicians that were qualified, nurses that were qualified, and then the mayor's office, the local police, and then the county system - it was a fascinating experience, I think, at the worm's-eye level.

Q: Yes

SONNENFELDT: I want to mention one other aspect of this, which wasn't part of my official role. My brother, Richard Sonnenfeldt, whom I've mentioned, had been in the OSS (Office of Strategic Services). He's three years older than I, had participated in the invasions of Italy and southern France, and then had been picked up by General Bill Donovan, the head of the OSS. Once they got into Germany, Donovan wanted an interpreter and someone knowledgeable about German psychology and history. He somehow found my brother; so my brother joined the OSS and remained with Donovan through the end of the war.

Shortly after the end of the war, the decision was made to set up the international war crimes trial in Nuremberg. Donovan, as head of the OSS, was asked by President Roosevelt, I guess, to do the preliminary work on the prosecution and on the indictments. Since this was an international agreement, it involved the four occupying powers (the U.S. Great Britain, France and the USSR). My brother stayed on with Donovan and went with him to Nuremberg. He then stayed on when Justice Robert Jackson and his people came, to prepare and conduct the trials. At first, my brother was mostly an interpreter, but he then became one of the principal interrogators. He

interrogated most of the Nazi leaders there that had been assigned to the U.S. to prosecute.

So I was in Hessen, and he was down in Nuremberg in Bavaria. Maybe every other weekend, I went down there from Fulda by jeep, and later I became senior enough to get somebody to fly me down in a Piper Cub, to see him. You know, we hadn't really seen each other at all since he was interned in England in 1940. I'd seen him only once or twice, briefly, in the States after I got there in 1944. So I went down to Nuremberg and spent two or three days with him and saw the trial at work. He took me into some of his interrogations of Nazi leaders and witnesses. Of course, that was fascinating in itself. For me it meant seeing, on the one hand, the fate of the Nazi leadership unfold, and on the other hand, the beginning of the process of reconstruction and rebuilding of Germany, at the grass roots.

Q: How did you feel? I mean, considering your background, having fled from Germany under Hitler and coming back there, was it hard to make the adjustment, or to operate as an American and not as -

SONNENFELDT: I've been asked this frequently. In June of 2000, I was back in my hometown, Gardelegen, with my wife and some of our children and grandchildren. I met with a high school graduating class, and I was asked how I felt - whether I had a sense of revenge, or what emotions I felt.

I have to say, in 1945, I felt that I was coming to Germany as an American soldier, although I had only recently become an American citizen myself! I felt that I was coming as an American soldier, and that I had a job to do! I really was not trying to "get" anybody. Now, of course, my CIC assignments were not in the part of Germany where my family had lived.

I was stationed in a different part of the country. But still, I wasn't there to try to get revenge against anybody. I wanted to implement the instructions we had. If somebody said, "This guy is an SS man," and we picked him up, I interrogated him. I wasn't bullying him; I wasn't whipping him; I wasn't trying to pin something on him. I wanted to prepare my required interrogation investigative report and send it up the line so this guy could be dealt with.

No, I wasn't happy as a clam coming home to Germany at all. The duties made it very clear in what role I was there. But I honestly can say, I really didn't feel a sense of revenge. And of course, this applies also to my later dealings with Germans when I was serving in the State Department and the National Security Council. I did feel, obviously, that the Germans had to be treated with great care because of their history and background.

You know, I basically tried to do my work. I was interested in re-starting the schools, for example: getting rid of the Nazi materials where we could, and if necessary, just getting some very preliminary text materials for the schools, and getting the Nazi biases ("bias" is putting it mildly) out of the history books or the geography books. We printed some texts on the old-fashioned machines that we had-

Q: Mimeograph machines, yes.

SONNENFELDT: Mimeograph machines. I didn't want to see any Nazi writings in the schools. If I came across things, or people tried to sneak something past me that wasn't exactly Nazi but was full of German grievances (going back to World War I, "encirclement," and all that), I said, "We start from scratch." But vis-à-vis individuals, I think I did what I was instructed to do, and that was it.

Q: You left Germany when?

SONNENFELDT: Before we end this conversation about my time in the Army in Germany, I want to note that I also remained in touch with Fritz Kraemer, whom I had met in Oberammergau. As the time drew near for my finishing the CIC assignment and leaving the Army, I talked to him on the telephone. I told him that I was getting ready to go home and resume university.

He said, "No, you can't do that! It's your duty to come down here to Oberammergau and teach here; you're so gifted; and in the meantime, we are a big center for information. You should be demobilized here in Germany and become a civilian."

I said, "Well, why don't you see what you can do." As plans stood, I actually would be getting back to the U.S. a few weeks too late to get into the academic year starting in September of 1946. The universities, Johns Hopkins in my case, were so overcrowded with veterans that they couldn't take people in mid-term. I would have had to wait about nine months before I could go into the next academic year. So I was open to the suggestion of going down to Oberammergau.

Kraemer called me back after about a week and said, in his heavy German accent, "The bureaucracy 'ist schrecklich.' [Bureaucracy is just terrible!] You're in the Army, and I tried everything, but you don't have a college degree, and they can't give you a civilian appointment without a college degree to teach at this school, and so on. So, you'd better go home, and we'll stay in touch," as we did, eventually, when he got back to the U.S. in 1948.

I think I left Germany in September or early October of 1946. I was demobilized practically as soon as I got back to, again, Camp Meade. By that time, Meade had stopped being a replacement center; it was a demobilization center.

Through a variety of circumstances (since it was too late to get back into a full-time university program), I managed to find a job in the State Department.

Q: All right. Well, we'll pick this up, getting a job in the State Department, and something about Kraemer, too.

Today is September 25, 2000. Hal, let's start. In the first place, you want to talk a little about Kraemer's background because he is an important figure in sort of helping form the diplomatic establishment later... I mean his background, and did you meet with Kissinger briefly at that time?

SONNENFELDT: Well, I saw Kissinger in Oberammergau a few times, and then he also came back to the U.S. and was demobilized. It's kind of a funny story that's been mentioned many times. Henry had attended CCNY (City College of New York) before he went into the military. Fritz Kraemer - this German-born officer, not quite an aristocrat, who had served with Henry in the same Division, and considered him a person of great promise - Kraemer told Henry, "Gentlemen don't go to CCNY."

Q: [Laughter]

SONNENFELDT: Kissinger had, I think, been majoring in accounting. And Kraemer says, "Gentlemen don't become accountants. You are a budding statesman." So Henry ended up at Harvard, and I ended up at Johns Hopkins. And we stayed in touch, too.

Q: Okay. Now, what about Kraemer and his background?

SONNENFELDT: Well, I've forgotten some of the details. Kraemer was an American citizen of German birth. I think he was born in 1908 [he died in 2003], and had a German education. His father, as I understood it, was either a civil servant or maybe in the military in World War I, and ended up being one of the governors (or whatever the precise title was) in the Baltic states before they became independent of Russia. (They were occupied by the Germans at the end of World War I.) I gather he was a pretty strict and autocratic governor. In any event, this is just to show the German nationalist milieu from which Kraemer came. I think Kraemer studied law at German universities. In the 1920s or in the early '30s, he went to Geneva, where international lawyers had a haven of sorts because of all the international agencies –

Q: The League of Nations forming and all that?

SONNENFELDT: Yes. I don't know exactly where in the League of Nations he worked, but I believe he had a degree from the university there, and he wrote scholarly articles. I guess he went back and forth to Germany, but he was very unhappy when Hitler came to power in 1933. From the standpoint of a German nationalist, a Prussian nationalist, Hitler was a radical, extreme figure - not to mention that he was an Austrian. So I think Kraemer was unhappy about Hitler from the start, in a general way, and more explicitly as time went on, as the nature of the Nazi regime became more obvious.

Sometime in the late 1930s, he came to the United States, not as a refugee (because I don't know that he would have qualified), but perhaps on some sort of academic visa. I think he continued to work in international legal matters, perhaps at Columbia in New York City. His father, I guess, had died; his mother was in Germany at the modest estate that they owned in the Rhineland. Meanwhile, Kraemer had married a Swedish woman slightly older than himself. They had a son who stayed with his mother in Germany at that time.

In any event, Kraemer became an American citizen and joined the U.S. Army quite early - maybe he became a citizen as a result of that. But he joined the Army as an enlisted man, maybe in 1941 or '42. He was by that time almost 35 years old, which was nearly beyond the draft age.

He went through training and was assigned to a division that was forming (I think it was the 84th Division) and was, I think, involved in the famous Louisiana Maneuvers-

Q: Oh, yes, where Eisenhower showed his stuff.

SONNENFELDT: -where they didn't have any equipment, and used fake, papier-mâché, or cardboard imitations!

Q: [Laughter] Broomsticks for machine guns.

SONNENFELDT: Then, of course, the U.S. got into the war. Kraemer came to the attention of the commanding general of this division because of his German background and because of his wide knowledge and his very energetic manner: loud voice, vigorous, great physique. I'm not exactly sure when - maybe 1942 or '43 - Henry Kissinger ended up in that division also. That's where Kraemer noticed him and was impressed by his talent, and where Kraemer told Henry about what he should do after the war. (I mentioned in our earlier tape that Kraemer said "Gentlemen don't go to CCNY, and gentlemen don't become accountants.")

Q: Well, now, Kissinger becomes an important figure later on. Henry Kissinger and you were of similar background. Did he have any kind of reputation or anything that you heard, or was he just another one of the -

SONNENFELDT: In the Army? Kissinger?

Q: Yes, yes.

SONNENFELDT: I really don't know, but Kraemer noticed him. I guess Kraemer also, at some point, brought him to the attention of General Bowling, who much later became G2, Intelligence Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army, after the war.

Anyway, both Kraemer and Kissinger went to Europe when that division was sent, and went through the remainder of the war. I think Henry was assigned to interrogating prisoners. I guess he had been up in the front lines and captured a number of Germans, but there was a big interrogation project underway during the war. Kraemer got a battlefield commission of some kind - he was a lieutenant when I met him. He and Kissinger became friendly. Kissinger ended up in the Counter Intelligence Corps (I'm not exactly sure how he got to that from prisoner interrogation). He was put in charge as a special agent of the CIC in what later became the state of Hessen, near Wiesbaden (which is the capital of Hessen). But he kept in touch with Kraemer, who in the meantime had been assigned to the intelligence school at Oberammergau. Kraemer set up the library there, and made himself a kind of a general encyclopedia and factotum for all sorts of American officers in the European theater - generals, colonels, and so forth.

As I mentioned before, that's where I ended up meeting Kraemer, after I was transferred from the Pacific to Europe after the end of the war in the Far East. I ended up taking some courses there because I'd been assigned to the Counter Intelligence Corps. I thought the classes were inadequate insofar as they concerned recent German history and what the function of the CIC

was - in trying to weed out Nazis and not get people with a Nazi past appointed to local German jobs, and also looking for whatever people above a certain rank were still on our lists as missing and requiring to be arrested for purposes of interrogation, and in some cases, because there were accusations against them.

Kraemer had noticed me at this school because I had started some impromptu tutorials on the Nazi party, its history and organizations; and we became friendly at that time. I think I mentioned in our previous conversation that Kraemer wanted me to become a teacher at this European Theater Intelligence School because he thought I could do more useful things there in training newcomers who were not that well acquainted with German affairs. It wasn't possible for me to do that because I had already been assigned to a county in Hessen. Our troops were on their way out, and our ranks were thin. I qualified for the post by language and background and getting through intelligence school in Oberammergau.

I was assigned to the northeastern part of Hessen. I met Henry Kissinger maybe once, briefly, at Oberammergau when I was still there in the school; and then maybe a few more times when I visited there. I can't remember when Henry returned to the States, probably sometime in late 1945 or early '46.

Then, as I said, beginning in early 1946, U.S. forces began to shift focus, not away from the continuing German functions we had, but toward Communists and Soviets. Things became dicier and dicier in our general relations with the Soviets, but also more specifically on German issues. I was assigned to an area of Hessen that was right up against the Soviet Occupation Zone. So what military we had left there were more alert about who was coming across from the East. Until that time, we had relied on Communists to tell us who the bad Nazis were. I think in some instances these Communists had come back from hiding or from concentration camps, and they were given some interim jobs in the local German administration that we and the Military Government people were starting to set up. That practice was gradually discontinued because it was assumed that they were working with and for the Soviets.

Then Kraemer wanted once more to try to get me, after I was discharged from the Army, to be assigned as a civilian to the Oberammergau Intelligence School. But the administrative people there said that, because I didn't have a college degree, they couldn't really pay me what I should be getting in that job. That would have been more than I made as a special agent of the CIC; but anyway, it just didn't seem to work out. I left Germany in the early fall of 1946, and I was demobilized very soon after that.

Q: Yes, and then you went to college?

SONNENFELDT: Well, it was too late for me to enroll at Johns Hopkins, because the university was filled with returning veterans studying under the GI Bill of Rights. They really couldn't take people after the academic year had started; so I had basically a year to wait before I could get in there.

My brother, who was still on the American Prosecution staff at Nuremberg, knew a couple of State Department people who were associated with the U.S. Prosecution at the war crimes trial. I

went to see one of them (I'm sorry I can't remember his name), in the old State Department building.

Q: The Old Executive Building, I think it was.

SONNENFELDT: Yes. In those days, it was called the State-War-Navy Building.

Q: Yes [laughter], it shows you -

SONNENFELDT: In fact, General Pershing [commander of U.S. forces in World War I] still had an office there.

So I went to see this fellow. He said he wasn't sure what job he could find for me for just a year, but he'd look. Then a few weeks later, I got a letter from somebody offering me a job as a mail clerk and translator in a division of the State Department called by the inimitable name, the Division of Foreign Activity Correlation (FC). It was a division that was partly an offshoot of a part of the OSS. It picked up many loose ends from the war and its aftermath.

In fact, there's one man here at The Brookings Institution in Washington who was in that division at the time (now this is 54 years ago): Brad Patterson, who has just published a book. He later became Cabinet Secretary in the Eisenhower administration and has written books about how the government runs or is supposed to run.

So I got a job as a clerk in FC with a civil service grade of CAF-3 (Clerical, Administrative, and Finance-Civil Service employees designation), GS-3 (General Schedule). It paid \$1,800 a year, later raised to \$2,100 – at that time, the most that I had ever earned.

I got my little desk in the mailroom, and they got lots of mail from all over the place. There was a woman there and maybe a little team that was scanning German diplomatic documents that had been either captured or had been turned over to the U.S. from German embassies in Latin America, from countries that had been at war with Germany. I think Brazil was one, and they got all the documents and files of the German embassy in Rio de Janeiro. We got stacks and stacks of papers.

In addition to sorting mail and getting it distributed to the various parts of this division, they had me translate captured German diplomatic documents, mostly for the purpose of identifying names of German officials whom our investigators wanted to interrogate. I started reading these German documents. Actually, I was much more interested in their contents because they contained German reports on attitudes in Brazil, rumors about what the Americans were doing, and so forth.

Q: I might just for the reader note that during World War II, the State Department and the FBI concentrated heavily on Latin America, and the Germans were trying to stir things up to no particular avail. But it was sort of the only playground that the State Department had...

DOROTHY JESTER
Secretary and Consular Officer
Munich (1946-1948)

Dorothy Jester was born in 1914 in Mesa, Arizona and majored in Spanish at Stanford University. She was posted in Lima, Mexico City, Munich, Mexicali, Bonn, Santiago, and Santo Domingo. Ms. Jester was interviewed in 1998 by Laurin Askew.

JESTER: My first post was Munich, Germany, where I arrived in February, 1946. You can imagine what it looked like. Just rubble covered with snow. But the occupying Third Army took care of people who had arrived to reopen the American consulate general. We were housed in apartments taken over from the Germans and we ate three meals a day in the Army Mess, which formerly was the Haus der Kunst, the art museum. Whatever became of the art we never knew.

I was the only woman in a group of men, not only from the consulate but from the Army, who took the written exam for the Career Foreign Service in September of 1946. In December I was delighted to learn I had passed, but I then had to wait until June of 1947 to take the oral. This was administered by a panel of five men, headed by the legendary Joe Green, who later gave me the happy news that I had passed. But because of budgetary restraints, I could not become an officer and move from my annual salary of \$1,800 to a princely \$4,300 until June of 1948.

Q: Well, let's then continue on with Munich. Tell us a little bit about Munich.

JESTER: I was one of the first three women secretarial staff to arrive. Incidentally, we were in a military plane that had to land in a snowstorm. They actually talked us down by radar, believe it or not. After getting settled in some temporary military housing, we went to call on the consul general, a real character named Parker Berman. Did you ever hear of him?

Q: No.

JESTER: As he looked us over, he asked if anyone could take shorthand. I spoke up and said I could a little. I'd been doing it in Lima after more or less teaching myself. So I was his secretary for the two years I was in Munich. I had really hoped to be one of his vice consuls. But when I had mentioned this to a personnel officer in the State Department, he had said that unfortunately because I was a woman even my two college degrees were not enough. But he encouraged me to apply to be designated to take the Foreign Service exam. If I passed, I would be on a par with the men.

Q: You passed it.

JESTER: Yes, I took the written in September 1946 and learned in December that I had passed. But I had to wait until June of 1947 to take the oral from a panel that had been around the world, with Munich its last stop. Then, once I had passed the oral, I had to wait until March of 1948, another nine months, to be sworn in as a junior officer. Again, the Department was short of

money for officer positions. Isn't that something?

Q: Let's go on to Munich. That must have been a very interesting time there.

JESTER: It was. As I said, I became the consul general's secretary, and so I didn't have to work on visas. In the front office, of course, I got in on special cases. I can't think of any particular one right now, but they nearly always involved "displaced persons," as refugees from the war were called. All were trying to get to the United States.

Q: That was before the Marshall Plan?

JESTER: That was definitely before the Marshall Plan, which was announced, I think, in the summer of 1947. Almost overnight you could see a change. Suddenly, goods appeared in store windows that had not been there before. Apparently, there had been some hoarding. But it really sparked the Germans. You know, they are hard working to begin with.

Q: Did you know German or learn German?

JESTER: I studied it with a little German professor, and I got up to the "useful" level. You know, the Department had ascending grades of one through five. I was about five in Spanish but only three in German.

Q: Well, then you got to use it again when you got to Bonn.

JESTER: Right. But in Bonn, as assistant commercial attache, my work was mainly with American businessmen seeking information or contacts. I didn't need German so much at work. It was useful socially, however.

DAYTON S. MAK
Vice Consul
Hamburg (1946-1948)

Dayton S. Mak was born in South Dakota in 1917. He graduated from the University of Arizona in 1939 and served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1941 to 1945. He joined the Foreign Service in 1946 and served in various posts including Germany, Saudi Arabia, Libya, the United Kingdom, Kuwait, and Lebanon. Mr. Mak was interviewed on August 9, 1989 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

MAK: I reported and was given a reserve commission as vice consul to go to Hamburg, which was in the British zone of occupied Germany. So I was sent off to Hamburg as vice consul, along with a number of other ex-Army people and Consul David McKillop. There were Frank Galbraith, Fred Armstrong, Bill Kelly and Bill O'Donnell. We all served in Hamburg under Consul General Edward Groth and became known as "Groth's Boys" there in Hamburg.

Q: What type of work were you doing?

MAK: Hamburg had been an important consulate before the war, and we were reopening the consulate, so from the very beginning we had to go through step one. I was appointed administrative officer. Another was put in charge of the visa section, another in charge of passports, another in charge of general consular affairs, etc. As I knew nothing about consular financial or administrative matters I was sent to Berlin to talk to our consulate people there and learn from them what would be helpful in setting up CG Hamburg.

In Berlin I got all the proper forms and learned how to pay people, and how to keep the accounts etc. The job made pretty easy by the presence of many of the pre-war staff who'd been doing the same thing, managing our accounts, before the war at the consulate, and subsequently with the Swiss who handled our interests in Hamburg and in Germany during the war. All I really had to do was provide a slight bit of guidance to Erna Kasperek, who then raced ahead and did everything beautifully.

Q: Hamburg was practically destroyed during the war, wasn't it? Did we have any building? What was our situation?

MAK: Well, it was a strange situation. Hamburg was fire bombed, and desperately fire bombed. They lost something over, I think, a hundred-and-some thousand people killed, which meant that a good share of the city was absolutely flat; it was nothing but rubble. But strangely enough, the nicer parts of Hamburg, including the center of the town around the Alster, were pretty much left intact. Even the main railroad station, although it had lost some of its glass, was basically intact and functioning. The shipyards, of course, which were a few miles from the center of town, were very badly bombed as were other things, but in the center of town you could walk through vast areas that seemed to be untouched.

Q: What was the attitude of the Germans? I mean, here we'd just gone through a war and you talk about 100,000 people lost in Hamburg. What was the attitude towards the Americans, I mean, towards you all there?

MAK: Well, first of all it seemed to me that the Germans were absolutely numb. In a way, they were starving. They had almost no food. I can remember seeing nothing but mounds and mounds of cabbages. That seemed to be about all they had to eat. There was nothing to buy in the shops, and rationing was absolutely strict.

They tended to move around their business, but very lethargically. They were really almost refugees in their own country. Their attitude toward the Americans -- we were very few; we were only a handful. That area was occupied by the British Army. The Germans always managed in those days to show a certain amount of deference to any captor and they did that, but it wasn't unpleasant and it wasn't exactly sullen. It was completely lethargic. Everyone looked and acted completely numb.

They were friendly to us. I mean, they weren't outwardly friendly, but if you talked to them, they

were polite. They were mainly just numb. There was not much of a basis for any friendship with them there, and we officers had some experience in the Army or in the Armed Forces, and we weren't terribly keen on cozying up to them anyway. It was too near the end of the war. But I would say their attitude was purely correct, nothing more, nothing less.

Q: What was our consulate doing in Hamburg in those days?

MAK: Basically we were just opening the consulate. There was very little that we could do. We did make trips out to sort of report on the agriculture situation. There wasn't much to report on in the industry going, because that was very tightly controlled anyway by the British and the tripartite groups. There was a number of American expatriates there, particularly American-born wives of Germans, who at that point wanted to renew their citizenship and come back to the States, at least temporarily, where there was some food and get out of the hell that Germany was at the time, so that was a pretty important thing. Of course, most of them had renounced -- not necessarily renounced their American citizenship, but they had made various acts of expatriation.

Q: Also, there was a law at the time where they'd lost their citizenship by marrying a foreigner, too. Wasn't that still in effect or not?

MAK: Well, actually, they could get it back if they had not made an overt act, such as, renouncing their American citizenship, voting in the German election or taking an oath in the German Army. So I know that we expatriated a number of American-born women who wanted to return to the U.S. but who had voted in the first elections after the war, but by so doing, they lost their American citizenship.

Q: How were your relations with the British? You were a small group there, and was this a difficult relationship or a good one?

MAK: It was a very easy relationship. They were very good to us. We were a very small group, as you know. We didn't get in their hair; we didn't bother them. All we wanted from them was a place to live and a place for our office and some work permits for the people that we needed to work for us. No, they couldn't have been better. Socially they were very friendly, and officially they were friendly. I presume that there was a bit of reciprocity involved because they were serving under our people in the American zone, as well. No, they couldn't have been better.

RAY E. JONES
U.S. Army
Berlin (1946-1949)

Ray E. Jones attended the Lafayette Business College. After a year in Washington, DC working for the Department of the Interior, he entered the U.S. Army. In 1946, Mr. Jones went to Berlin with the Department of the Army. Mr. Jones also served in South Korea, Vietnam, Switzerland, Austria, Liberia, the Netherlands, Sudan, and China. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on

August 23, 1994.

Q: You were there then during some of Berlin's most exciting times.

JONES: It was terribly exciting at that time because I was there during the Berlin airlift in 1948.

Q: Yes I was there at the same time, but unfortunately, with all the Americans there our paths never crossed. What were you doing during that period in Berlin?

JONES: In Berlin, I was in the statistical branch, OMGUS.

Q: What is that? The Office of Military Government....

JONES: The Office of Military Government for the United States, yes.

Q: What were your impressions of the situation in Berlin at that time?

JONES: Well, I certainly admired the Berliners with all their suffering, and when I first went there, you were not supposed to fraternize or anything else.

Q: However, that was honored in the (breach?) as much as anything else, wasn't it?

JONES: Absolutely.

Q: Did your life change at all during the blockade? Tell us about conditions then.

JONES: I can't say that we really suffered. I think that the most thing was the power outages. You had a lot of candlelight dinner.

Q: But there was no physical danger?

JONES: No, no physical danger, none whatsoever.

**STUART VAN DYKE
UN High Commission
Germany (1946-1950)**

Stuart Van Dyke was born in Idaho in 1915. He received a bachelor's degree from Indiana University in 1935. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Turkey, Brazil, and Chile. Mr. Van Dyke was interviewed September 18, 1997 by Scott Behoteguy.

VAN DYKE: That was an unforgettable time. Germany's cities had been destroyed, and people were living in the ruins without heat and with meager food rations. Transportation was disrupted;

trains ran sporadically, and you could drive down the middle of the autobahns without meeting anyone for miles. Civilian production was down by about half. There was nothing in the shops-- such shops as were open-- except rationed food. The currency was worthless, and what buying and selling took place was mostly on the black market. First General Lucius Clay, and then John McCloy as U.S. High Commissioner, had staggering responsibilities. My job started out as one of insuring that German farmers brought their crops to market. But we quickly moved on to the broader job of keeping some transport moving and rationing what was available. Since Berlin was surrounded by the Russian-controlled zone, it was possible to check roughly how much food people in that city were getting. It was quite clear that a lot was coming on the black market, since it would have been impossible to survive on the official ration. After the currency reform took place in 1948, things improved dramatically. More shops opened, and suddenly civilian goods appeared in the market. Military government began to be phased out, and the High Commission took over. The chief of food and agriculture work in the U.S. sector of West Germany during this period was Stanley Andrews, for whom I developed the greatest respect and admiration.

Q. Was that located in Berlin?

VAN DYKE: Stanley Andrews started out in Berlin as an army colonel, and then moved his staff to Frankfurt as a civilian when the High Commission took over. Later on, the High Commission itself was phased out and a new U.S. Embassy was started. Employees who had been with the High Commission were either transferred to the embassy or sent home, except for a few who became part of the information service or the new Economic Cooperation Administration, which was administering the Marshall Plan. I ended up in the ECA mission as head of the Trade and Payments Section. The head of the ECA mission was Bob Hanes, of the North Carolina textile family. His deputy was Charles Marshall, an investment banker from Texas. They were typical of the superb managerial talent which Paul Hoffman had been able to attract to the Marshall Plan.

I stayed in Frankfurt for a couple of years helping with the Marshall Plan. Of course, Western Germany had already been the beneficiary of considerable U.S. help. As a humanitarian gesture, the U.S. had begun to send food and other essential commodities to the western zones soon after the war ended, under a special appropriation called GARIOA--Government and Relief in Occupied Areas. By the time the Marshall Plan took over, three billion dollars worth of commodities had been shipped to the western zones and the western sectors of Berlin. The German authorities were informed that a strict accounting was being maintained, and that eventually they would have to pay for what had been shipped, but when the time came to settle, in 1951 I believe, we accepted thirty cents on the dollar. Meantime, the western zone governments gradually assumed more and more responsibility and came to play an important role in the work of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation in Paris. It was this organization which worked out the rules under which Marshall Plan funds were distributed and utilized. After I had completed a total of about five years in occupied Germany, I was transferred to ECA headquarters in Washington. ECA was housed in the Maiatico Building at the corner of Vermont Avenue and 17th Street.

THOMAS J. DUNNIGAN
Office of the U.S. Political Advisor
Berlin (1946-1950)

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

DUNNIGAN: I was in Berlin from 1946 to 1950. I did many things. There was no administrative officer in those days at post, at least not in Berlin. I was assigned to the Office of the United States Political Advisor, Robert Murphy, who was our State Department presence. There was a very large office -- larger than most embassies. The administrative work, including supervision of the personnel, was done by the political counselor, Warren Chase, in his off hours. He did have a personnel staff of three young ladies under him, but he made all the big decisions. And I was assigned there fully expecting to be a consular officer and apply what little I remembered about visa lore and the Act of 1921 to applicants.

But I had been there about a week, and Mr. Chase called me to his office one night and he said, "Dunnigan, it says here you are supposed to go over and work in the consular unit."

And I said, "Yes."

And he said, "Well, we have just sent a vice consul over there about a month ago. They don't need any more help. You stay here."

Young and pliable, I said, "Yes sir. What shall I do?"

Well, he said, "You know, this office has been established now for over two years. It was founded in London by Mr. Murphy back in 1944, and it has accumulated a great deal of history in its files. Now those files need clearing out. I want you to start weeding them out."

This sounded like a thankless task, but actually it proved to be a boon to me because I was able to read through the old files and find out the whole history of the Office of the Political Advisor's relationship to the military. I read fascinating reports about our officers who had gone into concentration camps immediately upon their liberation, and about relations with the Soviets in the early days and so forth, which gave me a tremendous background on Berlin.

After six weeks or so of that, perhaps a little longer, I was assigned to a unit that of course wouldn't exist now; it was called the "German War Documents Unit". What we really did were two things: we helped pursue and extradite Nazis who had fled abroad to Spain, to Argentina, to other countries; and we were the liaison with historians who were working in the German war documents. It was the Berlin Document Center in its beginning. There were three or four

American historians there, and we were liaison with them. When they had to get things, we would get them for them, help them with requests that required government help and so forth. And in return they let us see various nuggets of information and so forth.

Now that was interesting and I did that for a year, at the end of which the full panoply of administrative services was invented for the Foreign Service. It appeared, and we got our first administrative officer. He required a general services officer; so they look around for a junior officer, and I was appointed general services officer. I found that little less interesting but nonetheless challenging, because I found out how prickly people can be about certain perquisites such as office space and schedules in communications centers and things like this, and use of automobiles and, oh, various other things, and residences, although we didn't have to worry too much about residences because they were assigned usually by the military to us. That went on for awhile.

Our admin officer was a fine old gentlemen of British extraction who had been a prisoner of war in Singapore in the British Army and had become an American after the war, naturalized, and showed up as our admin officer in Berlin. I don't think one could regard him as a great success as an admin officer, although he was a very fine man and we all liked him, but he was still psychologically unrecovered from his four years in a Japanese prison camp.

So after about nine months of doing that, I was given my first job in political reporting. I was assigned to follow developments in eastern Germany, in what we called the Soviet Zone of Occupation at that time. This was fascinating. This was when the East Germans were founding what they called, euphemistically, the People's Police, but which was really an army, officered by former high Nazi officials. We got information that allowed us to complain to the Soviets, but they pooh-poohed it, of course, saying it was merely a strengthening of the local police and so forth, although we had tangible evidence of military units parading, drilling and so forth. This became worrisome.

I also reported on developments within East Germany. Occasionally in those days German politicians could come out from the zone, come to West Berlin, and talk to us, which was of course long before the Wall. They often did so at their own risk. But they wanted to talk, and so we got some very interesting stories about conditions in Saxony or in Rostock or wherever. The clergy were good that way, as were some of the university people, and politicians.

These people were definitely disturbed by the trends in East Germany but they felt powerless. They said all control was exercised by the SED, the German Communist Party in East Germany. And while they belonged generally to either the old Christian Democratic Party, which had existed there in 1945, 1946 and still existed in the shadows, or the Liberal Democratic Party, they were merely tolerated. They had no authority, no power; everything was done by the Communists. The only way to get ahead in East Germany was to be a member of the SED.

I came on home leave in the summer of 1949, got married, went back to Berlin, and picked up again on the work on East Germany. It was a fascinating period because it was at that time that the German Democratic Republic was established, in October of 1949. We saw signs of that coming by reading the papers from the Soviet zone, which would contain reports of slogans

adopted by factories, saying: "We must have our own government. If they have one in Bonn, why can't we have one?" One began to wonder why this was being orchestrated all over the zone at the same time. It was quite clear that they were preparing a move, which they did on the 7th of October of that year.

It was just at that time, too, that the East German problem was looming so large in our calculations that we established a separate unit to follow East Germany, headed at first by George Morgan and including several other officers. I worked with them for a while, then I was detached from that, because that group took over all the reporting in East Germany. Where it had been one person, say, the year before, it was now three at least. In fact, it soon was four or five.

I was assigned to a different responsibility, and that was to represent the U.S. on what was called the Civil Administration Committee of the Berlin Command de Tour, the group that ran the city. Ostensibly four-power, but by the time I got on it the Soviets had been out for over a year; so it was basically French, British, and American. We reported to our respective commandants. The Civil Administration Committee handled all of the basic details of running the city. The German authorities would report to us -- ask our permission to do things. We would give it, usually, if it were sensible; otherwise we would explain why it wasn't possible. Many of the things had to do with legal matters, going back to German law, so we had a legal subcommittee. We had a labor subcommittee, because we had to look after labor affairs and various things. This was a fascinating job, and I did that for the last year I was in Berlin.

We maintained, outwardly at least, that Berlin was a four-power city and that we, as a member of the occupying powers, could go anywhere we wanted within the city. We could not go outside the city into the Soviet zone except on one road that linked us to the West. That was the autobahn that went through Helmstedt. There was also a train line. We could go by train either to Frankfurt or to Bremerhaven, but we could not go outside the city in any other direction. But we deliberately went into the Soviet sector of Berlin, as it was called, frequently. In fact, they had the best opera there. We would drive around, just to be seen, in American cars and so forth. We didn't want the Soviets to say they had sort of shut us out of there, or frightened us out. In those days you could take the subway or the elevated train across. There was no problem, just right in the city.

It began to get a little dicey in April of 1948. The Soviets had walked out of the Control Council, the main governing body for governing Germany. Marshal Sadolovsky had walked out at the end of March 1948 over a dispute, as I recall, about currency reform, because the Soviets didn't want any. The Western powers had said, "Look, nothing will ever get this country off its back unless they have a solid currency." Well, there was a to-do about that, and Sadolovsky walked out and never came back.

Then about four weeks later a British plane coming into Berlin was, as I recall, shot down by the Soviets, who said it had strayed out of the air corridor (which was nonsense) and crashed. This told us they were ready to play hardball. They stopped the trains from Helmstedt around that period, on the pretext that the bridge across the River Elbe needed repair and would be closed for some time. So the noose was tightening. We still had the autobahn to drive back and forth; but they could have at any time said an autobahn bridge needed repair.

I think it was on the 21st of June that we declared currency reform for West Germany and West Berlin. The Soviets then declared a blockade on the 24th, and we started the airlift on the 26th.

We didn't know whether we would succeed. We didn't know how long the blockade would last. We kept getting reports from Ambassador Bedell Smith in Moscow. He would have conversations with Soviet officials, including Stalin, about this, and Stalin would sort of grunt or nod and say, yes, he thought something could be worked out, but, you know, it never was.

Dependents who were there (and I didn't have any at that time) were offered an opportunity to leave. Very few left; most wanted to stay. They wanted to ride it out and not leave the Soviets with the feeling that they had forced us out.

The situation didn't get questionable until the fall. The airlift worked fairly well in the early months, and there had been enough supplies there to last, but it soon became evident that the two great needs over the winter were going to be coal and potatoes. So the planes began to bring those in.

We started out using C-47s. While they were state of the art in some ways in those days, they weren't very big. Later, within a few months, we began to get C-54s -- from two engine to four. General Tunnel, a lieutenant general in the Air Force, was brought from the States and put in charge of the airlift; he commandeered almost every C-54 in the world and brought it to Frankfurt. So, with the C-54s, we could bring a lot more in. Still, we had to feed a city of two and a half million people, and it wasn't at all sure whether we could make it through the winter.

The worst time of all came in November, because, for about ten days in a row, there was heavy fog and planes couldn't get in. We didn't have the sophisticated radar or landing-guidance equipment we have now; it was very primitive. And also, most of the time, we were using Tempelhof Airport, which is right in the city of Berlin and wasn't really built for very large planes. It took some skill. Later, we built a new airport with the French and the British, Tegel Airport, a much larger airport. But that wasn't completed until February or March. So, in November, we were still using Tempelhof, in our sector, and Gatow, a smaller airport, in the British sector, and the British were bringing in their share of material, too. Now the feeling was that if that fog had persisted for another month or so, we might have been done in.

But, fortunately, after about ten days, it lifted enough for the planes to start getting back in. And it was amazing to see them come and go -- land, unload, and be gone in ninety seconds -- incredible!

The airlift certainly solidified our relations with the Germans in Berlin, because there was a feeling: we are all in this together. We, as occupiers, lived much better than they did. We still were getting PX supplies, although when electricity went off, as it did, we didn't have any electricity, things of that nature. We were given five gallons, as I recall, of gasoline a month for our cars; so everybody was car-pooling when they used a car in those days. I had a bicycle along with my car, and I used that a great deal during the blockade. It got to be a stick-it-out thing, everybody saying, "By God, we are just not going to let them do this to us!" And we did it.

We were always aware of a military threat. The Soviets, in my recollection, never particularly threatened that. They didn't threaten to come in. There didn't seem to be any large movement of their forces that would indicate they were planning something. All three powers had garrisons in Berlin, small, they would have been overrun, but it would have been a pretty stiff fight for a few days. And the Germans would have sabotaged everything the Soviets did anyhow; they hated them at the time.

It solidified our relations with the West Germans. For instance, in the airlift, all of the manual labor was being done by Germans at the airport, unloading that coal, unloading the potatoes, telling the plane when it could move out again. All of that was done by them, and pretty soon the spirit of cooperation replaced that of sort of occupier-occupied. It was very good in that respect.

We still went into the Soviet sector. They never stopped us. They had thrown the city government of all Berlin out of East Berlin, but we wouldn't let them stop us going there. Although, just because of the lack of gasoline, we probably never went there as often. We could go by subway, though -- when the subway worked, but, again, there were power shortages.

The East Germans, of course, were not directly affected by the blockade. Their level of subsistence had been perhaps close to that of the West Berliners before the blockade -- bad for both of them really.

But with the introduction of the new currency reform in West Berlin, prices meant something. Items began to have value again. West Germans had things that East Germans could only admire. So gradually, gradually there became a cleft between the two that grew wider over the years and ended, as we know now, with tearing the Wall down.

Robert Murphy worked, of course, extremely closely with General Clay, who was the military governor, and he was a most kind and considerate chief to the junior officers. As I recall, he did not hold staff meetings that included everybody, but we would hear from others what he wanted, and things like this. I am a great admirer of Murphy, and I think he did a splendid job there. We know, because I could read the telegrams, that he was cautioning firmness in regard to the blockade. General Clay, of course, had wanted us to send an armored unit up the autobahn to shoot our way in when the Soviets stopped our land transit. Murphy seemed to go along with that, but I don't think he was completely sold on the idea, because he realized the dangers.

The truth of the matter was that we had little military in those days. We had gutted this wonderful force we had had in 1945. We had occupation troops in Germany. Most of the combat troops had long since been discharged from the Army. We had a force that was called a constabulary in West Germany, and it wasn't until the Korean War, a year after the end of the blockade, that we began to build up our forces again. Clay and Murphy were well aware of our weakness in that regard.

CHESTER E. BEAMAN

HICOG
Heidelberg (1946-1951)

Chester E. Beaman was born in Indiana in 1916. He received his bachelor's degree from Depauw University in 1938. His career includes positions in London, Wales, Cairo, Port Said, Philippines, Syria, and Malta. Mr. Stuart was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in September 1999.

Q: When did you go to Germany?

BEAMAN: 1946. My wife was there in 1945. She came back recruiting people and she recruited me. That is how we met.

Q: Were you still in the Army or were you out?

BEAMAN: No. As a warrant officer, I couldn't serve in Washington. I had to be a lieutenant or above. So they got me out of the Army and made me a civilian so I could head the whole program. There are silly things in life like that. In any event, I was a civilian. I first was head of the Quartermaster program. Then, in 1946, I became head of the program in Germany where I helped convert former military personnel to civilian status.

Q: You were doing this from 1949 to when?

BEAMAN: Actually, I went in 1946, and in 1947, I came back to get married. I went back in 1948 and then I finally got in the State Department in 1949. The Office of Military Government [OMGUS] was being replaced by the U.S. High Commission [HICOG]. After the war, I was still pursuing and talking to people about getting into the State Department. Consequently, the people who were recruiting knew what my desires were. In 1949, when the U.S. High Commission was established, I was already in Heidelberg working for the Army and they gave me an interview and hired me for HICOG. But they didn't hire me for position classification. It was for what they called "Employee Services," which involved counseling, training, meeting VIPs, and putting out a newspaper. That is how I entered into the Foreign Service.

Q: You took this exam where, in Frankfurt or Heidelberg?

BEAMAN: Initially, I was only hired as a temporary Foreign Service staff member. I guess you know what that was. I was taking a chance. I could have stayed with the Army and probably gone up higher in the Army hierarchy, but instead, I was hired by the State Department for a job in employee services. I was finally in, but it was in personnel work. I continued to work at the High Commission until 1951 when I was transferred to London.

Q: In the High Commission, were you working in Frankfurt?

BEAMAN: Yes. The Army headquarters had moved to Heidelberg, so I had to move to Frankfurt with HICOG.

Q: What were you doing in Frankfurt when you were working for the State Department but under HICOG?

BEAMAN: A number of military officers as well as civilians in OMGUS, like me, wanted to get into the HICOG organization. I did not personally make the decision as to who was retained and who was out - that was another section - but I had a lot of employee service work connected with this group, such as counseling, arranging transportation if a person was moved geographically, obtaining housing, and various other problems connected with the changeover. Percentagewise a very small number of former military or OMGUS civilians were taken into the State Department. There was simply an excess of personnel.

Q: I think these were called Kreis officers, weren't they?

BEAMAN: Yes, some Kreis officers (U.S. representatives at local level) were converted OMGUS personnel. But the State Department had its own program. Young people with college degrees were recruited as Kreis officers back in Washington and sent over. They were then assigned to various Kreises (the German equivalent to a county). That program was very effective. There had been something like that with the military.

Q: When the war was over, you were ending up with sort of a residue. I think this whole program was designed to make the transition, to get the Army out from under and get the State Department there as an interim force.

BEAMAN: That's right. They did very well. Some Foreign Service officers whom I later met when I was a Foreign Service officer had started as Kreis officers.

Q: They would have a meeting here from time to time.

BEAMAN: Oh, they did? Well, I had a few friends in that program. Later on, I realized that it was really good training for Foreign Service officers to be in jobs like that. There were other services for which I was responsible. We had to work on a lot of problems. There were deaths that we handled. It was sort of like consular work. There were consulates in Germany. I wasn't replacing the consuls. But if the person were a HICOG employee, it was my responsibility. We had one fellow who committed suicide. We had people killed in automobile accidents. One officer, when he died, we found out he had two wives, one in Germany and one back in the States, and they both showed up to his funeral at Arlington. Another task was that of putting out a news-type sheet. Also I had a VIP bureau under my wing. For any high-ranking people who came from Washington, my assistants or I would make out their schedule, introduce them to people, and see that they were happy. The VIPs were quite often congressmen. Wayne Hayes was one of them. They were checking on what was going on.

Q: How did this work? With congressmen, things were relatively cheap. They were getting counterpart funds. I would think it would be a little hard to keep the congressmen "under reservation," in other words, from going off and hitting the high spots and the low spots.

BEAMAN: Yes. After I got into the Department, there were CODELs. We would just make out

a schedule for them and they could change their minds: "I don't want to go there" or "I want to go here." So, we would arrange whatever they wanted. But they enjoyed the PX and local nightlife while they were there, and took back a lot of purchases.

Q: What was your impression of how the State Department fit into the High Commissioner's office?

BEAMAN: The officers who were from the Department, the real Department, so to speak, were a bit unhappy to be assigned to jobs in the High Commission unless they were high up. Also, at the consulate, which was in downtown Frankfurt, they didn't like, for example, my entering in when an officer of the consulate committed suicide because they figured it was their role rather than mine, even though I was in the higher echelon. So there was a feeling that "You people aren't the regular Foreign Service." In a sense, we weren't. I had a Foreign Service staff designation, but I really was just temporary. I had to take an oral exam in Germany to become permanent staff. Then when I got to London, I had to take another exam to get regular Foreign Service officer status. It was step by step.

Q: Do you recall when you took the oral exam to get permanent status as a staff officer? Do you recall any of the questions?

BEAMAN: No, I don't recall those as well as I recall the ones in London. Those in Germany were primarily administrative-type questions. I remember, I was so nervous that I would fool around with a pencil in front of me. I flipped it way over in the corner. One of the examiners got up, walked over to the corner, came back, and put it right in front of me. In any event, I passed, along with a number of others. The questions were either administrative facts or cases like "If you had this person killed, how would you handle it? If you were going to go to the government and talk about privileges for our people, what would you say" and things like that.

Q: Was there any effort made to train you to be part of the Department of State or was it just "Here's the job and do it" and you pick it up as you go?

BEAMAN: Sort of the latter. At least, in my case, I had fooled around with the idea for so long, I knew a lot of things to be done. We just picked up knowledge as we went along. That is not a proper statement either. A lot of material we ourselves developed. For example, for new people coming over, whether hired by the State Department or from outside the Department, I developed a handbook to orient them to life in Occupied Germany. We also developed and held training courses for our local staff. I developed outlines for accomplishing each of our employee services. Without my realizing it at the time, this, my first Foreign Service assignment, coupled with my previous Army experience, later helped me in attacking other assignments in the Foreign Service.

Q: You haven't mentioned the Germans. I realize our structure in Germany was so much that one could have a very satisfactory, very busy, productive career in Germany literally without talking to a German.

BEAMAN: That's right. Stepping back a little, when I was with the Army, which led into the

same thing under the High Commission, the Germans at first worked for us because they got an 1,800 calorie meal. The money was virtually worthless. It wasn't the money they worked for; it was the food and the possibility of getting tips in food. For example, I always gave my maid a bar of soap and a pack of cigarettes, which was like tripling her salary each week. We were discouraged from associating with Germans outside of work. That was the situation in the Army. Under HICOG, the Americans were a little closer to the Germans because by then the organization was aiming to prepare Germany for sovereignty. The Germans at HICOG were more experienced and at higher grades. They worked in both administrative and substantive positions. We had certain training courses directed specifically at German staff. By that time, we could and did associate with Germans outside of work. Glenn Wolfe, the administrative officer, developed a program where groups of Germans and their wives were invited to several American (HICOG) homes on the same night. There we had a couple of hours of binational discussion aimed toward understanding each other, followed by a serving of food.

Q: When you were in HICOG, your work was still pretty well concentrated within the American working community.

BEAMAN: That's right.

Q: You did this until when?

BEAMAN: 1951. Before that, I took the oral exam that made me permanent Foreign Service staff. Being permanent, I was eligible for transfer to other posts. At first I thought I was going to go to, of all places, Manila, which I got to years later. Somebody else had staked out London, but much to my surprise, he turned down that job. I was thus assigned to London as personnel officer. That was February 1951.

JORDAN THOMAS ROGERS
Consular Officer
Stuttgart (1946)

Visa Officer
Berlin (1946-1948)

Trade Officer, HICOM
Frankfurt (1948-1950)

COCOM Officer, Office of German Affairs
Washington, DC (1950-1953)

Mr. Rogers was born in South Carolina and raised in North Carolina. After graduating from the University of North Carolina, he served with the United States Air Force in WWII. Entering the Foreign Service in 1946, he served at a variety of foreign posts in Europe, Latin America and Asia, primarily as

Economic and Political Officer. His final overseas post was Rawalpindi, Pakistan, where he was Deputy Chief of Mission. In Washington, Mr. Rogers was assigned to the Department's Staff Secretariat, to the Department of Defense as Foreign Affairs Officer and finally as Economic Officer in the Department's Latin America Bureau.

ROGERS: This was in October, the war having ended two months earlier. And one day in February the telephone rang and this voice says, "This is Mr. Burns, from the State Department." Well, as a South Carolinian, of course I knew who Jimmy Byrnes was. He had been the Governor of South Carolina and was then the Secretary of State. So I put two and two together and thought Mr. Byrnes, the Secretary of State, was calling me. Well, it wasn't Jimmy Byrnes, it happened to be Findley Burns and Findley says to me, "How would you like to go to Germany as a vice consul?" And I responded that I would go anywhere, if they would get me out of the army.

Things happened. I got out of the army very quickly and in about two weeks found myself on a boat going to Germany. The two weeks was enough to enable me to say goodbye to my family, to take all the training courses offered by the Foreign Service, full of things about protocol, I think that must have lasted half an hour at most, and everything else.

I got to Germany I guess in mid-March, assigned to Stuttgart. Sarah meanwhile, knowing her way around Washington, had managed to get permission to go to Germany very quickly and she ended up there on May 1st, as the third wife, after the consul general's wife, the wife of Consul General A. Dana Hodgdon and the consul's wife, who was working in the code room, whose husband was Fred Mann. Sarah ended up as wife number three.

The work was fascinating. We were dealing altogether with Germans and mainly, of course, Jews and hearing from them all of the difficult problems and treatment they had had, including most of them who had come back from a shorter or longer stay at concentration camps. So I was fascinated by everything that was going on in Germany.

Sarah arrived and there we were. That assignment did not last very long. Sarah had received no Foreign Service training. I had received exceedingly little. We knew nothing about calling on people. And so Sarah was there and never made an effort to call on anybody. We assumed that since we were new we would be told what to do. Well, we weren't told what to do and wife number two arrived, whereupon she was swamped with trips to the PX and use of transportation and so on. Well, we looked at each other and thought, "This isn't any way to handle newcomers. So, this is just a lark for us. We may not stick in the Foreign Service." Sarah says, "I'm not gonna call on anyone." (Actually, I believe she did call on Fred Mann's wife; they had entertained us.) So she never did. I'm not pointing any fingers but come a couple of months later, someone had to be transferred to Berlin. It turned out to be me, which took us to an even more interesting spot.

Somewhere along this process, maybe in Stuttgart, I think it was in Stuttgart, I took the Foreign Service exam and, since this is in part an exercise in revealing your weaknesses as well as what you would like to call your strengths, I'll have to say that I've known people who took the exam who made a lower score than I did (and who didn't pass) but I don't know anybody who took the

exam and passed it with a lower score than I had. My score came out, when adding up all the different sections, came out to be 69.45. So I guess some kind soul rounded the four to a five and the five to a zero and gave me a 70, which got me into the Foreign Service, I guess you can say, by the skin of my teeth.

Q: Yeah, were you in Stuttgart when Secretary Byrnes came there and made his famous speech?

ROGERS: No, I was not.

Q: You had already gone to Berlin?

ROGERS: We were in Berlin, yes. I recall his making a speech in Stuttgart, but for the life of me I can't recall his topic.

Q: Well, sorry to interrupt you but I, now tell us how Berlin affected you when you got there.

ROGERS: Berlin, we were in Berlin two years. I was still working in the visa section, as I did for not quite all of my time in Berlin. But we came even closer to the realities of German life. We were living not very far from the consulate, an easy walking distance. I used to go home for lunch. And it was close enough that Sarah was able to develop what you might call a small soup kitchen and I could send people from the Soviet zone, who were in the worst condition of all (and who made up the majority of our applicants) to our house for soup. And we were very happy to have done that.

We met Germans. We met a rather surprising couple back in Stuttgart, a man who had been a captain in the German Army, we hired him to come in several nights a week to give us German lessons. Of course I had no training in German when I got there. I say of course, maybe I shouldn't say of course but this was right after the end of the war and we didn't have all the luxuries that later fell our way. He had just come back from the Eastern Front. He had been stationed in Bordeaux early in the war and had married a French girl! One didn't hear about that happening very often and we were very surprised.

And even more surprised when his French in-laws came to visit them. In Germany, in 1946! His wife, she married him, she went back to Germany with him. She stayed in Germany throughout. I'm certain this did not happen very often but the fact that it did at all was a surprise to us. We liked the couple. We took her to Berlin once for a visit. In fact we saw them, over a period of time, a good many years later.

An amusing story about them: Hans, the husband, worked for the Bank Deutscher Länder, a leading bank at the time. About ten years later, when we were stationed in Budapest, Sarah needed an operation, and I arranged to take her to the Air Force hospital in Wiesbaden. Driving up, we stopped in Stuttgart, getting into a hotel by about 6 p.m. "Shall we call Hans and Odette?" "Well, why not, we can go by after supper." You know how pleased anyone is to have someone from out-of-town phone you at 6 p.m. and say "Here we are! We just got into town!!" Anyway, we phoned them, and they said, "Come over right now, come over for supper." So we went.

Steak and champagne!! They lived in the same apartment, no children, stuffed with a lot of new furniture, huge Grundig radio-record player in the corner (this was pre-TV), they'd each gained about 10 kg. Hans still had the same job. But the payoff: Odette said, "How long will you be in the hospital? I'll come up and see you." (Stuttgart-Wiesbaden must be 60-70 miles!). Sarah replied, "Oh no, that's much too much trouble, you'd have to change trains in Frankfurt, don't do it!! " Odette: "Oh, It's no trouble. The chauffeur can drive me up!!" Spiegel Deutschlands. The new Germany!

"Another story from the same trip. Driving back alone to Budapest, it began to snow around Munich. I had hoped to reach Vienna, but around Linz I decided that enough was enough, and found a Gasthaus, and got a room. Typical: big feather quilt on the bed, toilet way down the hall, everything icy.

So I go down for supper, and the only other people there was a table occupied by several men. They invited me to join them, so I did. I said, "I'll come if you'll speak Hochdeutsch, this Linzer accent is too much for me." One said, "OK, we'll try!" So I joined them and they asked me what I was doing, and I told them I was with the US Legation in Budapest. That was astounding to them. "The US has a Legation in Budapest!! Why on earth?" "Well, Austria has a Legation there too!" "Unbelievable! Deswegen sind unser Steuer so hoch!!" (That's why our taxes are so high!!)

Berlin, or at least parts of it, was almost totally destroyed. We got there in August '46, I believe. Sarah had a baby in December '47 and shortly after that the problems with the Russians began to be serious. In the meantime I had moved, I'm not sure exactly under what circumstances, I had moved from the consulate and was then working in the economic office under Wesley Harrison, in the office, I guess that was already the High Commission, HICOG or military government.

Q: It's still military government, yes.

ROGERS: So, working in the economic section, probably trying to figure out what I was doing. When the blockade began to come down, things got dicey. Sarah, incidentally, was working, at least until her pregnancy was pretty advanced, she immediately got a job, she'd already gotten the same type of job in Stuttgart, working for the military government earning, it may surprise the reader, a good bit more than I was earning, writing the history of OMGUS. Strangely enough, I've never seen that history published.

Q: OMGUS being the Office of Military Government of the United States.

ROGERS: Correct. And we were somewhat astounded at the extent of black marketing in Germany and I will say the extent of black marketing carried on by quite responsible people. And I can't say that our record was completely clear, meaning purchase of things like china and art and so on with cigarettes. I've never seen much published on the total extent of that in Germany and one can argue both ways, I suppose, about the ethics of it, but it was certainly very widespread in Berlin.

Q: Yes, well, in fact the commanding general's wife, General Clay, set up a black market

operation there, which made it semi-official.

ROGERS: Well, I knew she had that reputation.

Q: She did. She set that up there. I wanted to ask you, in the economic section, were you able to meet with Germans to discuss their problems or not?

ROGERS: Not in Berlin. Later, in Frankfurt, yes. But then my job was somewhat different, in Frankfurt.

Q: Any other comments about your Berlin days?

ROGERS: Well, not much. We were able to get out. We went by train to Copenhagen, bought a car and drove it back. We went down to Leipzig to a fair, at one point. My mother came to visit us in the summer of 1947 and we drove with her to Stuttgart and then to Switzerland. So until the blockade came along we did not find it stifling.

Q: You were in Berlin when the blockade began?

ROGERS: When it began. Well, when the antecedents began. When the British plane was shot down.

Q: In April of

ROGERS: April of '48.

Q: Of '48, yes.

ROGERS: I remember being told to burn secret documents, of which I had none but I'm not sure how much my office had. We had a friend in Stuttgart who called us up one night and just said, "I wanted to talk to you before the phone lines all get cut." That was encouraging.

In any event, we left in June of '48 on home leave, but since we had a six months old baby while I was gone I was transferred to Frankfurt. I got home and my father said, "I understand you bought a new car. What'd you do with it?" I said, "Well, left it in Berlin." He said, "You did? How you gonna get it out?" And I said, "Daddy, don't worry about those things." Of course, I had not the foggiest idea how we were going to get it out. But he kept asking me this all during the time we were there and I never had an answer until we got back to Frankfurt and discovered the car was there waiting for us. I can remember to this day how relieved I felt—at last I could tell my father!. It had been flown out, of course, on one of the transport flights, which had so much to carry into Berlin but very little to bring out.

Q: Well, you were in Frankfurt at the time when OMGUS changed over to HICOG, High Commission's Office.

ROGERS: I guess so.

Q: What was your relationship with the U.S. military, because they're very strong in the Frankfurt area?

ROGERS: We had a military couple living upstairs from us and we were very friendly with them. We saw the military fairly regularly, but we did in Berlin, as well. So I had no official connection.

Q: I was going to ask, nothing officially

ROGERS: Well, that's not quite true. I meant to say that when Sarah was on the boat going to Germany she became very friendly with a group of young Czechs about her age, maybe a half dozen or so, who had been caught in the U.S. during the war and were just going home to Czechoslovakia for the first time. Later, in HICOG, we were told by the military that that a Czech couple had crossed illegally from Czechoslovakia into Germany and he was being held temporarily by the Germans for interrogation. He had worked for the Ministry of Foreign Trade in Prague and we were asked if we wanted to question him. So we cabled Washington, I didn't know what questions to ask. At that point I was working in the foreign trade, interzonal trade division of the economic section of the Political Adviser to the High Commissioner's office. Anyway, I went out to interview this man and in hearing about his history I heard that he and a girl friend had come back on the same boat that Sarah had been on and they had known each other. Small world. So we saw them there and later he came to this country, got a job with Eastman Kodak in Rochester and we saw him once or twice in Washington while he was job hunting. I believe he stayed with us.

Q: Now, you mentioned earlier that you had a chance to meet with Germans in Frankfurt. Were they helpful to you or

ROGERS: Yes, that was the, what we were doing then, we were working on what was called COCOM, which was an effort to prevent a long list of strategic commodities from getting into the Soviet zone and eventually into the whole Soviet sphere of influence. So, yes, I worked with the Germans a good bit there. I went to Paris with a couple of them, for meetings in Paris on that subject and found them to be quite cooperative.

Q: Good. What were some of the other problems you dealt with there in Frankfurt?

ROGERS: Well, one personal job was, I sort of became John Holt's daughter's dentist, or better put, dental assistant. John Holt was my counterpart in Berlin and his daughter needed to see a dentist occasionally; so I became the person who met her at the airport, sometimes put her up with us for the night and then got her back on the plane to Berlin. I know John Holt is not living now but I saw him and Elizabeth, we saw them several times in Maine in recent years but I don't remember asking him about his daughter's teeth.

Q: Did you have anything to do with the airlift, because while you were in Frankfurt the airlift was going on to Berlin.

ROGERS: Not as such. They were trying to set up this COCOM system and I said that the Germans were cooperative with us. We thought they were. There was a great deal of questionable trade going on between the three Western zones and the Soviet zone and how much we had the wool pulled over our eyes and how much was totally straightforward, I don't know. And I believe you can question now whether the whole effort was in and of itself worthwhile.

Q: Well, Tom, your tour in Frankfurt ended in 1950 when you were transferred back to Washington, to the Bureau of German Affairs.

ROGERS: Yes, I was transferred back, Alex Kiefer and I, I believe, more or less swapped positions. He was working in Washington and he went to Germany. I came back to Washington, I taking the position he had. That bureau was under Hank Byroade, who had been a very young brigadier general, I believe, in the military and then I guess he'd gone to work in Germany and then later became head of the German bureau in Washington. Galen Stone and I were working close together at that point, as was I believe Monty Montenegro.

Q: And what did you do, really, in the bureau?

ROGERS: It was still the basic problem of how to keep items, goods, commodities that the U.S. considered strategic out of the hands of the Soviet bloc.

Q: So you were still dealing with the COCOM problem?

ROGERS: I was dealing with the COCOM problem. Neither Galen or Monty were. But I was still dealing with the COCOM problem, under which, one of the more serious leakage areas was the interzone trade between East and West Germany. I don't know if we ever made a serious dent in it or not. I wouldn't be surprised to find out that we did not. And I wouldn't be surprised to hear all sorts of critiques, both praising the whole effort and condemning it, today.

ALFRED LEROY ATHERTON, JR.

Vice Consul

Stuttgart (1947-1950)

High Commission Staff

Bonn (1950-1952)

Ambassador Alfred Leroy Atherton was born in Pennsylvania in 1921. A graduate of Harvard University, he served in the U.S. Army as an officer in World War II and entered the Foreign Service in 1947. He served in Germany, Syria, India, was ambassador to Egypt, and was Assistant secretary for the Near East and Director General of the Foreign Service in Washington, DC. Ambassador Atherton retired in 1983 and was interviewed by Dayton Mak in the summer of 1990

ATHERTON: But by then we knew where we were going. It was Stuttgart, Germany. There

were two of us in fact out of our course, both going to Stuttgart, Germany. Bill Kerrigan, who has subsequently also retired, and myself. We discovered, when we got to the post, after one of those long and, in retrospect, very enjoyable sea voyages on the SS America, with our daughter, aged four, and our son, Michael, aged two months, that we were the first new batch of Foreign Service officers assigned to the Consulate General in Stuttgart. This was 1947. Our son was born in August, and we went out to post in, I believe it was September or October. He was just a couple of months old. We are still in the fall of 1947.

On the ship, incidentally, was our new Consul General, A. Dana Hodgdon, and his wife, who had been on home leave. We had in fact met him and Mrs. Hodgdon in Washington. They had invited us to have a meal with them and get acquainted at the Army-Navy club, in which I had never set foot before. So it was an exciting first. There were a lot of firsts in those days.

He was going back on the same ship as we were, so that when we arrived, there was more than the usual attention, more than a new Junior Vice Consul would have gotten, because the whole Consulate, practically, was on hand to greet the boss and his wife, and we benefitted from the attention.

I should say that getting from Cherbourg, where the SS America docked, to Stuttgart was itself a bit of an experience. We had to take a rather long train ride, as I recall, with this babe-in-arms. And with post-war rationing, it was not the most luxurious of conditions for travel to Paris.

Once we got to Paris we discovered that there was a transportation strike, and we had to wait awhile for Embassy vehicles. But we finally did get to the hotel where they had put us up. It was the Hotel Crillon. Very luxurious, even in those days. Very close to the Embassy.

The only problem was that I hadn't brought enough money to pay for the hotel bill for more than one night. No one had told me that if I had gone into a bank in New York, I could have bought French francs at a much better rate than I could buy them once I got to Paris.

We were really very close to broke. So broke in fact that I went over to the Embassy mess and got a meal and brought it back to the hotel so the family could all eat, because we didn't think we could afford to go out to a Paris restaurant. In any case, between the high prices at that rate of exchange and wartime and post-war shortages, we would probably do better getting our meals at the mess. The only problem was that I took our daughter with me to go get the food and take it back to Betty in the hotel, where she was with the baby. And in the midst of the dinner at the hotel, the waitress spilled a bowl of hot soup over our daughter, who was already in a state of some anxiety -- the whole change of culture and all. Just what we needed. And the result of that was that she went into hysterics. It was not a very restful night. The Embassy said that it might be several days before they could get us on the train, which was the first leg of the Orient Express headed east to get to Stuttgart. We said we couldn't wait. We didn't have any money to wait. They finally got us one compartment. And so all of us: Betty, our daughter, aged four at that time, the baby, and myself, with some 20 pieces of luggage, got into one sleeping compartment on the Orient Express for an overnight trip.

It was still glamorous. Going into the dining car and sitting with the Consul General for dinner

was exciting. Going across the border in the middle of the night, having our passports taken by the night porter so we wouldn't have to be awakened. I had been told never to let our diplomatic passports out of my hands. The first thing I was told was that if I didn't want to have to get up in the middle of the night at the border crossing, I would have to leave them in the custody of the porter. So after consulting the Consul General, I decided it was worth taking that risk so we could sleep through the night.

We did arrive the next day in Stuttgart and, as I said, were royally greeted by the Deputy Consul General and put into the consular club, which had quarters for transients, until we could get into permanent quarters.

It was not a typical Foreign Service post. The Consul General was, of course, an old line Foreign Service officer. The number two was Fred Mann who had also been in the Service before World War II and had been in Japan when the war broke out. He was interned for some time and finally exchanged, and got as far as what is now, I guess, Mozambique, Portuguese East Africa, and was immediately assigned to the Consulate in Lourenço Marques, and that is where he spent the rest of the war. He finally got to Germany. So we had two rather senior career people in Stuttgart. Bill Kerrigan and myself, very junior, were new career people, and all the rest of the staff were what were then called staff officers. They had been appointed, many of them recruited locally, and their main job was running the visa program, which had been approved by President Truman to issue 100,000 visas in Germany to people who had come out of concentration camps, out of displaced person camps. No Germans. There was no immigration program for Germans, of course. Not at all. This was still a military government. It was still a period of de-Nazification. Germans were all being checked for their political credentials.

So we had a staff of people, many of whom had just come out of uniform and had been hired right on the spot to come into the Consulate. Except for the head of the consular section. The man who ran this program was Reed Robinson, who was on loan as a reserve officer from the Immigration and Naturalization Service. This was under the Act of 1946, which had created the reserve officer category. He knew the immigration laws inside out, and he was in charge of the operation. Bill Kerrigan was assigned to the citizenship section.

Then, as still today, my first assignment was to do visas. I think I was in the visa section for a year, perhaps a bit more, dealing largely with non-Germans, with people wanting to get out of Germany, out of displaced person camps, to the United States, supported by voluntary agencies, most of them church-affiliated, one kind or another, all nationalities, most of them without identification papers.

Without documentation, there was a great deal of difficulty in establishing whether there was fraud in any case. We had a security officer whose job was to try to determine if any of these were trying to escape the political crimes committed during the war or whether they were really who they said they were. Interrogation of these applicants for immigration under that program was pretty intensive. Most of the applicants were Eastern Europeans. Many Jews, who had survived, somehow, the concentration camps -- not just in Germany, but also in Poland and all across eastern Europe -- and who had ended up in refugee camps in the neighborhood of Stuttgart -- converted former German Army barracks.

One thing that we learned was that the one language they all had in common was what was called DP, or displaced person camp, German. And, of course, that was the language that I had studied, the language in which I had passed the Foreign Service exam. I was not very good at speaking it, but I quickly began to. And I used my German to interview these applicants. My speaking, and their speaking, in what was neither of our first languages. I also had German interpreters if I needed them.

The cases all tended to be quite similar. We were not issuing visitors visas except to very special Germans who were sponsored by the military government, who had been cleared of Nazi affiliations, some of whom were being hired to take on jobs as local employees of Foreign Service nationals, but for positions within the military government.

There were always a few cases of real fraud. But in most cases, the fraud consisted only of trying to establish their real identity, since they didn't have the documentation to prove it. Manufacturing birth certificates was a major industry. Now, very often, I think the information that was put in these manufactured birth certificates was probably correct. It was probable that what they said was true, but they couldn't produce the original documents from the place of birth or from the registries where they came from.

I must admit that the people doing the visa investigations and giving a clearance before we could issue the visas were themselves, I think, in some cases, rather over zealous. I often suspected that they were really against all of these foreigners going to the States, and they were trying to find ways to disqualify them on the basis of fraudulent documentation, which I thought a spurious reason for not issuing a visa. If you refused a visa, you had to have it countersigned. The officer refusing it had to get another officer to review it and countersign, and say he or she agreed that this was a justified refusal under the laws.

I can remember, once, deciding that the refusal was itself, I thought, fraudulent. I declined to sign the document that would have made this a legal visa refusal, thereby incurring the displeasure of my senior. But in fact, I did so. I just couldn't do this. I can't remember whether they got somebody else to sign it or whether that person got a visa, but at least I didn't sign it.

The investigations were conducted by officers who were assigned to the Consulate. They were hired, in many cases, from positions directly out of the military. Some of them had been in military investigation -- they had investigative backgrounds. One of the people doing this in fact was a locally hired Dutch national. He was assistant to the American who was head of the investigations for the Consulate. And I came to feel, after awhile, that on his part at least, and maybe on the part of some of the others, too, there was a certain amount of anti-Semitism involved here, when it came to the Jewish refugee applicants; that they were in fact trying to find reasons not to let Jews go to the States.

There was another force operating, which I only later understood the significance of when I began to know more about Palestine and the Middle East. Various Jewish organizations, the American Joint Distribution Committee and HIAS, for example, were active in trying to document and support and persuade Jewish displaced persons or Jewish refugees to go to what

was soon to become Israel. This was 1947, and there was a certain amount of pressure on the refugees to go to Palestine -- certainly in terms of affidavits of support. The impression was that they were much easier to get if you were seeking support to go to Israel than if you were looking for support to go to the United States, though many were also assisted in emigrating to the U.S.

That was a bit of an education, to learn about the politics of immigration to Palestine. Actually, the Palestine mandate really had ended, because by then it was late 1947, early 1948, and the partition resolution had been passed by the UN General Assembly in November, 1947. The British had turned Palestine over to the UN. It was that interim period that led up to the Israeli declaration of their state in May, 1948, and which, of course, led to the first Arab-Israeli War.

But that was a backdrop that I was only vaguely aware of. I was in Germany; I had no idea that I would spend, later, a great deal of my career dealing with that problem.

I am not saying they the AJDC did not assist and document those going to the States, but there was certainly a very major effort by some to persuade Jews that they ought to go to Israel to be part of the new state.

Anyway, that is what I did, basically, for the first year or more -- work in the visa section issuing visas to displaced persons. But you didn't, in those days, have the rigid core system in the Service that subsequently developed. And, while I was in the visa section, I also was at my first post, and it was envisaged that I would rotate in the course of that assignment, to other parts of the Consulate.

I became very interested, and I thought I would like to try my hand at political reporting. I had met, through the visa section, some of the refugees who were ethnic German refugees from East Europe -- the so-called Volksdeutsch, from places like Bessarabia, or places that had been part of Germany before the war and that were transferred, as part of the post-war settlement, to Poland or other East European countries, or people who had fled ancestral homelands where Germans had been settled for a generations, going back way into the early Czarist period in Russia or who had been expelled or who fled in order not to live under Communist control. For example, there were the Germans from what was the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia, which had reverted to Czechoslovakia after the war. So we had these groups of ethnic German refugees, many of whom registered as non-Germans and as refugees, even though they were of German origin and they spoke German. I can't remember whether any actually qualified for immigration. I became interested in the politics of these groups, because they were beginning to form into political pressure groups in Germany.

I can remember the very first political report I think I ever wrote in my life was about the politicization of ethnic German groups in the Stuttgart area. I don't know if anyone ever read it. I wrote it and gave it to the chief of the Political Section, and it maybe went into somebody's files. It was an attempt to use my position in the visa section to gather information, which could be useful for political reporting. This is something that I would hope officers still do today, and which I encouraged when I was still in the Service -- that while doing their obligatory service in the visa section, they should look at it as an opportunity, and not as something to get behind them. It is an opportunity not only to get to know the language, to get to know the people of a

country (you can see a lot more natives in the visa section than anybody else in the Consulate), but also sometimes to become one more eye and ear of the Ambassador or the Consul General, for doing what is one of the main jobs of the Foreign Service -- to analyze the situation in the country and report what you learn.

I eventually was able to move out of the visa section into the citizenship section of the Consulate. We worked issuing passports and registering the births of Americans, getting to know that side of the Consulate's work, the citizenship laws. I think it was during this period that the post had an inspection; the first time I had been inspected in the Foreign Service.

I am getting a little ahead of my story. I should have added that in this first period, I can't remember precisely when it happened, but in that first couple of years in Stuttgart, the Consul General, Mr. Hodgdon, had a stroke and died.

We were assigned a new Consul General, James Wilkinson, who was very much an old-school Foreign Service officer -- basically, a man with many biases, I have to say. He was not very fond of women; he certainly was against minorities of any kind. I'll give you an example of the kind of problem, at least from my point of view, we encountered when we worked under Jim Wilkinson as Consul General.

In February of 1948, which was the spring of the beginning of the year after we arrived in Stuttgart, there was the Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia. A great many Czech refugees ended up in some of the camps around Stuttgart.

One group consisted of students from Charles University in Prague, who came out and immediately organized a university in exile, in their camp outside of Stuttgart, to continue their education. Some of their professors had fled with them; so you had students and professors, and they organized what they called the Masaryk University in Exile for these Czech university students. One of the things they wanted, and there were many of them, was to learn English. Some had some English; some didn't. Betty and the wife of the head of the Political Section, Rosser Finger, volunteered to teach them. The head of the section was Max Finger, who later spent many years in the U.S. Mission to the U.N. in New York, with the rank of Ambassador. Max was then head of the Political Section. I eventually got out of the consular section entirely, and my third assignment in Stuttgart was to work in the Political Section with Max Finger as the chief. So Betty and Max's wife, Rosser, got to know each other pretty well, and they volunteered to teach English to these students. The Consul General got wind of this and called Max and me in, and he said, in effect: "I want you to understand that I don't want your wives going out to that camp and having anything to do with these refugees. Who knows, they may be Communists, and we should not be mixing with them."

So I got a direct order that I should tell Betty to stop teaching English to the Czech students, which was the first time since I had joined that I really began to wonder what kind of service I had gotten into. Is this what all senior officers were going to be like, arbitrary and, I thought, in this case, very wrong? Am I going to have to kowtow to the arbitrary views of people, particularly people who were themselves prejudiced, and who certainly had a view of the role of women and families in the Service that was not my view?

So I had mixed feelings about the latter part of that tour, although the job was interesting. Max Finger eventually moved on and another chief of section came in, and I had the satisfaction of being able to do some analysis. By then Germans were beginning to have local elections. Not national, of course. This was still military government. This was the American Zone, and they were having elections for state bodies -- part of the military government program, beginning to build institutions of democracy in Germany under military government. It was interesting to follow, and I did some analysis of these elections, and that was one of my contributions to the political reporting of that particular period. The other thing that I found particularly interesting was that, as political officer, I was invited to attend the periodic staff meetings of the military governor. All of us in the Consulate didn't quite fit into the military hierarchy, and they didn't quite know how to assimilate us into their ranking system. One of the great things that Dana Hodgdon did was to persuade the military government housing authorities that, as a Consul General, he was the equivalent of a three-star General, and his Consul was therefore the equivalent of a two-star General, and therefore Vice Consuls were one-star Generals. So we got housing that was probably better than we had for many years after that in the Foreign Service. We had two servants and all the amenities of living in an occupation regime.

But, also, it was an artificial situation. We had to do our shopping at the commissary and PX. Until the currency reform in early 1948, when suddenly goods began to return and the German mark was worth something, you really couldn't buy much on the local market. And whatever you did buy, you had to do with cigarettes or coffee.

It was a barter system; it was a black market system, basically. It was corrupting -- the whole black market system. I knew very few Americans who didn't, to some extent, indulge in it, and didn't sell their cigarettes or their coffee to get marks at the black market rate of exchange to use to buy things which were at inflated black market prices. If you had bought the marks at the legal rate of exchange, it would have been prohibitively expensive. Some of us whose consciences were a bit bothered by this used to go periodically to Switzerland, where you could buy marks legally at what was the free rate of exchange and bring them back into Germany.

But there was a kind of a corrupting aura about being in Germany during these days of the occupation, focusing on the black market and on the artificiality of being part of an occupation system. Although non-military, not part of a military government, we were still part of the establishment, and the Germans were the conquered people. There was still a lot of the residual attitudes towards Germans, that they should be treated as the enemy.

We certainly didn't pay much attention to it. We began, as soon as we could, associating with Germans. One of our daughter's best friends was the daughter of a next door neighbor who was German, and whom she kept in touch with many, many years after that.

But, still, it was not a typical Foreign Service environment at all. Obviously, we represented one of the few civilian departments in the military occupation, in a situation where nobody quite knew where we belonged. I had the feeling that many in the military never really quite understood what a Consulate was, what we were doing there in the first place.

I did enjoy very much being part of the periodic staff meetings of the military government, learning what was going on in the military government side. We got to know some of our military counterparts rather well, particularly those who were in the public affairs and political affairs side of the military government. They were often good sources of information.

In retrospect, I wonder why I was reporting things that they were probably also reporting through their channels, except that much of what they were reporting was probably going back to the Pentagon, and I hoped that what I was doing was going to the State Department, and assumed that maybe the two never talked to each other in Washington.

We got to know a few of the kreis officers in our part of Germany, as friends. The ones we got to know, in those days, for the most part were not Foreign Service officers. I know, at some point, new Foreign Service officers were assigned as kreis resident officers. Many of my contemporaries or colleagues a few years later started their Foreign Service career as Kreis officers in Germany, not in more traditional jobs. We did get to know a number of the Kreis officers socially, go out to visit them, get a bit of a sense what was going on in the countryside that way, but we weren't part of that network really.

Most of the time I was in Stuttgart, my job was in visas and passports. We were in Stuttgart for three years. That last year was not the happiest of times, because of the tensions I felt caused by the Consul General's attitudes and really rather tyrannical behavior, as far as junior personnel and junior officers were concerned. He did not like the fact that Max Finger, who was the head of the Political Section, was Jewish. If he had his way, and this was not a secret, because everybody that knew him knew this, there would be no Jewish officers in the Foreign Service. He had that much of an old-fashioned prejudice. It really disturbed me, and it disturbed a lot of my colleagues.

As I said, Bill Kerrigan and I were the only junior career people there at the beginning. The other officers doing visa and citizenship work were not in this as a career. They were doing a job, and then they were going to go on to other things. But for those of us who had chosen this as a career, we began to wonder if this was what all seasoned Foreign Service officers were like and if this was what our careers would be like.

Just about at the right moment, along came a man who, I guess if I'd known the phrase then, I would have said became my mentor in the Service. His name was Bernard Gufler. He was an old Eastern European and German hand; he had served in the Baltic countries before they were annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940. He had served in Germany before the war, and he had been sent back and assigned to establish an office, not in Frankfurt, which is where the headquarters of the military government was, but in Bonn, which was going to be the capital of the new West German Republic. He was recruiting staff to work with him in Bonn.

There were two offices established in Bonn in those days. By now, the military government had begun to evolve into the Allied High Commission, and the military governor had become a High Commissioner. It was the first stage of converting to an independent West German state. But we were there during that transition period when the military government was beginning to evolve into the High Commission, meaning more authority obviously being transferred to the Germans.

Gufler was to establish in Bonn an office called the Foreign Relations Division of the U.S. High Commission. The other office was being established by Charlie Thayer, and that became the Internal Affairs Division of the U.S. High Commission. It was, in the beginning, called a Liaison Office, and the purpose was to have somebody in Bonn who had liaison with the just-beginning-to-be-established West German authorities.

This was when a very limited, Basic Law was promulgated, and the West Germans had their first post-war parliamentary elections. As the government began to take shape, it began to reconstitute the German Foreign Service.

ATHERTON: We didn't go to Bonn until 1950. I was in Stuttgart from late 1947 until the summer of 1950. We went home and had our first home leave, and went back to Germany, and then we were assigned to Bonn. The reason we were assigned to Bonn was that Bernard Gufler had been traveling around Germany looking for people who were about ready to transfer and who might like to have a tour of duty with him. He wanted people who spoke German, had spent some time in Germany, felt somewhat at home there, and had an understanding of what was happening. So he asked if I would be prepared to go to work for him in Bonn.

Those were the days when senior officers could request officers and the personnel system generally complied. At least it happened that way in my case. I should say that, incidentally, we had received orders already through the routine personnel system to go to our second post, which was to have been Oslo. When I said that I thought it would be nice to spend some more time in Germany, Gufler was able to get the orders changed and have me reassigned to his office in Bonn.

He had two other people in the new office. One was a junior Foreign Service officer, whom I had not met before, who had come directly to Bonn, someone whom Mr. Gufler had known, named Stephen Koczak. Steve and I became the two career people in Gufler's Foreign Relations Division. The third officer was hired as a reserve officer, because he had studied in Germany before the war, spoke fluent German, and knew a lot of the people who emerged as figures in the new German government, such as Carlo Schmidt, for example, who became, during this period, the leader of the Social Democratic Party, and Willy Brandt.

So it was like night and day, going from Stuttgart to Bonn, working for Bernard Gufler who was a humanist who cared about his people. His wife was wonderful. She taught Betty a lot about what wives of the old Foreign Service were supposed to do. We became, in effect, not only colleagues but also very close friends. He restored my faith in a career which I could respect, in which I would hope some day to become a senior person myself and in which I would like to stay.

But we came very close in that last year, before Gufler came along and when I would say we were almost rehabilitated psychologically, to making the decision that this was not where we wanted to spend the rest of our lives. It was that stressful, in terms of the office atmosphere. I am

speaking of the office atmosphere that this created within the Consulate in Stuttgart.

Can I back up once, because there was one other thing that occurred in Stuttgart that I really should mention. The inspector who came was an old buddy of Mr. Wilkinson. He stayed as a house guest in the Consul General's house, something which was later not permitted. The Consul General would bring various staff people around to lunches and dinners and let the inspectors observe them in a social setting.

The inspector met with all of us on the staff individually, and in confidence, we were told. And many of us, certainly I did, let our hair down about how unhappy we were. We learned later that he told the Consul General. That didn't make our relationships with our Consul General any better. So that was another of the factors which really led me to think that this was not the business to be in.

But the light suddenly came on again when we got to Bonn. I had an interesting job, a pioneering sort of job. We were a very small office: Gufler, Cal Ancrum, who was the somewhat older German-speaking specialist, and Stephen Koczak. The French and British also had small missions because this was still the days of the High Commission. In fact, Bonn was in what was the British zone. Anyway, it was not the American zone. But the tripartite High Commission was in Bonn because Bonn had been designated to become the capital. You see, this was after the breakdown of functioning quadripartite control. The Iron Curtain had come down.

We were in Germany during the blockade of Berlin and the airlift, when the Soviets stopped all land travel to Berlin. I remember driving up the Autobahn by Frankfurt, and observing the endless takeoffs and landings of old DC-3s or 6s, which were part of the airlift of supplies and people from the western allied occupation part of Germany to Berlin.

It was a heady time. There was a lot: the beginning of the Cold War, the breakdown of quadripartite rule, the beginning of the development of a German government. And while my job was pretty junior we were there, and we were part of what was happening. On the tripartite High Commission there were a series of tripartite committees under the High Commissioners. One was the commission that dealt with matters that might be considered more foreign policy than domestic policy, such as travel control, the oversight of the beginning of the establishment of the German Foreign Office and of its Foreign Service, and others which I have long since forgotten.

But we had periodic meetings of this committee. Gufler was the American member, and there was a British member and a French member. I was Gufler's staff person. I prepared his meeting papers, wrote up the notes, helped him write up his reports to the High Commissioner and back to Washington on these meetings, and worked very closely with the British and the French counterparts at my level. So we had a tripartite working group as well, to lend support to the committee in terms of support of the High Commissioners.

The actual headquarters of the tripartite High Commission was in what had been an old hotel or something, I am not sure anymore, but it was a very grand building on a mountain across the river from Bonn in Petersburg, which was where the High Commission's Secretariat worked -- the tripartite Secretariat. And there were Americans and British and French on the Secretariat

who were all part of our community.

So there were other Americans in Bonn besides our little group in the Foreign Relations Division, and at the liaison office for internal affairs that Charlie Thayer had established in a different building in Bonn. There were Americans assigned to the office of the Secretariat of the High Commission. There was a very small American community, and we all lived scattered throughout German neighborhoods in Bad Godesberg, south of Bonn. This was before the American housing development was built in Plittersdorf. Our office was in an old mansion on the Rhine River that had belonged to a wealthy German whose name was Deichmann. This mansion, estate really, was called the Deichmann's Ave, or Mehlemerand because it was in a place named Mehlem. It had been requisitioned and taken over by military government, and this was where our office was.

We went to Bonn in 1950 at the end of home leave. By then plans were well under way to move the whole U.S. High Commission staff, which was quite large, from Frankfurt, which had been the capital of the American zone, to Bonn, to become part of what was the nucleus of, eventually, the U.S. Embassy. But at that point, it was still the U.S. High Commission.

There were, however, already many Foreign Service officers in the High Commission. It was a mixture of people who had transferred out of military government and people under the State Department who were different generations of Foreign Service. For example, the political advisor to the High Commissioner was a very senior career Foreign Service officer named Samuel Reber. His deputy was John Patton Davies, whose name was famous as one of the China hands, who was ultimately hounded out of the Foreign Service during the McCarthy period. They were people of the caliber of Davies, whom I think of as being extraordinarily able, committed Foreign Service officers of that era.

So our happy little community rapidly expanded once office space and housing had been built. Plans were implemented to build a housing compound in Plittersdorf, between Bad Godesberg and Bonn, and to expand the villa where we had as our Foreign Relations Division office to accommodate the entire staff of the U.S. High Commission. It was hundreds of people. It was literally hundreds. The building that was built, into which we eventually had to move as well, was what became, after the West German government became independent, the new U.S. Embassy. It is still, to this day, the U.S. Embassy in Bad Godesberg, in Mehlem south of Bonn. But, of course, it was built to accommodate the staff of the High Commission at its peak. A lot of the functions that were performed were going to be transferred to the new West German government, and there would be a great reduction in the size of the staff. So that, as it turned out, I don't think that the U.S. government ever really filled that office building with just its own people. Already, even in those days, the plan was to look for German government offices that might take over part of the building.

I can remember, to this day, a piece written by the *Paris Herald Tribune* correspondent in Bonn, Don Cook, who still is around, by the way; I've just seen his new book about that period. Don Cook wrote a very amusing piece about the new office building on the Rhine, in which he said: "It is reported that when this is converted to the U.S. Embassy, it will be much larger than needed, and, therefore, some elements of the new Bonn government will be absorbed. This will

probably be the first time that an embassy has ever absorbed some of the government to which it is accredited." It, in fact, happened.

So Bonn was rapidly growing from a sleepy university town into the seat of the West German Government -- but still with a small town atmosphere. I am sure people from that period will all remember that the Germans rather laughingly called it the Bundeshauptdorf, which meant Federal Capital Village. This reflected the fact that, at least in that period, very few people thought this was more than transitory. The attitude was basically that it was only a matter of time, and hopefully not too much time, before Berlin would again become the capital, and all of these government offices would be absorbed into the central German government offices in Berlin.

I can remember one of the young German Foreign Service officers in the first class that became part of the new German Foreign Service, whom I got to know and have kept in touch with ever since -- I can remember getting into a big discussion with him, very early on in those days in Bonn, about his predicting that this was all very transitory, and it was only natural that Germany would again be a single state in time, and that the West German Foreign Service would be expanded into an all-German Foreign Service. I can remember arguing with him and saying, "Kurt, I think it is conceivable that we will never see a reunited Germany in our lifetime." Well, I was wrong, but it was certainly took a lot longer than my friend Kurt Mueller thought.

Incidentally, I should mention that before the actual establishment of the West German government and the Foreign Ministry, there was a kind of shadow Foreign Ministry, consisting of former German Foreign Ministry and Foreign Service officers who had been cleared under the de-nazification procedures. All of them were cleared, and all of them, of course, at that point, were unemployed. These were people who had been on the world diplomatic scene, including as was traditional in the old German Foreign Service -- men of the old German nobility. For example, one name I remember from that time was Hasso von Etzdorf.

They formed, outside of Stuttgart in the American zone, an organization called Das Deutches Bureau fur Friedersfrager, in rough translation the German Office to Study Issues of Peace. And that was another of the things that I did during my political reporting in Stuttgart. I got to know some of these people, and did some of the original reports, along with Max Finger, about what was happening in this group of former German Foreign Service officers. It was obvious that what they were doing was trying to stay together as a group until there would be a Foreign Service, since they all hoped to go back into the Foreign Service. Some of them in fact ended up getting some very senior positions once the German government was established.

This established some contacts, interesting people just to get to know. And it got us out of purely military government circles, and was a way of getting to know Germans who had a certain common background. A lot of it was done evenings, a lot of it was done at social gatherings, usually at a local bierstube. We began to entertain in our home. As I recall, I don't think I had any entertaining allowance when I was a junior Vice Consul in Stuttgart. We had some modest receptions and begin to invite Germans to the house, not just all military government people. So we got to know some of these people socially, and we began to get some sense of not just who they were, but what they were thinking about the future shape of their country, the rehabilitation

of Germany into the world community, the European community.

Once the West German government was established, and I was by then in Bonn, some of these people turned up in Bonn. I could go see them, even though they were many times senior to me, because I was one of those people who had, in a way, sought them out and met them and gotten to know them when they were on the outside, really, when they were still suspect as former servants of the German state, living and working and doing some study papers about various issues in the future, about Germany and its role in Europe, in this little office outside of Stuttgart. So when they showed up at the Foreign Ministry -- and I am sure a lot of their papers eventually became the official papers of the Foreign Ministry -- I had at least some entree and some contacts.

Another thing that was very enjoyable was the decision, basically I think it was Gufler's idea, to make it a point to try to, not influence directly, but help to shape, if you will, the development and training of the new group of young German Foreign Service officers.

The West German government established a school for diplomats in Speier, on the Rhine south of Bonn. Gufler and I used to go there and sometimes some of the others from our office. Periodically, we would be invited to go down and meet with these new German Foreign Service officers and talk to them about our Foreign Service, talk about policy issues, have little seminars, social gatherings and work together, and begin to develop channels of communication outside of the office. We talked to them about issues that they were interested in. A lot of them were just professional issues; e.g. how you select officers in your Foreign Service, how you train them, what about language qualifications. They would also be interested in substantive policy issues.

A big issue in those days was: Should Germany be rearmed? It was before there was a German Army. A lot of talk about, for example, was about whether there was a role for Germany in NATO. Everyone understood this to mean West Germany, because the division of Germany by then was quite complete. The Germans did talk about reunification. They didn't have any answers. But obviously they had by then come to realize that reunification was an issue that was caught up in and subsumed by the Cold War. As long as there was a total division between the Soviet sphere and the rest of Europe which was by then beginning to establish its own Western European community and NATO, I think they realistically recognized that reunification wasn't just around the corner.

A lot of their attention was focused on thinking about the question: When reunification comes, how do we do it? Not only in terms of how do we manage internally. They were not thinking as much about how to combine ministries, currencies, and all the things that are now issues for a reunified Germany, as they were thinking about the role of Germany in Europe and in the world.

There was intense interest in Soviet studies, for example. There were new publications coming out, and Germany had its share of Kremlinologists. We got to know some of them. Some were very stimulating intellectuals who had a background in Soviet studies. We got to know a number of very able Germans in those days, who had been on the outs when the Nazis were there. Some of them had been in exile, some of them had been in jail. Obviously, their credentials were very good in post-Nazi Germany. Many of them were editors of new publications, newspapers, new

officials in the government, the politicians.

I can remember developing very interesting relations with people who were at a level where normally a junior officer would not have contacts. But our office was so small that Gufler couldn't see everybody, and those of us who were working for him often had entree, often on levels that were more senior than one would have expected.

The Germans would often seek us out, but we also would seek them out. By then the Bundestag had been established; there was a parliament. One of the things I used to do was to go sit in what was by then the diplomatic gallery and cover the debates in the Bundestag, and then go and call on the deputies, corner them in the corridors, and try to get a little material to report on this or that issue. I wasn't the only one covering the Bundestag; there were others. We divided the work up by issue. I was there to cover more the foreign policy debates and the issues having to do with foreign relations. Charlie Thayer's group was there to cover party politics and internal affairs generally.

I can remember hearing Kurt Schumacher, who was one of the legendary leaders of the Social Democratic Party and a great orator, even though I think he had had one leg and one arm amputated due to cancer. But he was still dynamic and an extraordinary orator. My German was good enough so that I could enjoy listening to him dominate the proceedings of the Bundestag. After Schumacher came Carlo Schmidt, who was a young, up and coming member of the Social Democratic Party.

I used to be able to talk with Willy Brandt in those days. That, incidentally, did not happen by accident. He had been in exile, I think it was in Norway, during the war, so he also spoke Norwegian. And Cal Ancrum, the member of Gufler's staff who had been a student in Germany before the war, was a great linguist, who also spoke Norwegian. He and Willy Brandt used to converse in Norwegian, and it was through Ancrum that I met Brandt.

German was extremely useful in those days. While most people in German public life today, it seems to me, speak English, that was not the case in those days. The ones who spoke English well enough to use it in conversation or as a working language were a minority. And so those of us who had German had a real workout. I hate to think if I took the FSI test today what my rating in German would be. Obviously, it hasn't been used really actively since we left Germany in 1952. But, then, I got a 4, 4+ in language tests, so I know it was good. I was quite comfortable using it in those days.

So that was a very heady experience, being in a position where I was having contacts at a level higher than I would probably otherwise have had, and probably wouldn't have again for a long time, where history was being made, where a government was evolving, where a whole new democratic tradition was just beginning to be established, where the Cold War was increasingly a shadow over German. I clearly had an exciting tour in Bonn where I felt I was at the center of things and not on the periphery, and with a boss who was extremely generous and helpful -- Gufler gave his staff as much head as he felt they could take. He didn't rein us in, and he encouraged us to stretch ourselves.

I can remember that my first interview with him, when he was deciding whether or not in fact he wanted me on his staff, was conducted in German. He wanted to test my German. He was very good in German, so he interviewed me, partially, at least, in German, enough so that he could see that I could use my German as a working language. He tested me in the language, as well as in my knowledge of Germany and my interest in the issues of the day.

Remember, when Gufler rescued me from Stuttgart and took me to Bonn, I had been in the Foreign Service three years. I was a very junior FSO, in those days a class Six, which was the entering grade. It was also the period when the McCarthy witch hunts were going on, because McCarthy's investigators, Mr. Cohn and Mr. Schine, came to Germany.

They were particularly looking for the old China hands who happened to have been in China when the Communists took over, and whom McCarthy charged with the loss of China. One of them was John Patton Davies, but we also had a younger officer in Bonn, Al Siebens, who had been assigned, just in the last days before China fell, to one of the consular offices in China. He was, as a junior officer, a suspect just because he had been in China and knew Chinese. He had a wife who spoke Russian, by the way. She was born in China of missionary parents and had a Russian governess; so she had learned Russian. And the fact that she knew Russian was very suspect in those days.

John Patton Davies eventually was hounded out of the Service. And Reber, too, for other reasons. So that was a shadow. It didn't affect me directly. I didn't have any of the wrong background, but I was disturbed to see this happen. Many of us were. I suppose it was another period when one began to wonder what kind of a business I was in, this Service. Was there going to be a witch hunt all my career, either being bullied by a tyrannical Consul General or surviving a witch hunt by a mad political ideologue like Joe McCarthy? But it had its compensations. Gufler, incidentally, was transferred during this period to Ceylon as ambassador. When he went to Ceylon, he was replaced by another great person, George West. George West was my new boss, and he was the boss for the rest of the time that I was in Bonn.

I had been in Bonn just about two years, when orders came through from Washington for me and for another colleague of about the same generation, who was working on the internal side, under Charlie Thayer, to go back and take what was then called the mid-career course at the Foreign Service Institute. This was 1952; so I had been in the Foreign Service less than six years. I was a little disturbed to think that they thought this was mid-career. But it was called the mid-career course. John Davies sent a message to the Department, as all of us have done at some point in our career, asking the personnel system to change this assignment. I can still remember him saying that both Pete Hooper, in the Internal Affairs side, and I, in the Foreign Affairs side, were playing such key roles at the working level in the Mission (by then it had become an Embassy in all but name; it became an Embassy after I left, when the Federal Republic formally was established), that we were so key, that the whole American operation would fall apart if we left Germany. This was the implication of those communications -- somewhat exaggerated, obviously. Of course, the Department in its wisdom ignored them, and our transfers went forward.

Pete and I went down to Frankfurt and boarded an PanAm flight -- it was one of those old

propeller-driven Constellations -- and headed back, leaving our families behind. Our transfer eligibility dates had not yet come, so there were no travel orders and no funds to pay for our families to go back to the States. So Betty was left in Bonn with our three children.

I should have said that our second son, our third child, was born in Bonn while we were there. Betty was, by that time, very active in the local Little Theater group. She had helped to establish a Little Theater group, first in Stuttgart and then in Bonn. She had taken speech and dramatics in college. So she was busy directing a play that I never got to see, because I left before the play was actually produced. By this time there was a theater and all of the amenities in the new housing development in which the American community was housed. We never moved into it, by the way because we had been assigned a house before housing was built and were allowed to stay in our house in Bad Godesberg, as part of the normal German community, with German neighbors and friends, rather than having to move into this American ghetto, as it has later been called. It was a real little America. We went to visit it, but we never became part of it. But that was where the theater was, and Betty was producing her play in that theater.

Pete Hooper and I came back and were assigned to the mid-career course and waited for the transfer eligibility date so our families could come back to the States. We were eligible, at that point, for home leave, after the training program was finished.

JOHN W. McDONALD
OMGUS
Berlin (1947-1950)

Allied High Commission, Secretariat
Bonn (1950-1952)

John McDonald was born in Coblenz, Germany in 1922. He attended the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign earning an undergraduate degree in Political Science. His career took him to Germany, France, Turkey, and Egypt. He held a number of roving ambassadorial assignments. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997

Q: How did you move into Government?

MCDONALD: Well, in a very strange way, as a matter of fact. You may remember from those days something called the Morgenthau Plan? Well, the Morgenthau Plan was designed to rule occupied Germany for 25 years, and keep them as an agricultural state. To totally destroy their industrial capacity. Secretary of Treasury Morgenthau, who was then running the State Department, had that plan and it was actually institutionalized at one point, for a while.

Well, there was an ad in the newspaper. I tried to get [into the Foreign Service] through the normal channels and the doors were still closed. This was in 1946. The ad said they were going to create a career service for occupied Germany. So, I applied. I was accepted and then they

wanted me to come right away in 1946, but I said no, that I had to finish the bar exam, if I didn't do it now I'd never do it. This was very critical for me. So they agreed to delay. I signed up in 1946, to go to Berlin as a part of the Occupying Forces working for General Clay.

I arrived in Berlin on January 15, 1947. That was a remarkable experience because the program had changed a bit and we were to now be Interns. We were told in Washington that we were going to an Intern Program and would be moving around for the first year to various parts of the Berlin Sector, and then go down to the Zone and various levels.

Q: To get perspective, at that point, while you were doing this, they were really talking about the Occupation lasting sort of forever.

MCDONALD: 25 years.

Q: 25 years. This was really a career of occupying Germany, rather than what actually happened?

MCDONALD: That's right. I worked for OMGUS, the Office of Military Government- United States in Berlin. What had happened during that time between when I had seen the ad and when I actually went over seas was the Morgenthau Plan was basically killed, by McCloy and Clay and a few others. They shifted the concept, which ended up rather dramatically in Marshall's speech in June of '47, and then the Marshall Plan and so forth. But when I signed on, it was to be a career occupation, because I just wanted to get overseas and feel that I was making a contribution internationally.

Q: So you arrived out there, then, when?

MCDONALD: January 15, 1947. And to show you how bureaucracy always has its problems, even back in those days, it turned out I was a part of the first group of Interns, as they were called, and about 18 of us, all men, were lined up at the Chief of Personnel's office in Berlin. He was a full Colonel. He came out and we were all standing in the line and waiting for this critical moment in our history, and the Colonel said, "Who in the hell are you and what are you doing in Berlin on my territory?" Washington had never bothered to tell the Colonel about the program. Literally. He had never heard of it.

We were supposed to have this all programmed, instructions, going different places at different times. He'd never heard word one, and he was furious. I'd love to have seen the message he sent back to Washington on that one. We said we didn't know, we'd gone through the process in Washington and signed the papers and got the transport and here we are! Well, he couldn't get over that. So what happened. I lucked out. I was the only lawyer in the group and so they sent me to the Law Division. I was a part of the Secretariat, then, of the Allied Control Council, which was the best place to be because it was four power, it was Quadripartite - the Soviets, French, British and Americans. So I was Deputy U.S. Secretary to the Law Committee of the Allied Control Council.

Q: Can you talk a bit about how you saw Berlin, how you saw Germany, at that time? How

things looked and worked at that time?

MCDONALD: It was brutal. This was in the middle of the coldest winter in a hundred years. Berlin was basically rubble in most parts of the city. The only part that was really not touched was the Western part, which was the U.S. Sector. That is where OMGUS Headquarters is located and that is where I had a house, with two housemates. It was very lovely where we were. But much of it was literally rubble, and the people were having a very difficult time surviving the winter.

Basic things, food, soap, clothing, and heat were all difficult to obtain on the part of the Germans themselves. We, of course, had it very comfortably. That was a major impact that I have never forgotten, of course, as you would expect. Coming from the plains of Central Illinois, to the rubble of one of the great cities of the world was a real shock.

I was surprised at how quickly one became adjusted to that situation; you would sort of walk through it and basically ignore. We were not allowed in those days to even talk to Germans. We were not allowed to fraternize, was the word. I didn't agree with that and I ignored it, but that was the rule.

It was also the time of a cigarette economy. The Reichsmark was worthless. It was a barter economy and cigarettes were what you bartered. A very strange situation to move into.

Q: Could you talk about, what is it, the Control Commission?

MCDONALD: Yes, Allied Control Council.

Q: The Allied Control Council, here in early '47, how it was constituted and what it did, and what your job was?

MCDONALD: Well, each power, Soviet, French, British, and American, was represented. It ruled Germany. Each of those four powers had a zone, the U.S. zone, French, British, Soviet zone. That was the hinterland, and Berlin had four sectors, the city was divided into four parts and each of the occupying powers had a sector of that city.

The Control Council governed the whole country and it had a side group that did the day to day operation with regard to the city itself but would report back to the ACC. So everything that was required to run a nation in occupation form was done through them. The Law Committee drafted and adopted all the laws that dealt with the Occupation. So when the ACC passed a law it became automatic in all four zones. There was no local government whatsoever. There was no German Government per se, because we were the Government of Germany.

Q: What was your impression of how this operated, from your perspective?

MCDONALD: In those days it was quite efficient. We were still friends, more or less, with the Soviets and I thought with any four countries getting together, there are natural differences because of cultures and national objectives and so forth, but it worked. The city worked and the

country worked. So I felt it was a useful mechanism.

Q: What was your job?

MCDONALD: I was responsible for attending every meeting of the Law Committee, taking the minutes of the meeting. We met two or three times a week. Then, with my boss, we would then negotiate with the other three Secretariats' members, from the Soviet, French and British. Negotiate the minutes. So my first job, actually, in the government was multilateral diplomacy, which [occupied] much of my career. So we would reach agreement on what had actually happened and then this would be translated into the languages of the respective parties and passed up to the ACC for information purposes. Sometimes we sent a law up and they would officially rubber-stamp it. But if the Law Committee passed something, basically the full Council adopted it.

Q: Here you had Soviet law, you had Code Napoleonic law, and you had British law and then American law.

MCDONALD: And you also had four different philosophies. For example, the Soviets wanted to follow the Morgenthau Plan. They wanted to keep Germany down and to get as much equipment out of Germany as they could. So did the French. Both the French and the Soviets usually sided together on many issues, and they wanted to follow the tenets of the Morgenthau Plan, basically. They wanted to try to take the Germans' equipment to try to rebuild their own destroyed industries.

The British and the French were more generous in that sense, more concerned about the people.

Q: You mean the British and Americans.

MCDONALD: I'm sorry, the British and the Americans were more concerned about the people who they were occupying. They were concerned about food supplies, how were they going to survive the winter, how could we help build the housing - they were more people-oriented, I would say.

Q: During this winter, were there any extraordinary efforts made by the occupying powers to do something about making sure you didn't have a dying population?

MCDONALD: Well, I'm not aware of any shipments from any of the four countries. What they did do was to reallocate some of their military equipment, like blankets and canned food and that sort of thing to the worst cases. But there were no shipments from capitals, for example.

The CARE Program, which was one of the first programs, didn't start until 1949, '48 - maybe some of the first packages came in '47. But that was after the winter. So this was still a government dominated country.

Q: Sometimes the new person on the block, coming in as you were when you first arrived, can see things in a clearer way than if you become involved in the process over a period of time. Did

you see any sort of cracks in the Alliance, from your perspective, because we're not far from the Cold War?

MCDONALD: That's right. No, no, I really didn't. Of course, I had very little experience as a basis of comparison at that point, but there was certainly nothing particularly evident. I was friends with the colleagues that I was working with. In fact I have one story about that period which is kind of fun.

I got to know a young Soviet lawyer in Berlin, who was also on the Secretariat of the Law Committee. It turned out he had developed a very strong liking for American coffee, which was totally unavailable on the Soviet side. And I had developed a very strong liking for Russian caviar. So we decided maybe we had something we could talk about and maybe do a little negotiation on the side.

So, I invited him over one evening to my house. I set the scene by having the coffee brewing in the kitchen already, so the aroma sort of drifted out into the living room. We sat around and we talked for awhile and we finally reached an agreement. Each month in exchange for one pound of American coffee, which I could buy for about a dollar a pound at the local Army Post Exchange, I would receive one pound of Russian caviar. I thought that was a pretty good exchange.

In fact I told that story to George Meany once, the head of the AFL-CIO, much later on, and he said he loved that story, that that was the ratio that we should continue to interact with the Soviets.

Q: As things moved on, what was sort of the attitude of the military, and the people you were working with towards the Marshall Plan?

MCDONALD: Well, that was another leap that was a little bit later.

Q: Okay, well you fill in the time up to then.

MCDONALD: This program that I was involved in finally moved into gear, this Intern Program. So I was taken out of that job after about six months and I spent some time in the Berlin Sector and then I was taken down to the Zone, the U.S. Zone, based in Frankfurt.

Q: The U.S. Zone was approximately what?

MCDONALD: It was the southern half of West Germany. Of course, when the Cold War really hit and things happened, why the Soviet Zone became East Germany. So those were the markers.

I went to a Kreis, or county headquarters in Bad Hamburg for several months. Then I was sent to Oberammergau where they had a training center for civilian/military government people who work in the field. I went through that. Then, out of the blue, totally unexpectedly, I was invited - my second job, I guess, to Frankfurt, Germany, and I was asked to be District Attorney of the city of Frankfurt, Germany. This was November 1947.

I couldn't figure that one out for awhile, but what happened was that the U.S. decided to create a court system because Germany courts were not operating, still an Occupation situation. And so they created a court system. We had jurisdiction over all allied civilians; over all displaced persons, which were in the millions; over all Germans who violated Occupation law. So, it was quite an agenda.

What happened was, when they decided to create a court system they moved fairly quickly. All of the people who had experience who were lawyers, wanted to be judges because it was more money, more prestige. I could certainly understand that. So they appointed all these people judges all over the U.S. Zone, and then they looked around and who was going to do the work? Who was going to be the District Attorney? So at the age of 25, I was District Attorney for the city of Frankfurt, Germany. This was a remarkable experience.

I was there for almost three years, and I was in Court every day for almost three years.

Q: So this would have been '47 to '50? Can you talk about the state of the city of Frankfurt in November 1947, and how you saw it?

MCDONALD: It was just as grim as Berlin. It was also at its center totally destroyed, rubble everywhere. Actually the U.S. occupiers worked and lived behind a 25-foot barbed wire fence.

Q: 25 foot.

MCDONALD: That's a lot of barbed wire. An enormous structure that went on for miles around the place. Because Frankfurt was the head quarters for the Zone, the I.G. Farben building was in the center of that. All of that area where we lived, the Post Exchange and so forth was behind these barbed wire entanglements that, literally, were 25 feet high. So we were totally separated from the community.

In my work I dealt with the people, so my offices were outside of that compound. So I had the daily task of moving back and forth, into the real world and as lived behind the barbed wire screen which was a dramatic shift, shall we say.

The city, by that time, had a little more life in it. We did have electricity, there was water.

Let me tell you a story about Berlin shortly after I arrived, to give you an idea of the ability of the Germans to survive. My dad and my mother were in Bad Hamburg, Germany, they had been posted there. I decided to telephone them in January of 1947, when I arrived. They were in a house in a small town, and I was in Berlin. I dialed ten numbers on my telephone, and got their telephone. No operators. Direct ten digit dials. It took us 20 years, 25 years in the United States, later, to achieve that across the whole country. So here in a destroyed economy, in a destroyed nation, yet they were so far ahead of us in the field of telecommunications that at the personal level it took 20, 25 years to catch up. That is a dramatic lesson, it seems to me.

Frankfurt was difficult. Then, of course, the political scene began to change fairly rapidly. You

might remember that in June of 1948 they had a currency reform.

Q: Yes. This was the thing that triggered all sorts of things.

MCDONALD: Exactly.

Q: It was the wirtschaftswunde (economic miracle) and also the Soviet living. Could you explain about the currency reform, because this is a very critical thing and how did it affect you?

MCDONALD: Remember I said before that the Reichsmark was worthless, and that this was a barter cigarette economy. That continued until 1948. In spite of the Marshall Plan speech, and beginnings of preparations, things had not really started to arrive at all.

The U.S. had long planned for a currency reform. The Soviets had opposed it. Finally the U.S. insisted. The U.S. had printed all of the bank notes in Deutschmark in the United States, and it was a major operation to get this money all across all of Germany simultaneously. The Soviets decided they did not want to participate and they developed and had their own currency. But that triggered the breakup of the Occupation and triggered the conflict over Berlin and triggered the withdrawal of the Soviets from the ACC and the creating of East Germany. It was a very dramatic point in time.

Nobody really expected that at the moment. But it transformed the German economy. They converted the Reichsmarks to Deutschmarks at 10 to one, but everybody started out - and this is something very few people recognize - everybody in West Germany, it was now West Germany, June 1948, was given 40 Deutschmarks, that's all. Regardless of how many Reichsmarks they had, how much insurance, it was all converted and they only got 40 marks. So everybody on that day had exactly the same sum of money to start with. That is pretty dramatic, pretty dramatic. And it worked.

Q: When you were in Frankfurt during this currency reform was there concern that the Soviets might do something to begin with?

MCDONALD: No, there was not. I don't think anybody anticipated that they were going to blockade Berlin and that over this issue it would get so destructive. Of course this was sort of a culmination of things and this was, I guess, the straw that broke the camel's back in that sense. But then they moved into the blockade of Berlin. Of course, one of the great efforts in history, I believe, is the Berlin airlift, which was the support of a city the size of Berlin for over a year, including coal and everything that was eaten by them was flown in by aircraft.

I flew the Berlin airlift once, just because I had to do it as an experience. Flew in and out of Tempelhof and watched the whole process. A lot of heroes out there to bring that city along.

Q: When the blockade started, what was your impression in your American, basically military, community in Frankfurt? Was there a change in beginning to look at the Soviets as the enemy?

MCDONALD: Well, nobody could believe that they were so stupid. Actually, that was the first

thought, why were they doing this, they were just going to destroy the thing that they had worked together to create. I guess it was the first real signal it was the beginning of the Cold War.

There is an earlier signal. One of your colleagues may have told this story. One of our diplomats was in Tabriz in 1946. Do you know that story?

Q: I'm not sure.

MCDONALD: Well, he was Vice Consul in Tabriz, his first post, I think. This was mid-1946. He woke up one morning, looked out the window and saw some Russian tanks going by Tabriz. He couldn't believe it, because this wasn't supposed to happen. So he went out and started counting them, and there were about 50 of them. Then he contacted his British Vice Consul friend, and they'd both counted the same thing and so they sent a dispatch to their respective headquarters in Teheran. The reaction, I gather, in Teheran was that the young man was on hashish, because this obviously couldn't happen. And so they ignored it.

The troops began to pile up there and the tanks got bigger and bigger and bigger and over a period of several weeks this went on. Finally the U.S. Embassy contacted London and asked them to contact their man, and he was reporting the same thing. So at that point the U.S. decided, I guess, it was true and so they sent confirmation out there and eventually it got to the U.S. Security Council

This was the first overt Soviet action that the Security Council had to deal with, at the end of '46. They forced the troops to withdraw. To me that is technically the start of the Cold War, but we didn't realize it at that time. But I never will forget my friend being accused of being on hashish. They didn't have communications like they do today.

Q: Can you talk about some of the cases and types of things that you were dealing with in this '47 to '50 period as District Attorney for Frankfurt?

MCDONALD: Sure. There was a lot of black marketing. A lot of importation, illegally, of cigarettes because that was the barter instrument. There was a lot of falsifying of questionnaires, of Fragebogen.

Q: These are questionnaires that every German had to fill out as part of the de- Nazification process?

MCDONALD: That's correct. To get a job with the U.S., or sometimes other places, you had to be viewed as at least not a member of the Nazi Party, and maybe even anti-Hitler, or whatever. Anyway it was a very complicated questionnaire, and a lot of Nazis filled them out incorrectly. The question was what did you do about it, and how was that discovered? Well, in their normally efficient way, the Germans and the Nazi Party left all of their files intact in Berlin, it became known as the Berlin Document Center. Every scrap of paper that any Nazi had signed or was a part of was carefully stored away in those files. So when we would get a case where somebody felt that this person might have falsified their questionnaire, their Fragebogen, we would ask for the file from Berlin and sometimes get back a foot of paper about what this particular person did

and how he was in the hierarchy. Then we would take those to court and charge them with perjury and put them in prison.

So those are two elements, the black-market and the Fragebogen questionnaire. Then there was violence and burglary and break-ins, because the Americans had the things that some people wanted. A lot of displaced persons were also doing the same thing. These were people from the East who had been sent back, or came back into the West. Some of them were being processed to go to other places but there was a camp outside of Frankfurt called Zeilsheim. They must have had 20 to 30,000 people there, and they were in constant turmoil. So I had problems with them.

One of the other areas was counterfeit currency. This went on throughout the whole time. The counterfeiting cases would vary, depending on the best military script or this, that or the other thing, or the Deutschmark. But we also had U.S. dollars, greenbacks, that were being counterfeited. I became somewhat of a counterfeiting expert, because I had a number of different big cases in that regard.

I remember one in particular that would be amusing to you. The police had captured a ring of 18 people. The Number One person was a Pole named Polansky, a displaced person. He had done a brilliant job of making these plates for fifty-dollar U.S. greenbacks. We caught him and a hundred thousand dollars in counterfeit currency, and the presses and the plates and the ink - everything you could possibly ask for. He also had a U.S. Army uniform. He had an ID card and an Army 45-pistol and a PX card. The whole bit. So, I thought this was great.

We were about to go to trial with the whole group of them when I was visited one day by a Major, who came into the office. When we met he said, "I'm Overt" and he flashed something in my face. Those were his first words, "I'm Overt." And I said, "Major Overt, it's a pleasure to meet you." And he said, "No, you don't understand. Overt as opposed to Covert." I said, "Oh, well tell me about it. Who are you?" And he announced very proudly, "I'm a member of the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency]." It had just been formed a few months before. He had been OSS [Office of Strategic Services] before. I said, "Well, nice to meet a new member of the CIA, what can I do for you?"

He said, "You have this Pole in prison, named Polansky." I said, yes, it was a great case, and I explained some of the evidence and so forth. Well, he said, "He's one of us." I said, "What do you mean, one of us?" He said, "Well, he's on our payroll. He's part of the CIA." I said, "Since when does the CIA employ counterfeiters of U.S. dollars?" "Oh" he said, "No, no, no. He did that on his own time." I said, "So it doesn't count, is that right?" He said, "Well, yes, it doesn't count. He is our best maker of documents, passports and all kinds of things like that that we use for going Eastward." And I said, "Well, that's fine, but he has still committed a crime and I couldn't care less about who he is working for. And I showed him the door."

The next day a Colonel came to see me about the same case and we had exactly the same discussion. I was unimpressed.

Two days after that a Major General came to see me. Now that is a lot of brass in those days. A Major General came to see me. It was very serious, I could see that. But he was smarter than the

other two, he said, "As you know by now, this man worked for us. We are the ones who gave him the uniform, and the 45 and all the ID cards and so forth. I would very much appreciate it if you would drop those charges, so that we will not be publicly embarrassed if he testified [to our connection]." So he left. I went on and a week or so later went to trial and of course got [a conviction sentence of] the maximum of ten years, which was the maximum under German law for counterfeiting.

But I've never forgotten Major Overt. My first encounter with the CIA was not a very auspicious one.

Q: Well now, how would the court system work? You're a District Attorney in Frankfurt, there is the German legal system, which is really sort of Code Napoleonic, with German overtones, and then there is the American, I mean, how would this man be tried?

MCDONALD: Well, that's a very, very good question. Actually we used the German criminal code as the basis for the law. It was a very good criminal code, very solid. We took out the Nazi stuff that had been put in, super-imposed. It was a very solid piece of criminal code work. And we used American criminal procedure, which was quite different, as you just indicated, from German criminal procedure. Under German law a person is assumed guilty. Basically the role of the Attorney is to plead a reduction of sentence.

I had to hold classes for the German defense counsels to teach them the art of cross-examination so they could appear in my court, against me, to cross-examine my witnesses. Early on I got into teaching people.

Q: Who were the judges?

MCDONALD: All these Americans who had volunteered before.

Q: And juries?

MCDONALD: There were no juries. There was a judge, the defense counsel, the accused, witnesses, and myself. Everything was interpreted into whatever language was needed. Most of them were German. That is basically where I learned my German, in the courtroom.

Then they created a Court of Appeals and Judge Clark was the Chief Justice. He had been an esteemed member of the judiciary in the United States.

Q: Tom Clark.

MCDONALD: That's right. And so there was even an appeal structure. The remnant of that court came up five or six years ago in Berlin, where somebody who was in Berlin was accused of murder. The thing had never been officially abolished, so they actually had a trial, which was rather unique.

Q: Was there any German input, other than the defense attorneys?

MCDONALD: No.

Q: Who was making the arrests?

MCDONALD: The German criminal police, the American CIC [Counterintelligence Corps], the American forces had various military police units and they would jointly investigate or whoever had the initial power would investigate. Then they would testify as witnesses, as would other individuals. So it was like a DA in the United States, in that sense.

Q: Was there any concern on your part, I mean, first place is the job and once you are the District Attorney you want to get your convictions. But at the same time, you are dealing with a Germany that one hopes will move into a democracy, which at that time was rather uncertain. With an American judge sitting on this thing maybe we were looking too much like what we were, an army of occupation.

MCDONALD: We were an Army of Occupation.

Q: At the same time there must have been a sort of looking beyond. What was the philosophy there, from your perspective?

MCDONALD: There was not much looking beyond. As a matter of fact, in 1949 I was transferred automatically from OMGUS to the Department of State because that is when the Pentagon passed on authority to the State Department who was not equipped to do it. And so, I did exactly the same thing, had the same desk, the same telephone, just had a different label on me somewhere in the files, and still got my paycheck. But that is when I became a member of the State Department.

I then became a Temporary FSS [Foreign Service Staff], as they called it. Before I had started out as a P-1, risen to P-4 in the government, but then was switched over by paper transfer when State officially took over.

There was not much thinking ahead. I was very proud of my conviction rate, as a matter of fact, it was over 98 percent. But I also was very careful about who I took to court. When I first arrived in November of '47 to take over there were about a thousand people in prison, all waiting for trial in this new system that was about to take place. Much to the chagrin of the police in the various parts of the city, I reviewed all the files and I released about 700 people. They were in for such minor offenses as stealing apples off of a tree and things like that, and they had already been in jail, sometimes for months. So I exercised my authority immediately and also set a pattern for them, the police, that they had to be careful about the fact they were now working with a different system.

They would arrest a man walking down a path with apples in his bag, assuming that he had stolen them. And he probably had, but that wasn't our system. So the very fact he had apples was proof in their mind that he was guilty. So this was an educational process.

Q: The reason I ask this, I came to Frankfurt as a Vice Consul in 1955, and dealing with the Refugee Relief program. And there we were running across some of the consequences of this justice system as regards Poles and others. We would find people convicted of two felonies, which would be having stolen two sticks of wood at the same time. This would make them excludable from the United States, and there wasn't much we could do about it. Obviously they hadn't gone through your court.

MCDONALD: Well, that was the purpose of the court, actually, because - and this was all over the Zone - there is probably a date in there someplace, because these kinds of offenses were taking place and nobody was doing anything about it. There was total disregard for human rights, as we would say today. That was the kind of case that I would dismiss. When I first reviewed them all I said, "This is ridiculous. This is absurd." And that's why hundreds of people were released immediately.

Q: It also struck me that the German police, with maybe some justification, were not unhappy to find displaced people, who were still sort of the under man, "untermensch." They hit them very hard, and then we were trying to translate this Draconian law and enforcement of the law, into our terms and it usually meant exclusion. We eventually worked around most of this but it was a hell of a problem."

MCDONALD: No, you are absolutely right. I think it is a very valid point. We tend to forget that we were operating with two different legal systems and two different mind sets on the part of the police. They were brought up totally differently than our police, or our military police and so forth, and that was one of the problems, too. Two cultures were clashing and the German police than had more power than they had had for awhile, so they were enjoying that. There is no question about it.

Q: Were you seeing a growth within Germany during this '47 to '50 period of a change, you might see, a growth of civil government and a development of a different spirit?

MCDONALD: Very dramatic. I would say one of the groups I was most familiar with were the defense attorneys that I trained. We got to know each other socially. I would bring them over for dinner and we'd have drinks together and they were very impressive people. They were highly trained, very bright, and very able. They had adjusted quickly to this new approach. In fact they enjoyed it, because they had been rather turned off by their fairly negative role in the past. Now they were involved and they were trying to save their client. So they became very tied into this idea of democracy very quickly.

Yes, I would say at all levels a whole new world was beginning to bloom. And then after the currency reform, they then began to get their act together economically. So that combined and made it easier for them to cope on the democracy side. It's pretty hard to be democratic when you're starving.

Q: What about in Frankfurt, was there the beginning of a German Frankfurt Government?

MCDONALD: Yes they were trying to get started at the very local level. They started first of all

in the villages, and then came to the larger cities, and then began to grow from there. My next assignment got more involved in that particular issue.

Q: What about Government duties when the Army left. State Department was really there as an interim measure before the Germans were to take over, to go from Army rule to immediate rule.

MCDONALD: It was a transition.

Q: You had a transition. You said things really didn't change for you, but did you see any changes within the system that you were looking at as the State Department took it over for a couple years?

MCDONALD: No, the State Department didn't change anything as far as my work was concerned. They left me totally alone and I just did what I had been doing before. I was, of course, fascinated by what was going on at various levels and watching the gradual creation of a new nation and the rise of Adenauer and his concerns and so forth. That part was very exciting.

Q: What was your impression of the judges who had been created? These were Americans and of course one of the things that always happens with judges is that pretty soon they begin to feel they are infallible. This was taking the human material that was available at the time and turning them into judges, so you must have gotten a pretty mixed bag. What was your impression of the caliber and types of decisions and all that you were getting?

MCDONALD: I was impressed, basically, with the caliber of the people I worked with and for. There is another element that is interesting, looking back on it especially. Most of the judges were of the Jewish faith. They had come into the Occupation and had been lawyers or attorneys and so forth, and they volunteered for this role. I think in some cases, this got pretty difficult for some of them personally. But I worked with four or five judges regularly and they were very fair, in my experience, and prejudice did not become a factor that I could really see in their decision-making process. They set high standards and you really had to work and convince them of the fact that you had the proof to convict someone.

Q: Did you find the judges sometimes understanding the role of developing a solid legal system within Germany, and particularly the role of Defense Attorney, which of course had been wiped out pretty much in Nazi Germany. Talk about sort of kangaroo courts, I mean, the Nazi courts were notorious. But did you sometimes find the judges saying the equivalent to a Defense Attorney that he forgot to ask this or that or something of this nature?

MCDONALD: Well, they were pretty good, but I see what you are saying. They were helpful in that regard as well. And also, I would get a little cocky after awhile and they would put me down, repeatedly, and force me to prove the case. Of course, when I was not successful I was interested in appealing and to seeing whether I could get them overruled. So there was that tension there, which I think was probably useful.

Q: Was the 25-foot fence coming down?

MCDONALD: Yes, it came down about, I would say, 1949. Maybe it was part of the State Department takeover, but it did finally come down, with a huge sigh of relief from both sides of that fence. The barriers were physically and symbolically removed, as well. So that was useful.

Q: What was sort of the feeling you were getting from the military during the Berlin airlift?

MCDONALD: Well, everybody was proud of what they had accomplished, very proud. The world was focused on Berlin and that whole effort. I think it is really unique in history and something we should all be proud of. And, of course, the Germans were unbelievable, they couldn't believe at first that this was happening. Here the occupying powers from the West were saving the people; they had bombed Berlin and now they were feeding Berlin.

I think it was a very powerful change agent impacting on the thinking of Germans, to see that this was in a sense, I would say today, an act of forgiveness on our part. It wasn't done for that particular reason, of course, but I think it certainly was a part of the larger picture. So that made a powerful impression on the German public outside of Berlin, aside from the people in Berlin.

Q: Did you see a change during the Berlin Airlift and after from being sort of the occupiers to being somebody with whom to work?

MCDONALD: I would say yes. In fact, they were considered as heroes. When their plane crashed and so forth there would be public statements of sadness and that sort of thing. It was really a help to be a change agent, I would say. That coupled with the fact that the Marshall Plan equipment and food was beginning to flow in by this time, why the whole atmosphere began to change.

Then we had bi-zonal connections with the British, and then we had tri-zonal, and then there was, formally, the split and the creation of the Allied High Commission.

Q: When did that happen?

MCDONALD: Well, I was assigned, in the State Department, to Bonn in early 1950. In fact, I think I was the fifteenth American in Bonn. I was a part of the Allied High Commission Secretariat. I worked in the Petersburg [Hotel]. This was before there was an Embassy. Before there was a little mission based in Bonn, [and] the International Secretariat supported the three High Commissioners, the French, the British and the Americans. John J. McCloy was the U.S. High Commissioner.

I lived in the little town of Bad Godesberg and used to take the ferry across the Rhine every morning and drive up to the Petersburg which was a lovely former hotel which became the seat of the Allied High Commission. There were secretaries from all three countries there, and I was again the Secretary for the Law Committee.

Q: I'd like to pin this down at the beginning. You were doing it in Bonn from '50 until when?

MCDONALD: 1952.

Q: What was the Law Committee trying to do in this '50 to '52 period?

MCDONALD: It also had the same powers as the Allied Control Council. It was the only law making body in the country. The three High Commissioners got together several times a week. They had half a dozen committees that looked at various aspects of the de-Nazification and other areas, and law was one of them. We would develop, draft and pass laws that would impact on the three countries, the three zones together, which was then Western Germany as opposed to Eastern Germany.

So the role and the mandate and the power was basically the same as in the four-power body.

Q: We had the takeover by the Communists of Czechoslovakia in 1948, and I guess you were getting close to the invasion by North Korea into South Korea, the Cold War was really being encased in concrete. Germany was looked at more as an ally now. Did you sense a turn around when West Germany was more considered with us, rather than somebody to be stepped on?

MCDONALD: I would say that probably 1950, for me, would be the turning year. There was movement in Bonn. Adenauer was taking a role, trying to create some kind of a government there in '51, '52. He would come up to the Hill, as we would say, up to the Petersburg from time to time, meet with the Allied High Commissioner. There was more interaction between Bonn and the Petersburg from month to month. Also, you have to remember this was the time when the first conversations were taking place, in early 1950, creating the coal and steel community. They were just about fifty miles down the river. Everybody was watching that with great interest and trying to encourage this.

Q: The big thing, of course, was to get France and Germany to sort of bury the hatchet and start working together. This was the seed for the European Community of today.

MCDONALD: Exactly. Exactly. I watched that evolve. Sometimes they would even hold some meetings in the Petersburg. You could see that this movement was beginning to take place, and then they finally created the coal and steel community formally, and then it began to take off. But those years, '50 to '52, were very formative in the whole structure.

Q: Well, here you are, you know you no longer have the Soviets to worry about for your particular thing, you have the French, British and Americans. You are coming up with laws for this tri-zonal area and these are laws for the Germans, who basically work under a different system and weren't really close to the French, the Americans or British. Here you have foreigners making laws for people who have their own distinct culture and long history and certainly as solid a one as any one could have. Did you have German input or someone saying so and so was fine but under the German context this wouldn't work? I would think by this time you would have German lawyers or somebody in there, you see what I'm getting at?

MCDONALD: Certainly there were some people on the German side, especially, who wanted to speed up the process, and wanted it to move along more quickly. The French were always against that. The French had a very different agenda still; as they had in Berlin they had at the

Petersburg. They wanted to slow down and make sure they got their dues. There were differences in that sense of the world. Throughout that period, as before, starting with this bi-zonal concept of trade between the two zones, the U.S. and British were closer together than either was with the French.

Q: What about German advisors. If you are making laws it's a good idea, particularly at this point, to have somebody who knows....

MCDONALD: I never saw a German advisor.

Q: I find that remarkable because as we move into this transition phase making laws for a foreign people is fine, but we have enough trouble in our federal system when the central government makes a speed law that doesn't make sense in Montana, for example.

MCDONALD: Well, I'm sure by this time the Political Section in Bonn had grown. The High Commissioner's office had expanded and a lot of Americans were there, and I'm sure they had contacts with their German counterparts and they would have had a role in doing some drafting, but I literally never met a German advisor.

Q: You didn't have German staff or anything like that?

MCDONALD: No. No. No German staff.

Q: Tell me about, from your perspective, the relations with the French. I just finished an interview with somebody who was about Number Two or Three in the NATO staff who spent four years in Brussels, and we are talking about the late 1980s. His children didn't know there was such a thing as the French. They thought it was the "God damn French," because he would come home steaming from the office, talking about the God damn French. What about this?

MCDONALD: I got along personally very well because we were together every day, members of the Secretariat of the Law Committee, so we had to get along. That was no problem for me. They had some very talented and very skilled members of their professional Secretariat, as the British did as well. So on the personal level, as opposed to your NATO friend, I never had any difficulty on that score. We worked well together, we liked each other personally, we'd see each other socially, and so it was very amicable.

In attending the Allied Control Council sessions, you could see the differences at the political level between the French approach and the British-U.S. approach.

Q: By '52 were we getting close to letting go?

MCDONALD: Yes, yes.

Q: By the time you came back to the Committee and all, in '50, was it the general idea of everyone there that this was a temporary thing, that the Germans were going to take over, except for maybe the French. That we were moving rather rapidly toward having at least some sort of a

German Government?

MCDONALD: I agree with that, and people were even beginning to informally talk about when it was going to come to an end and when would there be a shift and some were worrying about their jobs and what was going to happen to them. It was in the air by 1952, and that is, of course, what eventually transpired.

HENRY BYROADE
Director, Bureau of German Affairs
Washington, DC (1947-1952)

Ambassador Henry Byroade was born in Indiana in 1913. He graduated from West Point in 1937 with a Second Lieutenant appointment and bachelor of science degree and then received a master's degree civil engineering from Cornell University in 1940. Ambassador Byroade served in India, China, Egypt, South Africa, Afghanistan, Burma, and the Philippines. The interview was conducted by Niel M. Johnson on September 19, 1988.

BYROADE: Then, Acheson said the President wanted me to resign from the Army and become Assistant Secretary of State. I didn't really want to do it. It's good for a Regular Army man to have to face up to it; you know, you suddenly realize for the first time you belong to a world-wide club. Every place you go you know people. You're all making the same salary. In the State Department I would be relieving a millionaire; I had no fortune at all. But how do you say "no"? I, finally, on a train between Frankfurt and Bonn, wrote Dean Acheson a note and said, "I think you're picking the wrong man, but if that's what you want, I will do it."

I asked him later; I said, "Why me, I'm supposed to be a Far Eastern expert temporarily working on Europe and you're talking about the rest of the world." And he said, "Well, I'll tell you why the President wants you. Anybody that knows anything about the Middle East at all, and is any good, won't take the job because of the Arab-Israeli problem and that's why we want you!"

Q: When you were studying at the Armed Forces Staff College, were you studying international affairs at all?

BYROADE: Yes.

Q: You did become chief of the International Affairs Section of General Staff, so you had studied world affairs, and you had gotten into the European area, to a great extent, I suppose, in that study.

BYROADE: Oh, of course. And just serving in the Pentagon on the General Staff; half or two-thirds of what you'd hear every morning in the briefings would be Europe.

Q: You outlasted the Soviets there in Berlin, and the blockade was then lifted. I notice in Clay's

papers, he was worried apparently that we were going to make too many concessions to the Soviets. Well, we're getting more toward the establishments of the government for West Germany and Clay was still involved with this. In May of '49 there was talk about a central police director for Germany, and the withdrawal of occupation troops to garrison areas. Clay said that was too close to what the Cominform wanted. I guess we were still planning, in early '49, for unification. We still had that as a...

BYROADE: Still talking about it...

Q: ...as a realistic hope in '49, to unify Germany. This would mean, of course, changing the occupation status, and now we are talking about garrison areas. Did this ever get very far? Was it taken all that seriously, on this end?

BYROADE: Yes, I shared Clay's concern. Just before I went to the State Department permanently, I went along with General Marshall -- well, some months before -- to a meeting with the Russians in London, with Molotov, on Germany.

Q: This was a four-power meeting?

BYROADE: Yes. Marshall was then Secretary of State, and I was the Pentagon advisor. I had spent a lot of time studying up on the German problem. I was sort of horrified. We had made concession after concession. I thought if they came to that meeting and said, "We agree," that we would be in very bad shape. Now, I've forgotten the details, but I still feel that way. If they had said, "Yes, we agree," there wouldn't have been a NATO. It would have been a whole different world. And I think the Russians made a mistake. I think we had made enough concessions; they should have just said, "Okay."

Q: This is the London conference we're talking about?

BYROADE: Yes, 1947.

Q: Oh, back in '47. So you think it was fortunate then that we got a "Nyet" from the Soviets?

BYROADE: I do.

Q: How about the dismantling of German industry? Were you supporting this? To what extent were you supporting the breakup of the cartels and the Krupp empire and so on? Did that policy change?

BYROADE: Well, it was a very, very frustrating problem -- this dismantling in Germany. On the one hand, we had the French who wanted every brick, every place, torn down and powdered into dust. The British were sort of lukewarm about it. We were for it in principle, but when you got down to it, you know, you could destroy the munitions factories, but when you got into things that affected the civilian economy, or could, then we were not so enthusiastic. The problem really was in trying to bring the French along into something that seemed reasonable. That proved impossible many times. We didn't have any veto power in this, so you couldn't just

overrule the French. They got their way for more destruction than we would have thought wise.

Q: Of course, the Morgenthau plan was discarded early.

BYROADE: But it was a whole different situation. I got in a hell of a row from [Senator] Tom Connally on the Hill about German debts. Remember after World War I -- was it the Dawes Plan -- anyway it got an awful lot of publicity about making the Germans pay for the war. This time when the war was over, you know it became pretty obvious that it was a completely different world. It didn't take very long to decide what we really should try to do is how do we get German strength safely on the side of the West. Nobody gave a damn about a German debt settlement after the war. It was never heard of.

Q: The Soviets were really the only ones to get much in the way of reparations, I suppose.

Apparently, in 1949 there was an agreement in which the Soviets and the Western powers agreed to gradually end the occupation of Austria on condition it would be a neutral country. Do you think that they agreed on this plan to leave Austria -- one of the few instances I suppose where their troops actually left the territory they were occupying -- in hopes that that then would be followed up by a similar agreement for Germany?

BYROADE: No, I don't think the Russians ever thought for one minute of leaving East Germany. I was rather surprised at the Austrian agreement. Incidentally, that's the first time I met President Truman. When I first went to the State Department, I was in charge of German and Austrian affairs. I thought they didn't really belong in the same category, and it took me several months, but I managed to transfer Austria to the European Division, so that I just had Germany. While I still had Austria, there was a four-power meeting in, I think, Vienna with the Russians. What was under discussion at the time, and I've forgotten the details, was what was going to happen to the oil well properties in Austria, a very complex problem. We got a cable about 8 o'clock at night from Dean Acheson giving his proposal for the next day to give to the Russians. He wanted an answer and he wanted Truman's approval before he went in the meeting the next day. Well, I worked all night; I never went home. I tried to put the background of all this, because it was complex, into about a page and a half paper for the President. I called Jim Webb who was then Under Secretary of State for Acheson, and said, "We've got to see the President very early in the morning, maybe at breakfast, because Dean Acheson needs an answer early." He said, "All right;" so we went over and had breakfast. Truman read Acheson's cable.

Q: You're having breakfast with Truman?

BYROADE: Yes. And with Webb. That's the first time I met the President, and Truman read Acheson's cable. He said, "Dean is absolutely right; tell him to go ahead." Well, this was the answer that we wanted, but I couldn't believe that the President understood the problem. I didn't have the respect for him then that I got soon afterwards. I kicked Webb under the table, you know, suggesting "Show him my memo." The President read my memo and he said, "Well, that's good State Department gobbledegook, but I understood Dean's cable all right." So we started to leave, and I still didn't think he understood the problem.

Q: But he still had the memo?

BYROADE: He still had the memo, and he walked over to the globe, which he did often, and he started talking about the problem. I just couldn't believe it; it was then obvious that he had read personally every cable from Dean Acheson. He understood the problem completely.

Q: This was in the Oval Office where he had that globe?

BYROADE: The Oval Office, yes. I remember thinking at the time, "My God, I wonder if FDR ever read a cable." It dawned on me; my thinking at the time was, "Here's a little guy, that knows he's not a genius and he's got to work at it, and by God he does." My respect for the President started at that moment.

Q: He did his homework in other words.

BYROADE: Yes, that's right.

Q: That's something. So he kept the memo, and I presume that ended up in our White House files. You don't have a copy of it?

BYROADE: No, I don't have a copy of anything. Well, I'm not sure that he kept the memo. I assume he did.

Q: It's probably in either the President's Secretary's Files, or the White House Central Files. Do you have your name on it?

BYROADE: I would be on there as a drafter, yes.

Q: I don't want to keep you much longer, but I did want to get half of our session, at least, done here. In just a few more minutes we can end this up.

I think that this German problem is certainly very important, and we aren't going to finish it today. I might just bring up a couple more questions. Free elections, of course, was one of the sticking points, our insistence on free elections for all of Germany, apparently at the same time and under international inspection. Was that the idea at the time, that the United Nations would oversee free elections in Germany?

BYROADE: All I remember is internationally supervised, but I don't remember the mechanics, as to whether it was supposed to be U.N.-supervised.

Q: But this was not acceptable to the Soviets?

BYROADE: No.

Q: Were you at the time, or later, pleased that they didn't accept this because it could have led then to a unified but neutralized Germany? Did you really feel that a neutral Germany was

possible?

BYROADE: No, I didn't feel a neutralized Germany was possible. In the beginning, of course, we all talked about unification and it was a worthwhile goal.

Q: Wasn't that part of the Potsdam accords, in fact, the demilitarization and unification of Germany?

BYROADE: Yes. I think so. It wasn't more than a year until my main focus was how do we safely add German strength to the West? You know, West Germany.

Q: In '49 we have the Basic Law. Did you have input into the Basic Law, the constitution really of West Germany?

BYROADE: Well, the first thing that I remember is tremendous work on the occupation statutes; that was before that. The Basic Law; now I'm fuzzy on that.

Q: Well, it was supposed to be temporary as a way of readmitting some civilian rule in West Germany. Of course, [Konrad] Adenauer became the first chancellor under this law, and we began dealing with Adenauer, I guess, as well as [John J.] McCloy. I think McCloy remained as High Commissioner.

BYROADE: Yes, I had gotten involved in that; obviously, I did quite a bit. I had a rather fundamental disagreement with McCloy; I accused him of wanting to legislate democracy, which wouldn't really work. I've forgotten what the specific point was.

Q: But you were trying to get the military out, and get some civilian rule into Germany, before the others were pushing for that.

BYROADE: That's right, I was.

Q: You apparently had quite a bit of confidence in the Germans having rid themselves of the Nazi philosophy and Nazi ideas.

BYROADE: I'll tell you what I really had confidence in. I think it really is a remarkable stroke of luck in history when you think about it. In Adenauer, the Germans had a leader who really wanted to see unification of Europe move forward to the point where there would be a framework in Europe before the Germans got their last percentage of full, independent sovereignty. When you look at history, this is a remarkable thing. That was Adenauer's position, and so I was a very strong Adenauer man. That's why, you know, we got German support on a European defense force concept. That's what Adenauer was thinking; he was willing to go along with that concept, thinking it will be a better Europe than it will if it were just Germany alone again. That was great.

Q: He submitted his nationalism to an international frame of mind.

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: It's an interesting comment that you apparently made in early '50, in March of '50, when Acheson gathered a group of advisors around, including you, and asked for ideas about how to revitalize Western diplomatic initiatives. Of course, we had ERP -- the Marshall Plan, NATO, and the establishment, the beginnings of the Federal Republic, which are important steps. But he says it seemed now to have lost momentum, and so he's asking for new ideas. I think McCloy suggested moves toward a political arrangement like our Articles of Confederation for Europe, but Ambassador [Lewis] Douglas and Paul Nitze said that Europe was not ready for that, for this Articles of Confederation. One of the things that you mentioned -- you got Britain into it -- you said that Britain needed to recognize that it no longer had its old power status, and for better US-British relations, she should face up to this. You also mentioned that the unification question would come up again and we needed to have a position, because this kept coming up, but apparently we weren't as clear as maybe we could have been about our position on unification. At any rate, on this business of Britain, and not wanting to give up its old status as a world power, was Britain an obstacle, was Britain a problem, as far as we were concerned in our relations with Germany?

BYROADE: Not at all. No, the British were very good about Germany; almost always we and the British were in agreement. Seldom were we in agreement with France. So we would both work on the French. You didn't feel, in the meetings we had with Anthony Eden and others on Germany; we didn't feel that Britain was one that was losing their power status. It's only when you got into what was happening in India, and then the Middle East, and you saw their empire begin to fold up, that you really ran into that sort of thing. But while we were working on Germany, the relations between Anthony Eden and Dean Acheson were just great. We were almost always in agreement. The British were not a problem on Germany.

Q: In other words, when we first brought up the idea of rearming West Germany, or at least involving Germany in their own defense, military defense, Britain went along with this as you recall? They also agreed with us right at the outset that some movement should be made toward rearming Germany?

BYROADE: Well, we didn't go abruptly into the question of German rearmament. Even I felt rather strongly against that. What we were hoping could happen, and in a way my outfit was quite a bit responsible for this, this pushing to the utmost the idea of a European defense force, so that Germany could make a contribution.

Q: In other words, not under NATO at this point, not as a part of NATO, but as a part of this European Defense Community, which apparently was a French idea, or at least it became known as the Pleven Plan?

BYROADE: Yes, but before the Pleven Plan, Doug MacArthur (no relation to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur), for instance, and I were working on this frantically. We wanted the French to propose it. Robert Schuman was the Foreign Minister of France, a great man, and a very reasonable man on Germany as far as France was concerned. He was out of Alsace-Lorraine. We wanted to get a European concept, of which Germany would be a part. We wanted

Robert Schuman to propose this.

Now, if the French would propose this, this would really be something, and we could all jump in and support it. We had this proposition all worked before a NATO meeting in New York at the Waldorf. We wanted to get it to Schuman before he left France, you know, so he could think about it. We missed it by about 24 hours. He left France early, and went someplace else. So it really didn't start out first as a French idea; it started as our idea, and we were trying to figure out some acceptable way. We just didn't want to say there should be a German Air Force, and there should be thirteen divisions, etc. We didn't want that; we wanted something else. Of course, the French did buy the concept later on, but they went too far. You can't split units up like the French wanted to; they practically had different nationalities in a squad of eight men. You know, you've got to have units with a flag; you can't just have everybody all mixed together.

Q: *One language.*

BYROADE: The French wouldn't go that far, and I was so upset with the French. They finally vetoed the whole concept because we wanted to make it more practical, and they wanted to make it more diffuse.

Q: *Apparently in September 1950, Dean Acheson, at a three-power meeting, first brought up this idea that we've got to do something about involving West Germany in military defense of Europe.*

BYROADE: I was sitting right beside him.

Q: *Okay. I think it was kind of general at this time -- no details -- but this was a major point to be made. Did you do the preliminary work on the statements that Acheson made at that meeting?*

BYROADE: I certainly worked on them. There came a time in this when I was very leery about German rearmament as such. I wanted to find some safe way to do this. But things reached the point in Washington, at one stage, where it was pretty obvious -- you know, after Korea and so on -- it was pretty obvious that there was going to be German rearmament whether I liked it or not. I remember calling McCloy on the telephone and in gobbledegook, saying, you know, "This is going to happen whether we want it or not." McCloy felt about like I did -- whether we want it or not. So what we had to work out, right away, and we've got to hurry, is to get some acceptable way to do this. Then I went into the European concept, of a European defense force. I would say that McCloy and I were the first two who ever really worked on that. Then Plevin came along.

Q: *Well, now, you didn't say anything or do anything about this until after the invasion of South Korea. Is that what precipitated it, or had you already begun to at least jot down ideas?*

BYROADE: I think it was after Korea, but I'm not sure.

Q: *In other words, this idea about a neutral, unified Germany may have still had some validity until the Korean invasion?*

BYROADE: Well, I don't know. We were getting pretty tense, fed-up, and leery of the Russians

even before that. You know we had been through the Berlin blockade.

Q: But at least that was settled for the time being.

BYROADE: Yes, it was settled but Berlin was still sticking out there absolutely indefensible. I'm not sure when this happened.

Q: Well, why don't we stop here?

BYROADE: Okay.

*Oral History interview with Henry Byroade, conducted on September 21, 1988 by
Niel M. Johnson of the Harry S. Truman Library*

Q: We were talking about rearmament of Germany and the French attitude, and the British. At one point Adenauer was asking for an increased police force like they had in East Germany. That possibly was an option to creating an army. In fact, I suppose they did increase the police force in West Germany long before they created an army for NATO. They tried to match the East Germans, the "Volpos" [Volkspolizei] I guess they called them.

BYROADE: Well, that seemed like a reasonable request to us at the time. It wasn't significant really in the conventional military sort of way.

Q: Did they have a mined line at that time between East and West Germany -- the Iron Curtain as we would call it -- do you remember?

BYROADE: No, I don't know if they did or not.

Q: Theodore Achilles, in an oral history interview, says that in 1950, as the North Atlantic Council was being organized, that the Pentagon was promoting German rearmament because NATO forces were inferior to the Soviet. He says, "The office of German Affairs in the State Department," this would be yours, "sided with the Pentagon on this, but most of the rest of the State Department was dubious and most of our allies, especially the French, were strongly opposed." Did you consult with the JCS, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and what was your position on German rearmament in 1950, that is, the German Bureau's in the State Department?

BYROADE: I think Ted's emphasis is a bit wrong. Yes, of course, we were in constant consultation with the Pentagon, sometimes the Joint Chiefs. It was rather normal for them to want more strength on our side of the line, because in a conventional way we were vastly inferior to the Soviet forces. But in 1950 my own Bureau had not taken any position that we were in any hurry about rearming Germany; that came a little bit later on. Then we wanted to do it in some European context. We didn't like the word "German Rearmament;" we liked "European Defense Concept." It's a fine point, but not entirely. It's a question of, you know, whose ultimate sovereignty is this military force under.

Q: In September of 1949 we were first told about the Soviets setting off their first atomic bomb. Do you remember that starting or precipitating a new strategy for Germany, a new concern about arming her?

BYROADE: No. I don't remember it specifically but I'm sure it must have added to the Pentagon's point of view, that we should go on adding to German strength.

Q: The Soviet military strength, the conventional strength, we were not so worried about because we did have a monopoly on the atomic bomb up until the fall of 1949; isn't that true?

BYROADE: Well, true, except it was certainly obvious that it was just a matter of time until the Russians got a useable bomb. I can't pinpoint any date, or any conference, that this came to a head.

Q: That was a concern, no doubt. Achilles goes on to say that a group, including you, Harriman, General Gruenther, Douglas MacArthur II, Ambassador [Charles] Spofford, as well as Achilles, met in Achilles' home, and you "concocted a simple scheme," to obtain Allied support for rearming Germany. Harriman was to draft a letter for Truman's signature to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, asking whether the Joint Chiefs considered German rearmament essential. Gruenther would reply for the JCS that it was. Truman would then direct the State and Defense Departments to seek Allied support on rearming Germany. Achilles concludes, "It worked out but neither quickly nor easily."

BYROADE: Well, Ted's memory must be better than mine. I remember meeting a smaller group than that in Harriman's house, but that was really on whether we should put an American commander in Europe. I don't remember such a meeting on German rearmament.

Q: But you do remember a meeting in Harriman's home, about naming a commander of the NATO forces in Europe?

BYROADE: Yes, that's right. I don't want to be misunderstood here in an egotistical sort of way, but it's rather amusing how these things happen. A group of us felt that Europe wasn't progressing well enough towards unification in an economic way, and there was sort of a let-down in spirit. We came to the conclusion that one of the problems was security. The Europeans hadn't really accepted the fact the United States would fight for Europe, and the obvious answer to that was to put an American commander over here, and then we're hooked, as it were. We couldn't be in command over there and take any other position than we had to defend Europe. We got around to the idea that there was only one possible name for us, and that was Eisenhower, because of his reputation.

Q: Do you remember who else was in this meeting?

BYROADE: Just MacArthur and I. Doug and I went to Dean Acheson and he rather grasped at the idea. He said, "You go see Harriman and Gruenther," talking to the two of us, "and I'll go see the President." Doug MacArthur and I had that meeting in Harriman's house, and they both

agreed. Gruenther went back to the Pentagon to get the Pentagon's position. Why Acheson went to see Truman before he really got our position, I don't know, but he was rather enthused about it. He came back -- and it's an interesting comment -- and he said, "The President bought the idea." He said, "You know, that little guy is truly amazing. I think he was conscious of the fact, that maybe by making this decision, he was creating a future President of the United States, who might be a Republican." But, he said, "He didn't bat an eye." He said, "If that's what we need, that's what we need." Which was rather characteristic of Truman.

Q: Yes. I wonder when this meeting might have taken place. Are we talking about early 1950, before the Korean war, do you believe?

BYROADE: I'm not sure of that. It would have been three or four months before Ike went to Europe.

Q: By the way, Douglas MacArthur II, is he related to the General?

BYROADE: Not at all, no. He was married to Barkley's -- Vice President [Alben] Barkley's -- daughter, but they are no relation to Douglas MacArthur.

Q: Achilles, by the way, describes Douglas MacArthur II, who was political advisor to Eisenhower in 1950-51, as a "hard-boiled realist, and rather a political opportunist." How do you remember him?

BYROADE: Well, Doug was in charge of regional affairs for the State Department in European Affairs, and we were thrown so closely together because I was in charge of German Affairs, and I couldn't see any good answers to the German problem except in the regional context. So we worked together on everything that had to do with the regional advancement of Europe. Doug and I were extremely close at that time. He was a very capable operator. We drifted apart a bit later on; I didn't like too well the way I thought Doug ran his embassies.

Q: He was Ambassador later on?

BYROADE: He was Ambassador to Japan, and somewhere else, I think.

Q: That must have confused the Japanese a little bit didn't it? Perhaps he was a hard-boiled realist. I get the impression he was rather strongly in favor of getting West Germany into NATO, or into some kind of rearmament.

BYROADE: That's true, but he wanted to do it in the European context as much as I did.

Q: So he was favoring EDC?

BYROADE: Yes, very much. I always saw the logic of the French position, but it didn't quite fit in the world that we had inherited.

Q: Eisenhower came out for rapid rearmament, and yet he apparently was very patient about it.

Was your impression of Eisenhower that he did handle the French problem very astutely, diplomatically?

BYROADE: He did, yes. I thought he did, yes.

Q: Probably during World War II, he had learned quite a bit about how to deal with the French.

BYROADE: That's one of the reasons why he was the ideal commander for us in Europe.

Q: Of course, the Soviet Union feared German rearmament, and they proposed another four-power conference in 1951 to unify and demilitarize Germany. There was a meeting in Paris from March to June of '51, and there was no agreement that came out of that. They did appear to have made some concessions, but Adenauer and the other Western leaders were now intent on a pro-West Germany. In the meantime, the Western powers had decided to end the state of war with Germany. I suppose that this was really the first step toward doing anything...

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: ...in the military sphere. Do you think it was true that by 1951 the Western powers no longer had realistic hopes of unifying Germany, or keeping her demilitarized?

BYROADE: Yes, I think that's true. There was still talk of a German reunification, but everyone knew it wasn't a realizable goal, not in the near future.

Q: And yet you didn't, apparently, eliminate the possibility entirely.

BYROADE: We didn't think that would be wise. Public-opinionwise, it would not have been a good idea to say it could never work.

Q: In fact, didn't a majority of the German people, West and East, including West Germany, still think that unification was very important? Was that what you had to keep in mind?

BYROADE: That's right. I think that's true. It's rather obvious there would be a yearning for unification of their country. From the propaganda point of view, it wasn't good to say "no, it can never happen."

Q: But Adenauer, you feel, by this time had really given up?

BYROADE: I think he had in the foreseeable future.

Q: In fact, McGeehan in his book (The German Rearmament question: American Diplomacy and European Defense After World War II (University of Illinois Press, 1971) says that Adenauer favored German rearmament as a way, first, to regain sovereignty, secondly, to achieve security against the Soviet bloc, and then thirdly, to advance Western European integration. Did that fit in with American thinking on the subject?

BYROADE: It did. It did, indeed. Adenauer didn't oppose German rearmament in a European Defense Concept, except for the rather unrealistic plans of the French, which would diffuse the forces.

Q: Do you recall any changes in our diplomatic tactics, or strategy, like in 1951-52 when, you know, EDC was being debated rather strongly and the European Coal and Steel Community apparently had already been established? It was apparent that West Germany would become more and more a part of the Western bloc, and I think the documentation indicates that the Americans, including Acheson, and probably yourself, were coming out for a more aggressive counter-propaganda to the Soviet Union. Do you recall that we decided to become more aggressive in our efforts to counter Soviet propaganda and be "less diplomatic" about our approach to them?

BYROADE: Oh, there's no doubt about that at all. When I left German Affairs in 1952, we were only thinking really about adding German strength safely to the West, and, you know, to make it as viable a country as we could. [It was] a truncated country, but we wanted our side to be a showcase compared to the other side.

Q: The Oder-Neisse, the boundary line that had been drawn up as a temporary kind of border at earlier conferences, this issue seemingly was kept alive. That is, the Western side would not agree that this was a permanent border for East Germany. Yet, didn't we see that issue as probably a lost cause?

BYROADE: As a practical matter, we would not publicly say that is a permanent border. We just wouldn't say that, but as a practical matter, we recognized that that was going to be the border for a long time.

Q: So we were still kind of maintaining a fiction in a sense that that would not be settled until there was a unified Germany and a peace treaty?

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: With a unified Germany, and that was what was apparently spelled out at the Potsdam Conference.

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: Do you think that was wise policy to hold out on that? Did that help the Russians keep the East Germans perhaps more antagonistic toward the West than they would have been otherwise by not agreeing to that Oder-Neisse line?

BYROADE: No, I don't really think so. We felt as long as West Germany was clearly progressing more than East Germany, in almost every way, that that was a lure to the East Germans. It was, you know, "why can't we be a part of that?" That would have, of course, gone out the window had we said, "There is the line and it is forever; you're separate."

Q: Was it the Helsinki Accords of 1970 that finally settled that?

BYROADE: Not specifically, but practically, yes.

Q: That's no longer a problem or a question is it?

BYROADE: No, not that I know of.

Q: Kurt Schumacher -- did you ever deal with him directly, the head of the SPD [Social Democrat Party]?

BYROADE: Once. I made a trip to Germany to see Jack McCloy who was our High Commissioner. I said, "Jack, we should go see Kurt Schumacher." McCloy was pretty dubious about this; he was thinking about his relationship with Adenauer. I said, "Come on, it's an American tradition; of course, we talk to the opposition." Reluctantly, he went. I thought, you know, it would be a 30-40 minute courtesy call, but we got into a very long and fundamental talk with Schumacher. He was quite an impressive man. He was led into the room by his nurse; he wasn't a well man, of course. We got into a terrific argument with him about German rearmament. He didn't favor any European concept at all. He had a much more nationalistic approach and didn't want to discuss the military at all except under the concept of German sovereignty, German flag, etc. It was the first time that we had ever talked to Schumacher. I had a letter from him later about how much he appreciated the talk. We had a chance to really spell out how we felt about policy in Germany. I think we made some impression on him. He wouldn't change his mind in our presence, but I think it did some good.

Q: He was apparently afraid that France was actually trying to get hegemony.

BYROADE: He was a real nationalist, Schumacher.

Q: He did feel that France was trying to get domination over Germany?

BYROADE: I think he probably did.

Q: Did Chancellor Adenauer have the domino theory, too, that if we were to sign a neutralization treaty on Germany, that this would be the beginning of a Soviet push that would tend to neutralize the rest of Western Europe, that it might have a domino effect?

BYROADE: I don't really know; I don't recall that subject ever came up when I was around him.

Q: The Pleven plan, the EDC, did it specifically exclude Germany as a member of NATO, or German forces as part of the NATO force? Was this a substitute in a sense for NATO, or do you recall how this was to be related to NATO?

BYROADE: I don't really recall, but it wasn't to be separate from NATO. The only thing I really recall about the Pleven plan is that the military units themselves were to be international, down to the point where, you know, there would be no single unit that you could call a German unit.

Q: At least at division level. I think the big argument centered on what they call combat teams, which, in a sense, were regiments.

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: And the idea of German divisions. We Americans, and the British, too, were holding out for divisions, German divisions.

BYROADE: We were thinking of the effect of military support; if you don't have a unit at least the size of a division, with its own flag and its own commander, you know, you get into the point of soldiers' morale. There's got to be esprit de corps for your outfit. The French plan was so diffused that...

Q: I think we finally did get them to agree not to change the name so much but to change the numbers. There was talk about combat teams as having maybe even up to 10,000 men, which would be getting toward division level.

BYROADE: I don't really remember that.

Q: Perry Laukhuff, Director of the Office of German Political Affairs, wrote you a series of letters.

BYROADE: He was one of the best drafters in the Foreign Service, great.

Q: Some of it has been published in the Foreign Relations series. Laukhuff in one of his letters, concerning the exploratory talks in March and April of '51, said he noticed a change in Soviet emphasis, even away from German remilitarization to the arms race, and on reducing armaments in general. This was because the Soviet Union now had become very concerned about American rearmament in the wake of the Korean war, and about the fact we were going to send divisions to Europe. There was a controversy about sending American divisions to Europe.

BYROADE: Yes.

Q: Laukhuff at this point was saying that he felt that Davies, who was a British delegate to the North Atlantic Council, or maybe to the three-power conferences, that he was too eager to reach agreement with the Russians. He felt the British were a little too eager at this point to come to an agreement with the Russians. My question is, do you think that Stalin himself really miscalculated in apparently giving the green light to Kim Il-Sung who ordered the North Koreans to invade the south, not realizing what kind of backlash there would be not just in regard to Asia, but in regard to the rearming of Western Europe?

BYROADE: Well, yes, I think it was a mistake on Russia's part. That seemed to be sort of a habit. Every time it looked like we might make some concession that was really important, they seemed to do something stupid, and I think that was one of them. Zhou En-lai later on said that the biggest mistake China ever made was getting into the Korean war.

Q: He thought that was kind of pulling Russia's irons out of the fire?

BYROADE: That's right; and they shouldn't have gotten involved.

Q: Laukhuff also said the State Department seemed to be giving in on a matter of making the demilitarization of Germany a separate agenda item for these Council of Foreign Ministers meetings. There seemed to be a lot of back and forth correspondence going on just on this matter of a separate agenda item for demilitarization of Germany. We did not want that as a separate item; we wanted that to be part of a larger picture. Yet, he thought the British were going too far in accepting the idea of demilitarization as a separate item on these agenda. Yet, I think you have already said that the British did side with us on these issues.

BYROADE: Most of them.

Q: Apparently there was a Big Four meeting of deputy Foreign Ministers that broke up in June of 1951 without agreement on an agenda. The Soviets at this point were demanding discussions of NATO, US bases abroad, and disarmament. They refused to discuss armaments of satellite states, and Acheson said, "Well, the Soviet preconditions would end up requiring Western disarmament." Was there any logical reason why they would try to exclude the satellite states in talking about, you know, European disarmament?

BYROADE: I just can't remember now.

Q: The satellite states had armies of their own.

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: Didn't they tend to react in a sense? We came up with NATO, and then they came up with the Warsaw Pact; we come up with a government for Western Germany, and then they come up for one for East Germany.

BYROADE: That is a little backwards, in a way. We reacted to them behaving the way they did in Germany, and refusing to unify Germany in any sensible sort of way. All the other positions they took every day of the week, on Berlin, the Allied High Commission and all of that, and we began to see more what kind of an adversary we had. So our first reaction was to them, and then they reacted to us, of course.

Q: Okay. Then these contractual agreements come about in May of '52, which was very important in that they began the steps toward German independence, or independence for West Germany. These ended the Allied occupation statutes, but we still maintained forces. Apparently, part of that was that we would maintain American forces in West Germany, and I think the British had troops there.

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: *Did the French still have occupation troops too?*

BYROADE: I think so, but I'm not sure.

Q: *Which troops were the closest to East Germany that were on the line? Was it both American and British?*

BYROADE: I think the American and British were about equally on the line, but I don't remember.

Q: *They'd be the first ones to take the brunt of an invasion. Even though North Korea had invaded South Korea in 1950, did we really feel that a similar occurrence could happen in Germany, another divided state? Was there any chance that Russia would try to invade West Germany?*

BYROADE: We felt that the temptation would be very great for them, unless they would obviously run into significant force that would cause a real battle. Yes, we did.

Q: *I think there were only two divisions, American divisions, that are sent to Europe after the Korean invasion.*

BYROADE: But they were very symbolic. If you've got to hit an American division, you're at war with the United States.

Q: *Of course, the NATO treaty provided that any attack against any members of its members would be an attack against all of them.*

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: *So it would have been precipitating a world war in Europe. And even though we didn't have a monopoly on the atomic bomb, we certainly had many more at this point, than the Soviet Union had.*

BYROADE: I think we felt, you know, if Russia could pick off one at a time, like Hitler did for a while, without causing World War III, they'd probably do it. But with the NATO framework, and our forces there on the ground, that couldn't happen.

Q: *That was to prevent the kind of piecemeal aggression that Hitler had tried out?*

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: *Another question, why were you more optimistic than McCloy about retaining emergency power to intervene in West Germany? Apparently McCloy felt we needed to retain this emergency power to intervene even after the contractual agreements, and you were saying, "No, we really don't need that."*

BYROADE: Well, we had a great argument on that one. We ended up pleading our case before Dean Acheson. McCloy, of course, was a very, very competent lawyer and he did a lot better than I did in that presentation. I lost my own case. Jack finally said, "Hank, you just gave away your case." I said, "Damn it, I didn't mean to but I guess I did."

Q: But you did retain that emergency power to intervene until some years later?

BYROADE: That's right. I didn't think we should.

Q: Why was that? What was the source of your optimism?

BYROADE: I felt very strongly about it, that in a way it still continued the occupation.

Q: You had been in West Germany several times by this time?

BYROADE: Oh, I practically commuted to London and Germany for three years. I never lived there, but I made a lot of trips.

Q: To Bonn mainly?

BYROADE: Well, first it was Frankfurt, of course; and then later on, to Bonn.

Q: In other words, you had seen the Germans at the grassroots level to some extent.

BYROADE: Well, not really; you go to visit a headquarters and you see the top brass. I didn't get out much in the countryside; I didn't get to know many of the German people.

Q: Did you feel that they had been really denazified, and democratized?

BYROADE: Well, I don't know; I had mixed feelings about the Germans. I felt we needed their strength in the West, and I thought the way we were trying to do it was safe enough. I held out for a long time that they shouldn't have, for instance, their own air force. I shared the French feelings a little bit.

Q: And also about a German general staff?

BYROADE: Well, I didn't certainly want to see them have the type of general staff they had before. I don't remember ever getting into trying to work out what kind of a general staff they should have.

Q: I think that when we agreed to the EDC concept that there would be no German general staff in charge of German forces. It would still have to be a part of an integrated command?

BYROADE: I think that's right, but I've forgotten the details.

Q: In September '51 you and Jacques Reinstein represented the United States at preliminary

meetings for a Foreign Ministers conference. In a draft on September 10, 1951, the Western Foreign Ministers agreed to fuller equality and sovereignty for West Germany. Apparently they were even envisioning West German membership in NATO at this time. Another agreement was to allow West German trade and diplomatic relations with Eastern Europe. So you were not trying to block them from trade relationships with Eastern Europe, or whatever they could arrange?

BYROADE: I don't remember it specifically, but I would think that would be right.

Q: You weren't concerned about trade in non-strategic materials with Eastern Europe?

BYROADE: Well, I think we had to prohibit trade in strategic materials.

Q: But you felt that whatever would help the West European economies would be advisable to do?

BYROADE: That's right.

Q: There's something about a Catholic question; maybe this is in regard to naming our first Ambassador to West Germany. There is a memo of conversation in the Acheson papers, in which there apparently is a note from you to Acheson in which you say that you thought that McCloy was placing too much emphasis on the Catholic question. I'm not sure what this meant, unless it meant that perhaps our first ambassador to West Germany should be Roman Catholic. Do you remember anything about that?

BYROADE: I don't remember the Catholic question. I do remember the logical man for that job would have been Bob Murphy. He was our greatest expert on Germany. I didn't favor that, and Bob never forgave me for it. From his point of view, I don't blame him. The reason I didn't favor Bob Murphy was that he was a brilliant political strategist and probably the world's worst administrator. We had the job in the State Department of inheriting HICOG, this tremendous military establishment, and breaking that down and getting rid of it, and setting up a US Embassy there for normal relations. This was indeed quite a task. I wasn't sure Bob was the guy to run the administrative end of all that.

Q: All these administrative details...

BYROADE: I may have been wrong, and I know Bob was disappointed. I suppose my voice counted as something; I'm not sure. In some ways it should have been Bob Murphy.

Q: Did you have a role in the Psychological Strategy Board plan for Germany in 1952, aiming Western propaganda at Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union? Did you have any input into Radio Free Europe, or Voice of America, or in the Psychological Strategy Board?

BYROADE: I suppose we must have had, but I don't recall any of the details. Henry Kellermann was my public relations man, and I suppose he worked with these people. I don't remember anything specific.

ROBERT B. HOUSTON
Officer in Charge
Bremerhaven (1947-1949)

During World War II, Robert Houston was a radio engineer at the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, DC. He entered the Foreign Service in 1945, serving in Accra, Bremen, Vienna, Edinburgh, Warsaw, Vancouver, Sophia, Moscow, Helsinki, and Washington, DC. He received a master's degree at the Soviet and Eastern European Studies Program of the University of Indiana. Ambassador Horace G. Torbert conducted this interview in 1990.

HOUSTON: In December 1947, after two years in Accra, I was ordered to Bremen, Germany. Those were still the days when one traveled by ship. I spent twenty-six days on a ship coming up from Takoradi, the Gold Coast to, Amsterdam. It was not that the ships were so very slow in those days. This was a combined freighter-passenger ship which anchored in a number of ports in West Africa on the way to Europe. It also anchored in Le Havre for three days, during which time I was in Paris. All this of course was while I was in travel status.

In many West African ports, it was necessary to anchor out in the roadstead. The freight would be brought to the ship by lighters. Natives would come out in outrigger canoes, one could bargain with them for a ride to shore. I was able to go ashore in Monrovia, Liberia; Freetown, Sierra Leone; and Bathurst, Gambia en route.

The Department was just getting used to the idea that Foreign Service officers should be given regular home leave. I would not get home leave until after I had been almost six months at my new post. On January 1, 1948 I took the train from Amsterdam to Bremen, Germany. I thought all the time my assignment was to Bremen, Germany. When I arrived in Bremen and met people there, I learned that my destiny had been switched, again without consultation with me. I was going to be the officer in charge of a Vice Consulate in Bremerhaven, Germany. Bremerhaven in those days was quite active as far as American shipping was concerned, being the port of embarkation for U.S. forces in Germany. There was very little transportation by air then for either personnel or equipment, so that there were many vessels going in and out. The powers-to-be decided that a Vice Consulate in Bremerhaven under the supervision of the Consul General in Bremen was needed, primarily to handle shipping matters, but also because of the large number of Americans residing in that city. The Vice Consulate would handle consular matters, but not the full range of consular matters. He handled primarily applications for birth certificates and passport renewals. The Vice Consulate would forward these to Bremen, where the experts could complete action on them.

We had no visa office. The only consular service that we performed totally in Bremerhaven were services to seamen and shipping. If there had been some sort of heavy weather, or if a ship's captain for purely legal reasons wanted to file a marine protest (which I learned about for the first time when I got there), he would come in and swear to me that he had run into this unusual

weather. By doing this, if there was any damage to his ship or his cargo, he could claim that it was due to the weather and not his seamanship. Also there were a number of instances where seamen were problems. I can recall one instance in which a MP convoy, escorted by four armed MPs, drove up with a man in handcuffs. They took his handcuffs off outside and I was supposed to handle him from then on. I also recall an instance, I think this occurred on January 1, 1950, in which a ship, which had been supposed to sail that morning, was delayed because some of the crew decided to claim that it was unseaworthy. The responsibility of the consul in those days was to investigate the seamen's complaint. So on New Year's day I had to round up some friendly shipping experts to go around, look at the complaints, and decide if they were unjustified or not. The experts I had empaneled decided that the ship was as seaworthy as most that came to the port, and that the seamen were just trying to prolong their holiday by filing this complaint. The powers that consuls had, and may still have, in such a case, include assessing costs on those who are guilty. In this case I had to find that the seamen were at fault. I believe that the seamen's pay was docked for the expense of the survey. This is a sample of what the Vice Consulate was doing in those days.

We also performed some political work. When I arrived in 1948, we were just beginning to convince our military that the Germans were not our enemies any more and were going to become allies. I think I played some small role in getting the commander of the port of embarkation to pay a little more attention to local German sensibilities. I believe I introduced the Oberbuergmeister of Bremerhaven to the Army commander for the first time -- the first social contact between the Occupation Forces, as they were called, and the German political authorities in Bremerhaven.

I should mention that the reason for my going to Bremerhaven was that my predecessor had been caught using the consular car to ferry cartons of cigarettes in a big black market deal. Black-marketing was a sore issue in our early period of occupation of Germany, before we reached the status we now have. Of course cigarettes were not legal tender, but illegal tender for all kinds of services. The locals often wanted to be paid in cigarettes rather than cash. Before the so-called Währungs reform (the currency reform of June 22, 1948), you could buy practically nothing with the old Reichsmark. Cigarettes were the kind of currency. While I did not engage in it, using cigarettes for purchasing was practiced widely.

I went on my home leave early in June 1948. I was actually out of Germany when the currency reform took place. I attended the summer session at the University of Colorado in Boulder that summer. When I came back in September of 1948, I was amazed at what a change the introduction of a stable currency had made. The German economy was beginning to take off. You could buy things with the new currency.

It was while I was on home leave, on the ship on the way home, that I met my future wife. She came back to Europe so we could marry in Paris in January, 1949. To be married in Germany would have required my getting permission from General Clay, the Military Governor of Germany in 1949. The military had set up very complicated procedures to discourage GIs from getting married to *frauleins*. I would have to comply with this very discouraging process, and it did not sound very romantic. I decided that would be too much hassle.

We had advice from an American lawyer in Paris as to how we could get around the requirement that one party to a French marriage had to have resided in France for at least thirty days. My passport showed I had been in France five days, and my wife's passport showed she had been in France four days. But it was easy enough with a carton of cigarettes to convince the *conciierge* at our hotel that she had actually been living there for thirty days. His certificate to this effect was good enough for us to get married on. I don't necessarily recommend this procedure to others, but I thought it was appropriate for those days. And it has been a very successful marriage.

The Consul General in Bremen in those days was Mr. Maurice Altaffer. He was very conscious of the fact that the Vice Consulate in Bremerhaven was part of his fiefdom. I went down to headquarters once a week, generally on Wednesday. I would take down the passport applications, the birth certificate applications, whatever, which I had received during the preceding week and leave them there for experts to process. I would confer with the experts on matters of interest. From time to time, the Consul General would deign to see me. I must say that when on January 1, 1950 a ship's crew decided their ship was unseaworthy, and I chose to handle the problem on New Year's Day using strictly Bremerhaven resources and not call on the experts in Bremen, I got in a bit of hot water. I think the Bremen people thought I was taking too much liberty with the long tether I was kept on. But it turned out all right. During the time I was in Bremerhaven, I sometimes questioned the utility of keeping the post. Only forty-two kilometers separated the Vice Consulate and the Consulate General. When the Vice Consulate in Bremerhaven was closed, it was found to be not all that necessary after all.

I had spent three and a quarter years assigned to Bremerhaven. It was time to leave. The Department gave me home leave and transfer. While I was still in Bremen, I took the Foreign Service exam. It was a three day exam. I was very grateful in the fact that in those days, language ability was deemed important. While I was somewhat shaky in some areas, particularly in economics, I really clobbered the German part of the examination and passed with a 77.

My German was very good. I had studied German in the university. I think I got 97 in the German part and this was enough to bring my overall written score up to 77. This was well above the passing level of 70, but I do think the German part did a lot to raise my average. I was not sworn in as an FSO until I reached Vienna -- my next assignment. I passed the oral exam during my home leave, between Bremerhaven and Austria. The oral exam was given in the old Walker-Johnson building, now torn down, which was where Personnel was. I remember that the chairman of my panel was the author, Louis Halle. In those days, orals did not include in-basket tests, or all those sorts of things they do today. A panel of three people interviewed you. The panel had a chance to go over your file beforehand. I assumed they were favorably disposed to my candidacy, as they asked me questions that I could logically be supposed to know the answers to. I thought I did pretty well, and before I left the building, Halle told me I had passed. By the time I got to Vienna, the paperwork had gone through, and I was sworn in as a proper FSO then.

EDMUND SCHECHTER
Chief of Radio Munich, USIS

Munich (1947-1955)

Edmund Schechter was raised in Vienna, Austria and attended the University of Vienna. After the Nazis took over Austria in 1938, he escaped to Trieste, and ultimately to Paris. After serving in the French Army and in Casablanca, he emigrated to the United States. Mr. Schechter served in Luxembourg, Austria, Germany as Policy Officer for the European Area, Italy, Bolivia, and Caracas. This interview was conducted by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1988.

SCHECHTER: I returned after an interlude of about ten months in New York to Munich in the early spring of 1947. I returned to a precise, definite position as chief of our military government radio station, Radio Munich. As I said, my predecessor had trouble with the military government authorities, and Mickey Boerner in Berlin wished for my return to Munich.

Let me speak now about our activities and this whole period, because I stayed until January of 1955 in different positions and locations in Germany. I would like to focus on the background of radio in Germany, which had an incredibly important impact already during the Weimar Republic and above all, during the Nazi period. Radio was, as in most places in Europe, a state-owned and state-controlled media instrument.

In Weimar was all the freedom and cultural diversity and informational diversity that characterized the Weimar Republic, but because of its central character and its government dependence, it was much easier for the Nazis, when they took over the country in 1933, to take over radio, lock stock and barrel, and later the newspapers, because you had newspapers of all varieties, shapes, and political colorations. You had the Communist Party, you had the Christian Democratic Party, and the newspapers were official organs of certain political coloring. Whereas the radio stations were from one day to the next taken over by the new government as they were owned by the previous government. This was later for us a warning that at all costs, in our reorganization, we had to avoid that the radio stations ever would become a central instrument of one central authority.

Therefore, when the occupation, under the control of the Office of Military Government, began, Germany was a wasteland; not only physically, because it was destroyed -- bombed out, with a hungry population and millions of displaced persons roaming the roads; it was also a wasteland psychologically. All the newspapers had stopped publication before the Allies marched in. The radio stations were equally silent, because they were either destroyed, half destroyed, or the personnel, which was all Nazi, had fled their jobs. I don't know how it was in Japan, but in Germany, this would be a situation that will probably, unless there was ever a nuclear holocaust, never be repeated. It was virgin territory, in a sense, permitting us to do all sorts of things really from scratch.

The first directive already in 1945 outlined the future for the German information media and for the American personnel that was supposed to supervise them and the task to create a media structure which would contribute to the democratization of Germany.

In 1946 came more detailed military government instruction on how to do it and how not to do it.

The gist was more or less to prevent the entry among the German personnel that would have to be hired, all those of a Nazi, militaristic or totalitarian attitude, and bring in people that would have a contribution to make to the future democratic state, the form of which was as yet unclear.

As we all know, Germany was divided into the four zones: the Soviet eastern zone and the three Western zones in the north, the British zone in the center, the large American zone in the south, and then in the last moment, a part was carved out in the west bordering Switzerland for the French zone.

The media generation system in the four zones was entirely different. The Soviets had it very simply: they took over lock, stock, and barrel the media stations. These became Soviet-type propagandist stations in the narrowest sense.

In the Western zones, the newspapers were treated differently than the radio stations, the reason being, as I have mentioned before, that whereas the radio stations were completely de-Nazified from the very first moment, going over from one central authority in the Weimar republic to the Hitler government, the newspapers had much more varied complexion. It wasn't like one radio station. There were different Nazi paper in different colorations, but nevertheless, there was some differentiation.

So the system that we introduced in our zone was called licensing. The first aim was to create in each city, from medium-size to large cities, one regular newspaper which would be licensed, where we would select a suitable German as receiver of the license. We would have American press officers who would not necessarily, except for the very beginning, sit right at the paper, but would exercise overall control, but not censorship in advance. They might look it over later, criticize, fire the writer, or whatever else, but there was no advance censorship. This process went fairly quickly with its errors and mistakes and a great number of newspapers sprang up in the American zone.

A little later -- just to put this newspaper thing in the context, even if it doesn't follow exactly the chronology -- we added in the large cities, like Munich, Stuttgart, and Frankfurt, another paper, to have one paper more right of center and one paper more left of center, and licensed a second paper. In the smaller cities, only one paper remained.

In addition, the licensed papers were from the very beginning, though strictly controlled from behind -- watched and observed by Allied representatives -- truly German papers. The "publisher" is the word that comes nearest to describing the function of "bearer of a license from military government." In addition, we had from the start of the occupation, an American newspaper in the German language, the famous Neue Zeitung. Though I used only three minutes to describe the process of creating these licensed papers, it was still a process that in each case dragged on for quite a while but we had to have a paper in the German language right from the beginning for informing the population of what was going on -- military government decrees, what is verboten and was not verboten, etc. -- and that was the Neue Zeitung -- a sector-wide paper. American officers handled both the distribution as well as the production. It was a paper for the whole American zone -- not local as the German papers were, either a Munich paper or a Frankfurt paper. It was first produced in Berlin and then in Munich. This paper became not only

well known, but it became -- let's use the phrase "a quality paper of the very highest order." It was read in later years not only in the American zone, but all over Germany. The thanks for this goes to two extraordinary newspaper people. One was the first editor, Hans Habe. Hans Habe was a well known Viennese newspaperman who was a refugee, just like I was, and was then a captain or a major in the Third Army, and became the first editor of the Neue Zeitung. He had a lot of newspaper experience, because he was the son of the owner of a big newspaper in Vienna. He was Austrian born. His name was really not Habe; his name was Hans Bekesy, a Hungarian name, because the family came from Hungary. In the States, he made Hans Bekesy, into Hans Habe. He was a remarkable man. He wrote a couple of bestsellers about the war period, and he was a natural choice for the Neue Zeitung. He was very good. But since he was a very autocratic personality, which he had to be, some difficulties developed. Then he married a very rich woman, returned to the States and still wrote many books.

His successor was the opposite of him, but equally a brilliant journalist, Hans Wallenberg, who was, in Berlin, one of the top executives of the Ullstein Verlag which was the biggest newspaper and book publisher in German, one of the biggest firms in the world. Hans Wallenberg was one of the executives. There was a great difference in personalities between two men. Habe became very Americanized; he was younger. Wallenberg, until the very end, not only by accent, spoke half German and half English, but an absolutely brilliant man who made of what Hans Habe began, a really great newspaper.

When in 1949 we liquidated the whole licensing process, lots of Germans wanted to offer and did offer just for the title, just to keep the masthead, the Neue Zeitung, millions of dollars to military government if we would sell them or give them the right to use the Neue Zeitung: It was so popular and considered the best in journalism.

The decision of military government was no, and the Neue Zeitung stopped publishing in early 1950 or so. You will hear from Max Kraus, who worked directly for the Neue Zeitung, lots more details on this. I personally knew Habe quite well and was a great friend of Hans Wallenberg.

The British, in their zone, had a totally different approach to the newspapers. Whereas we licensed individuals with strict guidelines of separation of news from comment, of giving space for all political shades and coloring, the newspaper belonged to a private person. We created a private press. The British acted differently. They licensed newspapers, too, but they licensed newspapers of political parties. They licensed the newspapers of the Social Democrats, of the Christian Democrats, and so they created party papers. They had a counterpart of the Neue Zeitung -- Die Welt, (The World), published in Hamburg, equally excellent, though, in my opinion, never as good a paper as the Neue Zeitung. But when it came to liquidating it, they gave the right of Die Welt to a private publisher. Thus Die Welt is still to this very day one of the three or four most important papers in Germany. Few people in Germany today realize that Die Welt started out as the British official paper in the German language like the now defunct Neue Zeitung.

I want to finish this newspaper picture. When the licensing period ended in 1949, all of a sudden, everybody who had the money and could get a printing press, which was still very difficult, could organize a newspaper. In military government there were vicious behind-the-scenes

battles: "Should we or should we not really end that period of licensing?" Because very many people were afraid that the licensed press, all the papers that we had created with blood, sweat, and tears would all disappear, and the previous owners, would come and claim their offices, create new papers and use the printing presses. There were fears that in a few months all the old papers would be back, and Nazi personnel would enter the back door. It was a very justified fear, but it did not come true.

It is one of these great success stories of ours that all the papers in the American zone that we created exist until this very day under the same name. Let us take Munich. We created first the Sueddeutsche Zeitung. Then we had created the Münchener Merkur, a little bit right of center. And to this very day, what you can buy in Munich is the Münchener Merkur and the Sueddeutsche Zeitung.

The first paper in the American zone was the Frankfurter Rundschau. You go today to Frankfurt, you buy the Frankfurter Rundschau. There is only one paper in the American zone, in the bigger cities, that later, after the licensing period ended, was created by Germans independent of military government, and that is a very excellent paper, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, which fits beautifully into the picture.

But it is truly interesting and remarkable that the German military government-licensed papers, were able, in a very short time, to create the trust of their readership and survive the wave of attempts to discredit them as stooges and instruments of the occupation, and survived to this very day. Not survived. They are the press of today's Germany. The same, more or less, in the French zone.

So there can be no doubt that the press and its wise handling in the first few years, together with the radio stations which I shall deal with in a few moments, have, to an extraordinary degree, contributed to the democratization of Germany. Whatever your or my opinion about Nazi Germany is, about the crimes that the people had to share with the regime, the fact is that Germany today, though there is legitimate criticism, is an eminently democratic country. It is a fact that for 40 years now, they exist as a part of NATO, of the Western alliance. Without laying the foundation in the media, it could never have been possible,

This is what I mean when I say that our media program in post-war Germany is an eminent American success story that is now 40 years old and which has so basically contributed to the political structure of Europe. We Americans criticize ourselves on the most minute things, but tend to forget our eminent successes.

The magazines came later because there was not enough paper; there was not enough personnel; there were not enough printing presses. It was impossible. Now you have a great variety, Der Stern, Der Spiegel, after the Time format. Germany is a great country with a great publication tradition. Germany is still, to this day, holds the greatest book market, book fair in the world, in Frankfurt.

Now a few words on the radio side. The radio side was quite different than the licensed press, because we had in Germany the system from way before of regional stations under central

authority. We had stations in our zone -- in Munich, in Frankfurt, in Stuttgart, and in Bremen. The British had one in the British zone in Hamburg. It was always there. A new one was founded in the headquarters of the French zone, which was a famous spa and gambling place in the olden days, a beautiful place called Baden-Baden. There was not before the war a radio station there. But all the others that I mentioned were the previous regional stations.

So the stations, right after the occupation began, were halfway repaired for the main purpose of broadcasting three or four times a day, military government news and instructions -- rationing, saying when an assembly is permitted, whatever decrees came out, about traffic, about licensing of mobile vehicles, etc. For this, we used German-speaking American personnel.

Then newscasts were added as the stations were repaired and more facilities became available. Then slowly, a complete program developed. I say this in a few words, but it was quite a period of time at each step, requiring great efforts.

This might be the place and the time to say a few words about the kind of people we had in military government, because God knows I can hardly imagine another example of this sort of diversity of American personnel which was concentrated in military government, and particularly in the information field, in the ICD, Information Control Division, of military government.

You had people who were assigned for a reason, such as the fact that they happened to speak the language, or because they had studied in Germany, or for no reason whatsoever. So you had people from the various parts of the U.S., younger and older, and then you had the vast variety of Central European refugees who had reached the shores of the States, got into the Army or in civilian service of the Army, and then were, like by a sponge, soaked up into military government. Well, because of the diversity you could have found "character" by the hundreds. I mentioned two, Habe and Wallenberg and their extraordinary merits. We had people from Prague and from Vienna and from Germany, mostly Jewish refugees in its different facets of occupation duties, but we had a number of non-Jews who were anti-Nazis and who had fled Germany. We had all sorts of people who all brought this variety of approach with them but shared non-familiarity with American regulations, instructions, or even ways to do things.

My greatest compliments go to the Army, which demonstrated a wonderful flexibility and a willingness to skirt restricting regulations in the interest of letting the new information media be effective in those unusual times in Germany. My compliments are based upon the fact that an Army, by its very nature, is a rather rigid organization wedded to its ways to do things and to its regulations. In the case of the reconstruction of the German media, it proved its wisdom by just leaving it to the people who were supposed to do it, interfering as little as possible and showing a magnanimity of extraordinary proportions that otherwise would have made the task impossible. Because substantively, what was the problem? Both in the press and even infinitely more in the radio stations, in the Military Government basic instruction of 1946, which I mentioned before, it said what sort of personnel we want to have, it said what sort of personnel we do not want to have, it said what the aim of the media was, all highly laudable things.

I remember I attended a few years ago a seminar at the Wilson Institute on the occupation

discussing the text of all pertinent instructions regarding the media. I was sitting there and I was asking myself, "Are they talking about the same thing?" I mean, I knew the instructions, except that once we read them, nobody gave any thought to it, because the problem was not what it said: "Don't take Nazis, take democratic personnel." The problem was how to find democratic personnel in a country that has been 12 years under Nazi occupation, under Nazi grip, where every field of activity and endeavor was reserved for Nazis? But no field or endeavor was so controlled, so absolutely deeply inbred in the strictest Nazi sense as the information media. Goebbels was the past master of propaganda, and radio was particularly a Goebbels instrument.

It was easy to get rid of the Nazis. They got rid of themselves; they disappeared all over. But the method of how to find "democratic" replacements could not be given in a circular. This was left to the ingenuity, to the innovative spirit, to the most -- to use my term -- unorthodox methods of selecting and finding people.

The "characters" that I described earlier used the most varied methods. For instance, we wanted to get German personnel from secretaries to future chiefs of stations to replace, let us say, Ed Schechter as chief of Radio Munich. The obvious source would be some former members of the Weimar Republic radio station that had been removed by the Nazis and who had survived for one reason or the other, such as not being too prominent, were not taken into a concentration camp, or were not taken by the Army and killed on the Russian front, but "disappeared" in some God-forsaken village and survived the Nazi time. That was, as an example, of how I found the man whom I brought up as German chief of Radio Munich. In 1949, I appointed as German chief of station, Rudolf von Scholtz. He was an old aristocrat who had a medium-size position in Radio Munich during the Weimar Republic and was living, during the Nazi time -- he was too old for the Army -- unobserved and unmolested in a little village. I somehow got his address, drove out, talked to him, brought him in first to work, and then later brought him up as a chief of station. That was one example.

Then as chief editor who later became Germany's chief radio commentator we found a man who was also an old Radio Munich hand guy from the Weimar Republic. Then a few German refugees returned but very few.

Then we had to take young people who had not been Nazi members but just soldiers, junior officers who returned from prisoner of war camps, in England and the United States. So American personnel had the role of finding people. In many cases, we had to teach them the business. I worked with my three assistants as tutors explaining why a commentary had to be separated from news. We also had to find women for transmissions to women and for children. It was a constant struggle of new ideas for whom to get. At the Officers Club in the evening, when stories of the day were exchanged somebody would say, "Look, I found a German today. You would not believe how . . ."

The stories sounded like finding gold in the far West, because everything in our plans depended on finding suitable German personnel in a completely Nazified country. In addition, relations with the Soviet Union were becoming worse and worse, so we had to be aware of possible Communist infiltration which added an additional dimension to the problem.

Let me give you an example of how things worked and of the cooperation between the press and radio divisions. It was the time when in Munich one licensed paper already existed, and our press people wanted very badly a second paper that was right of center, but they had to find somebody they could license, and who had all these positive and negative qualities of not being a Nazi, but nevertheless already experienced.

I had a man in my radio station, one of the editors that I found six months before. One day I went to the bathroom, and I was standing at one stall, and right of me was this Dr. Buttersack, a very strange name, (it means a sack of butter). His first name was Felix. He stands right near me doing what you do at a urinal, and as I look at him and I get this idea that he would be the ideal man for the license of this second paper. I left the toilet and went back to my office, and I phoned my counterpart, Ernst Langendorf, who was the head of the press, just as I was head of the radio. I phoned him and said, "Ernst, under very special circumstances, being in a toilet with him, I had the brainstorm that Felix Buttersack would be your man."

He said, "It is a brilliant idea." The same afternoon, Felix Buttersack was called in for an interview, and in three days he left Radio Munich and became the licensee of the Münchner Merkur -- a paper that successfully still exists today. He was the publisher up to three or four years ago, when he died.

Why this little story? Because it was typical of the unorthodox methods in use at times when you could do things without complex processing. Since Buttersack had already cleared by us, he could easily be transferred. This is how we operated. The idea of this oral history project is to negate the impression of, for example, the Wilson Institute, that people were sitting half a day studying the instructions, then following the instructions, then gave an advertisement in the paper -- an open position for so and so. This is childish. This was a world which never existed before and I cannot imagine to exist again, where a medium-level official like myself and Langendorf and decided who would become the owner of a big city newspaper.

Again, to come back to the Army as an institution, they, too, had incredible characters. The head of ICD press, radio, theater, film, everything, was a Colonel Barney McMahon, an Irishman with a wonderful sense of humor, who selected for himself and for his division headquarters, a castle right near Munich. He had never read or didn't want to read about the regulations of non-fraternization and all this and was running a brilliant show. By his Irish charm, he got people to work day and night. Once he trusted his lieutenants everything was possible. Langendorf and myself went over to him, and he said, "It is okay with you? Let me see this sack of butter," and that is how it went.

The Army was lucky. The whole military establishment was lucky that we had three truly great Americans as chiefs. We had, of course, General Clay, John McCloy, and then Conant, the former head of Harvard. So we had three great Americans of great wisdom. Clay was a typical political general, what I consider in the best sense of the word, that saw the Army as an instrument of national policy. So as usual, if you go for the explanation of this phenomenon of the Army permitting these unorthodox methods, it can be traced to the top leadership.

To continue with our radio story, within a year after my arrival in Munich, we were

broadcasting, after my arrival in Munich, an 18-hours-a-day program with German personnel. We had four American officers. This is the very important thing. Pre-broadcast scrutiny lasted until 1949, whereas there was no real pre-censorship of the German press. In radio, we had pre-broadcast scrutiny. That means that everything that was written for broadcasting was brought first to an American control officer for approval. So the Americans had to know perfect German. As you started to know the people that wrote and trust them, scrutiny was then almost a formality. Commentary however, was a different thing. These texts you really read.

As human life is, even those of us -- and God knows I was one of them -- who came to Germany with the greatest reservations, (two dozen members of my family perished at the hands of Nazis) but you cannot live and work with people on the basis of hostility. It isn't that you tell yourself, "As of tomorrow I shall not be hostile." It doesn't work that way. But as you work with individuals -- the selection that we did was as efficient as it could be, that we did not select Nazis -- a sense of joint working for a common purpose, even camaraderie, developed slowly. Sometimes I asked myself, if somebody would have told me a few years ago that I shall sit with Rudolf von Scholtz and Walter von Cube late at night, at work, and really share ideas and feel rather comfortable, I wouldn't have believed it. Whether this is good or bad is beside the point. That is what human nature is. After all, it was that they were now bound inextricably with us in the effort of building up a democratic press, a democratic radio in the future democratic Germany. We didn't realize the real importance that this radio development had, because when television developed, there was again not the system of private television stations. Television developed first as a junior partner of the radio stations. So Radio Munich or the Bavarian Radio today is a television station. Today, radio is a minor partner. And it developed the same way in Frankfurt and in Bremen and in Stuttgart and in Hamburg as part of the radio station. So what we did in building the structure and the personnel, was to build it, not realizing it at that time, really for an infinitely more important medium that played a decisive role, in the development of the new Germany, and it had its roots, fortunately, in this period.

When we reached what I thought was a plateau after one year, which was parallel to developments in Frankfurt and the other stations in the zone, I began looking, as I said before, for a German chief of station. I found it in Rudolf von Scholtz, and we had a big, big ceremony, because with the German chief of station, this pre-broadcast scrutiny almost disappeared completely and we began to reduce the staff from four to three and later to two Americans. I let the German chief of station, Mr. von Scholtz and his chief editor, Walter von Cube, run the station as much as possible.

Even after we had the German chief of station, the stations remained under the military government. The next step was to return the radio station to German supervision but keeping them politically independent.

I was very happy and proud that the first station in Germany that went officially into German hands was Radio Munich. Negotiations with the Bavarian land government -- the regional government -- went on for six or eight months because they wanted to go back to the old Weimar system, where the station was more or less controlled by the central authority and then it becomes all political, a political football, depending on whoever won the local election. That party would control all the chief positions at the radio station. Our military government was

absolutely adamant and did not permit the transfer until we had a radio law that was satisfactory.

In a very big ceremony in Munich in 1950, in the presence of the Minister, president of Bavaria, and top American officials, General Clay came from Berlin and transferred Radio Munich into German hands. I still remained for a few months to help in the transition, but the station from then on was run by the Germans. One of the key provisions of the Radio law was the establishment of a Rundfunkrat, a council for radio -- which was an independent and a supra-political council. The Council was politically independent and supervised the station. There were people of political parties but they were not selected because they were party members. The other radio stations in Frankfurt, and Bremen, once we had it in Bavaria, followed suit in a few months.

The transfer was again a success story, as I mentioned in the first part of our discussion today. Some of our people were fighting this transfer into German hands, because they said, "In a short time you are going to have the Nazis back." But to this very day after 38 years except for minor changes in the law, mostly caused by the fact that television plays now the major fiddle and not radio, rather than the way around in 1950, the basic law in Bavaria and in the other states of the former American zone is the same one that was written under our guidance. And how many people today, except a few old hands realize that this system of an independent, democratic radio and television so vital for Germany stems from the time when Americans were running the show?

So this is, I am unhesitatingly speaking, a real success story that is worth being occasionally mentioned. History never starts yesterday. In this country, we always believe everything started yesterday. For the very young, the Vietnam War is already old hat. But the past World War II events could not have happened in the times of Napoleon or the 30-Year War. But the occupation of Germany happened in our generation and our information policy was certainly an important contribution of the democratization and stabilization of Germany, which enabled Germany to become a partner in the NATO structure. It is good to realize that some of our own up to a few years were still active in USIS and in other areas and had played their part in the shaping of post-war Germany.

We have mentioned Mickey Boerner several times, and he deserves it because he was from the beginning in a position of policy making where he could really smooth differences very well. Our top ICD chiefs were also brilliant, unusual characters. We had General McClure, who was ICD chief, for whom Mickey worked directly. Later we got more and more civilianized, and Shepard Stone was brought in, the editor of the New York Times magazine. We really got top people over in different positions that were running a large staff of these diversified, almost wild men of crazy ideas, and let them do it, because they themselves were characters who must have had a strong belief in the importance of the mission.

I should now mention, since I have been discussing the American successes during the time of the military government occupation in Germany in the information field, which covered radio, newspapers, theater, and films, an entirely different area which today is forgotten by almost all the people who know only that the German mark, the Deutschmark is one of the strongest and most stable currencies in the world. The Germans today are against any attempts which could

possibly bring back any degree of inflation, and we tend to forget why, and that everything has a history. And this goes back to one of the greatest successes that we had during the occupation, namely the currency reform in 1948.

Germany was a country which until June, 1948, three years after the war was in very poor shape, though never as bad as Austria, which really was at times near famine. The physical destruction though, in Germany was much greater than in Austria. The rationing was very tight, but the Germans handled it quite well because they are, by nature, a disciplined and obedient people. But it was a very difficult situation. You just couldn't get anything but the dire necessities. This had very little to do with the living standards of the American occupation personnel, because we got everything that we wanted in the PX. We were not living under local economy, so what I am saying now has nothing to do with the American soldiers or civilians. They were not "suffering" except for psychological factors that I will touch on briefly in a moment.

I have one of my favorite stories to illustrate the unavailability of even the simplest items. It loses its flavor in the translation. I needed a pair of shoelaces. There were no shoelaces in the PX, and it was the beginning of 1948, and I was on a trip from Munich to Berlin. I walked to a shoemaker store and asked for shoelaces. The Berliners have a very dry humor, quite different from the subtle sense of wit and humor that Viennese have. I remember this old woman there. Stating in staccato phrases: "Shoelaces we don't have, we never had them, and we shall never again have them." A beautiful Berlin statement. A few months later, after the currency reform, you got not only shoelaces, but within a few months, practically everything that was hidden in black markets and was raring to be sold.

It was a very simple thing which made many rich black marketeers poor people overnight. The currency reform was kept secret. The next morning, ten marks would be changed into one new German mark, the Deutschmark. Really, nobody knew it, not even the soldiers, because some of them were quite good black marketeers themselves. It was a cigarette and coffee economy, items that replaced cash. We helped the Germans who worked for us and everybody knew this. But we did this for a good purpose. I, for instance, had no idea of the currency reform. This was kept really among maybe 20 people. It was an incredible story!

The recovery of Germany starts on June 20, 1948, and with the recovery of Germany, the rest of Europe, and this was another extraordinary success story. But this explains, also, the German fanatical aversion and fear of inflation. They had it twice, after the First World War, the most incredible inflation, and after the Second World War, after the collapse of Hitler, you had the hidden economy with the inflation, and then the sudden currency reform. So you have to understand German resistance to overheating their economy. Certain political and economic phenomena can be understood only historically. I wanted to mention the currency reform both as an American success story and as a factor that plays a role in the world economy to this very day.

And now a little bit of general psychological atmospherics. I tried to explain before how myself and hundreds of similar cases of Jewish refugees harbored justified resentments against Germany and the Germans. Nevertheless, by living and working together with selected Germans, we developed ties of, maybe "great friendship" is exaggerated, but a feeling of camaraderie and joint

aspirations. But this was because we worked with them.

I had, for instance, sometimes a difficult time with my mother. You see, my mother came over. She was already waiting in Europe and with the first permission of dependents joining the occupation cadres, she came to Munich. I had a nice house reserved. As I say, our living conditions were quite good. My mother was a good soldier, she would have made a wonderful Foreign Service wife, but she had much more psychological trouble living in Germany than I had. It would be another three or four years that she stayed with me. It was easier for her, after Munich, in Bonn, because in Bonn, we lived in an American compound, so she had less contact with Germans and much more with Americans.

I would like to touch on a few overall problems and phenomena which will sort of typify the years of the occupation. First, a justified question. I talked about the successes of hiring hundreds of Germans for top and medium and low positions in the media. Did Nazis and Communists slip in? Of course, they did. It is just a miracle that relatively so few did. It was contrary to what one would think, easier to catch the Nazis, because Germans had their own private reasons to denounce them. Sometimes the denunciations were just the other way around, that a Nazi denounced a non-Nazi to be twice victorious. So if Nazis slipped in, it was rather a brief period until they were caught and fired.

It was different and more complex with Communists, because they might have been really Socialists before, and now they were in alliance with the Communists. East Germany was strictly a Soviet and communized zone of Germany. It was easy to slip in and out. I remember well a very typical example, which was after we had already given up pre-broadcast scrutiny, which was after 1949. One evening, I was sitting at home and listening to a commentary by Radio Munich, which, as I said, was not scrutinized in advance, because we had given that up in 1949. The speaker was a man whose name I remember and whom I see almost in front of me, his name was Egel. The talk was the straight Communist line. I went the next morning into the office and confronted him with a direct accusation that I had reason to believe that he was a member of the Communist Party, and this was proven in the commentary of last night. He didn't even argue the membership; I fired him on the spot and he left the same day by train eastward to the Soviet zone. The incredible thing was that the next evening, he broadcast out of Berlin and remained one of the chief commentators from Soviet-controlled Radio Berlin for years and years to come. So it is no question that infiltrations happened.

Whereas I am pretty sure that we had caught almost all Nazis sooner or later, I would not say flatly that no Communist inspired people remained, because they could go under "left leaning," still permissible groups that we, ever eager to extend freedom of speech just permitted.

There were funny and strange events, like there was a Minister for Culture and Education, Dr. Hundhammer, in Bavaria. He was not a great selection by military government, though he was really a convinced and proven anti-Nazi who spent two or three years in a concentration camp. But he was an arch-conservative who wanted to re-introduce corporal punishment in the schools at a time when we were talking of school reform to further the democratic development of Germany based on the theory that a strict disciplinary school system was at the basis of Germany following a Fuehrer and a totalitarian regime. Hundhammer happened to love soccer, and so do I,

and we met once at a soccer game. Just as military government was re-introducing and permitting theater and movies, it was also re-introducing sports, to make life as quickly normal as possible. A picture of mine with Hundhammer appeared in a Munich paper, then distributed by one of the agencies in the States, and published by, I believe, the Buffalo Evening News, with a little acid comment that U.S. military government officials fraternize with the "re-introducer of corporal punishment in the Bavarian schools." So for a while I got in all sorts of hot water. The photographer thought it was interesting to see two prominent inhabitants of Munich, one American and one Bavarian, at a soccer game. But I was for a long time, the butt of jokes such as the innocent question when I was going to introduce corporal punishment in the radio station.

During the occupation period, one extra ordinary event happened, again in which the media played a major role -- the Nuremberg war crimes. Nuremberg was in the operational radius of Radio Munich. It "belonged" as a primary source of coverage which was founded during our efforts to reconstruct the German media. The coverage of those trials proved its wisdom by just leaving it to the people who were supposed to do it, interfering as little as possible and showing the product to us after the fact. We founded a substation in Nuremberg with a special correspondent in charge. This was unquestionably for the licensed newspapers, and for the radio stations, which were still military government stations, a truly major task, because the trial touched the lives of two-thirds of the German population. The War Crimes trials went on for a couple of years, first the major war crimes and then the second echelon. The whole world press was there, and in addition to the trial, they were roaming all around Germany covering all facets of the occupation.

The one thing I got as a "war booty," I mean, I just got it as a gift, is the complete volumes in German of the trial. I went by car three, four times a week for a few hours to the trial, and I have photos of Goering and the other murderers just as they were sitting in front. It was politically a very complex time, how to cover the trial in what amount, how angled.

I still sometimes wake up during the night and see some scenes of the trial, of the cold, indifferent, faces the "banality of evil," how people reported about the killing of hundreds of thousands of people in a tone like you would report about a corporate session where the board of directors decided to buy or to merge or have an unfriendly acquisition of another enterprise. It is something that when I heard it at that time, I would never have realized that things like these might still come to haunt me decades later. So this goes also under the title of the atmospherics of life in Germany, this Nuremberg trial.

Another subject to talk about was the McCarthy period. It came much later. By that time, I had left Munich already and was promoted to chief of the radio branch for Germany. That meant supervising all the stations in the American zone, and RIAS again becoming part of my "empire."

The chronology was very simple. I left Munich in 1950, being transferred to our new Embassy in Bonn. But the Embassy wasn't ready, so all those that were transferred got stuck in Bad Homburg near Frankfurt -- for a few months before we moved on to Bonn. There I was first the deputy chief of the radio branch. My boss for a few weeks or maybe months was Charlie Lewis. Then Charlie resigned and I got the job. Now, this is important because it is part of the McCarthy

story. You will remember that I discussed in our previous sessions that the "red herring" there was never true and I gave the example of a colleague like Eggleston that there were Communists in government. Now it never became quite clear whether Charlie Lewis was one of the last ones who had slipped through, or that his problem was only a mistake in his youth. I had said the last time that we got rid of almost all Communists long before Cohn and Schine and before McCarthy. It was done mostly on occasion of transfers from one agency to another, requiring another clearance and so on.

Charlie Lewis, I personally believe, was not a Communist during the time he was with the government, which was now for ten and twelve years dating back to OWI. Rather he must have been a member of a strong leftist student group when he was studying. Anyway, on one occasion or the other, he required another clearance, got sick and tired of it, or resignation was suggested to him. I knew him very well. Just as Eggleston was a clear-cut Communist, I never thought and until this very day don't think that Charlie was. Anyway, he resigned and I moved into his slot.

But that got me into trouble a few months later, when these "gumshoes," as Cohn and Schine were called in a famous article by Ted Kagan, came to Germany to look into the libraries and all the other activities, because according to McCarthy they were "infested with Communists." They had on their list to look into, the chief of the radio branch, but the chief of the radio branch, when they arrived, was the newly appointed Ed Schechter. They had the chief of the radio branch put on their list two months earlier. Therefore, I had to introduce the story of Charlie Lewis. It took them a week or two weeks to find out that I am Ed Schechter and for better or worse, I was of no interest to them.

The episode of Cohn and Schine in Germany, just as the whole bulk of my "testimony" today was an enthusiastic endorsement of the performance of the Army, was a truly shameful story from the beginning to the end. It was shameful, because the government could have finished it easily in explaining that in the beginning of the war, some Communist had slipped in, after all the Soviet Union was our ally. As the situation changed, we got, as I had explained, rid of them one after the other. But by denying it, we made it easy for McCarthy to come up with some names which some people had shipped to him as is usual in periods when rumors and gossip flourish and people get commended by denouncing other people. I mean, there was what they called themselves a "patriotic underground" in the Voice of America that fed names as they saw fit to McCarthy and Cohn and Schine. One of them was Steve Baldanza, who used to be a good friend. I knew him from the Voice of America, and we were very good friends. Later, though he didn't do anything to me, but to people that I knew who were accused unjustly, I never spoke to him. And then after I retired and he retired, one day we found ourselves on a promotion panel together. I was the head of the panel and he was one of the other three or four participants. So he came over and asked, "Ed, so many years have passed by. Do you mind shaking hands?" So we shook hands.

Another aspect was that two such ridiculous people, like Cohn and Schine -- Cohn -- I have to withdraw the word "ridiculous," because he was a very smart man, but just an evil man, as evil as they come. Schine was an idiot, a rich boy who just wanted to be in the spotlight. Cohn and Schine were able to terrorize hundreds of people with their methods, and men like James Conant, the U.S. High Commissioner whom I have mentioned before as one of the great Americans, was

afraid the appearance of these kids. I remember I came home for lunch, and my mother gave me the message that -- I just had left Conant -- he phoned that I had to come back immediately, because Cohn and Schine phoned him; they wanted to talk to him for another 15 minutes. And such was the atmosphere of fear that he couldn't find the courage to say, "Go to hell." And what could he, Conant, risk?

Again, things are very hard to understand out of a perspective of 30, 40 years later, what fear and psychological terror can do. I like always a general story to serve as an example.

When Cohn and Schine arrived, they were continuously pestering me because they thought that I was the chief of the radio branch that they had scribbled down somewhere. One morning, they found out that I am not that guy, and that I was the founder of RIAS. So Cohn, who had treated me like dirt for two or three weeks, (they were for a few months in Germany) must have heard the whole story about who I am; so all of a sudden, he stops me in the corridor. I swear to you again, I see the scene in front of me. He puts his arm around me and for the first time calls me Ed. "Ed, let me talk to you. I know what a wonderful job you did with the founding of RIAS, but now the station goes completely down, it becomes practically a red station. Just tell me, who are these people who ruin your work?"

I looked at him. What I really wanted was to spit in his face, but I told him, "I tell you something. RIAS was a very good station when I founded it, but it was nothing. It was in its childhood. I left it right after putting it up -- I am very proud I put it on the map, but RIAS is today under these people that you defame, a really great station. Not only is there no story to tell that you want to hear, I have to stress that RIAS is the most efficient anti-Communist instrument that we have. You don't even have to go to RIAS." He just looked at me and hissed, "No sense talking to you."

So, one day I was a source of spite for him because I was the wrong chief of radio, and the next came this crude approach by flattering me, how good it was when I was there, and now it was becoming "red," to find another source for anonymous accusations. From that moment on, I have really had only feelings of the greatest contempt for him.

I recommend that on the Cohn and Schine story, we arrange for an interview with Hoofnagle. Jim Hoofnagle was at that time our chief executive officer for ICD in Bonn. The HICOG Exec officer was an old-time, very well known Foreign Service officer, Glen Wolf. Glen Wolf behaved magnificently, with much greater courage than Conant did. Jim Hoofnagle was also a wonderful, courageous guy with great knowledge of how far he could go and how to deal with people. I have a very high opinion and great admiration for both Hoofnagle and Glen Wolf who died a few years ago.

But this McCarthy interlude was not a story to be proud of, and one of the really bad things that happened during that occupation period. It was also a very great setback for our efforts in Germany, because practically every American official in the information and culture field was at one time a "suspect," got in the news, and something always remains. People have read a name in this context, but don't know exactly what it really meant. So this was probably one of the saddest and worst episodes that we had.

I am coming shortly to the end. I stayed on as chief of Radio in Bonn. I had two or three assistants, and we were supervising, again in a very loose and informal way, the German radio stations. By that time these were all truly German radio stations. We still left one American officer at each local station. He was not anymore physically at the radio station but had his office in the military government complex.

Mine was a very interesting job because there was a lot of traveling involved and many contacts with my counterparts among the French and the British. They became good friends. By the way, the French continued their close supervision of the German radio stations much longer.

I stayed in Germany until January 1955.

KENNETH P.T. SULLIVAN
Visa Officer
Berlin (1947-1949)

Kenneth Sullivan was born in Massachusetts in 1918. He served in the Foreign Service in Sudan, Austria, and Washington, DC. Mr. Sullivan was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on October 25, 1994.

Q: You were appointed at Berlin to stay in Berlin and were assigned there?

SULLIVAN: That is right. They started saving money on me. I was in Berlin so they just kept me there. I was assigned to the visa section of the US Political Advisor's office where I spent a year being broken in by Andrew Hanne, a former Immigration and Naturalization Service specialist who was a wonderful instructor. A second year I spent there in charge of the visa section, which was a very big section at that time. The consular section embraced all of what was then not only Berlin but East Berlin and East Germany.

Q: Both of which were under Soviet control.

SULLIVAN: That's right.

Q: Now, consular work in Berlin in the immediate post-war period had some extra dimensions to it. What did you do with people who had been Nazis?

SULLIVAN: Basically there was a prohibition on issuing visas except to parents or wives of US citizens. So the visa operation in the beginning was not very much involved in that. The second part of the thing was that we had access through an arrangement, which I won't disclose in any detail, to the records which were kept in an office in East Berlin called the Opfer des Faschismus, (The Victims of Fascism), which actually was a clearing house for East Germans who were up for employment under Russian control. We merely had to say the word, if we didn't say it too often, and we would get what was the equivalent of a photostat of what they had put in

their records to impress the Russians, and we had a pretty good idea of whether they were communists from that also, as well as who were the Nazis. So there was not too much of a problem with that.

Q: Were people able to come in from East Germany into the office at that time?

SULLIVAN: Surprisingly they had little trouble with it except some times making the date because of poor transportation. The postal system wasn't very good, but my predecessor had developed a line convincing all those who were successful in getting visas, that they would have no use in the United States or in West Germany for their East German currency which was pre-war German currency over stamped. So they all put it in a hat when they were getting on the train and we would use this to send telegrams because the East German telegraph operation accepted these Marks and we would send notification to our people by telegram and we had a pretty good field on that.

Q: That is what I call a field expedient.

SULLIVAN: Yes, until the inspectors caught up with us.

Q: To carry it one step further, there were many Germans I know who came from areas which were formally German but had been taken over by the Russians or Poles. Did any of them get to the consulate? Did they need visa services? How did you handle these refugees?

SULLIVAN: Oh, we had a lot of them for the first part of my tour there. We couldn't do much about them, because, as I said, we were limited to non-quota visa cases. But then we opened up a full operation about a year later by which time I was supervising. It was the operation, the opening of regular immigration throughout Germany but it worked only for West Germany at that time and West Berlin. In the previous time and through the full program time we got all kinds of visa request. We even had a couple of Tibetans who came in looking for visas to go to the United States. We had an awful time figuring out what was on their mind because nobody could speak Tibetan and they couldn't speak even Russian. But we happened to have one of the members of my former unit in the Liaison and Protocol Section who came from that part of the world and he managed to find out at least what was on their minds, but we couldn't satisfy their hopes. But we couldn't do much. The Refugee and Displaced Person legislation that had effect in Berlin was taken up pretty much by Jewish refugees.

Q: I wanted to ask you about the effect of the Refugee and Displaced Person Act of 1948 that Congress passed. I know that altered a good deal of what our consular people did in Germany.

SULLIVAN: Well, I could only say something about that secondhand because that was about the time I finished work in the visa section. It was in effect somewhat a broader program than one that had been in operation before, which I think was known as the Presidential Executive Order of December 22, 1945, that President Truman had issued. It was an executive order to take care of a limited number of Jewish refugees and that was what was the basis for the legislation that broadened the whole field up. And, what that did in effect, was to make for a faster placement of displaced persons and a broader eligibility count. But, I was no longer working with that as a

visa person.

Q: Having once been a visa officer myself, I know that certain pressures are brought on our people. Were any pressures brought on you in Berlin?

SULLIVAN: Well, I got a commendation in writing one time for responding to an attempted pressure deal. Somebody had started a rumor that the way to get a visa in Berlin was to sleep with one of the visa officers. And this gained some currency in the United States. It came to its culmination in the case I am about to describe, shortly after we had opened up for regular immigration. That required us to announce on the radio, because the papers were not reliable, that we were going to open up on such-and-such a date and the first step was to make a written request to have a form sent. Then to submit the form which would indicate that you had requested entry on the register of intending immigrants, which was the book that decided when a person would be called up. To make a long story short, I got a letter from a religious person in the United States complaining that the relative of one of his constituents was denied an early place on the visa register and, indeed, a visa because she refused to sleep with a consular officer. This letter was rather long with all sorts of reported details.

It bothered me quite a bit since we from the first day on had picked up approximately a 100,000 applications a week. In fact, we had picked up a few hundred before we had sent out any forms. These I had kept in alphabetical order expecting that if anyone had the ingenuity to make an application to get on the register before the register opened, there might be follow-up. And what do you know, there was. That lady was in that group. She didn't bother to file a formal visa request, as far as I knew, because we only registered the first 100,000 which was more than enough to fill our quota for a couple of decades... So I wrote a letter back to the gentleman and explained that I knew there was a rumor, and people who were disgruntled often made rumors like this. In fact they were commonplace when people were talked to each other in Nazi-ruled Germany.

But that is about all the pressure there was. Sometimes I did have requests again from interested parties, most of them well intended, about why we didn't move certain cases a little faster than the others under the refugee programs. Mostly I had to tell them regrettably that we needed sponsors who have to post a bond and all other things being equal if people qualified, we shipped the ones that had a bond because that was a requirement.

ANTHONY J. PERNA
Air Force, Berlin Air Lift
Berlin (1948-1951)

Anthony J. Perna was born in Jersey City, New Jersey in 1918. He attended Syracuse for two years and then decided to join the Air Force in 1940. He served in the Air Force for twenty years and was involved with the nuclear weapons tests on the Bikini Atoll. In 1960 he was sent to Paris and given the Strategic Air Command post with NATO. He also served with the National War College in

Washington D.C. Mr. Perna was interviewed by Francine D. Haughey in 1992.

Q: Did you participate in the airlift?

PERNA: Yes. Our job was to hold this deterrent over the Russians' head by having the B-29 capability to bomb out of England. We had to set up a depot to repair the airplanes that were flying the airlift, those were the C54 transports.

Q: They came to your base?

PERNA: They came over to Burtonwood which was near us where they repaired them. Our job was to provide deterrents to make the Russians stop being any worse than they were. After the Berlin airlift got their production up to like 20,000 tons a day, the Russians threw the hat in and said: "OK" and they opened up the autobahns, and they opened up the canals for barge traffic, and they opened up the railroads and life went on. The B-29 deterrent in England and the Berlin airlift were successful.

DALE D. CLARK
Civil Affairs Division
Bremen (1949)

Civil Affairs Division, Military Government (OMGUS)
Berlin (1949)

Mr. Clark was born and raised in Utah and was educated at the Universities of Utah, Columbia and Harvard. After service in the US Navy during World War II, he worked in Germany in the Office of Military Government in Germany. He later was professor at Harvard University. In the late 1940s and 1950s Mr. Clark worked in the US Government's Point IV program, dealing primarily with agricultural and self-help programs, primarily in Europe and the Middle East. He was also active in promoting cooperation between the US Government and religious, non-profit organizations. Mr. Clark was interviewed by Robert Zigler on October 14, 1998.

Q: What was your function when you returned to Germany?

CLARK: Back in Berlin I was assigned to the Civil Affairs Division, headed by Ed Litchfield. General Lucius Clay was Military Governor. I quickly joined forces with my friends who were major players in the German resistance. My activist friend, Rainer Hildebrandt, with the Nazi's out of the way, had turned his attention to stopping the communists. He had organized a group called "Fighting Group Against Inhumanity." I suggested that Civil Affairs Division assist him and was given the green light to be his contact.

Many American know of this pacifist revolutionary. He established a safe house for escapees from the Communist east, also a museum at Checkpoint Charlie, just west of the Berlin wall. He was a link between East and West who gave aid and comfort to anti-Red dissidents. He collected the gear and artifacts connected with escape attempts, both successful and fatal, and he created the most popular museum in Berlin. I think most of us have friends who have visited the Hildebrandt establishment, the “Museum at Checkpoint Charlie.”

Q: How long did you remain in Berlin?

CLARK: After a time I was assigned to Bremen, which is a city-state, as Chief, Civil Affairs Division. My first child, Kristina, was born at Bremen-haven. Her name was derived from three names of wonderful friends who lived through the days of the resistance: Christine Bonhoeffer von Dohnányi, her son Christoph, and Christa Müller, daughter of my hero friend, Dr. Josef “Ochsensepp” Müller, founder of the CD political party, fir first post-Hitler political party to be formed in Germany.

My office in Bremen had a direct telephone connection to the chief of state. I had an observer’s seat in their Bundestag (parliament). I administered Law No. 40, dealing with control of the media, also police, and political parties. I was head of the adoption board. It was government in miniature, a wonderful experience.

Q: After your service in Bremen, what next?

CLARK: In early January, 1949 I moved back to a Civil Affairs Division position in Berlin. I immediately started working to carry out a plan I had been formulating for some time. Through an espionage channel I expressed feelings of friendship for Georg Dertinger, a brilliant political operative who had gone over the East Berlin Communist regime.

I floated an “implied” invitation for him to come “uninvited” to a small dinner party at my residence in Berlin. I expected to be laying the groundwork for a slow build-up of negotiations about the lifting of the Berlin blockade. He surprised me by coming in with a Kremlin approved offer to start immediately, for a gradual, de facto, lifting of the Berlin blockade and a gradual ending of the airlift. This was several months before the battle to save Berlin from starvation by airlift was won. Something went wrong with Dertinger’s plan. Something happened in the Kremlin. The hard hand of Lavrentiy Beria to the helm and Dertinger’s offering transmitted through me, was repudiated by Beria. Dertinger was sentenced to die.

A funny thing happened to him on his way to the gallows. Lavrentiy Beria, his enemy in the Kremlin, was sitting in a meeting in the Kremlin and someone reached in and shot him dead.

Thus did Georg Dertinger beat the rap. He moved back to the freedom of the American zone.

Q: Who did you work for at this time, army, navy or State Department?

CLARK: This was the OMGUS period (Office of Military Government, U.S.). General Lucius Clay was in command, but the transition to normal civilian government was well advanced.

Q: What happened next? Did you finally get Germany out of your system?

CLARK: No. I returned again to Germany in 1949. This time I came as an itinerant professor for the University of Maryland overseas program. It was a program to give college courses and credit to armed services personnel who were stationed overseas. It was mainly located near airbases. One of my colleagues found himself giving make-up classes in North Africa.

One day -- I think it was June 30, 1950 -- I went to teach my class in South Ruislip, near an air base next to London. No one was there. They were all headed for Korea for a new war.

A new plan was taking form in my mind. It took root at a regularly scheduled meeting of a "German Brain Trust," held at Josef Müller's residence at Gedon Strasse 4 in Munich. (This was an adaptation of the "new Deal Brain Trust" headed by Raymond Moley, a professor of mine at Columbia University). A member of this "G-4" group had suggested that German citizens should form voluntary corps who would repair some of the havoc they had visited on other nations. The suggestion was admirable, but impractical. I soon heard of a better plan. The Point Four Program of President Truman. I decided I wanted to join this program. I resigned my position, teaching international relations and headed for Washington to try to get into the Point Four Program.

Q: When was this?

CLARK: In 1949, I heard about the Point Four Program in Germany. I learned that it was going to be directed toward the undeveloped nations, a transfer of technology to lift them up. As I listened, I decided that's the program I wanted to go into. I came back to the United States with that in mind. Because of my background in the Department of Agriculture, I was picked up there in the interim and assigned to the Foreign Agricultural Service. This organization was in a very real sense the forerunner of Point Four.

In some sense, this program was a prelude to the Point Four Program. Many of the people there moved over to the State Department, including Stanley Andrews. He was head of FAS and later transferred became head of the Point Four Program. I think I was one of the first one hundred to join Point Four. It is very interesting when you look at the big catalogue of the roster they have now, a whole book of names.

There were cases where one man had to have more than one function. I was, for example, head of education for the world and there were two of us in education. Then, I had always taken a liking to the private voluntary agency side of it and that was virtually nonexistent. It had to be resurrected.

SLATOR CLAY BLACKISTON, JR.
Vice Consul
Stuttgart (1949-1950)

Slator Clay Blackiston, Jr. was born in Richmond, Virginia in 1918 and spent most of his childhood in New York City. He graduated from the University of Virginia in 1940 and became a Naval aviator. He has served in Amsterdam, Port-au-Prince, Jerusalem, Tunisia, Cairo and Stuttgart. This interview was conducted by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

BLACKISTON: I next served in Stuttgart in 1949 and 1950 in a country still suffering from the after effects of war. Stuttgart was not so terribly bombed; the center of the town had been bombed; the Bahnhof had been bombed but that had been reconstructed. The French had been in there too and they had caused quite a bit of destruction with their troops. They were euchred out of there; the Americans got them out of there and that was all in the American zone. I was just an ordinary vice consul -- we had a lot of vice consuls; but later I became the head of the visa section. We were not in the Villa Hauf which was the Consulate General up on the hill, a requisitioned building. We were in the Zeppelin Bau, which was across the street from the Bahnhof. We had, I think, six other vice consuls and we processed regular visas and what they called section 12, that was a category for ethnic Germans from the Sudetenland, Poland and Eastern Europe in general. It was a big operation.

We had to check on all these people, and the de-nazification, and then the Berlin document center to see what their Nazi record was. We did not handle the displaced persons visas; those were handled in separate establishments scattered throughout Germany. The one in our consular district was at Ludwigsburg. Ludwigsburg had a palace; I think Queen Mary, Mary of Teck, used to play there as a child. We traveled around Germany quite a bit. We had people there, staff vice-consuls who had a counterintelligence background, doing the investigations on these visa applicants.

I might just tell one thing that is fairly funny. The letters which we wrote to applicants, or to anybody inquiring about applicants, would have up in the right hand side "In reply please refer to VD," VD being the Visa Division and then there would be a number. We got a letter from a GI objecting to something we had done; his fiancée had applied for a visa and I guess she had gotten this letter "Reply to VD." He wrote this letter to us saying, in part, "I want you to know that my girl has never had VD," and on and on. I thought it was so funny I sent it in to the *Reader's Digest*; I thought they might print it but they didn't.

The non-fraternization policies had all been abolished. I think they still urged you not to buy meat from German butchers, allegedly because they were not sanitary enough, but I don't think people paid too much attention to it. We lived in a house that had been requisitioned but we were very meticulous in caring for the furniture and everything that had been in there. I'll tell too of an indication of the change there. We had gotten orders for transfer to Haiti. We lived in Degerloch which is up in the hills around Stuttgart, a very nice leafy suburb, in a duplex apartment and we had the upstairs which had been requisitioned; downstairs I can't remember whether they were Americans or they were Germans. But we got to know quite a few Germans, actually, quite well. We were having this party in the back yard and we had a little dog named Tuppy; our son, who was about three or four, ran out from the backyard to the front and Tuppy was chasing him. My son stopped before he got to the edge of the street but Tuppy sailed out into the street, and he

sailed out past a car which had been parked right at the edge of the driveway. At that particular point a German on a bicycle came by and the bicycle and dog collided, the man was thrown off the bicycle and broke his arm. He then sued me in the High Commission courts saying that he was repairing war damage to his roof and with his broken arm he couldn't do this work; he added it all up in a very meticulous German fashion. These courts were designed to take care of cases between the citizens of the occupying power and the Germans. I couldn't stay there, I was being transferred to Haiti, so I had to hire a lawyer who was accredited to this court. In any event they found against me -- I didn't appear -- and when I was in Haiti I had to pay some \$550.

Another funny thing: my son had a little German friend; in a neighbor's house there was a chicken coop and they got in the chicken coop and started chasing the chickens around and one or two of the chickens escaped. So he wrote me a letter saying that he couldn't introduce a new chicken to this coop of chickens because they would fight, so he was missing x number of eggs and so forth and he figured out how much I owed him. I think I paid him, but I can't remember.

EDWARD W. MULCAHY
Visa Officer
Munich (1949-1950)

Ambassador Edward W. Mulcahy received a degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in 1943. Within eight weeks of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. At the end of World War II, Ambassador Mulcahy joined the Foreign Service. In addition to serving in Germany, he served in Kenya, Ethiopia, Southern Rhodesia, Tunisia, Nigeria, and Chad. Ambassador Mulcahy was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on March 23, 1989.

Q: This was in Munich.

MULCAHY: In Munich. Most of my time, actually, I spent at Amberg in the Oberpfalz (Lower Bavaria) with a team of three other vice consuls. We were all German-speaking vice consuls and, just as I was due for home leave, I was dragooned into a tour in Munich. I stayed two months at the consulate general at Munich but mostly at Amberg. After six months of visa work I wrote to friends back in African Affairs saying, "Put my name in for anything that's going. This program in coming to an end within the next few months and I'd just as soon go back to Africa." I got a private telegram from two friends of mine in African Affairs who asked if I'd like to open a consulate at Asmara. I wrote back, "Ready, willing and able; sooner the better."

While I was in Kenya I learned a great deal about Asmara, about Eritrea and the ex-Italian colonies from some of my British friends who had been in the military service up there in the campaign against the Italians in East Africa. I knew what a delightful city Asmara was. On the map it looks dreadful, only this far away on the map from Massawa which is one of the hell-holes of the world climatically at least. But, Asmara is up at 7,600 feet and that's perpetual springtime there, about the same altitude as Mexico City. So I jumped at the chance of going

there. This was in December of 1949. By the middle of January, I had my orders transferring me to Addis Ababa. We'd closed up our post at Amberg on January 10 and I was back in Munich.

Q: Why were we opening a post there? Why did we want one in Asmara?

MULCAHY: We had had an Army group there, Signal Corps, and Army Security Agency, since just after Pearl Harbor. The first Army group going out to establish a small communications station there were on board ship in Cape Town at the time of Pearl Harbor. The British, who had taken Eritrea from the Italians, were occupying it by then with a civil administration -- a corporal's guard of colonial service and Indian civil service types who'd left India and were out of jobs -- two British regiments of battalion strength, very small numbers of British. They kept Italian law and Italian customs but, with minor changes in force and something like 80 civilians and two regiments and few policemen, they ran this country of about a million and a half people.

Q: Was that part of Ethiopia at that time?

MULCAHY: No, it was not, and what it was to become was the subject of great dispute at the Big-Five Foreign Ministers' level, the whole question of the ex-Italian colonies. The reason for the rush in getting me out there, canceling the home leave that I was well over-due for, was the fact that the United Nations Commission of Inquiry, on which we were not represented, was going out to recommend to the General Assembly what the future of Eritrea should be. They wanted me to get out there and keep Washington informed on a daily basis if possible what the tilt of the report or recommendations of this U. N. Commission of Inquiry would be. It consisted of South Africa, Burma, Guatemala, Norway, and a number of people from the secretariat, including two Americans. I lived in the hotel, the principal hotel, where they lived and saw them at practically all meal times and entertained them over at the small military base, then called Radio Marina. There were about 75 Americans, counting dependents, at the base then. In the three years I was there it grew to 400 people. It ultimately grew to 5,000.

ARCHER K. BLOOD
Displaced Persons Program
Munich (1949-1951)

Consul General Archer Blood was born in Illinois in 1923 and attended the University of Virginia School of Law. In addition to Germany, he served in Greece, Algeria, Pakistan, and India. Consul General Blood was interviewed by Henry Precht on June 27, 1989.

Q: Then after Thessaloniki, you were off to Munich?

BLOOD: I spent sixteen months there and suddenly received orders in the beginning of March to be in Munich by the end of March. This is 1949. In fact, many of my classmates ended up in Munich administering the displaced persons visa program. We were issuing visas to people who had actually already been screened and approved by the displaced persons program. It was a very

routine job, much less interesting than normal visa work. And we didn't even work in the consulate general in Munich. Our section, at least, was stationed at an old German signal corps barrack outside of Munich which was a displaced persons camp.

Q: You had a law degree when you entered the Service?

BLOOD: No, I did not. I had left law school shortly after entering.

Q: Well, you could have had a law degree.

BLOOD: Yes.

Q: Now, for the first few years in your Foreign Service work, you are doing very routine consular work. Did you ever think of leaving the Service at that time?

BLOOD: Yes, I did, especially when at my fourth post was Algiers I found my -- no, my fifth post which was Bonn, I still found myself doing consular work. It wasn't very challenging, and I felt that I had to get out of it. I had done political work in Athens before going to Algiers and enjoyed it very much. And then to find myself doing consular work in Algiers, and when I got to Bonn, I was assigned first as, really, official greeter of the High Commissioner which I took care of visiting Congressmen, officials, and briefed various groups. And then Herbie LaRue, the executive director, asked me to take over the consular section in addition which I did.

About this time also, the Service was Wristonized. The Foreign Service was expanded when civil servants and staff corps became FSOs. The number of classes in the Foreign Service increased from six to eight. I had just been promoted to FSO-4, I went back to class five from four.

And about that time, I thought seriously about wondering whether to continue. But then I got a good job in Bonn as civil military relations officer acting as liaison between the Germans and our own military headquarters in Heidelberg. And then from there, went to the Department with good jobs, and from then on, I never had to do any consular work except in a supervisory capacity as the DCM.

Q: Okay, well, let's go back to Munich for a moment. Anything in that tour that you think worthy of recording for history?

BLOOD: Not really. I think the DP program was a well-conceived program, and we were bringing in many, many Jews, many Poles, Hungarians, ethnic Germans from eastern Europe, others who had been displaced by the war and were anxious to get to the United States. So in that respect, one felt you were -- these people really were desperate to get out of Germany and get to the United States. But it was a mechanistic, very routine program in which you just issued, you know, hundreds of visas a month.

Q: You didn't even have the challenge of determining whether true love was a factor.

BLOOD: Not at all, no. Or really no challenge in determining whether or not to give the visa.

WILBUR P. CHASE
Head of Refugee Visa Program
Hamburg (1949-1951)

Wilbur P. Chase is a native of Washington, DC and graduated from George Washington University in 1942. After serving in the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II, he joined the Foreign Service. In addition to Hamburg, Germany, Mr. Chase served in Basra, Iran; Montreal; Haifa, Israel; Ankara, Turkey; and Washington, DC. Charles Stuart Kennedy conducted this interview in 1990.

CHASE: In 1949, I was transferred from Montreal to Stuttgart. I can't tell you why, but anyway I was sent to be in charge of the refugee visa program. Before I left, I was told by Washington to do certain things and I also got instructions from the Consul General for refugee work in Frankfurt. The Consul General in Stuttgart didn't want me to take instructions from anybody but himself. So we did not get along together. Certainly to have two bosses is always difficult. Then I called up a fellow I knew in Frankfurt, Jim Suttleff, who was an aide to the Consul General on refugee matters, and I said, "Look, things aren't going too well here. Is there anyplace else I could be assigned in Germany?" And he said he would look into it. Then I was told that the Consul General in Hamburg, Edward Gross, needed somebody to help with the visa section up there, would I be interested in that? I said, "Swell. Going up to the British Zone would be interesting." And they said, "Well, they need somebody up there because all the officers are bachelors." Gross was a bachelor. And they said, "The inspectors have come through and they said that the office just has to have some married people there, because no one can get to know the local community. So, Will Chase, you are married." I had gotten married just before I left Montreal -- the same lady I gave the visa to. She didn't get to complete her program at MIT So we were then transferred up to Hamburg and I was in charge of the visa section.

After the war ended, the Germans, I'm sorry I can't recall exactly, but German citizens were not eligible for visas to emigrate to the United States. Maybe if they were parents of minor children, but not normal Germans. So just before I got to Germany, they had determined that they were going to open it up. And there was a big hullabaloo whereby on a certain date the consulates in Germany would accept visa applications. Everybody wanted them, and they had to be sent in there, practically time-dated. We got thousands and thousands of letters, in every one of the offices, for visas, and each one of these was bundled up by the date it had arrived. When I got to Hamburg, they hadn't even been carded; the visa people didn't know who all these people were. We knew that on a certain date we had so many people waiting there. So it was a matter of going through and carding them, knowing who they were, alphabetizing them, and getting up waiting list numbers.

This was still occupied Germany. Max Brauer had become mayor. He was a German who had lived there, had been chased out by Hitler, gone to the United States and became a labor leader over here. Then he returned to Germany as a U.S. citizen, and the people in Hamburg asked him to stay on to become their mayor. Actually, since Hamburg was an independent state, it was like

he had become governor of the state. So he renounced his U.S. citizenship, became a German again, and was immediately elected mayor. But then the British High Commissioner sat on top of him, and he controlled, to a large extent, what was going on.

The streets of Hamburg still showed many of the remains of war. Broken buildings. Some buildings had been cleaned up, some were just in rubble.

As Americans, we went to the British High Commissioner to get housing. They provided us all with housing.

While we were there, the influence of the occupying powers decreased. We went from the British being the, I can't recall the proper term for it: authority to where then we got the High Commissioner. The Germans were beginning to manage their own internal affairs, but we were kind of riding shotgun to see that they didn't do something they shouldn't do. And that continued on for about three years, I think, before the Germans became independent.

Hamburg was an interesting assignment. I was head of the visa section, then I became deputy land observer for the United States. The Consul General was the land observer. It meant that I worked with the British authorities and how they were doing things.

On the question of how our immigration laws were being applied, I became much more concerned with what I thought were the inequities of the old system. Many of these are still on the books today. That is, if a person was a Communist, they were forever and ever forbidden to come to the United States.

We had a case of a very eminent German woman. She had been a judge, as I recall, and she applied for a visa to come to the United States. Well, in the course of events, through the British and American intelligence services, we identified that back in 1932-33 she had spoken at some Communist Party meetings in opposition to Hitler.

We had a son of a bitch of a guy who was a security officer for the Consulate, and he said, "Oh, she's a Communist."

And I said, "Well, look, she denied she was a member of the Communist Party. She admits having attended these meetings, but she was against Hitler. She was working with anybody who would be against Hitler. She was not a member of the Communist Party. She never voted Communist. But the Communists were the only ones who were active, and so she associated with them."

I protested that she should get the visa, because since 1945 she had only done good things insofar as promoting the development of a good Germany. We got representations from Max Brauer's office that she was well thought of. She had never had any dealings with Communists since 1932. And yet in 1949 we denied her a visa and labeled her a Communist.

That bothered the hell out of me. As we now know, we were constantly bringing in Nazis. And yet we were being so strict with the people who had done what they thought they could do to

oppose Hitler, oppose fascism. There was a lot of sloppiness about how information was passed about and people being condemned.

We denied a visa to a young woman who had been convicted of having an abortion. But there had never been a court trial that she admitted that she had the abortion. And she was the wife of an American citizen. She was either a wife or she was engaged to a soldier. She was an awfully nice young girl, who had come though the war. These things bothered the hell out of me.

And I didn't like the favoritism we gave in the visa process to some of these people who had played footsies with the Nazis. This bothered the hell out of me. The people who were interested in pursuing this sort of thing were almost invariably not particularly well-educated. They weren't, I think, sophisticated. Not that I was necessarily sophisticated, but at least I was aware of a variety of currents, and that you can't look at a person one way and determine forever and ever what they are going to be in the future. There was this overwhelming number of security people, all sorts of checks being made, and the records weren't being well-handled. We also never told a person what the allegation against them was. We could maybe hint around about it, and if the person was smart, they would know how to approach it. But at the beginning, they didn't really know what to say.

DAVID E. MARK
Deputy Protocol Officer
Berlin (1949-1951)

Ambassador David E. Mark graduated from Columbia University in 1943. Shortly after completing a year of law school, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. Near the end of World War II, Ambassador Mark joined the Foreign Service. He served in Korea, Romania, Switzerland, Burundi, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Henry Precht on July 28, 1989.

Q: So where did you go, your next career turn?

MARK: Well, I had applied for Soviet language and area training, and when I got back to Washington, they said to me, "Well, we don't have any room for you in that right now. We'll keep your application on file. We do have some other area training that you could go into."

I said, "Well, what do you mean?"

And they said, "We'd like to sign you up for Arab language and area training." Well, although I'm not a practicing Jew, I'm nevertheless of Jewish background, so I said that I didn't think that that would prove to be very useful for the Foreign Service. Besides, I was interested in the Soviet side. So they said, "Okay. Just wait for that and go on to your next assignment, which is Berlin."

Now, before I got to Berlin, everyone arrived through Frankfurt in those days.

Q: This was in --

MARK: This was in approximately August or September -- well, maybe it was July 1949. I was informed in Frankfurt that I was not going to Berlin after all, that a new government was going to be formed in West Germany. Our military headquarters would be moving to Frankfurt from West Berlin and, therefore, I should stay in Frankfurt. And I was given a sort of ignominious job as the deputy protocol officer of the new U.S. High Commission under John McCloy that was taking over from the military government.

The protocol officer dealt with all of the diplomatic or quasi diplomatic missions of all the other countries in Germany -- which missions were still nominally attached to our military command. Protocol dealt with all of those, except, of course, the other Allies: British, French, and Soviet. And it was a boring routine job at a time when a lot of interesting things were going on. So this was the first time really of unhappiness in my career, because, by this time, my pay had gone up from \$3,278 to \$3,500 a year, and I was feeling pretty good. And as a matter of fact, I'd even gotten a promotion from grade FSO-6 to grade FSO-5 in the scale of those days.

So I started politicking within the protocol and High Commission offices to get to Berlin anyway. I mean, Berlin just seemed a lot more interesting. And I did succeed in getting shifted out of Frankfurt after a couple of months there to Berlin at the end of September 1949. My boss there was the senior Foreign Service officer left behind in Berlin, Eric Wendelin, and he said, "Well, David, you speak German, don't you?" not knowing that I had flunked German in the Foreign Service entrance exam.

And I answered, "Well, I've been brushing up on it and doing my best to get it back into shape." And he said, "Okay. Your first job" -- this was very early October -- "is to keep up with what goes on in East Germany." They were about to launch a government, too, to counterbalance our regime in Bonn. He added, "As a matter of fact, it's been announced that Wilhelm Pieck" -- who became the first president of the German Democratic Republic -- "is going to make a speech on the air, and you listen to it and take notes and find out what he means."

I said, "God, do you think my German's up to that?"

He said, "We'll see." So I did, and, of course, it was the proclamation of the German Democratic Republic, with a declaration of eternal loyalty to Moscow. As it turned out, my German was adequate, not brilliant, but adequate at the time.

A little unit was formed in our office with a more senior officer named John Holt in charge, who was a German specialist; and this little unit was given the task of watching East Germany in some detail. Amazingly, nobody had been doing that in detail for about a year and a half. The U.S. military had started out watching East Germany in 1945 in a non-military sense, that is, what politics the Soviets were dictating there, and the army had continued this through '47 but had let it fizzle out during the airlift. Thus, we were really behind in our base of knowledge.

We didn't know very much about the political undercurrents there in which the Soviets had forced the old Social Democrats to combine with the Communist Party in a subordinate role; that

is, Moscow had formed what's called the SED, Socialist Unity Party, but that is still the Communist Party of East Germany. Many other changes had been taking place as the Soviets imposed totalitarian hegemony on whatever political life was allowed in East Germany. So we had a very substantial job of catch-up to carry out in this little unit.

Q: And you were attached to the High Commissioner's office in Bonn? That was your formal status?

MARK: Well, no. There was a branch of the High Commissioner's office in Berlin under Eric Wendelin. As a matter of fact, Berlin and Bonn were in theory co-equal branches under High Commissioner McCloy, because the occupation regime -- and there still formally is an occupation regime to this day (1989) -- remained located in Berlin. So McCloy came up there; he had a house up there. There were meetings there. There were still some significant contacts in those years with the Soviet side. Indeed, there were a couple of occupation institutions that were maintained, I believe are still maintained (1989), such as the Air Safety Center in Berlin.

There were a couple of other things that survived all the clashes, and we still had -- they've lately been revived much more, of course -- the military liaison groups. I mean, the U.S. had its military people in Potsdam, in East Germany. They worked out of West Berlin. Likewise, we were assigned to the High Commissioner's office in Berlin. We tried to keep up with what went on in the East, and in those days it was relatively easy because there was no Berlin Wall, and people moved back and forth across the border, and we had all kinds of visitors from East Germany, people in church groups, Christian Democrats who were being forced more and more to the wall in those days, although a rump, sort of pro-Soviet Christian Democratic Party was allowed to continue tenuously. I even had the pleasure of working on these East-West issues with Willy Brandt, later Chancellor of Germany in Bonn who was then the editor of Berlin's Socialist Democratic Party newspaper.

Q: But you could travel without impediment anywhere in East Germany?

MARK: No. We could travel anywhere in East Berlin. For East Germany, we needed special Soviet passes, and I only received one twice during the year and a half that I was there, and they were both to visit the Leipzig trade fair. The Leipzig fair was to be the commercial showcase of East Germany to the world; and the Soviets were anxious to push East German industry, of course, as a foretaste of communism's quality potential. So people were allowed to go there to see how the German Democratic Republic was recovering from war devastation and from Soviet reparations dismantling, which had been very extensive.

We were able to get permits to go just for the several days that the fair took place, but I did get glimpses of East Germany in that way, and at other times, while traveling between Berlin and the West on the one approved superhighway, "autobahn," for which we didn't need permission. That was all regulated by the understandings reached after the blockade had ended in 1949. Again, I was in Berlin when the North Koreans attacked the South Koreans; and, of course, people immediately wondered whether there was going to be an analogy in Europe to this. For all of a week, I guess, I was lionized as the one person around who knew that Korea existed and had some ideas on the subject. And I must say that I took a pretty alarmist view of things at the

moment.

I didn't distinguish the Korean situation from the German, but just felt that the Soviets were, you might say, feeling their way to world domination, and indeed probably had similar ideas toward Europe. Because it was at this time that NATO had been formed, and indeed that the first talk had begun about some kind of West German armed force, which ought to be recreated, so that West Germany would somehow be within NATO. That didn't happen until 1955. We had to run through the whole episode of the West European Defense Community, which the French finally killed in 1954. But the Soviets could see the way things were trending, and they had such superiority in ground forces in Europe at that time, much more even than now (1989). We, in our demobilization, had denuded our forces in Western Europe. The British were exhausted; the Belgians, Dutch, French and others didn't amount to very much militarily then, so the vulnerability of Western Europe was even greater. I didn't know it at the time, but the Russians probably did, that our whole nuclear arsenal, not the just tested first hydrogen bomb, but just nuclear weapons, was minuscule. I mean that, by the time of 1948 came around, we had just a bare handful of nuclear weapons. It was probably better by 1950, but not very substantial even then, and the Russians were certainly aware of that, more or less.

Q: But Russia, after all, had been devastated during World War II.

MARK: Right. But they had maintained a huge Red Army and kept it supplied, and they had built up tank factories and airplane factories and whatnot. During the war, they built them east of Moscow, and, of course, they had continued to pump resources into military industry after the war. I mean the time, from 1946 on, when Stalin clearly visualized the cold war and forged the Iron Curtain and the division of Europe.

Q: Did it ever occur to you that the Russians themselves might feel under threat from the West?

MARK: Oh, I'm sure they did. I mean, the Russians have felt that all along. We were the first with nuclear weapons; we were clearly supporting their enemies, that is anti-communist forces, in all the states which they considered to be in their sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. We supported anti-communist Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Romanians -- well, there weren't many of those, but some -- Bulgarians, less so, Yugoslavs, whatever, so that our anti-Moscow intentions were very clear in those areas. And the Russians felt that this was their security buffer zone, and we weren't willing to accept it.

Sure, I guess so, and that was all the more reason why in 1950, at this time when they invaded South Korea, I thought that they would use their military superiority, or be very tempted to do so, to just sweep to the Atlantic -- which they could justify as pre-emption. They would take whatever losses came from a few American nuclear weapon strikes inside the Soviet Union that we landed there, but then they would be masters of all of Europe. And I'm sure it was a very tense period. People in Washington must have been thinking the same thing. I remember that we even had several sessions with General Taylor, Maxwell Taylor, the later Army chief of staff, Kennedy's military advisor who played a very prominent role in our Vietnam military efforts, who was the commandant in Berlin at the time. He was a most impressive man, with a huge grasp of world politics and strategy and tactics, and so, our sessions with him led up to a paper

that John Holt and I wrote setting out the dangers for Europe of possible Soviet aggressive moves and what we might expect. We sent that think piece out, it was distributed to other U.S. embassies and produced a good bit of flack, I must say.

Q: What do you mean? People didn't take your perception of the dangers seriously?

MARK: I don't know whether they took it seriously, but they thought that we were exaggerating Soviet willingness to engage in this sort of aggression. And obviously we were, because that invasion in Europe never took place. I don't know how seriously the Soviets ever contemplated it. When we get to "super-glasnost" after Gorbachev, enough of the Soviet archives may be opened so that we learn about such things, but we're not at that point yet (1989).

There's really, I guess, only one thing worth talking about in those years regarding East Germany before I left Berlin, and that is the German reunification issue. The German reunification issue is being talked about again nowadays (1989), but it was sort of quiescent between about 1955, when the West Germans reconstituted an army within NATO, and, let's say, 1987, or some period like that. People didn't talk about it. It was just considered out of the question.

But it wasn't out of the question in the 1950 to 1955 period because, for those years, the debate was going on in Europe about the West European Defense Community, and about a new West German army, and about a possible future role for West Germany in NATO. Throughout, the Soviets were using all of their efforts to disrupt U.S. plans, not just with Communist forces, which were pretty strong in France and Italy at the time, but even with people who were anti-communist, but had grave doubts about rearming Germany under any circumstances and under the guise of any controls that the Allies might set up.

The debate went on for a long time, and the Soviets encouraged people to think -- and Germans to think -- that if they only did not cooperate with the West, with the Allies, and stayed neutral, why there would be a possibility of German reunification; and we saw this campaign pretty clearly way back in 1950. So we started, in our little unit, to prepare our outline for German reunification, for the democratic reunification of Germany, but detailing under what circumstances, in what ambience, with what framework, with what sort of elections, with what kind of government to be formed, and so forth and so on.

This document was finished about the end of 1950 and we put it into U.S. Government channels. It actually emerged with very little change, I believe in 1952, and this happened at that time -- I was not in Germany then -- because it was suitable for the propaganda war that was being carried on in a heightened tone in 1952 about those issues that were so fateful for Germany.

Q: Released by our government?

MARK: Yes, released by our government. It was finally put out as a plan, and it's the only formal plan I think that the U.S. Government has ever backed on German reunification. And, of course, it has been completely overtaken by events, such as Mutual East German-West German recognition in the 1970s, except that the subject has become current in Western circles, even though the West German government says (1989) it entertains no such illusory notions. And I

think it still is illusory at this moment, but that has nothing to do with the fact that it remains an issue and a problem which will again have its day in history at some point.

Q: What was your perception of the attitude of Germans -- East Germans, Berliners -- toward the Soviet-American conflict at that time?

MARK: The Berliners, of course, had just been rescued from the airlift, I mean, by the airlift. They had just lived through this challenging period, so you couldn't have found a more pro-American population anywhere outside of the United States, and it remained that way for many years. I mean, that's why Kennedy got, you know, this resounding reception when he said in 1963, "Ich bin ein Berliner." The Wall had gone up by then, but the population was strongly pro-Western, pro-American. And, of course, until the Wall, people had been fleeing East Germany by the tens of thousands and settling in the West; this showed what they generally felt.

East Germany, even by then, had begun losing population. East Germany, I think, started out with 18 million people in 1949, and by the time the Berlin Wall went up in mid-1961, it was somewhere around 16 and a half or 17 million. So I think that statistic shows the general attitudes toward the Soviet Union, not that there weren't many pro-Soviet people too. I mean, you can always get some minority to support a totalitarian or communist regime out of ideology or careerism or mistaken self-interest.

But anyway, I got notice, to my surprise and pleasure, about February 1951 that I had been selected for Soviet-area training and language training. I had begun a night course in Russian at the local Army school in Berlin and hadn't gotten very far, which led me to wonder whether I could. I mean, it looked so tough as a language, but, nevertheless, when the notice came that I'd been selected, I happily went trundling off to Washington and started that course in March 1951 for four very intensive months of study in Washington.

DAVID E. L'HEUREUX
Displaced Persons and Visa Officer
Butzbach and Frankfurt (1949-1952)

David E. L'Heureux was born in Washington, DC in 1928. He entered the Foreign Service in 1949 and served in Germany, the Philippines, South Africa, Libya, Morocco, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

L'HEUREUX: They had had an urgent request for help from the Displaced Persons Program in Germany, which is now known as the Refugee Program, and that I would be going to Germany. I asked where I was going to be assigned. They said that I was to report to the Displaced Persons headquarters in Frankfurt and they would assign me from there.

In those days the whole structure in Germany was a duplication of the Foreign Service. It was a small Foreign Service. You were assigned to Germany and the personnel people in Germany

determined where you were going to go. You were their “property” while you were in Germany. You could only be transferred out of Germany once they released you back to the “central system”. It was a completely autonomous operation.

So I went to Frankfurt and was assigned to the Displaced Persons camp in Butzbach, Germany, which is about an hour north of Frankfurt. Because the camp was an old German military barracks compound and Butzbach was a very small farm village there was no housing there for anybody, we were housed in Bad Nauheim which is about ten kilometers away. We were put into requisitioned military hotels. They had requisitioned, I think it was, three hotels in Bad Nauheim, which was a famous health resort before the War (and again after the War).

I worked at Butzbach for about a year. We were driven in a little military Volkswagen beetle to work every morning and then come back at night.

The barracks were old primitive barracks with meter-thick stone walls, heavy plank wood floors, probably about 12-foot ceilings and heated by potbelly stoves in one corner of the room. One of my jobs was to keep the place heated. I would come in in the morning and get the fire going. Throw some coal on and get it to where the stove would glow red and the room would become very hot. Then the thermostat system (me) would go over and open the window and cool it down. Once the redness was gone and the room became a little cool I would close the windows and stoke the fire again. It was an all day process.

We had a complete visa office there. There was a medical division with doctors who would examine the visa applicants. INS had an inspector there who would pre-clear people. We would go to the International Refugee Organization and get a list of names. Our Displaced Persons Commission was there too, as well as all the voluntary agencies.

We would get names from the IRO of people interested going to the United States. The Displaced Persons Commission would process them for placement and support (usually through the voluntary agencies) and turn them over to us. We would medically exam them. Of course our laws required that they have birth certificate, marriage certificate, police clearances from places they have lived. Most of these people had fled from the Baltic states. Many in this camp were from Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and some from Poland. They had no documentation, they had nothing. So there was an office that the IRO had developed where they could go in and create documents by swearing out a statement and having it notarized. We accepted that as being the best evidence available. Then we would conduct an interview. They had to pass a literacy test. Eventually we would issue the visa and they would be herded into trains and sent up to Bremen and transported to the United States.

One of the problems with our system at that time was that it took months to process these people. In the meantime, there were other foreign countries represented there. Just above us in the barracks was the Australian consul and his secretary. We had about 20-22 people in our process. As a matter of fact I created a photographic processing picture which I still have...a series of pictures glued together showing all the different stages of our process.

I went up one day to see the Australian consul to see how he worked. He obtained names from

the IRO. He would call the family in. They would walk in the door. I remember one interview...a man and his wife and three kids walked in. The consul looked at him and said, "Don't you take your hat off when you walk into an office?" He said, "Sorry Mr. Consul." And took off his hat. "What have you done before?" "Well, I have farmed." "What type of farming?" "Wheat." "Tell me a little about wheat farming?" This was all through an interpreter. He explained a little about the process. Then the consul said, "Come over here. Let me see your hands. Yes, they look like farmer's hands. Could you roll up one of your sleeves? You look healthy. Have you had any medical problems recently?" "No, no." "Is the family all healthy?" "Yes, we have had no problems." "Okay, you are going to Australia. Next."

So what they were doing was getting the cream of the crop. People who would apply to several countries, the Australians would get the cream right there because they would move them through in one day. We took several months.

I spent a year there in the camp.

Q: Did you find that you were having problems with people associated with accusations of war crimes? A number of people from the Baltic states were involved in running what amounted to minor little concentration camps.

L'HEUREUX: Yes, they went through a security check. What we did was to use the military, CID, organization to screen all of these people. That was part of our processing. They would run a name check on them to see if they had any record of Nazi activities or anything like that. If they did they were not accepted. We turned down quite a few people.

When I went out there I was the junior clerk in that office and when I left I was the senior clerk, pretty much running the office because in the 12 months that I was there I had 13 bosses. It was a training post and they were running Foreign Service career officers through there fairly regularly. I became the expert. I ran the office, so to speak, as a clerk.

A year later in August, 1950 they decided to close the camp and move all the processing for that area to Schweinfurt. So I took all the records and packed them up and took them out to Schweinfurt. I spent a week in Schweinfurt turning everything over to the staff there and then went into Frankfurt to work in the visa section, where I started doing normal visa work.

One little anecdote; in Butzbach when I first arrived, I was placed in an office with two attractive young German girls. Even though I had lived in Germany and was fairly fluent in German I was very timid. I didn't like to use my German or admit that I spoke it. I kind of enjoyed sitting in this office listening to these two young ladies talking about some of their activities outside of the office and then eventually starting to make comments about me. After about a week or so of this and painfully trying to speak to me in English, one morning I came in and one of them asked the other how the night had been. She said that it was okay, pretty quiet. But she said, "You know, I sure would like to wake up one morning and find Mr. L'Heureux' shoes under my bed." I couldn't resist at that point...I have a pretty keen sense of humor. So, I mustered my best German and turned to her and said, "I would be very happy to put my shoes under your bed at any time." You could hear a pin drop in that office for about ten days afterwards. Absolute silence. Nobody said

a word. Gradually things softened up and I began speaking German with the staff.

Q: Were there any pressures on the operation there to issue more visas?

L'HEUREUX: Tremendous pressure. The pressure primarily was coming from the US voluntary agencies. They were sending people out constantly from their headquarters, primarily in New York and Washington.

Q: These would be the Tolstoy Foundation, HIAS, National Catholic Welfare Conference....

L'HEUREUX: Yes, all of those groups. They would put me under a lot of pressure because they knew I was the key person in moving things through there. Word got around very quickly. I was under a lot of pressure to speed up the process. They would appeal cases that the vice consul had turned down. I won't identify the faith, but there was a very well known senior official from one particular faith in New York who came out. He got me aside one day over lunch and he did his darndest to convince me that the only reason that laws were written were to be broken. He said there was no other reason. He went on that laws were written to be violated, and get the job done. Fortunately I had a good solid Christian background and was able to deal with this. But this was the type of mentality I occasionally had to deal with. They would try anything to move people into the United States. While I was very sympathetic in trying to get people out of Europe, I did feel we had to comply with the laws that our Congress passed.

In 1950 I was transferred to Frankfurt. I was the chief clerk in the Visa Section there for a while. During that time I also became the office expert on adoptions of Germans. I would advise Americans on adoption procedures, where to find children, etc. I had some rather interesting cases there.

There was one very attractive American Caucasian couple who came in to see about adopting a German youngster. It turned out that the man was an airline pilot. He was out of town most of the time. They were based in Frankfurt. He felt it would be good for his wife to have a child to take care of to keep her busy, etc. The next time they came in he was on a flight and she came in with the youngster that they wanted to adopt...a striking blond, 17 year old German, and they walked into my office holding hands. I couldn't stop it, everything was legitimate, but it was very obvious what the situation was. He wanted her to have companionship and she had a different notion on what kind of companionship, I guess.

Anyway, there were several cases like that. There was one of an Irish Sergeant in the military who had nine children. He had never been to the United States. He was born in Ireland and joined the US military in England during the war and had acquired citizenship through that process. He was serving in Germany and hoping eventually to be stationed in the United States to see what the country he now belonged to looked like. He and his wife came in saying that with all these children it was too much of a burden on her and they wanted to adopt a young German girl to help them raise the family and help around the house. The next time they came into the office, he came in with a 16 year old German girl, very attractive, and they came into the office hand in hand. It was very difficult to try to deal with that because you knew there was something going on, you knew it was wrong, but you couldn't touch it.

I was also involved in getting a visa for the nursemaid to the children of Major Draper, who had been Eisenhower's personal pilot in Europe, and when Eisenhower became President he asked Draper to come back and be his pilot at the White House. His wife was back in the States with the children and they wanted to bring this German woman over to take care of the family. I arranged for the visa. Several months after she arrived in the United States, I read where he had divorced his wife and married the maid.

After about a year in Frankfurt, I was promoted and commissioned as a non-career staff vice consul. I was moved to the visa issuing line where I came across many fascinating new situations.

There was the mentally ill woman who kept coming in to me trying to get a visa to the United States. I had been told by a psychiatrist on the outside that she carried a gun in her purse. She sort of picked me as her favorite and would come in about once a month to sit down and have a long talk with me. I had to be very careful not to irritate her because I knew she had a gun in her purse. I was able to eventually gain her confidence and get her to ask for help. She was put into an institution in Wiesbaden.

Q: How did you find the German staff?

L'HEUREUX: Excellent. From the female pipe smoking file clerk I had working for me in the file room to the receptionist and those who processed the papers, they were all excellent. Really top notch people. I really enjoyed being with them. There were a couple of employees who had been with the Consulate before the War. One was a fellow by the name of Westfahl who had actually operated an underground for us in Frankfurt during the war. He would ride his motorcycle around town collecting information and passing it to American intelligence people.

Q: He ran the file room didn't he?

L'HEUREUX: Yes.

Q: I knew him when I was there in 1955.

L'HEUREUX: There was another institution there, a fellow by the name of Mr. Spyglass.

Q: Oh, yes, Homer Spyglass.

L'HEUREUX: He is married to a German lady and called her "his lady." A fabulous singer. I think he died on the job.

Q: He did. He died about 1956 or so.

L'HEUREUX: A wonderful man.

Q: He was a black soldier who stayed on after World War I.

L'HEUREUX: Yes. He knew everything that there was to be known in the area. He was the center of attention at every party.

STANLEY D. SCHIFF

**Orientation
Frankfurt (1949)**

**Kreise Officer
Schwabischvish Hall (1949-1950)**

**Kreise Officer
Baden (1950-1953)**

Stanley D. Schiff was born in New Jersey in 1925. He received his Bachelor's degree from Rutgers University in 1948, and his Master's Degree from Columbia University the following year. He served as a First Lieutenant overseas in the US Army from 1943 to 1946. Entering the Foreign Service in 1949, his postings include Baden, Strasbourg, Liverpool, Trinidad, Pakistan, and Brussels. Schiff was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 9, 2000.

Q: What sort of training did you get before you went?

SCHIFF: We had 10 weeks at FSI, very intensive language instruction. Most of us in that class had no familiarity with German. After that, it was basically training in things German by people who had served in Germany.

Q: What were they looking for you all to do?

SCHIFF: When we first went over, there were two basic things. One was to administer any residual functions that we still had as occupiers, which were much diminished. That was not a burdensome part of the job. The major part of our task was to contribute to the reeducation effort. That meant working with a variety of German groups and individuals, encouraging people to establish a working democracy at local levels. We were working with municipal and county officials to try to do this. I spent a great deal of time working with teachers and with students. One of the things I did was to run an English conversation class for high school seniors who lived in the town. We had an interesting experience a few years ago. Our class went to Germany to celebrate its 40th reunion. Someone had arranged for a group to meet with the president of the University of Augsburg. My wife went to that with some of the others. I was not able to go. The President asked where each of these people had been posted during their stay in Germany. My wife said, "Buchen." He said, "I came from Buchen. I was in your husband's English language class." That was kind of fun.

Q: Did you feel any trepidation coming from a Jewish family going to Germany?

SCHIFF: I think I raised this question with the panel that interviewed me. They were rather reassuring. There was a certain amount of apprehension, but we actually found in the two years that we were there no hostility on the part of the people whom I dealt with either professionally or socially. We did get close to a number of Germans. There was none of that.

Q: Did you go to a central point or did you know where you were going from the beginning?

SCHIFF: We all went to Frankfurt for about a month of additional training. While we were there, families lived in the same hotel. That furthered this bonding process that I was talking about earlier. People really got to know each other.

Q: How many were there?

SCHIFF: There were 27 of us. All were married; there was one bachelor at the time and he didn't stay a bachelor for too long. They were looking for families.

Q: Also, by the time you were 25 or so, you'd better be married. That was expected.

SCHIFF: Yes.

Q: And have three children.

SCHIFF: My wife knows the count exactly of how many children in our group we started out with when we first got there, but the number that we had about two years later was some multiple of that. It was a productive period.

Q: This was that generation.

SCHIFF: Yes. There was one family which had eight kids and stayed in the Foreign Service, traveled all over. There were a couple of others who had five kids.

We stayed in Frankfurt for about a month and then we were assigned to Kreise (the equivalent of a county). Initially, we were assigned to work with the military government people, who were in civilian clothing by then. That was a training period. Then we were moved out and given our own Kreise. Some of the military government people left Germany.

Q: I imagine that at that point, it would have been relatively easy for you all... I assume that almost everyone had had military experience. You all talked the same language and had somewhat similar backgrounds, etc.

SCHIFF: Yes and no. There were some excellent people. There were also some who were not and who had taken advantage of their situations to use it for private gain. Some of them were involved in the black market. Some of them were people who just didn't do anything. I replaced one guy like that. Nothing much had happened in the Kreis for which he was supposed to be responsible. So, there were both. Things changed. That's probably what they had in mind when

they recruited us, that we did have different backgrounds. We all served in the military, but we had different backgrounds and different perspectives.

Q: This was obviously a pretty bright bunch of people.

SCHIFF: Yes.

Q: Was your contract, "If you do this and do a good job, you're in the Foreign Service, become officers, etc.?"

SCHIFF: No. We all understood what the situation was. It was only a matter of about six months after we were in Germany that we got our commissions as Foreign Service officers. What we got as a result of that was a reduction in pay. It was rather significant for some of us.

Q: Where were you assigned then?

SCHIFF: We were first assigned to Schwabischvish Hall, which is in the province of Wurttemberg. I worked with a military officer. We had responsibility for two Kreise/counties. I was there for some months.

Then I was given my own two Kreise in Baden, one of which was called Buchen and the other Tauberbischofshein. That's where I stayed.

Q: What was the situation in Germany when you arrived?

SCHIFF: Germany was in flux politically. During that two year period, the Korean War broke out.

Q: You were there from when to when?

SCHIFF: '50-'52. The Korean War broke out and that changed the complexion of things very significantly. The emphasis shifted from reeducation to rearmament. One of my major tasks - and I'm sure it was true for some of my colleagues - in the second year was negotiating with the Germans for the evacuation of a German military installation, which, after the war, had then been used to house refugees from Eastern Europe. We negotiated to evacuate it so that American troops could be accommodated there. That took up a lot of time. But the reeducation effort went on. It diminished in emphasis.

Economically, the area in which I lived, Buchen and Tauberbischofshein, were very impoverished. It was a predominantly agricultural area with small farms. Buchen at that time had a population of about 4,000. There were about as many animals in the town, many of whom lived side by side with their owners. The unemployment rate was about 15%. Under German law, the German people were obliged to accommodate refugees who had come from Eastern Europe. So, there were social tensions. There was also a degree of unrest and dissatisfaction among those who had been either expelled by communist governments or who had fled them. So, it was rather grim, but it was during that time that Erhardt was the federal economics minister, and he pushed

currency reform, which enabled Germany to begin turning around economically. The Germans at that time still did not have sovereignty, and they were beginning to chafe about that as well, but that was more of an issue at the national level.

Q: How did you find local officials that you dealt with? Were they getting bored with Americans hanging around?

SCHIFF: No. I had an excellent relationship with the local officials and I suspect most of my colleagues did. They were very cooperative. We tried to help them in any way we could, in small ways. I might cite one example that had a lingering effect in my own case. The High Commission had established a special fund made up of what were then called counterpart funds, which was local currency which the U.S. owned and could then invest back into Germany. They established a fund which they were going to use to pass out grants to various activities around Germany. I worked with a German Catholic priest who had established a youth home in the area where I was. I was able to help him get a grant. My wife and I were invited back to visit that place on its 40th anniversary, which coincided with our 40th reunion. So, we did go back. It was just delightful to see the place. It had flourished and they had taken kids from many other parts of the world. It was not ethnically pure. They had kids from Ethiopia and Turkey and they even had a couple of Vietnamese kids, the boat people. I was immensely pleased to see this because it was unusual in Germany. This was in the middle of nowhere in Germany. It had become a very successful enterprise. The relationship between the priest and myself and his successor and myself was very good. With the local officials, they were excellent. It was a very good experience.

Q: Did you find much interest in the American way of doing things?

SCHIFF: I think there was a curiosity about how Americans did things. That was one of the purposes of our being there. We were the only Americans in this town. We had a little park right outside our garden. There were times when people would come sit in the park and look into our garden to see what we were doing. They were that curious. There were frequent questions about how the Americans would do something as opposed to how the Germans did it. The Marshall Plan, which began the exchange of people and so forth, had, I believe, a major impact because of the encouragement it gave to the exchange of people.

Q: Did you have any feeling about attitudes towards the Soviet Union or East Germany?

SCHIFF: Toward the Soviet Union, the feeling on the part of most Germans was venomous. You heard it particularly from people who had lived in Eastern Germany or in other countries where the Soviets had been present. Accounts of physical abuse as well, were frequent. They just loathed them, hated them. One thing which we frequently heard, "You Americans made a great mistake." What was the great mistake? We had not gone with the Germans against the Russians.

Q: Was political life beginning to resurrect itself?

SCHIFF: Yes.

Q: Where did Wurttemberg fall within the CDU, SPD?

SCHIFF: The area was basically CDU. Both churches, evangelical and catholic, had significant influence. Still, it was different from Bavaria; less conservative.

Q: Was this an area where there had been a significant amount of immigration to the United States?

SCHIFF: I don't know.

Q: You probably would have known if there had been. You would have had people coming back.

SCHIFF: Yes. We had a little bit of that. I never saw much of it. I can think of the few people whom I met. But I doubt whether there were many former Germans living in the U.S. who returned at that time.

Q: If you were in a place where a lot of people left, after the Wirtschaftswunder in '48, they started coming back to Germany after having left there in the '30s.

SCHIFF: They were very inconspicuous and insignificant in numbers.

Q: Was there much concern about an attack from the Soviet Union?

SCHIFF: When the Korean War broke out, yes. The term that gained great currency then was "Wieder Aufrüstung." Rearmament. The allies were now looking for a German military contribution. That really turned things around.

Q: Did you have any feel about HICOG being pretty civilianized?

SCHIFF: Yes. Some of the people might have been carryovers from the military, but they were in civilian clothing and it was basically civilian – except for the commissioner in Wurttemberg-Baden, who was a general.

Q: Did you get much direction from HICOG?

SCHIFF: I'm sure we did, but I'm not sure how important it was. On certain things, I suppose we did, but there is nothing that comes to mind other than this general thrust of policy that changed after the Korean War broke out.

Q: Was there any effort made for a Foreign Service institution to come around and tell you about the Foreign Service and get you ready to be a regular officer?

SCHIFF: No. Our entry into the Foreign Service came with our next assignment. That was the introduction.

Q: Is there anything else about Germany, any events in your area?

SCHIFF: No, I can't think of major memorable events as such. It was a period of flux. That's what was memorable, the fact that so much could change in so relatively short a time, within two years. That largely was provoked by the Korean War and the changes we had at the top policy levels, which were then reflected on down.

Q: You left there in '52. Whither?

SCHIFF: Strasbourg.

Q: That was a regular Foreign Service assignment?

SCHIFF: Yes, at the consulate.

Q: You were in Strasbourg from when to when?

SCHIFF: '52 to '54. Then the Department had two things going. One was, legislation that the Department had to administer, a change in the Seaman's Visa Program. Individual seamen were going to have to be issued visas. This meant that certain parts of the world - and they thought that Liverpool, England would be one - would be just overwhelmed with new visa activity. Strasbourg was not a terribly active post at that time. I think there were only five of us there. Our only claim to fame was that the Council of Europe was there. So, the decision was made to cut our staff by one and I was the one. So, I was sent off to Liverpool to run the Seaman's Visa Program. When I got to Liverpool, the U.S. Congress had to back off this initiative.

Other governments were about to do unto us what we proposed doing to them— namely, impose obligations on individual seamen to get their own visas instead of doing them en masse – so there was a backtracking on that and that program never saw the light of day. Consequently my assignment when I got to Liverpool changed. Instead of doing visas, I was fortunate and I got to do a variety of things, including economics and labor reporting.

HANS N. TUCH
Amerika Haus Director, USIS
Wiesbaden/Frankfurt (1949-1952)

Hans N. Tuch came to the United States from Germany in 1938 as a 14-year- old. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II, gaining enough active combat points to be discharged early. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas in 1947 and a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Mr. Tuch's career with USIS included positions in Germany, Washington, DC, Russia, Bulgaria, and Brazil. Mr. Tuch was interviewed on August 4, 1989 by G. Lewis Schmidt.

TUCH: I joined the Foreign Service in 1949 and my first assignment was in Germany. So

although I understood everything that was being said and I felt I spoke German, my German was that of a 14 year old boy. Here I was an adult trying to communicate in a sophisticated adult manner; yet, my German vocabulary was that of a school boy. I didn't realize that and it was initially quite frustrating. It took, I think, two or three years before I was able to catch up in my German to the age at which I was communicating. I did manage after a while, but it took sometime.

I was hired into the Foreign Service in October 1949 in Germany. At the time I had been working for the Chase Bank in Stuttgart. At that particular moment, U.S. Military Government was phasing out. The German Federal Republic had been established, and the State Department was moving in to take over under John J. McCloy, who became the U.S. High Commissioner.

The State Department was taking over all the jobs and facilities that had previously been handled by military government and they were hiring people on the spot.

I was told that it would be easy to get a job by various friends that I had made in Stuttgart, friends with the American Consulate General in Stuttgart. They said, "You just go up to Frankfurt and talk to a man by the name of Glen Wolfe, and he will find you a job." I went to Frankfurt, and I was immediately sent out to Bad Nauheim near Frankfurt, where a Mrs. Patricia Van Delden was in charge of the America House program in Germany.

I didn't even know what an America House was when I was sent out to see her and to be interviewed by her. Interested in making a change, I went out there cold. I was ushered into the office of a man by the name of Max Kimental, who was introduced as Mrs. Van Delden's deputy. She couldn't see me, she was busy, but he would interview me. We started chatting and he received a telephone call, and he interrupted our conversation and said, "Excuse me for just a few moments, I have to go to a very brief conference and I will be back in ten minutes. Make yourself comfortable. Here on the table are things to read, whatever you want to read, make yourself at home." I looked on the coffee table and there was a document, a paper which said, "The Future of the America House Program in Germany" by Patricia Van Delden. So I thought, I might as well find out what this is all about since I still didn't know what an American House was. I read the document; it was about six pages. Kimental came back in and said, "Let us continue our conversation. If you were an America House Director, what would you do?" I just went along with the document that I had just read, and he stopped me after about two minutes and said, "Just a moment." He stepped out and came back with a formidable lady, Patricia Van Delden.

He suggested that I start again from the beginning to tell Mrs. Van Delden what I thought I would do as an America House Director. I mentally went through the document, and to make a long story short, they hired me on the spot. I was sworn in the next day together, interestingly, with "Pic" Littell -- Wallace W. Littell. I was sent to Wiesbaden as the Director of the America House there, and Pic was sent to Darmstadt as the American House Director. One other person who was working with Patricia Van Delden and Max Kimental in that same office at the time and this is interesting only for historical purposes, was her administrative officer who was Irving Scarbeck. "Doc" Scarbeck, a colleague, a friend who in 1961 became the first American diplomat convicted of spying, and was sent to prison. But that is another story.

I was sent to Wiesbaden as the Director of the America House and here I think it would be useful just to interject a little about what the America Houses were because they were at that time unique to Germany and Japan.

After the end of the war, with the military occupation, the U.S. authorities established a number of what became known as America Houses, in German Amerika Hauser, to serve as library, cultural and information centers in various cities in Germany. These cities had for the most part been destroyed and am sure it was the same case in Japan; both had absolutely no cultural infrastructure left. These America Houses became the community centers for these cities. They helped these communities reestablish a cultural infrastructure. They had a library, they usually had music programs, lecture programs, children's programs, English teaching facilities. They served as a very broad gauge community center. In my view they did a lot to help the Germans emotionally and culturally reestablish their society. For instance, one of the things which I think was significant, was that America House libraries were open shelf libraries where people could go into the library and pick out their own book, check it out, read it there, or take it home. They were the first such libraries that the Germans had even seen. The directors of the university library and the public library in Frankfurt and Berlin were so impressed with the nature of an open shelf library that they rebuilt their libraries in Frankfurt and in Berlin as open shelf libraries. They were the first such libraries in Germany which had in itself a democratizing effect for the population who could go and read anything that they wanted to read, not what the librarian told them they could have.

At that time in 1949, 1950, 1951, there were over 40 such Amerika Hauser in Germany, which were reduced to a more manageable number of about 25 in 1951, but they were in every major city in Germany. Gradually as the Germans were able to rebuild their cultural institutions, their cultural infrastructure, these Amerika Hauser converted themselves into American institutions of information and culture and they became American cultural and information centers. The libraries were usually reduced in size; they were weeded to have only American materials in them, some in translation. Lecture and exhibit programs were geared toward the United States. We were teaching English, we were still having children's program. We were bringing people in as lecturers and performing artists, but they were Americans for the most part, except that Germans who had made a trip to the United States often appeared in the Amerika Hauser as lecturers and discussants about their experiences in the United States.

At that time, the public affairs program, the public diplomacy program in Germany was huge. I remember there were American representatives in every "Kreis", which is the equivalent of county, in the areas which had previously been occupied by the American Military Government. We had a total of 1200 American officers involved in the public affairs program in Germany. With, if I remember correctly, a budget of about \$40 million a year.

The first public affairs officer in Germany under U.S. High Commissioner John J. McCloy was a publisher from Louisville by the name of Ralph Nicholson, who, however, stayed only for a short time and was succeeded by Shepard Stone, who was the first PAO in Germany. Shepard Stone had been the assistant editor of the Sunday "New York Times". He had some German background, was close to John J. McCloy, and became the head of the U.S. Public Affairs

Program in the F.R.G.

It is interesting to compare when I was PAO in Germany in the early 1980s, what my facilities and resources were as compared to what his were in the early 1950s. Stone was succeeded by "Mickey" Boerner, Alfred Boerner, who was the second PAO. We had a very large public affairs establishment in Germany, of which these 25 Amerika Hauser were only one part. I became the America House director, initially, in Wiesbaden, but after five months was transferred to Frankfurt where I remained as America House director until March 1955 -- five years. That was for me a very interesting and personally satisfying period of time. I was a junior officer, yet I had an institution which I ran with a staff of 55 people, 25 of whom were librarians. I had a program director, I had a program every night of lectures, discussions, and concerts. I had a huge English teaching program, a children's theater program, a youth library, a quite large institution. I was always thinking that I was doing for a salary what I was really doing for fun. It was a highly satisfying activity because the Germans just swarmed into the Amerika Hauser.

DWIGHT J. PORTER
Head of the Office of Management and Budget, High Commissioner in Germany
Berlin and Bonn (1949-1954)

Ambassador Dwight J. Porter, a native Midwesterner, attended to Grinnell College. His career in the Foreign Service included positions in Austria, the Middle East, and an ambassadorship to Lebanon. This interview was conducted by Horace G. Torbert in 1990.

PORTER: I was tapped to join the team which went over to Germany. This was just proceeding John McCloy's appointment. This was the team that went over to plan the transition from military government of occupation to an ultimate reestablishment of Germany as a democratic state. That team went over in 1949. We spent several months putting together a report. I did go to Austria two or three times and talked to Red Dowling about how the transition was occurring in Austria to learn something about that.

It was a fairly large group, about six or eight -- half of us were from the State Department, the others were from outside. We made our report to McCloy who was arriving in Germany. Within a few weeks he, or the State Department more specifically, asked me to go over to Germany to serve on his staff, and that is when I really first joined the Foreign Service even though, of course, the High Commissioner in Germany was hardly the Foreign Service. It was basically staffed by career Foreign Service people.

At this point, the Army assumed a much more subordinate role; we were really a civilian organization. There were a lot of ex-generals -- e.g. George E. Hays was the deputy to McCloy. It was a wise move to keep a military man in there to keep contacts with the U.S. military.

When I first got to Germany I headed the Office of Management and Budget working for Glenn Wolfe. He had just come from the Bureau of the Budget or wherever he had been. Glenn was a

dynamic, driving fellow. He deserves a lot of credit which he hadn't got just because of some silly nonsense that happened later on. He did good job. It was a unique period, of course. We were in Frankfurt in the I.G. Farben building and John McCloy was the ideal choice for the job of High Commissioner. He was a remarkable man and a wonderful man to work for. He had selected, by and large, a highly intelligent, interesting group, mostly from New York, to be his principals. The political work was done by the old career Foreign Service. It was a great privilege for me to get to know that crowd. John Davies was sent there during his trial and troubles [as a result of the McCarthy episode] and I grew very fond of him. He was one of the real great ones. He never showed any of his problems on the surface at all; just did his job well and bravely, as we all know.

Sam Reaber had come back after going through some agony in Washington, talking to, among others, John Foster Dulles; he had been asked to leave. He came back to Germany and he could not contain himself. He asked me to come over and we stayed up all night drinking Scotch to get to the point where he could sleep. Sam shortly thereafter left.

Jimmy Riddleberger was there; he later became my immediate boss in Austria where he was DCM. Haynes was running the industrial side, the financial side was run by a Belgium banker, who was an adopted American citizen. Whitney Debovoise was there. Bennie Bittenwieser and others. Ben Shoot, who was one of the old OSS boys, was involved in setting up the ultimate CIA apparatus. Then there was a whole host of military people -- Max Taylor, whom I got to know well, a tennis partner who beat me. Max was at that point the U.S. representative in Berlin. We had a State Department element in Berlin, which was under him. Cecil Lyon was another. Al Leitner was there; some ten years later he went to Berlin and later Munich. He was there when the inimitable Scott McLeod [head of Security for State Department in Dulles years] came over.

It was my job to contain the damage. McLeod was after Al. Al was old Foreign Service and he could not have been any good as far as McLeod was concerned. But we managed to divert the arrow. I have really deviated in talking about people. I suppose as a youngster -- I was still in my early thirties -- it would be difficult to create a situation where one could meet so many fascinating people from so many walks of life as one did in that period.

It is fascinating how much power and authority I had in my job. McCloy would just give general directions and it was up to me and a small group working for him, Glenn and the lawyers, to create the institutions to do certain jobs and then to wipe them out as the German political structure and economy moved along and they were no longer needed. Sometimes getting rid of them was the biggest problem, but McCloy would brook no nonsense on that. For instance, when the time came to get rid of the Ruhr Authority, which really was no longer needed because they finally got John Monnet's coal and steel organization going, we just got rid of the Ruhr Authority. Now there were things that were done perhaps too quickly, but once the momentum started it was much more sensible to let the Germans back in to run things. I think that the only problem where McCloy probably felt some disappointment was not being able to control cartelization as well as could have been done. But I learned to enjoy and respect McCloy immeasurably. He took life so seriously. When we had war crimes problems he would lock himself in for weeks, not being visible, lawyer that he was; he would study the individual trials to decide whether to commute their sentences or let them stand. The Germans, of course,

appreciated it -- the understanding that he had for them. He blocked the bombing of Rothenburg and another in Bavaria. It did not hurt that they knew he had been opposed to the Morgenthau plan which would have been one of the greatest tragedies of our post war period if it had actually been carried out. [A plan proposed by Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau to turn Germany into a purely agricultural country].

That period was one of transition from one of all out military government to restoration of diplomatic relations between sovereign states. The whole purpose of the High Commission was to achieve what was unfinished in the military government -- basically creating the political structure and institutions which would lead to a long term solid democracy in Germany. To put into effect the German constitution and to make it real and effective. Also, of course, to complete the eradication of Nazism. Most of that had been accomplished in the military government. McCloy still had, as I said earlier, difficult decisions about individual cases, in which he had to decide the ultimate fate of individual Nazis. In any case, the High Commission operated from 1949 to 1954 and we really had three goals: the democratization objective, the establishment of a viable economic structure in Germany which was a Marshall Plan objective, and finally the integration of Germany into a Western European structure, which would hopefully avoid the warlike pattern of the past.

I was lucky. I never understood why, but McCloy put me on the Marshall Plan committee, which voted the money that would be used for whatever purpose. By that time we had moved to Bonn, Bad Godesberg, at the urgent behest of Konrad Adenauer who wanted the capitol near his home and frankly at the behest of the British as it was in the British zone of occupation and they were very eager to have the capitol there.

Sitting on the Marshall Plan committee, we were not doing so well. The problem was consumer goods; the German labor movement after the war was very disciplined and gave up a great deal of possible advantages it could have taken in terms of its wage and other demands in order to allow the economy to recuperate and develop. But the workers would not work too well for there simply was not much to buy with the new mark. The mark at that point, when it was created, was around 4.5¢ - today when one reads the paper it is about \$1.17 or thereabouts. Its pegged rate was 22¢ if I remember correctly and it got up to that rate in about a year and a half or close to that rate. We had about three months to go until our two plus billion we were allocating to Germany (which was a lot of money in those days) would essentially run out. Suddenly it all began to come together. French soap and stockings were starting to come in, mopeds [small motor bikes] which workers could buy, the shops began to get not only food but clothing and still it looked chancy. We got down to our last month and we only had two hundred million dollars left, and we said, "Well, here we go!" and we put in all the two hundred million dollars into industrial expansion, praying that everything the Marshall Plan had been doing in the rest of Europe would continue to work and consumer goods would flow in. Sure enough, by the end of the last month everything had turned around; the German worker was working his tail off, as is his wont and the Marshall Plan was a success. But it was much more chancy than people realize at this point. It was only a few years later that Germans were beginning to pay us back for the Marshall Plan.

McCloy worked very closely with Schumann and Monnet also, particularly Monnet, of course, in

trying to create European mechanisms. We put a lot of money and quiet support in getting the Germans to accept the Coal and Steel Community. We were not at all sure that their newly-created government would endorse it, but surprisingly they endorsed it overwhelmingly and the German steel cartel crumbled in opposition as did the French to a degree.

The job I had, as I started to say earlier, was the creation and the dissolution of various institutions. First of all, we had to hire people, mostly Germans, and towards the end of my tenure, which was several years, firing most of the ones we hired. Most of them went to work immediately for the new German government and doing substantially the same work they had been. It really worked beyond one's wildest dreams. The democracy is as stable as any in Europe today; the momentum that was created towards Europeanization of institutions and political structures has really carried on to this day.

I participated a little bit in the writing of the German constitution. It was primarily done by a political scientist called Pollock from the University of Michigan. He did most of it. Some of us read it and made some minor suggestions. That was when we were over on the initial survey. But that constitution has stood up awfully well. One wondered if the federalism that was built into it would last, but it has now endured through two generations and has become accepted. Of course the whole constitution structure was designed so that you could not have a strong unitary structure, so that it could not be taken over by a Hitler or even a Bismarck.

I probably never had a more challenging job in my entire life -- as a not-quite-forty-year old in Germany. When you think of the magnitude of the task and how relatively easily and peacefully it was done. We worked ourselves out of a job, of course. Little tidbits stick out. Konrad Adenauer was making his first trip as the chief of a state to Paris. I think it was early 1953. Ben Wolf and I were really quite close to Adenauer and his staff. The famous Johnny von Herwarth was a close, immediate aide de camp. I will come back to him. Adenauer was visiting Paris and of course there was no infrastructure for the fledgling German government at that moment; so we, in our munificence, provided him with an aging DC-4 and hastily painted out the U.S. Air Force markings and sent him to Paris. About the only people who sent him off were a few of us from the High Commissioner and Johnny von Herwarth. There was a little field very close to Köln which maybe the big airport of Cologne now, but then was a tiny ex-military field. That was Konrad Adenauer on his first out of country visit as Chancellor.

Johnny von Herwarth was fascinating. He was our liaison man with Adenauer. Johnny has written a book which should be a must reading for those who like reading about the old foreign service. He was a German who was at the German embassy in Moscow before the war and became intimately acquainted with Chip Bohlen, Llewellyn Thompson and all who were there. He has written a book, a portion of which deals with that period. Johnny was in the anti-Hitler movement and never slept in the same bed twice, mostly in the Bavarian Alps. He came out to become Adenauer's trusted, number one aide. He was then the first German ambassador to England after the war. It was amusing. I was then stationed in London. When you think of what Germany is like today. He had nobody to turn to when he went to London. I helped him find a house, helped him hire people to get started. Now one would probably find the reverse to be true, not in England but in many places. How quickly the German government recovered.

I guess my remembrance of that period is so real because of these very close relations with just a handful of Germans who were recreating the country. The same was true in the economic and fiscal fields. The Marshall Plan Ministry was really more important than any other ministry. Those were the people who eventually went over and staffed the Ministry of Finance and Economics. That is how German bureaucracy was recreated and/or spawned after World War II. In my budget office we had a number of German employees, some of whom rose to great prominence in the German government -- one of them became minister of finance. We actually made him a budget analyst. He had a lot of responsibility, especially when we were dealing with the dissolution of some of the occupation and High Commission political institutions.

FRANK E. MAESTRONE
Vice Consul
Hamburg (1949-1954)

Ambassador Frank E. Maestrone was a military government officer in Wurzburg, Germany at the end of World War II. He entered the Foreign Service in 1948, serving in Vienna, Austria; Hamburg, Germany; Khorramshahr, Iran; Cairo, Egypt; Manila, the Philippines; and was Ambassador to Kuwait. Ambassador Horace G. Torbert conducted this interview on June 6, 1989.

MAESTRONE: Now to get to your question about Germany. The attitude of the Americans, on the whole, was one of a certain skepticism as to Soviet policies as they seemed to be developing. Our interest seemed, mainly, to put Germany back on its feet, not necessarily as a major industrial, and certainly not military, power, but to enable the Germans to rebuild their economy sufficiently to take care of themselves. We were pouring a good deal of money and supplies in there to help maintain the German economy and, particularly, to feed the Germans in the initial stages. So we wanted them to take over the responsibility of taking care of themselves.

I had several assignments during my four and a half years in Hamburg. Initially, I was a visa officer under the displaced persons program. I actually helped set up a visa office in a refugee camp, former German barracks, outside of Hamburg. Subsequently, I became chief of the visa section in Hamburg in the office in town. Following that I was in the economic section, where I wrote some of the first reports after the war about beet sugar production in Germany, about the fishing industry in Germany.

Then, my last two years, I was a political officer and occupied the position of deputy land observer for Hamburg. That system that had been set up under military government was that there would be land commissioners in the various provinces or *laender* in Germany. Obviously, American commissioners were in the American zone, British commissioners were in the British zone. Hamburg happened to be in the British zone, so that they had a British land commissioner. But the role for the other Allies, the United States and France, not the Soviet Union, was to have land observers. In other words, we were there to observe how 1), the land commissioner carried out his occupation functions, and 2) to keep an eye on what the Germans were doing.

YALE RICHMOND
Kreis Resident Officer
Germany (1949-1951)

Cultural Affairs Program Officer
Munich (1951-1952)

Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer
Nuremburg (1952)

Exchange Officer
Stuttgart (1952-1954)

Yale Richmond was born in Massachusetts in 1923. He received a bachelor's degree in 1943 from Boston College, thereafter he joined the Army from 1943-1946. He then receives a master's degree from Syracuse. His career included positions in Germany, Austria, Russia, Poland, and Laos. Mr. Richmond was interviewed in June 2003 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: You were in Germany as an intern from when to when?

RICHMOND: I arrived in the summer of 1947. I went first to Berlin for a month of orientation on the Four Power occupation system. Then I went to Bavaria, where I served for the remaining 2 years. It was in the summer of '49 that I became a Foreign Service officer.

Q: Where were you in Bavaria?

RICHMOND: All over. I started off in Rosenheim in Oberbayern in the foothills of the Alps learning about military government on the county and city level. Then I went to Freising, a town just northeast of Munich, where I was executive officer in a large district of 5 or 6 counties. Then I got my own county. I was the military government officer in the second year at Wasserburg am Inn, an old medieval city on the Inn River between Rosenheim and Passau. There I was military governor for one year. We didn't have any authority over Germans in those years, but the German police and legal authorities could not touch foreigners or displaced persons and I had 2 Displaced Persons camps in the county, so that's why I was there. Then HICOG took over.

Q: By this time the whole idea of a 25 year occupation was sort of passé, wasn't it?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes. The Cold War had already started and we realized that Germany had better be an ally rather than an adversary and the process began to produce an independent Germany which could be democratic and liberal in the political sense of the word which would be integrated into a unifying Europe which was just then emerging. So what we did on the county level was work on the democratization program which we called the reorientation program. What it consisted of mainly was encouraging town meetings. The Germans had never

had the tradition of a town meeting and we encouraged them to hold them where citizens could meet in a local gasthaus and as they sat there drinking their beer they would question their elected officials as in a traditional New England town meeting. That caught hold. That was a very interesting program. We also had a large film program showing American documentary films that had been dubbed in German. We had a projectionist who drove around in a jeep and showed films every night in gasthaus all around the county, films about the U.S. and the rest of the world and the new Europe that was emerging.

Q: I might mention that a gasthaus was a restaurant/beer place which was really the center of most of these activities in these small places where people went to the same table and sat around for generations. If you wanted to touch the nerve of the German folk out in the country, that's where you went.

RICHMOND: It's like the pub in England or Ireland.

Q: You were there in '48 when the Berlin airlift went on. How was this viewed? Was there a feeling that we were pretty close to war?

RICHMOND: That was only about 3 years after the end of the war. The Germans were apprehensive. Berlin was always a flashpoint and there was always the fear that something could happen at one of those checkpoints. If somebody shot a few rounds of fire, you might have started World War III. But the Germans were very apprehensive about that. Most of them thought that you could never save Berlin through an airlift. I remember talking to a German who had been in the Luftwaffe during the war and he said, "You'll never be able to supply the city of Berlin by air." But we did it, we and the British and the French to a lesser extent.

Q: It was quite an effort. I guess the Germans had tried to save their army at Stalingrad with an airlift which had enemy opposition but it didn't come close.

What was your feeling towards working in Germany so shortly after the war and coming from Jewish origin?

RICHMOND: I didn't advertise the fact that I was Jewish but I didn't deny it when it came up. I tried to separate my personal feelings from my job. Of course, in those days, we still didn't know the extent of the Holocaust. That was slowly emerging. All I had to go by was the Stars and Stripes newspaper, radio broadcasts of the Armed Forces Network and the Post Herald Tribune. The supply of information was accurate enough but it was rather limited. But wherever I was, I tried to keep the 2 things separate: my own views and the views of the government that I was representing.

Q: The elite military, the real fighting army, had gone home and the second group that was staying on was not always the cream of the crop of the military officers. Did you have that feeling?

RICHMOND: We had our share of carpetbaggers. But we also had career officers. The army in World War II was largely a civilian army. The top commanders were military men, West Point

grads, but below that it was largely a civilian army. A lot of those people were former city administrators, lawyers, college professors, and many of those stayed on and some stayed on because it was comfortable living. Financially, it was lucrative. We got free housing. We had access to the PX. You had cheap gas which was something like 10 cents a gallon. And you lived in Europe. You could travel. So it was nice. But when HICOG took over, they cleaned out a lot of the carpetbaggers. That's one of the first things they did. In Bavaria, our commissioner for Bavaria was George N. Schuster, a very prominent Catholic layman who had been editor of Commonweal magazine and president of Hunter College in New York, the city college for girls. And he cleaned out some of that dead wood. Then they decided to get Foreign Service officers assigned to those jobs and gradually the whole personnel changed.

Q: This was during the period when the Foreign Service was taking over these jobs, there would be a transition, and then the Germans would take over completely.

RICHMOND: Yes.

Q: And you were sort of the buffer.

RICHMOND: I was a Kreis Resident Officer.

Q: Many in the Foreign Service came in... This was the incubator of the Cold War Foreign Service.

RICHMOND: And it was a very useful incubation period. That's where I learned all about European politics on the local, city, and county level. That helped me in every future assignment I ever had in the Foreign Service. I started off in Dinkelsbuehl, a big tourist center, a Middle Ages city that history passed by because the railroad, when the railroad came to Germany it never went through there. Its fame rests largely on the Thirty Years War and then more recently modern tourism. I was there only a year, didn't accomplish much.

Q: What were you supposed to be doing?

RICHMOND: I was supposed to be the eyes and ears of the occupation, reporting on what was going on, encouraging democracy and working with local groups. I also had a military installation there. There was a Signal Corps unit up on top of a hill outside the town that was monitoring Soviet broadcasts from the east. That was probably the reason I was stationed there. I had 3 counties, but I was in the one that had this military installation. After a year, I was transferred to another town that nobody ever heard of: Pfaffenhofen, which is halfway between Ingolstadt and Munich. That was the headquarters of the Signal Corps unit. Otherwise, they never would have had us there. I was there for a year. Then I went to Schweinfurt, the big ball bearing center of Europe that had been heavily bombed. That was my most interesting assignment. There, I had all the major parties across the political spectrum of Germany on the local level. The city was Social Democratic. The surrounding county was agrarian and Christian Social, the Conservative Party. They had a strong Communist Party in the city. They had the Liberal Party. And I was at the tender age of 27/28. I sat in this big office that had formerly been the office of the chief judge. I was the "Gouverneur," the "governor."

Q: Back when you were with the military, how did you find the Displaced Persons camps? These must have been a real problem. These were a bunch of people who were restive and were refugees sitting in the middle of Germany.

RICHMOND: It was a very difficult problem for us. What we wanted to do was to get them out of Germany as quickly as possible. They were just sitting there doing nothing and trying to support themselves with all kinds of black market activities, which was the real underground economy in Germany in those years. But the processing took time. They had to be cleared. You had to get countries willing to take them. Our task was to keep them quiet, settled, and get them out as quickly as possible.

Q: Did you have a problem as the in-between person between the German police authorities and the refugees? The refugees were out making a living as best they could, which had to be almost by nature illegal. The Germans sort of like police authority.

RICHMOND: We had no problem that I can recall with the Jewish displaced persons. In Pfaffenhofen, I had a displaced persons camps of Kalmyks, a Buddhist tribe of Russia who were exiled by Stalin.

Q: Many of them ended up in New Jersey. Did you get involved in that?

RICHMOND: No. Things were pretty quiet there.

Q: When I was consul general in Saigon, I had Naran Ibanchukoff, who came from that Kalmyk thing. He was a CIA officer working with me.

Here you are, a 27 year old governor. Germans move rather quickly into taking over things for themselves.

RICHMOND: Well, they had a denazification program which initially was very strict and then became sort of a whitewash job. Eventually, everybody was denazified. Local government was given to them in 1947 and federal authority in 1949 although the United States still had some residual powers especially in Berlin, which continued to have a special status.

Q: How did you find you were able to operate? Were you an observer or a participant?

RICHMOND: I was mostly an observer and was called in only when there was something that demanded my attention. Because I spoke German by that time, I was often invited to speak at public meetings where people were debating the issues that were going on in Germany. I remember one particular meeting... I was invited by the local chamber of commerce to a debate on freedom of trade, which was a program we were pushing the German Bundestag to apply which would have ended the guild system. We had all these refugees from East Germany and Sudetenland, ethnic Germans, who came in with skills in business and commerce but weren't allowed to practice because they couldn't break into this guild system which required that you had to pass an exam to show your competence and they allowed only a certain number. If you

had a certain number of butchers in a town, that was enough. You didn't need any more butchers. We tried to get them to have a freedom of trade system. I remember standing up there in front of all these businessmen arguing that this was going to be good for Germany, which it turned out to be. They eventually adopted this.

Q: Did you feel that the authorities were getting restive by having these Americans around?

RICHMOND: No, the Germans were very observant and respectful of authority and I was still the representative of the Besatzungsmacht, the occupation power, and accorded all rights and privileges.

Q: I imagine, too, that when the airlift finally proved to work, did that change the atmosphere, did you get a feeling that the Germans were saying, "These guys are probably going to pull this off?"

RICHMOND: The Germans were very appreciative of all the assistance we gave them. We gave them a lot of economic aid, food aid. I remember going to many dedications of housing projects and buildings that had been put up with American aid and there was usually a plaque on the building, the stars and stripes shield of the United States saying, "This building was erected with help from the American government." Also, there was an undercurrent of feeling that if the Americans weren't here, the Russians would be. So, the Germans looked upon us as the best they could do under the circumstances.

Q: In view of your later career in the Foreign Service, was there a network of Amerika hauser or not?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes. I opened a small one in Schweinfurt. In those days we had Amerika hauser in all the major cities. There was one in Stuttgart, in Nuremberg, in Munich, and I opened a small one in Schweinfurt, which was little more than a reading room where we had lectures and so forth.

Q: Were they taking?

RICHMOND: The Germans welcomed it. These were tough times and the Amerika Haus was always a good place, like any library, where you could go in and find a comfortable chair and good light and heat during the winter. You got a number of those people who came in just to get out of the cold and the rain. But you also had a lot of people, young students, who were interested in studying English, in listening to the lectures, the music concerts, the debates we had there. It was like a big community center.

Q: Did you get a feel that the younger generation were a different breed of cat than the older generation?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes, definitely. They felt that they had not been responsible for the war, they were not guilty of the atrocities. The Germans had an expression: *kollektivschuld*, collective guilt, that they should not be included under that umbrella.

Q: Did you get a feeling that there were a lot of denunciations?

RICHMOND: No, I didn't experience that at all.

Q: I was wondering if people were saying, "Well, he was with the Tukaheinzins" or something like that.

RICHMOND: No, you get that in Eastern Europe, but you didn't get it so much in Germany.

Q: Schweinfurt. After all, we had bombed the hell out of it. Our raids on the ball bearing plants... We took a lot of losses there. What was the feeling towards Americans there?

RICHMOND: I encountered no hostility despite the tremendous damage there. We had a battalion of American troops there in what was called the Constabulary. Their mission was to patrol the border and be the first to trip wire in case of a Soviet invasion, which people were seriously considering. The Soviet army was just across the border a few miles away. For that reason, the Germans were very happy to have us there.

When the Korean War broke out, the army changed a lot of things in its disposition of forces. I remember some top brass from Frankfurt came down to this little battalion of Constabulary which patrolled the border in jeeps and ordered them to get one of their companies up on the border tomorrow morning. They had to go up there and pitch their tents and they were right on our side of the border. They kept rotating. They had one company up on the border. That was to move the tripwire closer. In those days, everybody thought the Russians were on the verge of invading Western Europe, which was hogwash. The Russians had been seriously damaged in the war and they wanted to protect what they had, the territory in Central Europe that they had conquered, but they had no intention of starting another third world war.

Q: One of the major concerns was that the Communist Party seemed to have real clout and might take over particularly in France and Italy. How did you feel about the communists in Germany?

RICHMOND: In contrast with France and Italy where the Communist Party had been really strong largely because they had very effective city administrators. In the cities where they controlled the local government they were good, honest administrators. In Germany after the war, the communists never had a large following, particularly in Bavaria. The strongest parties were the conservative parties and the Social Democrats. In the city of Schweinfurt, that was also true. There was a small Communist Party of dedicated Marxists. I used to go to some of their meetings just to see what they were doing. They knew who I was. They knew I was in the audience, never gave me a hard time.

Q: What about Franz Josef Strauss? Was he a presence?

RICHMOND: He was just starting in. He had been appointed the burgermeister of a small town in the foothills of the Alps. He had not been a Nazi. When the American troops marched, they

looked for people who were not Nazis. That got him his start. Then he went up to Munich on the state level.

Q: Did we get involved or were we concerned about the socialists? Socialism was not necessarily the regime we looked with great favor on.

RICHMOND: The German Social Democratic Party, the SPD, was going through a transition in those years. You had the old guard, like the British Labour Party, who were Marxists led by Kurt Shumacher and a much more moderate deputy, Ollendorf. Then you had a younger generation who was coming up. The party was gradually changing. In Schweinfurt, the mayor was a Social Democrat, but he was a lawyer, not a worker. A lot of people sincerely believed that that was the way to alleviate the social ills of Germany and other countries. On our program of domestic reforms within Germany, the Social Democrats were our strong supporters, and the Christian Democrats only lukewarm. On foreign policy, it was just the other way around.

Q: When the Korean War came, did this change... There had been the coup in Czechoslovakia and that scared the bejesus out of everybody.

RICHMOND: It sure did, and refugees started coming across the border. All of Germany was very uptight about the whole thing. The coup in Czechoslovakia was not exactly a coup. Germany was also divided and everybody was thinking, "Well, if there could be a war in divided Korea, maybe there might be also be a war in divided Germany." There was a lot of apprehension about that.

Q: What sort of directions were you getting as this Kreis officer?

RICHMOND: Not enough. We had all kinds of publications and directives on what we should be doing. We had monthly meetings in Munich. But we were left largely on our own. I can't recall at any time – well, only once in Schweinfurt, George Schuster and my other boss came around to visit me, but that was the only time.

Q: Did you get any feeling about the Foreign Service then?

RICHMOND: When I was stationed in Munich for a year working on the exchange program, we were in the same building on the Ludwigstrasse with the Consulate General which at that time we were part of the Consulate General which at that time was the largest consulate general in the world. We were aware that the consulate general was in another part of the building but there was no interchange at all. We were there as the successors to military government and they were doing what consuls usually do. When I was in Stuttgart my last 2 years, it was quite different. We were integrated into the Consulate General. We were in the same building. We were the public affairs section of the Consulate General and we had a lot of contact with the political and economic sections.

Q: When you left Schweinfurt, is that when you went to Munich?

RICHMOND: I went to Munich for one year working on exchanges.

Q: What did that mean in those days?

RICHMOND: We had a huge exchange program with Germany that brought 13,000 or more Germans to the United States and to Western Europe. This included everything from high school students to college students to graduate students to professionals of all kinds, trade union leaders, government leaders, religious leaders, writers, artists, musicians, a huge program selecting people. We had joint German-American committees. I served on many of those committees. We had Germans as well as Americans doing the selection. They went to the U.S. for periods of anywhere from 90 days to one year for study and research.

Q: How did the selection process work?

RICHMOND: For the college and high school students, what eventually became Fulbright programs, they were selected on local levels with local committees. I served on some of those local committees when I was in Schweinfurt. Then they were selected by a state committee and the final selection where we had joint Americans and Germans making the selection.

Q: What sort of feedback were you getting on this program?

RICHMOND: In those days, it was too early to measure. I had the interesting experience of being in on the selection of high school students in Schweinfurt and being there a year later when they came back. Some of them had a marvelous experience and some of them went on to make careers in U.S. Studies. One of them eventually became a professor at a university but then immigrated to the United States. One of the girls came back and the first thing she did was to make a beeline for that American military battalion on the edge of town to find an American boyfriend. You had all kinds of reactions.

Q: You were in Schweinfurt from when to when?

RICHMOND: It was around '50-'51.

Q: Then from Schweinfurt, you went where?

RICHMOND: Munich for one year.

Q: Was this concentrated on exchanges?

RICHMOND: Yes, exchanges over the whole state of Bavaria. And then we opened an office in northern Bavaria. It got too big to handle in Munich and we opened a HICOG office in Nuremberg for Franconia in northern Bavaria. I went there for a year where I was exchanges officer for all of northern Bavaria.

Q: HICOG stood for what?

RICHMOND: High Commission for Germany. OMGUS was Office of Military Government

U.S.

Q: Where did you go? How was Munich in those days?

RICHMOND: Munich was reviving. It was doing rather well. The food was plentiful. The beer was great. There was a wonderful music scene there. I had an apartment that was literally a hundred yards from the opera house. I could go down there any night and sit in on any opera I wanted to, which was a marvelous experience.

Q: At this time you were unmarried?

RICHMOND: I was still single.

Q: Then you moved up to northern Bavaria in Nuremberg.

RICHMOND: The big headquarters of the Nazi movement.

Q: You were always looking around for hidden Nazis, weren't you?

RICHMOND: No, by that time that had died. We were interested in a reconstruction of Germany, the democratization program, and integrating Germany into European organizations.

Q: What was the feeling on how it was going?

RICHMOND: We thought it was going rather well. Of course, we were still there in a massive presence. The American officialdom was widespread and really massive. We had several thousand Americans in the country. Americans still out in the kreis resident officers were still resident in the major counties. We all felt that after we left we would see what would happen.

Q: Did you get any feel for the area of French occupation? Was it a different sort of circumstance?

RICHMOND: When I was in Stuttgart, we had Landwurtemberg under the consulate general in Stuttgart and that included the French zone of Baden and this capital in Freiburg. Things were rather quiet there. There wasn't any industry there to speak of. This was land that was east of the Rhine River and had been back and forth between Germany through the centuries. The French had a strong influence there. It was rather quiet and there wasn't much going on there. The French did not have the same kind of program we had to democratize Germany. They didn't oppose it but they didn't support it in any way.

Q: You were up in Nuremberg from when to when?

RICHMOND: I think '51-'52.

Q: That big stadium was still there, wasn't it?

RICHMOND: Yes, it was.

Q: Was this used for anything?

RICHMOND: Sports events. That's all.

Q: Any reference to Hutterzeit?

RICHMOND: No, they were trying to live that down.

Q: What were the politics of Nuremberg?

RICHMOND: Nuremberg was also socialist. Nuremberg had really heavy industry. It was an SPD town.

Q: So, about '52, you left?

RICHMOND: I went to Stuttgart in '52.

Q: But there was a different setup, wasn't it?

RICHMOND: We were an integral part of the consulate general. Ed Rice was our consul general. He was an old China hand. When Senator McCarthy's henchmen swept through Germany leaving many wrecked careers in their wake, Ed Rice was very vulnerable. They left him alone for some reason. They never came to Stuttgart.

Q: This is the infamous tour of Cohn and Schine.

RICHMOND: Yes.

Q: These were 2 rather reckless young staffers who went through and created absolute havoc.

RICHMOND: Pulled books out of libraries, held inquisitions, and wrecked a number of careers.

Q: Were you there at the time?

RICHMOND: They didn't come to Stuttgart, but I was there at the time they swept through Frankfurt and Munich.

Q: That was really the nadir off...

Do you know Frank Hopkins?

RICHMOND: Frank Hopkins was a Foreign Service officer who came in after the war. He was our public affairs officer in Stuttgart and then went to Australia. He had come from FSI, where he had been deputy director.

Q: Were you feeling McCarthyism? Were people beginning to look over their shoulders and wonder what the hell was going on?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes, everybody was wondering whether he or she would be vulnerable. Later on when I was a student at Columbia University studying Polish history, I was dating a girl who had leftist sympathies and I remember how I was wondering, are they going to bother me because I had dated this girl who was left of center?

Q: You were at Stuttgart until when?

RICHMOND: Until the spring of '54.

Q: How about the East Berlin riots of '53? Was that at a flashpoint?

RICHMOND: We were far away from it. We didn't get involved in that.

Q: Was there concern that this could lead to a bigger conflict?

RICHMOND: Some people thought so. I didn't.

Q: I was in Darmstadt in the air force as an enlisted man. We were confined to barracks. I think there was a concern that this might lead to a larger...

RICHMOND: You were in that area of central Germany which the military called the Fulda Gap. It was commonly believed that if the Soviets were going to invade Germany, they would come through there.

Q: What about the Soviet threat?

RICHMOND: We thought it was real. We were constantly given all kinds of briefing papers to show that the Soviet troops were here and there and everywhere and they were in an offensive mode, not a defensive deployment. There was a real fear that someday the Soviets might march over the border. And there was not much to stop them.

Q: But you were in a time when the American military really came back into Germany in a big way.

RICHMOND: Well, they were beefed up. The headquarters was just below Stuttgart, the headquarters of the army command for U.S. Military Command for Germany. There was a big military presence there, but it still didn't compare with what the Russians had on the other side of the border.

Q: Was the exchange program going through any changes while you were in Stuttgart? Were you seeing a different emphasis or was it just getting bigger?

RICHMOND: It was continuing to be big. After I left, it was reduced somewhat. I don't know why. There is a book I have on it that I'm reading now: "A History of the Exchange Program in Germany" written... Did you interview Henry J. Kellermann? He ran the exchange program in the State Department for years and he wrote a history of it. He has statistics in that book on how the program gradually declined... Kellermann is dead, by the way. The State Department library has a copy of his book.

Q: By the time you were in Stuttgart, '54 or so, were you in the State Department? Had the job coalesced into a more line Foreign Service type job?

RICHMOND: But we were Foreign Service Staff. The Foreign Service officer, information officer, came later on when USIA was established and we were really integrated into the Foreign Service. At that time, we were Foreign Service Staff officers.

WOODWARD ROMINE
United States Displaced Persons Commission
Germany (1949-1950)

Assistant Land Observer
Freiberg (1950-1951)

Political/Economic Officer
Stuttgart (1951-1953)

Assistant Travel Control Officer
Bonn (1953-1954)

Woodward Romine was born and raised in Indiana. He graduated from Wabash College and later pursued studies at the University of Geneva, Switzerland. His primary assignments in the State Department were as Political Officer in Washington and abroad. His foreign assignments, all European, include Warsaw, Paris, Strasbourg, Vienna and four posts in Germany. In Washington, Mr. Romine dealt with French relations as well as Refugee and Management matters. He is a graduate of The Industrial College of the Armed Forces. Mr. Romine was interviewed by Peter Moffat in 1998.

ROMINE: I thought that the best place to follow a career in international affairs probably would be with the State Department or in the Foreign Service. So that led me to this. I did a couple of years with the United States Displaced Persons Commission in Germany. When that position was about to be abolished, I was considered favorably for the position of Assistant Land Observer in Freiburg, Germany, which was a position in the State Department. So that was where I got started.

Q: When you say "Land Observer," do you mean land, a German state?

ROMINE: Yes. This was an interesting time. The occupation as such had come to an end, but we still had the High Commission, and in each German state or land, there was a Land Commissioner who represented the former occupying power. This in Freiburg was the French. But then each of the other two occupying powers sent observers to watch what was going on. I went there as the Assistant to the U.S. Land Observer.

Q: And that was at Freiburg?

ROMINE: Freiburg in the Black Forest.

Q: And then you moved on to Stuttgart?

ROMINE: Yes. This was an interesting time. At that time there was a question of whether to maintain the old German states, that is to say Baden and Württemberg, or to combine them. There was a referendum carried on in both states, and they decided, quite overwhelmingly as I recall it, to combine the two states into the state of Baden-Württemberg.

Q: Which still exists today?

ROMINE: Which still exists today. The French had not wanted to do this. The French wanted to maintain separate states, and so in the South where they were, they had what they called Land Baden and Land Württemberg. In the north the Americans had combined the two states calling it Württemberg-Baden. There was a very vigorous campaign which was great fun and amusing. They had a president of the state in Freiburg who was vigorously supporting the re-establishment of the whole of Land Baden reaching from the Swiss border nearly up to Frankfurt, a large thing. But he lost. Delightful fellow, though.

Q: Were you working at cross purposes with the French, or was this strictly observational?

ROMINE: No, we didn't really have cross purposes with the French. That's to say, the French knew where we stood, and we knew where they stood, and we watched with interest. I think those of us who were in this part of Baden probably felt that that was a good idea, to maintain the old states. The French thought this was a wonderful idea, because it was to make Germany really a federal state with each state having very strong federal powers, and that appealed to them, I think, for obvious reasons, greatly. But we all stood back and watched this go and watched for President Bulline fight his cannon fight but lose.

Q: How long did you stay in Stuttgart?

ROMINE: I was looking at that this morning. I'm really in Baden now, and then I came up to Stuttgart in 1951 and stayed there until 1953, shortly after the election of Eisenhower as President, when we at that time again went through a reinventing government exercise in which many, many people including myself were invited to leave the government with letters of warm appreciation of what a fine job we had done; and that happened. But in the meantime, the times in Freiburg and Stuttgart were interesting in watching them put together this new German state,

which really worked quite well....

Q: After your time in Berlin, you went to Bonn?

ROMINE: I went to Bonn for another rather brief time, where I was in the Office of Travel Control, a thing which was an enormously important instrument that the Allies used to control and direct the Germans after the war. We issued travel documents in lieu of German passports, so the office could have a good look at who people were, what they were going to do, and whether they were allowed to travel or not. At this particular time, of course, we were in the process of handing the whole operation over to the new German foreign office.

Q: Was it a means of sanction, or did everyone in effect have the right to travel?

ROMINE: Well, at the beginning it was certainly a means of sanction or of reward, how well you cooperated with the occupying powers or later even the High Commission, because if you didn't do this, you couldn't travel. Legally you couldn't travel, anyway. But later as more and more independence was handed over to the Germans, it became more and more a passport operation. When I was there, we were in the process of handing this over from this three-power office that we ran, which in itself was quite interesting and amusing, to the Germans.

Q: I had a somewhat similar situation in Japan as a visa officer a little bit later. We had the Japanese in effect through foreign exchange release mechanisms control the travel of their own people. It was a visa officer's dream, because everyone was vetted carefully before they even came to us. Was there anything like this with the Germans themselves vetting in advance?

ROMINE: Not as far as I remember. But then I came at the very end of this operation. I wouldn't be surprised but what that was the way that it had worked. But by the time I arrived, the large part of the office was to prepare to hand it over to the Germans. Since it was a tripartite thing, we had lots of interesting and different ideas about how the office should be run. I remember one thing which was very amusing. We had a Frenchman in the office who was deeply impressed by the strict security rules that we had concerning confidentiality, locking up the files at night. He had never seen anything like this. He went on travel to a particular French office, and when he came back, he said to me, "I'm glad to get back, because as far as security goes, coming from that office to here is like going from hell to heaven."

HORACE Y. EDWARDS

**Educational and Cultural Officer, High Commissioner in Germany, USIS
Germany (1949-1955)**

Horace Edwards was born in Texas in 1915. He completed graduate work at the University of Colorado and at the University of Pennsylvania before he was turned down for military service. He went into North American Aviation defense work and joined OMGUS after the war. Mr. Edwards served in Mexico, Uruguay, and Spain. This interview was conducted by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1989.

EDWARDS: The educational and cultural part of the HICOG was broken off from the Department of State, and many, perhaps even most of us, who were doing this type of work in the Department of State went into USIA, which took over this responsibility. USIA was formed at least partially by this branch of the Department of State -- the Education and Cultural Relations Division. This happened in 1948.

The educational exchanges program became a very large program under Ralph Burns who had been head of the Department of Education at Dartmouth in Hanover, New Hampshire. We sent everyone from high school teenagers to important leaders from Germany to the United States for various periods of time. The students went for a year. The program included high school students and university students, of course, and then leaders in almost every walk of life, everything from public health to political leaders, professors and civil administration people. We sent thousands actually. We sent so many at one time that we had to charter ships from Holland to send them and to bring them back.

There were various organizations in the US who handled these exchangees.. We worked with the Department of State and through it with the Institute of International Education, the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church, with the National Catholic Welfare Association and many other exchange organizations in the United States. But our primary contacts were with the Department of State which worked with all these organizations. The latter, in turn, had established contacts with schools all over the United States, and the students were placed very readily, all of them.

Americans everywhere were very generous, very willing to help. The program turned out to be very effective. We had an evaluation program and we were convinced that it was a very good program at the time -- an exceedingly good program.

We had a fairly good spread of the people who wanted to return to the United States, but this did not become a serious problem. We had selection committees set up all over Germany, made up of Germans and Americans from the exchanges program. Sometimes some other important Americans were on the committees, but the they were primarily composed of Germans in positions of leadership, not just in the educational field but also in politics and in city administration. When the people came back, we didn't have to encourage them to talk about their stay in the United States. They were almost invariably eager to talk about it, to tell the rest of the Germans about it.

Occasionally we ran into adverse reactions. There were one or two cases that were unfortunate and I think probably it was due to a misunderstanding on both sides where the youngsters, the high school students were -- they were allegedly being used as free labor on some of the farms, but it was a very unusual thing. But the vast majority, I would say 98 or 99 percent of the high school exchange program was very successful. All the high school students placed in American homes.

University students also were placed in American homes. The university students offered a different problem. They had to sign a statement saying they would come home after being over here for one year, but they weren't always ready to go back home. In some instances they could

get an extension for another year, and very frequently when they got back to Germany they couldn't wait. They did everything within their power to come back to the United States. Of course, Germany was in still pretty much of a shambles at that time. The currency reform wasn't until July of 1948 and even after that it took the Germans quite a while to get back to where they had a viable home life.

I was involved with the Amerika Hauser both in Bremen and in Hamburg; they were under my supervision. Then we left Hamburg and were transferred to Bonn where I became Deputy Chief of the Exchanges Program for Germany and that was enough to keep one busy. You didn't have time to become involved in anything else.

I was in Germany for ten years -- I left Germany towards the end of 1954 and the number of exchangees per year had been reduced considerably by that time. It continued but then I lost contact with it. Even the last few months that I was in Germany I wasn't involved with the exchanges program because I was asked to take over from Tom Tuch to take charge of the first international exhibit on peaceful uses of atomic energy in Geneva. This was in 1954. So I left the exchanges program a few months actually before I left Germany. But it had decreased considerably by that time. I don't know what it is doing, whether it's still going on today or not.

Speaking about the numbers that were sent over to the United States: they tried in various places to form groups of those people who had been in the United States and they found that it was very difficult because that was about the only thing that they had in common -- that they had been in the United States. The high school students and the leaders and the politicians had very little in common other than that. But there got to be so many who had been in the United States that there was a joke going around that we ought to have a club of "those who have not been in the United States."

The Amerika Haus was, I suppose, primarily founded, we said, for the teaching of the English language, but also to bring in all sorts of programs about the United States, to bring in speakers and to have exhibits about the United States; things to give a favorable impression of life in the United States, what we do, what we did, and to help counteract perhaps some of the unfavorable information that had been disseminated about the United States over there.

They had governing committees, some of which were made up almost entirely of Americans. If we are going to say "America House" then correctly we should use the German plural "Amerika Hauser" also. If my memory served me, we always used the German words. Some of the Amerika Hauser were controlled almost completely by the Germans, and as a matter of fact later were turned over to the Germans themselves to run and eventually finance. They had libraries but not extensive ones like some of our regular libraries abroad such as the one in Mexico for example where we had a real library. They were places to go to gain information about the United States in almost every aspect of life, whether it was politics, the fine arts, American homes or business in the United States. The works were usually carefully selected.

In the early days the Germans used them a lot because so many of their libraries had either been destroyed or else they had been carried off for safekeeping and also the German libraries were so full of Nazi propaganda and so out of date that they were of little value. I heard that some

valuable books were taken into salt mines in Germany just like a lot of the fine art works to protect them from the bombs. And in the early days even though our libraries weren't very good, they certainly had information about the United States that was never available in any of the German libraries. Many Germans read English. They had learned it in school. We were surprised at the number of high school students who came in, 15 years old, who spoke very good English.

The Germans were responding pretty extensively to your lecture programs, seminar programs. We used both Americans and Germans, but we felt that the Germans themselves, and I suppose this is a natural reaction, were more likely to be completely believed about everything that they said to their fellow countrymen than were the American speakers. We used returned exchangeers a lot. They were always not just willing, but eager to talk, and we used them a great deal.

The German professors who had participated in our exchange programs had no trouble getting back into their own universities. The problem was that we had to agree on how much time would be considered worthwhile and at the beginning we wanted them to stay longer than the German professors could stay. They couldn't stay three months in the United States for example. They just couldn't do it. So we didn't get a great many German professors in the beginning. We had to shorten the period of time we expected them to stay, but then I knew of no cases where they had any problem coming back into their own universities after they got back.

We did have Americans coming over sometimes for one year exchange. We had a few Germans I know who came to the United States for a year, but the problem in each case was a financial problem. The German universities did not have the money to pay their professors when they were absent and even if they had had the money the salaries which they were getting in Germany in those days would not have been sufficient to keep them going in the United States. Today, I don't know. It might be a different thing. American salaries might not keep the Americans going over there.

I think I would like to touch upon one more aspect of the American visitors program. In the beginning of that part of the program which brought American experts or leaders to Germany, the Department of State almost invariably did an excellent job of sending us good people in the fields in which they were requested. But as word spread in the United States that this was a pretty good deal -- a free trip to Europe plus extra money -- the Department began to get political pressure from congressmen and administration officials who wanted to use the program to pay off political debts. The Department and in turn we in the field were caught trying to make the best of a bad deal. I cite an example; tragic if you were involved, comical if you weren't.

Mildred Allport was our Women's Affairs Officer. The wisdom of choosing that sort of title, and especially in Germany in those days, lends itself to debate. However, Mildred was an intelligent and energetic woman, always impeccably dressed, who entertained well and knew her way around. One day Mildred received a telegram saying that Mrs. Logan, of the Massachusetts Logan Airport family, would arrive at Frankfurt by train on such and such a day and, in essence, do something with her for two weeks. The Department had failed to say that Mrs. Logan dearly loved her alcohol, was, in fact, an alcoholic.

The train arrived and Mildred waited until all passengers appeared to be off the train, but saw no

sign of Mrs. Logan. I don't know what German porters use today for moving luggage, but in those days they used large, flat carts about five or six feet long upon which they could stack a great amount of luggage. Mildred said she was about to leave the train station as a porter pulled up with a cart loaded with luggage and a well-dressed woman lying flat on her back -- sprawled is a better word -- atop it all. Mrs. Logan.

A few days later Mrs. Logan was scheduled to speak at the Amerika Haus in Hamburg; on the subject: "American Women in Politics." Hamburg was the largest city in West Germany and, along with Bremen, possibly the most progressive and international in outlook, due in part, probably, to their many years as members of the Hanseatic League. It was easy, therefore, to fill the Amerika Haus with interested, educated German women. Mildred and Mrs. Logan were seated at a library table, meaning that the audience had a full view of the feet and legs. I noticed that Mrs. Logan had on lovely high-heeled shoes and a dress too short for the occasion. I also noticed that she had had one too many drinks before she arrived. Mildred arose, showing no outward sign of worry or misgivings and told how Mrs. Logan had been active in politics, particularly in campaigns and said, "And now I am pleased to present to you Mrs. Logan who will speak to you about women in politics in America."

Mrs. Logan had been sitting there apparently in a daze. A wisp of hair had fallen down over one eye. She blew at it once out of the corner of her mouth and then ignored it. When Mildred said she was now on stage she came to life. Her ankles suddenly had no bones and collapsed, turning her feet on the sides with the shoe heels toward each other. This may have been what pulled her legs farther apart. She leaned forward, placing one elbow on the table and chin in hand she said, "Girls, it is a rat race!"

As I said earlier, late in my tour, I took over the direction of our atomic energy exhibit from Tom Tuch when he was, I believe, going back to the States. I took it first on practice runs in Dusseldorf and then Vienna getting ready for the big exhibit in Geneva at the time of the First International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy. We had let the Germans build the exhibit for us with materials coming from the United States. We had some excellent Germans working for us and I picked up some more wonderful workers in Vienna, all of whom were either physicists or advanced students of physics. So, by the time we got to Geneva we had a superb, well-trained staff and an excellent exhibit. There were many exhibits there, some from the largest commercial firms in the United States and Europe. But there was no exhibit better and I don't believe any as good as the USIA exhibit, and it made my job so much more rewarding to have such a well trained and enthusiastic staff.

JACQUES J. REINSTEIN
Acting Chief: Division of German Economic Affairs
Washington, DC (1949-1950)

Director of German Affairs
Washington, DC (1955-1959)

**Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs,
Washington, DC (1953-1955)**

**Director of German Affairs,
Washington, DC (1955-1958)**

Jacques Reinstein was born in 1911 in Savannah, Georgia. He attended the University of Basel, Switzerland, the Alliance Francaise, Paris, Georgetown University, and American University. He then joined the Department of State in 1936 as an Economic Analyst and Assistant to the Secretary of State. After a long career in the Department of State, he was sent to France as Minister Counselor for Economic Affairs. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 2001.

Q: In stamps? [laughs]

REINSTEIN: In stamps. They were conserving their coins.

We made our way to Switzerland where conditions were better and then went to visit relatives in Germany, in Wiesbaden, which was in the French occupied zone of the Rhineland, very close to the American zone. The Americans were in Koblenz; when we went to public places very often American officers were there; coming to the French zone seemed to have some attractions for them, though I'm not sure what they were. But there were considerable visits of American officers to the French zone.

The conditions in Germany at that time, in 1920, were deteriorating rather rapidly. My father had been aware of that and he had sent ahead a barrel of provisions for us; I remember particularly I had a lot of canned corned beef and that canned corn beef was I think about the only meat we ever ate. One could see also – and this was in the eyes of a nine year old – you could see the beginning of the economic deterioration with the fact that the currency was not worth as much. I guess this was a time of Communist threats. But remember that the Communists had taken over the government of Bavaria and had threatened to take over the government in Berlin. There's an amusing story that's not true that they were going to go down and take over the government buildings in Berlin but they had to take the subway to get there and they didn't have the change that was required to buy the tickets. [laughs] And they never got to the government buildings because they didn't have the change.

Q: [laughs] That sounds like a German story.

REINSTEIN: It may not be true; it's just a kind of German mentality. What is true is that the Communist threat to take over the government was very real and at Christmastime the government simply left Berlin and went off and took vacation and got out of the city. There was street fighting. Later, in 1928, on a walking trip I made in the Swiss Alps I fell in with a German who had left Germany. I traveled with him for several days. He had been in Berlin in 1918 and had engaged in street fighting. He said they set up barricades. He just finally got fed up with the situation and left.

The Communists had taken over the Hungarian government, and had taken over the Bavarian government. They were all over. They were a threat, apparently, in Wiesbaden. At one point my uncle who we were visiting there, and my aunt, had a shop – a merchandise shop of some kind. His wife was an extraordinary woman and one day she just put on a red blouse and stood at the store door to indicate their sympathy with the workers. After our visit to them and some other relatives we returned to Switzerland and we went down to the area of the lake of Lucerne. It was very interesting – I’m sorry that we never kept of copy of this – but they used to get out once per week a list of all the people who were staying in the various hotels. Most of the royal families of Europe – not the British and maybe not the Swedes, but a lot of the others – had sent their women and children to Switzerland to safety that summer and the list of the people who were staying there was extraordinary.

Q: Royal Highnesses, eh?

REINSTEIN: Yes, and as a matter of fact, in one of the places where we stayed, one of our neighbors was Queen Marie of...

Q: Romania.

REINSTEIN: Yes. A nine year old American had absolutely no hint of limitations in what he did in curiosity. I wandered into the French headquarters in Wiesbaden and there was a soldier on duty there and he told me to get out. One of the things we always did when we could was get American flags; I said to him, “I’m an American,” and he patted my flag. I pretended that I didn’t know any German at all, a useful thing to do. Anyhow, he finally said to me, “Raus mit dir!” [laughs] But a nine year old, really an American without any inhibitions, could sort of poke his way into all kinds of things.

Q: Jacques, what a wonderful education, a practical education this was to you, seeing Europe in those days.

REINSTEIN: One of the things that struck me after I came back from Germany to Switzerland: I was sitting at the table in the restaurant while the waiter was cleaning up and I looked at the adjoining table where people were eating and I said to my mother, “In Germany the people are practically starving and these people are eating so well.” The impressions that you got were really marked.

Q: Sure

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Q: What happened to you after Moscow?

REINSTEIN: I came back to Washington, and as I had mentioned previously, I had been assigned to Willard Thorpe’s office as a special assistant.

Q: Willard Thorpe, then the assistant secretary for economic affairs?

REINSTEIN: He was then the assistant secretary for economic affairs. As I arrived, I remember that one of the first things that happened was I went to a staff meeting and the head of the trade office – I’m trying to remember his name; he was one of the early career ambassadors – came with the trade figures for the first quarter of the year – and I can remember Thorpe was occupied so we had to stand around and wait outside – and he had this piece of paper in his hand and it indicated that we were running a trade surplus with Europe at the rate of ten billion dollars, which was in those days a massive sum of money. They were all shaking their heads and saying, “Well, this was not what we anticipated.” When we went in and had the staff meeting that became the major topic of discussion. These people were saying this demonstrates that all our plans were wrong. Things were supposed to be getting better and...

Q: You mean better in Europe?

REINSTEIN: Better in Europe, and the Europeans would be coming back, and this indicated that the situation was perfectly terrible. And, in fact, having seen how bad conditions were, I was rather taken aback by the lack of understanding by the economic staff on how serious the conditions in Europe were after that terrible winter and the breakdown in many ways of the major economies. And of course Germany was not involved at all, being under occupation and being pulled around to some extent by differences among the occupying powers. A number of people became conscious of this at the same time, and of the need to take some major action to deal with it. One of the major things that was done was to try to bring it to the attention of the American public, and of the Congress, which was done in a speech by Dean Acheson at...

Q: Cleveland, Mississippi.

REINSTEIN: Delta. The Delta speech.

Ben Cohen made an important speech in California and Will Clayton was writing memos internally, and this was the point at which, as it was so ably described by George Kennan in the first volume of his memoirs, when he was called back from the war college by Marshall to set up the planning staff – Marshall had selected him for that job but Kennan was at the war college and he wanted to finish out the term and Marshall called him back and said, “I want you to work on this. This is very urgent. I can’t let you stay there.” So he was instructed to set up a planning staff. This is all very well described in Kennan’s memoirs and is a matter of public record. They had to pull together a staff from people who happened to be available and he brought together a group. He got in touch with Thorpe, I guess, and said send somebody. I was available so I got...

Q: So you were one of the original members of the Policy Planning Staff.

REINSTEIN: I was one of the original members of the planning staff, of which there were something like seven, I think.

Q: He mentions five at one time. Paul Nitze was one, I believe.

REINSTEIN: No, Paul was not a member. Tick Bonesteel, General Bonesteel, Ware Adams,

Carlton Savage, a fellow who was later head of the Council on Foreign Relations. Anyhow, it was a very small group. I was the only economist.

Q: Congratulations.

REINSTEIN: And we had a very short time in which to produce a paper. We worked and argued and argued and argued. We had great trouble with Kennan, the rest of us did, because – and I realized later, Kennan, although he has been described as one of our top diplomats, had never had an assignment in a country with which you had normal relations. He had been in Russia, in Nazi Germany, and in the Baltic countries, but he'd never been in a country with whose government you had give and take relations. And a lot of the arguments that we had with George were that he wanted to take really completely unrealistic positions. We would say, "George, you can't do this with other countries." In his memoirs he said that the discussions were carried on so vigorously that one night he went out and walked around the building crying *[laughs]* because we beat down on him so hard.

We did come to a sort of consensus as to what we thought should be done, which I have written up in an account of my participation in the planning staff. George Washington University had a conference a couple years ago on the Marshall Plan and I was one of the contributors of a paper there. It really would fit perfectly into this but we can't use it because it's copyrighted. Now, in the discussions in the planning staff, they came up with this idea which was not unique to the planning staff, that if you really wanted to get major funding from the Congress; and the funding, it was realized, would be quite large – I can't remember what the initial figure was, about four billion.

Q: Excuse me, Jacques. Were you people preparing a paper for Secretary Marshall's Harvard speech that year in which he mentioned the Marshall Plan?

REINSTEIN: No, we were simply providing advice to the Secretary, and he had several other papers. He had one from Clayton, too.

Q: But you're all focusing on this one topic that Europe needed resurrection?

REINSTEIN: On what to do. There was a certain similarity between the ideas that had been put forward. They were put forward best in the planning staff paper of having a plan come from the Europeans on what was necessary to get out of this, and pulling for a cooperative approach rather than the way we had been dealing with things, which was dealing with individual countries; and as we do now in dealing with individual countries in other parts of the world.

One of the points I made in the discussion was that the situation was so bad that you couldn't wait for an overall plan to get going on it; that it was necessary to try to get at some key bottlenecks in the situation. I argued particularly for two, I think; and I believe they're both mentioned in the planning staff paper. I did get this into the planning staff paper, that we shouldn't necessarily wait to try to deal with some of the key bottlenecks. My proposals were to deal with Ruhr coal and fertilizer. Trying to do something about the coal situation. The coal situation was terrible and was a major drag on the French economy and other western European

economies. The Ruhr was under the control of the British. We did have – and I guess this was one of the things that was worked out in Germany, but this was approved in Moscow – the Moscow sliding scale. It was a formula which would determine how much would be exported in relation to production. They worked out this formula and then they went back to Germany to the British headquarters and issued it there so that it wouldn't be tied up with Moscow and immediately became known as the Moscow Sliding Scale. *[laughs]* But the Moscow sliding scale, the production of coal simply was not adequate and there were a variety of reasons for it; and the British were incapable of handling the situation. What happened...

Q: By the way, had the Soviets agreed to this Moscow sliding scale or were they consulted at all?

REINSTEIN: Oh no, no.

Q: This was strictly British and American.

REINSTEIN: This was a bi-zone. They may have consulted with the French. I don't know. But it was a bi-zonal decision.

I'm not sure exactly about the timing of this, but Kennan agreed that I should pursue my ideas, which were incorporated in the planning staff paper, of trying to get at the economic bottlenecks. I spent some time talking with the economic staff of the Department and the one thing that clearly emerged was the need to do something significantly different about Ruhr coal. I wrote what became known as the Marshall Plan paper, the first paper of the staff, PPS-1; and I had worked on what became PPS-2, which has become known as the Coal for Europe paper, proposing that the United States get involved in the Ruhr coal production. I can't remember the specific proposals that I made; I got a lot of help from the staff in the Department who were very good at these things, and who had been trying to get people's attention without success.

The planning staff was just the perfect mechanism for this because I could write a paper that without clearances or anything went directly to the Secretary of State. That was the whole idea of the planning staff, that it was advisory to the Secretary of State. So I wrote PPS-2 which was approved by the Secretary and resulted in our telling the British that we wanted to get into it. They came to Washington for the Anglo-American Coal Talks that summer and it resulted in the establishment of joint boards for Ruhr Coal and Steel. When I had the opportunity to go to Germany when the State Department first took over the occupation in '49, and went to the Ruhr, I could see the practical results of this, that the Americans had gotten in. Our technology was quite different but we had a pageant of people who figured out how to do things and they made a very significant contribution to getting the production up.

One of the other things that was necessary to do, that's worth mentioning, I think, is that part of the problem there, and in other parts of the German economy, was getting workers where they were needed because so much of the housing had been destroyed in the allied bombings. Building housing, which enabled workmen to live where the work was needed, and to have their families, was a very significant requirement, but to do it you had to break a lot of rules. If you gave priorities on a basis which was just different from the general rules, it worked out very well.

Q: The miners got extra food and I think they got housing too.

REINSTEIN: They got extra food. One of the things you have to understand is that extra food didn't just go to them. It went to their families. They didn't eat 4000 calories and hold their families down to 1500 or whatever they figure it was. You had to blink at that. Anyhow, that did work out quite well.

The planning staff had sent this paper to the Secretary. I remember sitting around in the planning staff and we said it's up to the Europeans to come up with a plan, and one of them said, "How shall we get this idea across to them?" Well, I found out, as did a lot of other people, my wife had to have a very serious operation and I was told that I would have to take over running the household which had three small boys and I had not had any vacation at all since about 1944 or '43 and I was absolutely knocked out as a result of intense negotiations that I'd been going through. So, to my wife's annoyance I went up to our place in New Hampshire to take a little bit of rest. I got a bus, I think, to come back to Boston to get the overnight train to Washington. In those days you had three trains a day between Washington and Boston. The Federal was the overnight train from South Station.

I had a drink with one of my wife's close friends and she said to me, "Your boss made a speech at Harvard today," and I said, "My boss? Which one?" and she said, "General Marshall." I said, "Oh really," and paid no further attention to it. I went down to the South Station and I bought a newspaper and put my bags in my berth and took the newspaper and went back to the club car to have a drink, and opened up the paper and here was General Marshall's speech at Harvard with all this familiar language from the planning staff members. *[laughs]* I looked at it and I couldn't believe my eyes. Anyhow, I forget who drafted the speech. The author is well-known. It worked. The next episode was...

Q: Well your friend Ernie Bevin was in the next episode, wasn't he?

REINSTEIN: Bevin immediately picked it up and called for a conference which they held in Paris, which the Soviets attended. The Soviets began throwing roadblocks into it. Well, the questions that we had discussed in the planning staff didn't deal with specifically was How do you deal with the Soviets. Our ideas in the planning staff were that the invitation should not exclude the Soviets and when we drafted it, it did not. There had been the article just before that, George Kennan's famous article on foreign affairs. Kennan himself felt that there had been some misunderstanding of the Truman Doctrine; that it had been regarded as being a declaration that we would fight communism anywhere in the world; and he thought that something should be done to get the idea across that this wasn't the way it was to be interpreted and that you couldn't just get American help by saying you got a Communist problem. We dealt with this in a subsequent paper.

We decided not to put anything into the first paper. The paper very deliberately did not exclude the Soviet Union. Our thought was that if the Soviets were to participate, in order to get congressional approval for funds we would have to deal with them somewhat differently – probably in terms of requiring, at least nominally, repayment. We'd be tougher on them than we

would be on other countries but that we would not exclude them from participating and cooperating in the arrangement. They excluded themselves, of course.

Q: And their allies.

REINSTEIN: And their allies. Actually, both the Poles and the Czechs accepted the invitation to come to the Paris meetings and the Soviets forced them to withdraw. Also, about at that time you had the alleged suicide of Masaryk, which was generally believed to have been a murder, and which had enormous...[Tape 12, Side A]

One immediate task us after the Harvard speech and its enthusiastic reception by the western Europeans was that in the planning staff paper there had been a phrase saying that the plan should be a European plan and the Americans should confine themselves to giving friendly advice. As soon as the Europeans began organizing for this task, they said they wanted to send some people over to get friendly advice.

Q: [laughs] They advised that.

REINSTEIN: And they proposed to send a delegation from all the countries – except Germany – to have discussions with us and get friendly advice. So we were immediately confronted with the question of when we meet with the Europeans what do we say to them. Well there were two exercises that were launched to deal with this. One was in the planning staff, and the planning staff wrote a very lengthy paper which had some rather controversial ideas in it. For instance, it dealt with the rather ticklish subject about whether we gave special treatment to Britain because we were really very much concerned about the British situation. In fact, we talked about the possibility of maybe working out something like a free trade area of Canada, the U.S., and Britain because we had very serious questions as to whether the British could handle their problems and whether they fit into this.

The planning staff paper dealt with these ticklish questions in a very frank way in terms of advice to the Secretary, but we didn't think they should be noised around so the paper was classified as top secret. It had been given a very limited distribution. As I say, the State Department never published these planning staff papers. They have, however, I think been published by a private organization which got access to them.

The other exercise was conducted under the direction of Willard Thorpe, by the economic staff of the department. We had a lot of talk about this. Willard talked about getting people down from New York to work on this and I said I thought that was wrong, that the ideas as to what we should say to the Europeans had to come from the people who were actually working on the problems. It would be difficult to organize in the daytime and there was only one answer, and it was to meet at night. So, what, in practice, was done was that they set up a small staff under Charles Kindleberger, which produced papers on a whole series of problems. As a matter of fact, I think there was probably no major policy issue which came up during the course of the four years of the Marshall Plan on which some kind of a paper wasn't produced at one point.

Q: Excuse me, was Kindleberger working on the economic staff then, under Thorpe?

REINSTEIN: Yes, he had been the head of an organization which dealt both with Japan and Korea, and Germany and Austria and then they had split the two east and west and he was head of the German-Austrian division, as I remember. He was borrowed from the job and he and maybe one other person produced papers. And then we had all the top staff of the economic part of the Department meeting. The committee had a proper name, but I forget what it was. It was known informally as the board of directors. We met at night and tossed these ideas around and sent the papers back for redrafting. They really incorporated the ideas which we initially discussed with the Europeans and then were the basis for the congressional presentation by the Department. People tend to forget how important the role of the State Department was in the formulation of the Marshall Plan because Congress decided they wanted to have an organization independent of the State Department and was very consistent on that.

The basic ideas in considerable detail which went into the Marshall Plan initially were formulated by the State Department, and they were then, in practice of course, further developed between the American representatives of the Marshall Plan organization. And there were foreign countries involved who were required to develop an organization to deal with us cooperatively, the OEEC originally that ...

Q: The Organization for European Economic Coordination.

REINSTEIN: Which at a later stage was remade into the OECD, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and which was eventually enlarged after great argument to include Japan and now includes a number of other countries, including Mexico, I believe, and perhaps Brazil. It's been described as the rich man's club; it isn't really that. It's an organization which was one of the most useful economic organizations in the world. They don't fortunately get attacked by the people who are attacking the World Bank and the Monetary Fund, and they do an excellent job.

I think that probably takes care of the Marshall Plan.

Q: How long did you stay on the policy planning staff?

REINSTEIN: I stayed with the staff until the completion of the second paper on the Marshall Plan that I mentioned, and then I returned to Thorpe's office. I had the following year, 1948 and into '49, a second tour of duty with the planning staff. These are all, incidentally, assignments, although they never appeared in my personnel records or anything like that. *[laughs]* It was not part of my official biography, but that's true of a great many of the assignments I had, that they were not personnel assignments and therefore not part of my official biography. Now, at that point I went back to Thorpe's office and...

Q: Jacques, there was a review of policy toward Germany about that time. Did you get involved in that?

REINSTEIN: That was my second tour. Before that I worked in Thorpe's office as the general assistant to him. It was rather interesting because I discovered that all I had to do was to sit at my

desk and people would bring me problems.

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: They were aware that I had a very close relationship with Thorpe and when problems arose and they couldn't get agreement between divisions or between parts of the organization, or maybe sometimes a knotty problem would come up in a telegram, and I'd get a telephone call asking me if I could organize a meeting on something or had I seen a particular telegram and did I have any thoughts about it. So I just sat at my desk and the problems came to me. I was able to work out resolutions of problems among different parts of the organization, or see that a problem was raised for consideration at a higher level in a form in which the elements requiring decision had been brought up clearly.

Then I had one junket. We had put into our various missions in the former enemy countries people who worked specifically on the peace treaties. The ones who were in the countries which were occupied by the Soviets had a rather rough time. Now under the various armistice agreements there were control commissions and we had seats on those and we were supposed to have a voice in the administration of the armistice agreements. Well, the Soviets did not allow us to have any effective participation. It's fair to say that by the same token we didn't give the Soviets much participation in what went on in Italy.

Q: Or in Japan.

REINSTEIN: In effect, by that time de facto things had been split up; Germany had been split up. Not all the way. You asked, I think at an earlier stage, in connection with the peace treaties, about whether the former enemy countries had any kind of a voice. They were allowed to make comments. We did have meetings with them. I think they tended to be informal. I can remember having rather useful discussions, for example, with the head of the Central Bank of Hungary. This was before the Soviets overturned the government there and put in one of their own liking. The Soviets, incidentally, didn't even tell their allies very much. I had developed over time very good relations with the Czechs. The Czechs had been western communists. The Soviets never told them anything about what was going on. I found, without any breach of security or anything, there was no particular problem about informing them about what was going on in negotiations and they were very grateful. It provided a basis for very useful exchanges at various times.

Q: Again, this would've been before February of '48 when the Communist takeover happened.

REINSTEIN: Even after '48. Because at that point you had two types of communists, those who had been in Moscow and those who did not: one of my principal contacts was a communist who had worked for the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) during the war. He was a communist all right, but his ties were with the western European communists and he wasn't Moscow-trained and Moscow-brainwashed. There was a real difference between the two kinds of communists. It was possible in '49, for example, to have useful talks with him.

I mentioned the timing of this junket. I was in Paris at the time of the break between the Yugoslavs of Tito and Moscow.

Q: June of '48.

REINSTEIN: Yes, and it was very interesting to read L'Humanité [laughs]. We were able to get both sides of the issue, which was a very rare occurrence. Anyhow, By that time, of course, the blockade had...

Q: Was just beginning. The aerial blockade.

REINSTEIN: I perhaps should go back to the London meeting and there was something I wanted to mention, which is at the very end of the London meeting – it was a meeting of the top of the American delegation at which I was not present – and...

Q: This was in April of '48?

REINSTEIN: No, this was in December of '47. The meeting at which I was not present, at which I guess this may have been a tripartite meeting; I'm not clear about whether it was a meeting of the Americans alone or whether they were meeting with the British and French. But anyhow it was a meeting at which it was decided to proceed, in view of the fact that no agreement could be reached with the Soviets, to set up a political authority in West Germany. Originally this idea had its origins I think in JCS-1067 that contemplated that there would be a German administration, but it would not have people at the ministerial level. People at the highest level would be "staatsekretär" which in German usage you would recognize as a top civil servant, not a political figure. That idea, I think, goes all the way back to JCS-1067.

I think this was the way they began their thinking that there would be a German administration, but as it began to develop gradually the ideas were the subject of debates among the three western allies and discussions with the Germans. The Germans were called upon to organize themselves as the states in western Germany. I think Berlin participated in that, although it was not eventually allowed to become a part of the German Federal Republic. The basic law of Germany provided that Berlin was to be a state of the Federal Republic, but the allies suspended that and it remained in suspension until the wall came down, I guess. Although, in practice, Berlin had representatives who sat in the German parliament; they just couldn't vote.

What happened there at the end of '47 was that in the final meetings, at a meeting in which I was not present, General Clay asked that he be allowed to make one more effort to reach agreement with the Soviets on currency reform. This was an absolutely ridiculous idea because if you're going to set up a west German organization, the last thing in the world that you wanted to do was to allow the Soviets to have some say or have the same currency as the currency used in western Germany because with unlimited ability to print money they could've done all kinds of things to wreck whatever plans you had in West Germany. They actually began discussions of this with the Soviets in Germany in the Control Council, and then I think began to realize that this was a great mistake and began to pull back; and I think you can find a very clear connection between the beginning of the measures to interfere with Berlin access and the pulling back from the discussions on currency reform. A very direct connection; the Soviets are no fools.

The currency reform incidentally, for which Erhard was given such great respect and was regarded as being the author of the German miracle, was in fact an American idea. The ideas for currency reform are all in the paper which was written by three Americans: Dodge, Comb, and Goldsmith. Joe Dodge was the head of the Detroit Bank and was the head of the financial division of OMGUS, the Office of Military Government in Germany for the U.S. I think he was head of that, and he had a couple of talented economists working for him, both of German origin: Ray Goldsmith and Comb – I forget what Comb's first name was – and they developed plans for the currency reform, which incidentally included originally a capital levy to prevent people who had managed to horde large amounts of currency from getting benefit from that. When the plan was presented to the Germans, the Germans took it. They took the credit for the ideas, but the capital levy was a little bit too much for their appetites. Taxing rich people was apparently not very popular there any more than it is in the Republican Party in the United States.

Q: It was only popular in East Germany.

REINSTEIN: In East Germany, yes, but not in West Germany. What began with pinpricks and annoying interferences with access to Berlin developed, as you know, into a full-scale blockade to which we responded with the airlift. At the time, as it is well known, there was discussion as to whether military action should be taken to open the way to Berlin. General Clay was a great proponent of that idea. I went to a meeting with General Clay years later and he still thought it was a good idea, but it was turned down by the military authorities.

Q: And by President Truman, too, I gather.

REINSTEIN: Well, I suppose. But the military authorities in Washington had no appetite for engaging in a military confrontation with the Soviets. I don't know what the military deployment was then.

Q: It was weak in Germany because we only had the constabulary forces.

REINSTEIN: Well, we had the constabulary force which was for the purpose of keeping the Germans in hand which didn't seem to involve any particular problems. No, perhaps not then, but later, we had one division and some other elements.

Q: We had to rush them over.

REINSTEIN: No, no. We had to rush over reinforcements later.

Q: We had part of the 1st Division there, yes.

REINSTEIN: One of our problems was that our base was in Bremerhaven and the line of communication to our forces ran in front of [laughs]...

Q: It was close to the Soviet line.

REINSTEIN: It was an untenable military situation. There was no military confrontation on the

airlift.

Q: Were you involved with German affairs by this time?

REINSTEIN: At this point, as I said, I sat in Thorpe's office and yes, German and Austrian things came to my desk. I did a lot of work on Austria. As a matter of fact, we had several phases of the Austrian negotiations and I was responsible for developing them in a way in which they were set up. I spent a lot of time on Austria, but the Austrian issue stayed the same as the one that I've described before; no matter how we tackled it we always came back to the same questions, until the Soviets decided they could make a deal with us in 1954. And I had the pleasure of participating in that. But no, I got increasingly into German matters.

After I came back from Europe in 1948 I thought I had done something very smart. We had a place where my wife went with the children in New Hampshire, and I decided that instead of taking my vacation in July I would take it in August and come back just at Labor Day and then escape the Washington heat. This was all a dull time, in economic terms, and so I sat around and didn't do very much for about a month, and then took off for New Hampshire. One of the things that they had done in the discussions with the Soviets about the blockade was that at some stage they made an offer to the Soviets to hold a conference on Germany if the Soviets would lift the blockade. General Marshall, having unpleasant recollections of two previous meetings with the Soviets on Germany, said he wanted this well prepared and he gave George Kennan instructions to work on developing positions to be taken at a meeting with the Soviets if they agreed to lift the blockade.

I no sooner got to New Hampshire when I got a telephone call and a telegram – they still had telegrams in those days – telling me to come back to Washington. George Kennan decided he didn't want to start up another round of major discussions without my being involved; and so I immediately turned around and came back to Washington for a second round on the planning staff. That began a very lengthy examination of German policy which lasted for many months and which brought in a lot of people. Initially George Kennan's position was that the division of Europe was extremely dangerous and it would eventually lead to a war. It was inevitable. That you couldn't have the continent split that way. Therefore, it was essential to reach some agreement with the Soviets. Well, we took the question of what kind of agreement could we make with the Soviets which we could live with, and we looked at it from every conceivable viewpoint and we had a lot of people – I remember Dean Acheson was out of the Department at that time; I remember we had invited him to a meeting of the planning staff. We had lots of people from outside the government. We looked at it from every conceivable viewpoint.

Q: Excuse me. Did you get the views of General Clay, and Ambassador Murphy in Germany?

REINSTEIN: I don't remember. We might have. If we did, I don't remember that they were striking views to which we gave a lot of...

Q: I ask because they of course were directly involved.

REINSTEIN: Well, they were directly involved in the day to day relations and they had their

hands full with the Berlin blockade and keeping Berlin alive. Also, at that point they were also heavily involved in discussions – well they were beginning discussions; no, I guess they weren't – the discussions with the Germans on the basic law. In '48 I think the discussions about what we would allow the Germans to do were still being carried on on an inter allied basis. There was a working group – incidentally, have you had interviews with Ed Martin? Has he been interviewed?

Well, Edward M. Martin would be a very important source of information on this and many other policy issues. Ed Martin headed up the Washington representation in discussions with the British and French, to which the Benelux countries were invited; they were not full participants, but their views were solicited on the formation of a German administration. Those discussions were going on in '48 and they involved heavy OMGUS participation. So I think to answer your question, the OMGUS focus was really on the next steps in Germany, whereas what was going on in Washington was our longer range European policy.

Q: Excuse me, if I could make one correction. I said I did not interview Ed Martin in the oral history program. He may have been interviewed. I'm not sure.

REINSTEIN: You had discussions going on at the intergovernmental level on the development of a German administration and you had discussions going on more concerned with living with the immediate task of administration and the implementation of the currency reform in Germany itself, the military government, with increasingly French participation. In a sense, the Marshall Plan took care of many of our difficulties with the French because they were part of the Marshall Plan. Perhaps it would be useful to indicate what Germany's relationship with the Marshall Plan was. There being no German government, there was no German participation in the European organizations for dealing with the Americans.

Q: The central planning committee.

REINSTEIN: The initial discussions with Mr. Oliver Franks. When the draft legislation went to the Congress, the State Department kept rather quiet on how Germany would be involved. They didn't want to push German issues with their more recent allies because they were recent victims of German aggression. They thought it might be very difficult politically. Well, when it got to Congress, Congress insisted on full German participation. They made it very clear in the legislation that they expected that there would be German participation. Under the Marshall Plan legislation it was required that each of the participants make a bilateral agreement, ECA cooperative agreement, with the United States. Those agreements had really two basic characteristics. One was they had a series of policy objectives which really were the policy objectives of the International Monetary Fund and GATT and those kind of things – the Atlantic shore objectives – which they undertook as policy commitments. There were also administrative provisions because they were required, as a condition of getting American aid, to present us with plans on how the aid would be used, which we had to approve. And second, they had to agree that the proceeds of sales of products supplied under the plan would be spent only by agreement with the United States; which meant the United States had not only this sort of general connection through the OEEC, but it had a very specific hold on the development of programs in individual countries.

I don't know how I happened to do this, but I got involved in an argument we had with the French over intermediate credit facilities and the question of which money would be made available for housing, and which we could really put the screws on the French to cut down on what was politically very desirable from their viewpoint, but what we thought was a strain on the financial resources available for the recovery plan. The Americans were quite deeply involved in national policy.

I think we need a word about how the Marshall Plan developed in Germany, which is that of course there was no German government. Therefore, what we did was we had an agreement with the military governor of each of the western zones of occupation. In the American case you had an agreement which was signed by General Clay from U.S. military government, and Bob Murphy from the United States government. *[laughs]*

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: The three military governments were represented in the OEEC.

Let me say a word about how we financed aid to Germany. We had to provide civilian supplies when we went in to this country which had been completely smashed by the war. The formula which was used to justify that was for the prevention of disease or unrest, which would be harmful to the troop deployment. That turned out to be a rather useful formula. The level of help that was given was, as I think you mentioned earlier, to some extent affected by *[laughs]* the experience of Austria back in 1945. That is only on the ration scale. The aid which was given under the disease and unrest formula was quite significant. In effect, Germany got the largest amount of aid at that time; much larger than any other country.

Q: Under the Marshall Plan?

REINSTEIN: By the device of having reconstruction in the Marshall Plan and having the disease and unrest formula for basic civilian supplies, so that when you added the two together Germany was the principal beneficiary. Incidentally, we later collected some of that money back in connection with the German debt settlement, which I'll come to at a later stage of our discussions.

The American occupation authorities were not particularly cooperative. General Clay was very sensitive about the need to get appropriations from Congress for the disease and unrest formula. I don't know that he needed to worry about it because the Congress, as I had said earlier, was very insistent on full German participation; full use of Germany as a contributor to the Marshall Plan. And in fact, German participation was very key because Germany was the machine shop of Europe and effective German participation was essential to the success of the Marshall Plan. But anyhow there was this extraordinary sensitivity and concern about congressional reactions and maybe the people who went down to Congress did get to kick it around a certain amount, but that goes with the job.

The military government, OMGUS, was a very difficult organization to deal with in economic

terms. They were trying to maximize the foreign exchange earnings and being not very cooperative in the European sense. As a matter of fact, it was said that the least cooperative government in the Marshall Plan was the Americans' own zone of occupation of Germany, with considerable foundation.

You asked about my participation in German affairs. We were talking about discussions in the planning staff and we never quite finished that. Where we eventually came out was we couldn't see any solution to the German problem except completely on our terms. Compromise with the Soviets did not seem to be in the cards. As a matter of fact, I read somewhere recently that the situation was such that either one side or the other had to surrender, that there really was no middle ground. We could not find a middle ground, which didn't prevent us from having further meetings with the Soviets [*laughs*], beginning with the one we promised them that we would have, which took place in Paris at the end of the blockade at the Palais Rose.

The discussions in the planning staff examined the possibility of working out some kind of compromise with the Soviets which would not be prejudicial to our position. We simply couldn't find it. I don't know that those discussions ever resulted in a paper. It was just that we finally came to the point where we couldn't see any solution and the Soviets eventually threw in the towel on the blockade and we did have a meeting and we had a very detailed discussion of Germany, and again of Austria, in Paris in 1949 after the blockade. We came out on an interesting point which was that – it's been kind of overlooked, I think – there was a *modus vivendi* reached; an international document that recognized that we had been unable to reach agreement on how to deal with Germany, but there was an undertaking by each side not to do anything to worsen the situation.

Q: Were you present at the Palais Rose talks?

REINSTEIN: Yes, I was present at the Palais Rose. At that point I guess I had switched back to Germany again and yes I went to all the administrative meetings.

Now, one thing we did do at Paris was that we had very detailed discussions with the British and French on the proposals we would make to the Soviets if they were willing to engage in negotiations. Actually, every morning while I was on the Economic Committee on Germany we went over and we had meetings with the British and the French and began to develop detailed proposals that we would make to them on various economic subjects, not including reparations. A lot of very useful work was done, I think, in those discussions because they were very helpful I think in allowing us to think a little bit about how we would deal with the Germans themselves at a later stage. We worked very seriously on the assumption that there would be negotiations with the Soviets and that there would be tripartite proposals; there would be absolute solidity among the western powers.

Now I've skipped over one important phase of the German developments and that is the establishment of the control authority in the Ruhr. The French, while they were generally going along with us, never joined the bi-zone, but they set up parallel organizations so that if there was the bi-zonal office, there was a corresponding French office. In practice it was tripartite coordination, but they had their own organizations with slightly different names. For instance, I

remember we had a trading organization – I forget the name of it: there was a corresponding French organization. They duplicated all of our bi-zones. It was complete cooperation, and then when the Federal Republic came into existence, in effect the zones were all unified. But the French desire for special treatment continued. We skipped over the Saar which Secretary Byrnes conceded to the French in 1946, and which the Germans negotiated back. As a condition of one of the major agreements which they had to submit to the French parliament, they had to give a commitment to seek a control authority in the Ruhr.

It was agreed that there would be a meeting to establish this Ruhr authority in London. So the British, as the host government, were obligated to set up the arrangements and they kept asking us to fix a date and we never agreed. Finally they got a little raspy about it and a telegram came in one day that they called in the American ambassador and had really fussed with him. You know, when you call in the ambassador to make a fuss about something that means it serious. So we had a telegram from London saying that the British were very insistent on fixing a date for the beginning of these discussions. Well, this telegram wound up on my desk.

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: At that point Thorpe had had as his number two C. Tyler Wood, who went over to the Marshall Plan and then Paul Nitze came in as his number two. Well I went in to see Paul and I said, “Look Paul, we’ve just got to do something about it. We can’t put this off any longer because it’s politically impossible,” and he said, “Well we haven’t got a position.” And I said, “We will never have a position until we fix a date for the beginning of negotiations.” And I said, “All right, I’ll make a deal with you. If you will agree to my sending a telegram” – that way the British could perhaps propose a date – “If you will sign the telegram agreeing to this date, I promise you we will have a position.” Paul very reluctantly signed the telegram but he didn’t think I could do it. Well, I assembled a group of people and there were all practically, I guess, from the economic side of the department. They were the most brilliant, talkative group of people I have ever brought together in one room. And I chaired the meetings. We had picked out a fellow – now the head of the delegation was to be Lew Douglas, who was our ambassador to London, and our number two was to be a man named Wayne Jackson, whom was selected for the job.

We had these meetings in which Wayne sat there but did not participate. He listened to all the arguments, and we had developed our positions, and he knew everything about how the position argued out and developed and the like. At the end of this I finally drew up a formal written instruction to the ambassador. It must’ve been one the last formal instructions written in the department. *[laughs]* It wasn’t a telegram. It was an instruction on paper. It was a shorter paper than we had for diplomatic notes. A form of diplomatic notes. Anyhow, we set this off and everything went along quite well until the very end. It was just before Christmas and the French came up at the last minute with proposals for control of investments in the coal and steel industries in the Ruhr. All the text of everything else had been settled and then this last minute addition. The French had made a commitment to their parliament and it was really quite tough. We finally agreed to some language to go in in two articles, Articles 18 and 19, without deciding what the content would be. That was agreed to be left for further negotiation. So we were able to sign that agreement and we set up the Ruhr Authority and our representative was Henry

Parkman, who had been in OMGUS, has been mayor of Boston; a very distinguished public servant.

We had a dickens of a time. Do you remember Parkman?

Q: I remember who he was. He was tall, good looking.

REINSTEIN: Very tall, yes. We had a terrible problem about one respect, which was that this was financed out of the conference budget and the conference budget only permitted you to buy small automobiles. *[laughs]*

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: Poor Parkman. This was a time when they had teardrop cars and poor Parkman had to sit in the back seat doubled over. *[laughs]*

Q: Yes, he was about the tallest man in OMGUS, I think.

REINSTEIN: Anyhow, the French then deviled us at various times to talk about implementing Articles 18 and 19 of the Ruhr Authority Agreement and we did get to that subject in 1949, informally.

Q: Jacques, going back, do you think the Ruhr control commission was an ancestor of the Schuman Plan?

REINSTEIN: Oh, I was going to get to that.

Q: Very good. Please.

REINSTEIN: Very precisely. In the spring of 1949 we had a whole series of developments and they are hard for me to remember; first was the agreement to lift the blockade. The negotiations on that were very secret and there was one point that I was concerned about in the text. I got a hold of the text and I looked at it and it contained an agreement that all the restrictions that had been imposed since the beginning of March the first would be eliminated. Well, this created a difficulty for us because we had set up the strategic export controls in the meantime and we could not agree that Berlin was going to be a hole through which things could flow to the Soviets which they otherwise couldn't get, and therefore there had to be some weasel language in this that covered that topic. The negotiations, as I say, were very secret. Jake Beam was the fellow who was working on it. He was the head of the Central European Division – it was called CE. And I would catch Jake in the stairwells and things like that and wrest the latest draft from him and look to see if it had the language covering this point and if it didn't I would put it in. It finally went in the final text.

We signed the agreement and shortly after we signed the agreement a telegram came in from Berlin from Jimmy Riddleberger saying, "We trust that you remember that we introduced, in dealing with this agreement, that we kept strategic controls." And the yellow of that arrived on

my desk...

Q: The yellow being the action copy.

REINSTEIN: The action copy. And yes, certainly we had taken care of it in our language so I just initialed the yellow and sent it to the files. Well the next thing I discovered was that OMGUS was working out with the British and the French language for implementing the agreement and they weren't covering this. Well, we wanted to send them a telegram saying, "Look, we have covered this. It's covered by this language so you don't have to worry about it. And don't make any commitment to the Soviets that's inconsistent with our controls." The assistant secretary in the War Department who was in charge of civil affairs went to Philadelphia to make a speech and he left an instruction that no telegram was to be sent out overruling the field; and since our line of communications, for practical purposes, was through the military this effectively blocked us from sending a telegram. We had a meeting over in the Pentagon and Ed Barten and I were there and we argued our heads off and we ended up getting to send the telegram. And we came out and we said, "Boy, we're in a pickle," because these fellows were carrying on negotiations and if we didn't stop them they would commit themselves in the implementing language to the Soviets to something that would in effect create a hole in the controls.

I had an idea. There was a predecessor of Marriott over by the Pentagon – the Twin Bridges something or other – I said, "Let's go over there." We got a telephone and I called up the guy who handled Germany at the British embassy, Hubert Benson, who had come from the Treasury. And I said, "Hubert, we've got a problem. Can you meet us at your embassy in about twenty minutes?" I said, "This is very important," and he said, "All right, yes." So Ed and I had a car, either his car or my car, and we drove to the British embassy and we explained the situation to Hubert and we said, "Will you get a telegram to your people explaining what our situation is and put a hold on this thing until we can get instructions out to our people?"

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: So Hubert sent off a telegram and the next day we went to Dean Acheson, who was then Secretary, and we laid this out and Dean said, "Well, that's a lot of nonsense. I mean if we were sending them cows, I'm not going to stop sending them cows now. Send the telegram over." With the authority of the Secretary of State we sent the telegram and countermanded the position in which they were sliding themselves into.

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: But it was a hairy, brief period. The things you do in this business are very curious sometimes.

Q: I would've loved to have been in Berlin when that British instruction was given to our people. They would raise their eyebrows as to why did you give us this and not our own people? [laughs]

REINSTEIN: We just told the British, "Stall, stall. Don't let anything happen until we can get

straight with our people.” [laughs] “Just stall it.”

This brings us to...

Q: In '49 you're getting deeply involved in German affairs. You moved over and became director of the Office of German Economic Affairs. How did that happen?

REINSTEIN: Well, what happened was there was finally an agreement reached on the basic law and the setting up of actually a German government. It had been agreed between the State Department and the War Department, that when a German government was established, the State Department would take over the occupation of Germany. So when agreement was reached on the basic law – of course they had to have elections and there was a period of about six months between...

Q: May of '49 to September of '49.

REINSTEIN: Yes. Actually, on March the first they set up an organization in the State Department to plan for taking over the occupation. Also it was agreed it would also take over the occupation in Austria, which would really run past any need for military operations. So they set up an office to plan for the assumption of State Department responsibilities in Germany and in Austria under Bob Murphy, and with a staff joined from the State Department and the War Department. They were all people from the civil affairs division mainly. They brought over from the Pentagon an officer who was highly regarded by State Department people, Hank Byroade – Henry A. Byroade, as deputy director of the office under Murphy. I was told to take over as director or chief, whatever they called it, of German and Austrian economic affairs, and I balked. I had spent some years in international negotiations and I said, “If I start working on Germany I won't have any personal life of my own and I think I've given up enough of my time and life and being separated from my family and I don't want to be put in the position of making that sacrifice any more.” Well, they put the screws on me and I finally said, “All right, I tell you what; I'll do it for three months, with the understanding that at the end of three months I get a vacation.” And I planned on going to New Hampshire.

One of the things that I figured out is that the State Department was always very soft on vacations. They hesitated to interfere with your vacation plans. So I figured this would carry me right to Decoration Day – Decoration Day it used to be called, now it's Memorial Day – and I'd go off. And I was absolutely secure in this position. The only trouble was the Soviets agreed to lift the blockade and we were then committed to have a meeting with them in Paris and I was sent off to Paris and that's where I was at the end of May. By the time I got back it was vacation time and there wasn't really much to do so I figured, well, I might as well stay on. So I did. And I spent a number of years working on Germany. [laughs] So the best laid plans of mice and men.

Q: What were some of the big problems you confronted then? Were German reparations still a problem?

REINSTEIN: No, the countries for which the western powers were responsible, had been given some money – it wasn't very much – and we had given them this dismantled plant under that part

of the reparation program, which didn't turn out to be all that useful to them. One of the things we discovered with the Marshall Plan was that people who had taken dismantled German plants would've been better off if they hadn't because they would've gotten new plants under the Marshall Plan. *[laughs]* I saw some of this I think in France. The old German plants which had been used hard during the war were not in very good shape and didn't turn out to be very useful, whereas if you got the Marshall Plan, plant, brand-spanking new with all the latest technology, you were much better off. So the reparations really faded out.

Q: Is this the place to talk about the German debt settlement? Because I know you were involved in that.

REINSTEIN: Yes. During that interim period, between March and the actual takeover of responsibility, we did a lot of planning. John J. McCloy had been designated as being the fellow who would be our high commissioner and once that was decided he was made military governor. He didn't have the troop command – that was left under EUCOM – but he was military governor. We spent a lot of time with McCloy in that interim period working out a number of administrative problems – staffing, policy issues. One of the policy issues that we discussed was how to deal with the holocaust, and we agreed that we would not get into this as a government, that we would take the position with the Germans that they could have no decent relations with other countries without doing something about it. But this would be a matter of conscience for them and we were not going to tell them what to do. Over the course of time we did have to do some prodding, but it was done very discretely. At one point I think Acheson spoke to Adenauer about it and said, “Look, the negotiations are not going well. You've got to do something about this.”

Q: Is this the Adenauer Agreement with Israel and things like this?

REINSTEIN: Yes. We prodded the Germans very quietly but we stayed officially out of it. The Israelis kept us informed, I guess. I got into this issue by doing interviews like this and found that there were misunderstandings, and I went down to the archives and went through the records myself to see exactly what had been done and came to the conclusion that we had done what was necessary. We had given the Germans a push at various times, but very quietly, and had avoided getting directly involved in the issue ourselves. The Israelis would come in and make noises to us and complain and we'd listen to them, but we managed to stay out of it.

Q: Now it's to the debt settlement.

REINSTEIN: The debt settlement, all right. One of the things in the discussions that we had with McCloy was that we wanted to avoid the situation that we had had during the period of military government; it was constant confrontation between Washington and Berlin. I think to be fair about this one should say that one reason for the difficulties which existed over time was the quite different concepts which the State Department and the War Department have about how you deal with people in the field. In the military you give a commander a mission, you tell him what his resources should be, and then you don't look over his shoulder every two minutes. Well that's not true in the conduct of diplomacy where you have to be dealing all the time with members of Congress and the public and the press and you have to know you just don't give

people general instructions and then sit back and wait and see what happens. You have to be in touch all the time and you have to be able to respond immediately. As I said earlier, I used to read the newspapers every morning and then figure out which stories should be denied at the noon press conference. Your reaction had to be that fast. So the State Department's concept of how you deal with your representative in the field, and the military's, were quite different. The trouble was that the military government was doing things which involved diplomacy and they really made problems for us. Anyhow, the relationships were very unhappy and it was agreed that we would really try and avoid that situation and one rule of thumb they had was to have people go back and forth pretty frequently. So as soon as the Federal Republic was established I was sent over to Germany to spend some time there. I went over in September...[Tape 13, Side A]

As I said, we agreed with McCloy that people would go back and forth and find State a close contact. And I was sent over as the first person from Washington to implement this policy. I left on October twelfth. I remember it very precisely because I was anticipating a stay of some duration and I had ordered clothes and it was a very hot day. In the initial arrangements for the takeover of State Department responsibilities it was agreed that the State Department people would travel by military transport. That policy didn't last very long because the airlines objected to it and they made their point. But anyhow, it was in effect and I had found that I had to take a shuttle plane originating in Texas and go to Chicopee, Massachusetts, to pick up a navy transport plane to take me to Frankfurt. Why the navy was running planes to Frankfurt, I don't know; except that if the army does something, the navy has to do it, too.

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: At any rate, it so happened that Prime Minister Nehru of India was due to arrive and I discovered that President Truman had sent his plane, appropriately known as "the Sacred Cow" *[laughs]*, to pick up Nehru in London and bring him to Washington, and he was scheduled to arrive at four o'clock, which was the time at which my plane was supposed to take off for Chicopee, Massachusetts. So I said to my secretary, "Call them up over there and say they can't be serious about sending a plane off at four o'clock when the president's plane is arriving." "Oh no, we'll be over here at half past three," and on and on. I went over with my family and of course the plane didn't take off then. *[laughs]* It wasn't allowed to land.

I was there in the military end of National Airport sweating in heavy clothes because the temperature was about ninety and my family were there to see me off and so they went out and they were within the security allowance – of course they didn't have security then the way they do now – anyhow, they wandered out to watch what went on and they were about the only civilians that were there. They had a guard of honor so they went down in front and then after they turned around they came back.

Q: This was Nehru?

REINSTEIN: Yes. When you do that you look at the soldiers when you're in front, but as soon as you turn the corner you stop. Anyhow, my three kids were there – the littlest one was about yea-high and he looked up and he waved to this great man and they looked down and they patted

him on the head or something like that and said, “You’re a great success,” and I went off on this trip.

I had been given a top secret document to carry without a courier pass, but I had it under my undershirt, which was a very uncomfortable situation to be in. Anyhow, I went over and I spent a good deal of time just looking around; going to meetings of other people and working in their offices.

Q: Was this in Bonn, in Berlin?

REINSTEIN: No, this was in Frankfurt. We had moved our headquarters to Frankfurt. We had the I.G. Farben Building there.

I went to meetings and I chatted with people and I looked around. I went up to the Ruhr to have a look at what was going on there. Gosh, I guess I stayed in a British army billet up there. This was rather in Düsseldorf. The people in Düsseldorf were eating very well. In the British army mess you got cold baked beans for breakfast. They didn’t do away with meat rationing in Britain until I think 1950. I was there in London at the time it happened and it created chaos in the markets because they were so used to rationing it. Nobody knew how to operate a market economy.
[laughs]

Anyhow, I spent some time looking around, forming impressions, and in general forming a very good impression of the establishment which had been chopped down and I thought okay, and I had very good relations with all the people there at the top. There was a fellow who was a lawyer who worked for the Navy Department – maybe the Secretary of the Navy – and they put us up in the Victory Guest House, which was a guest house up in the Taunus Mountains that had belonged to I.G. Farben. There were two of us and there was a staff of forty people.

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: We ate well when we were there, which was rarely. I was invited out to dinner very frequently.

I was about to come home and I got a telegram instructing me to stay. They had realized in Washington that they needed a bilateral ECA agreement with the new German government to replace those with the military governors. The original agreement had all been negotiated in Washington. Of course, I haven’t talked at all about the occupation statute and I should say a word about the occupation statute which is that in allowing the Germans to create this government, we had adopted a military government document which reserves various powers to the allied occupying authorities, which covered practically everything under the sun. The Germans were extremely unhappy about that because it had us looking over their shoulders and controlling all kinds of things. They made a great fuss about it and then we promised that we would review the occupation statute and revise it in due course. I got back to that one the following year.

One of the things that the allies had decided was that relations with the governments of the

occupying powers must be through the high commission because they couldn't have embassies play the capitals off against the high commissioners. So the agreement had to be negotiated in Germany, and of course there was nobody in Germany who knew about these things and here I was, so they said, "You stay on." I had never been in one of these negotiations before, but as I said at an earlier stage, the bilaterals basically had the substantive commitments to the objectives to the World Bank and the GATT and all things of that kind. They knew I knew about that so they figured I better hang around and participate.

Well, we didn't have any particular difficulty about that. The Germans were quite prepared to agree to that.

Q: Did they send over people from Washington to help you, or not?

REINSTEIN: They must have sent us a...

Q: Perhaps a legal adviser.

REINSTEIN: No, they didn't send a legal adviser. We had the bilaterals for the other countries as a model and so that was all we needed in practice, except for one thing that we put in and we got the draft. We said that they had a provision saying that the Federal Republic was to succeed to the rights and obligations of the military governors, and we had meetings with the Germans to go over the text and the Germans said, "Well, we would like to know what the obligations of the military governors are." So the negotiations were carried on by...

During the preparatory period we had a great argument in Washington about who would be head of the ECA mission because in other countries the ECA mission was headed up by someone who was independent of the embassy. Well we weren't going to let the ECA have an independent mission in Germany independent of the high commissioner and we had quite a fuss about that and then finally settled it. They would have a mission chief, but he would be the number two; and McCloy would be the official representative. Actually it turned out McCloy never did anything. Norman Collison in fact just ran things. Norman Collison had been there as the ECA man during the period of military government, except the military governors wouldn't pay any attention to him. I think he did what he was supposed to do, and what was done in the European Recovery Plan (ERP) countries, which is to ask them for their general economic recovery plan. If he asked the military governors for that, they simply ignored it. They didn't deal with him.

Under the ECA bilaterals, as I had mentioned before, you couldn't spend any of the ECA counterpart without the agreement of the U.S. government, and the way you got the U.S. government was to go through the ECA mission. Collison and I sat there innocently and asked the subordinates for a statement of what the military government obligations were, and at that point the door opened and the skeletons began falling out.

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: It was absolutely outrageous. The military governors had no obligations at all with regard to the use of the counterpart from disease and unrest aid. They were free to spend that any

way they wanted. So they were not in the habit of asking anybody's permission for anything.

They got themselves into financial trouble. They made a series of decisions, some of which were sensible and some of which were stupid. *[laughs]* They made some bad trading deals. They bought Swedish steel at a high price and then the price dropped and when they sold it in the German market they could only sell it for a competitive price. So they lost money on that deal. They made a very sensible deal in which they gave money to the German railways for the rehabilitation, but it didn't produce any revenue and so the railways couldn't pay them back. What happened was they ran out of disease and unrest counterpart. We were just pouring aid into Germany and here was a great big fat ECA counterpart. I forget how many – I'd say about a billion marks, I think. It was a very large sum because we were really pouring money into the country.

Anyhow, they had in their control structure something called the Allied Finance Committee, or something like that, which controlled the Bank Deutsche Laender. So what happened was they went around to the bank – and remember, this organization exercised control over the bank; they had the power of using occupation controls to control the bank – “You have an account here called ECA counterpart.” “Yes.” “Well,” said the Allied Finance Committee, “we'd like to make a deal with you. What we would like you to do is we're going to open up an account called” – I forget whatever the name was – “and you will put money into that and we will agree that we will not use a corresponding amount of the ECA counterpart account,” in effect, drawing down the ECA counterpart account by creating an account with nothing but a red balance.

Collison and I had a meeting and we agreed to supply the governments with information on the military government obligations. We had a meeting a week later and the American representative from this allied financial control board came and he disclosed what had happened – that 300 million marks of the ECA counterpart account had been spent in violation of the agreement with the United States. Well, we adjourned the meeting. Our faces were red and we decided to put a stop to this immediately. We were trying to figure out how to square this with the Germans. We then had another meeting and the American element of the high commission had rather large plans for the use of this money, particularly for housing which was very short. Putting housing in places where there was a need for workers and stuff like that, which was an important way of getting the economy rolling. Some rather large ideas of expansionary character.

We had another meeting and we discovered that in the intervening time the deficit had gone up by another hundred million marks and we had to adjourn the meeting again, to the great embarrassment of the Germans, and I said to the U.S. representative, “Look, you stop this right away. If you don't stop it I'm going to get on the telephone to Washington and tell them what's happening and they will send you a telegram and you'll get instructions on what to do.” Well, nobody wants to get slapped down by Washington in that way so we got into a great discussion with the Germans about this because what we wanted to do was for the Bank Deutsche Laender to in effect assume the deficit by carrying it on its books as an obligation of the German government and make the entire amount of the ECA counterpart account available for recovery purposes. And the Germans had cat fits because they were living under this recollection of two inflations and they were very difficult to deal with because they didn't want to do anything that might lead them in that direction. We had an extraordinary fight with them over this until they

finally gave in. This agreement was the first international agreement made by the new federal government of Germany.

I came back to Washington after this was all over, having delayed my return. I regret I didn't make a written report. I went around and saw people and what I said was basically that I had been around, I had had a look at what was going on, the people were competent; they knew what they were doing – I gave them very good marks – and I said everything is fine except for one thing, which is you've got all these questions about claims against Germany, German debts and things of that kind which are just out there unsettled, and the allied controls had adopted a statute of some kind saying that you couldn't pay any of these debts, and were getting a lot of pressure from the New York banks which were among the prewar creditors with Germany under the Standstill agreements, the commercial credits. So when I reported I said the one thing that bothered me about all this was that these unsettled claims and I said I did not see how the Germans could get back into normal economic relations with other countries without getting some understanding as to what you did about these things.

You see we had these trading monopolies which nominally carried on foreign trade in the name of the German military government. In practice, while trade was carried on by private firms, nominally the proceeds went to military government and therefore couldn't be attached by creditors. That was good up to a certain point, but now when you started up a German government that you don't check up on anymore, and one of the things that we particularly wanted to do in taking over the occupation was to liquidate these monopolies which were contrary to our policies. It seemed to me that it was essential to get a settlement of this. When I reported this to Willard Thorpe he said, "Are you saying that you think that Germany can pay back these prewar debts?" and I said to him, "Willard, the mark was stabilized in 1924, after the first war. In 1927 the Germans were doing pretty well." I said, "It'll take them a little longer this time, but I would say within four years they can begin servicing the debt." He said, "I think you're crazy." But he said, "If you think so, go ahead and try it." Nobody else took an interest in this at the head of the economic part of the department, so I began assembling working stiffs to work on debt settlement.

One of the things I should mention is that as a condition of putting in all the aid that we gave to Germany in connection with disease and unrest, we had got an agreement from the other two occupying powers that we had first call on Germany for repayment on German export proceeds. So we were sitting there in control. Nobody could get paid unless we got paid first. Between the disease and unrest amount and the Marshall Plan, we had a great big whack of money that the Germans owed us. So, in principle, nobody could get any payment except with the agreement of the U.S. government. So we had a veto over things. I began assembling experts to work on this. I sort of ran into some difficulties with the Treasury. I said to them, "What's your problem?" and they said, "Well, we don't see how we can defend this to the Congress." I said, "You don't have to worry about it. We will defend it to the Congress. What we want is your advice from a technical viewpoint."

Q: Speaking of the Congress, was there any pressure from that end to get on with the German debt settlement, or did it mainly come from the New York banks?

REINSTEIN: No, not really. You had two major kinds of debt, both of which had representation. There were the debts owing to the banks, the Standstill agreement. At one point, the German financial situation in '31 got so difficult they put off collections in the so-called Standstill Agreements. So the banks had large claims and they had a committee to represent them. And then you had the Organization for the Representation of Bond Holders, which represented bond holder interest in all foreign countries.

The banks had been making a great fuss. They made a fuss with the military government about getting paid. They had connections. They bondholders organization really didn't have much political clout. Anyhow, as I say, I pulled some kind of organization together. I got the Securities and Exchange Commission into it. I had some background on the personal matters, which was that my father-in-law had represented an estate whose assets had been handled by the trust department of the National City Bank. They had sold off a lot of good American investments and bought a lot of Latin American bonds, and German bonds too. During the time he was fussing with it and threatening to sue them for the handling of the estate, this coincided with the hearings on what became the Securities and Exchange Act, at which the skeletons all came tumbling out of the closet. They put the midget in J.P. Morgan's lap. *[laughs]* I remember one time they had him there. Anyhow, in the examinations they really went after the banks and they made them disclose their knowledge of these loans. The trust departments of the big banks had, in the first place, they made loans which they themselves knew, and from their records which were disclosed in the hearings, were not good. The second thing was they had gone to their various correspondent banks around the country and said, "Look, we have an allocation of a certain number of bonds – Chile or Peru, for example – lent us from somewhere or other – that's what you're going to take. You take that or you don't get any business from us.

What happened was that the trust departments in the banks did what City Bank did with this particular estate. They sold off good, solid investments and loaded up with these lousy loans from Latin America and the like. The trust departments were the same banks that were asking for preferred treatment to Standstill creditors. Second, there were provisions of all kinds of priorities and provisions under both the Dawes Plan and the Young Plan. So I said, "We're going to start off as the principal here but there aren't going to be any preferences. Everybody gets treated the same." We developed papers and I found no opposition in the American government. All I got was technical assistance from the FCC and the Treasury and so on, but there was no substantive interest. The State Department had a priority and we developed our instructions.

There were three stages of the settlement. The first stage was you had to get the German agreement to pay. That came up in connection with the revision of the occupation statute.

Q: Which they wanted very much.

REINSTEIN: Which they wanted very much. The story of the occupation statute revision goes back to June of '50.

Q: The occupation statute was approved in May of '49 and went into effect in September.

REINSTEIN: September, that's right.

We'll have to deal with the revision of the occupation statute as a subject. Basically what we did was we set up a tripartite working group in Germany. Now I was the number two in the fact of the matter, the operating guy. During the summer of '50 we worked out proposals for the joint occupation statute. We had very little input from the British. The main negotiations turned out to be with the French. My French opposite number was at that time head of the German department of the Quai and later became Foreign Minister. He was promised the ambassadorship to Washington but they gave him London instead.

He and I did a lot of the real tough negotiation, but we had a number of people working on specific technical problems. Some of these problems it was really very interesting how simple the solution could be. One of them was what did you do with the old... We had a political committee and we told the political committee, "Work on the old Reich treaties." So they sent a telegram asking for a list of all the Reich treaties, without clearing it with me. Arch Calhoun sent it off. I saw the telegram the next morning and I said, "What the hell are you going to do? When you get this list what are you going to do with it?" It annoyed the dickens out of the people in Germany. We sent another telegram canceling it. I came up with a very simple formula which was any treaty entered into by the Reich could be put back into effect by mutual agreement between the Germans and the other party. If the other party wanted a treaty to be restored and the Germans didn't want it, the matter should be referred to the high commission. Not a single case came up. Let people do what they want to do.

Some issues were not easy to agree with the British and the French, particularly not the British on some of them. I remember having dinner with my French colleague one time and we were discussing the British outlook and he says, "These British are strange." He and I had agreed that we better keep a thumb on relations between the Federal Republic and the communist countries. We would let them establish diplomatic and consular relations with all of the countries except the three occupying powers. They could have consular relations with us, but not diplomatic relations. But we wanted to keep a thumb on relations with the East. The British didn't enter any objection but control over foreign trade and foreign exchange; my proposal was on foreign trade. If they agreed to join GATT, and pending agreement on their entry, apply to GATT as a practical matter, and clear the thing with the Monetary Fund, then you could get rid of control of foreign exchange. Now, we had very complicated problems on other matters – internal restitution and treatment of refugees, and a lot of other things that gave us complicated problems – but we worked out quite a considerable easing.

Where we ran into a problem was on what was the international status of the Federal Republic.

Q: Ah yes. [Tape 13, Side B]

...the international status of Germany. Perhaps you could explain some of the difficulties and problems that arose in trying to settle that.

REINSTEIN: This became a very key issue in the revision of the occupation statute and our negotiations with the German federal government which was just newly established. One of the questions that it seemed to me, personally, had to be resolved if we were to carry out the policies

that we wanted to carry out, regarding Germany, that is the reintegration of Germany into the international community. Because this was basically the main thrust of the policies that we had agreed that we wanted to adopt with respect to Germany. That meant the restoration of German relationships with other countries in a variety of fields: economic, financial, and the like.

Q: Did we allow German representation abroad at that time, or not?

REINSTEIN: We began by allowing the Germans to have consular relations. In the occupation statute we did allow them to establish diplomatic relations with all countries except the three occupying powers. We were very insistent until the very end, until the treaties came into force in '55, that relations with the three western occupying powers be conducted through the high commission. In effect, you did have the development of diplomatic establishments, but they really weren't fully developed. Otherwise the Germans did have an office here and we talked with the German representatives. Wilhelm Grewe subsequently became their first ambassador. But substantive problems had to be dealt with through the high commissioner.

But as I say, what we wanted to accomplish was to reintegrate Germany into the international community. I think I've already mentioned that we wanted them to come into the Monetary Fund, the International Monetary Fund in particular, and the GATT; and to observe the rules of those organizations. Incidentally, they did escape control of the International Monetary Fund when they established the value of the deutschmark because that was done in agreement with the three governments and it was not done well and wisely. That may be worth a separate comment later because I think in effect the German mark was undervalued and has had a significant effect on their international trade relations in particular. It wasn't done for that purpose. I think that's worth a discussion because of the crises that we had to deal with.

In writing the revision of the occupational statute I proposed that we include some formula by which we would define what the international status of the new German government was. Now this got us into major negotiations with the French. I might say that in the whole negotiation in the interim governmental study group in Germany the British played no significant role at all. What was done was done in agreement between the Americans and the French, and to an important extent between me, personally, and Jean Sauvagnargues, who at a later time became the French Foreign Minister; who at that time was the head of the German office in the French Foreign Office, and reported rather directly – from as far as I could make out – to the Foreign Minister – Schuman. Schuman played a very key role in all of these things. He took a very direct interest and I knew on various things that Sauvagnargues was touching base with him directly. I didn't have any such problem because we had had the position developed in Washington and the problems that I had with dealing with Washington really involved such matters as how you dealt with refugees and things like that. George Warren was a kind of key figure and there was some specialized interest in Washington at that time. In general policy we had everything laid out and I reported fully what was going on in detail with regard to various subjects in a very voluminous set of telegrams.

Q: But you were working basically under Ambassador Douglas there at the time?

REINSTEIN: In principle, yes. At the beginning he took a significant role. A little later he kind

of dropped out. One of the things was he had physical problems. He had injured his eye. He left that job before we finished the negotiations the following spring and his position was superseded by the DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission).

Q: Julius Holmes?

REINSTEIN: Yes. I had known Julius for a long time and you get all these personal relations of confidence. If I had a problem Julius knew I would come and consult with him and he didn't have to second guess me or approve my telegrams or anything. Reporting telegrams all went from me. We had a special telegram series – TOSIG and SIGTO.

Q: You must have had legal help there, too.

REINSTEIN: I had two lawyers working with me; one was Covey Oliver and the other was Bill Bishop from the legal adviser's office, but I don't remember if either of them played a significant role. The French developed a very complicated concept that German sovereignty had been put to sleep by the defeat of the Germans. It was asleep so it couldn't be exercised by anybody. Well, it could be exercised by the allies because we had specifically assumed sovereign power. But they got themselves into a very complicated soft spot. We had very complicated negotiations.

We finally came up with a formula, which I believe I devised, which was designed to do three things. One was to assert that the western German government was the only legitimate governmental authority in Germany. In other words, to refuse to recognize the East German military regime. The second was to lay a legal basis for German relationships with other countries; and the third was to get at the German debt. The formula, which I think I basically devised and which was that the Federal Republic – and I think I remember the exact words of this; it can be checked – was the only government legitimately constituted in Germany. That denied the legitimacy of the East German government. "And capable of assuming the rights and obligations of the German Reich." What I had in mind in that second phrase was that they could undertake the treaty obligations of the German government in their relationships with other governments, excluding the three occupying powers; but also laying the basis for the acceptance for the responsibility for the debt. And the Germans saw that.

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: And we didn't quite finish all of the things that we had planned to do in the revision of the occupation statute in the summer of '50 because our target date for making our report to the two governments was something like the middle of September and the three governments decided to have an inter-allied meeting in New York in early September and so we were cut a little bit short and there were a few things on which... Basically what was happening was that Sauvagnargues and I were fighting with our bureaucracies in Washington and in Paris to get an agreement for some of the tricky things which were really domestic German matters, but of allied interest – like the treatment of refugees. We didn't have time to fight out everything with the bureaucracies, so our job was not quite complete but everything basically was there and we could report it.

Q: Excuse me, Jacques. Were there any German observers in London at these talks? Were they kept advised?

REINSTEIN: No. What happened was this was a discussion which was going on between the three allied governments as to what they wanted to do with Germany in the future. Therefore, it really didn't involve the high commission directly, although in the reporting process they were kept informed of what was going on. They were free to comment, but in practice did not really contribute anything.

Q: Chancellor Adenauer must've been very curious as to what was going on.

REINSTEIN: I'm talking about the allies. The Germans were not part of this in any way, shape, or form. They didn't come into it until we presented them with the revision of the occupation statute.

What happened was that the foreign ministers meeting was set for very early in September and we didn't quite get a chance to finish up, and also on the American side what was done was it was submitted directly to the Secretary of State by the secretariat, I think, without any opportunity for me to brief the Secretary on what we had accomplished and what issues remained to be resolved.

Q: This would've been Secretary Acheson at the time.

REINSTEIN: Secretary Acheson. The result was that the document was presented to the foreign ministers by the secretariat of the conference with a request that they resolve those issues which hadn't been resolved as yet in our negotiations. *[laughs]* They put the wrong question to the foreign ministers. Instead of putting the question to the foreign ministers of, "Here is what is proposed to be done. These are the major decisions that we are proposing that you make," they put all the technical questions to them. Dean Acheson got extremely annoyed at me, personally, and he said to me at one point, "I will love you someday, but not soon."

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: I never had an opportunity to sit down with him and say, "Mr. Secretary, this is what we have accomplished. Here are the main things that we have done, the basis that we have laid for future relations with the German government." Instead of that he was just given a series of nasty little questions that we hadn't been able to resolve and he got annoyed, but instead of getting annoyed with the secretariat, he got annoyed with me personally.

The foreign ministers received this document rather grumpily and they were rather nasty to the intergovernmental study group in their initial discussions. I think they finally realized that they had been wrong and in effect they apologized to us. In the final communiqué they had a provision expressing their gratitude to the intergovernmental study group on Germany for its accomplishment and the importance which their work had done in the agreement. But I remember we had a meeting of the study group representatives and we were mad as hell at the ministers. We were saying, "Who the hell do these ministers think they are to abuse us in this

fashion?" [laughs]

Q: [laughs] Was this in New York or London?

REINSTEIN: This was in New York. We met at the Waldorf-Astoria. Lucius Bloomberg, who ran the Waldorf, had a magnificent apartment in the top of the tower and he very graciously made that available to us. We had been there before in '46 for the peace treaties and what he did was he allowed us, for this rather brief meeting in September, he gave us the same facility. Anyhow, we met in that. He had an enormous living room that was the room in which the ministers' meetings took place. In the earlier meetings in '46 there was a wonderful photograph in Look magazine, I think, of the breakup of the '46 agreement of that room. As we were about to leave the British Foreign Minister, Bevin, said, "I have a question." We were already starting to leave and at that point the photographer took a picture and so Chip Bohlen and I were right in front of the camera and so we kind of dominated the picture.

Our proposals for the revision of the occupation statute were communicated to the Germans, who complained like the dickens about them. They characterized the thing as a small solution to the problems. What they wanted, in effect, was for us to turn them completely loose. That was exactly what we did not want to do. We wanted to lay down the terms on which Germany was to reenter the international scene. This was a basic disagreement between us and the Germans and it centered on that particular clause defining the international status of the federal government, which in effect committed – and that was why the Germans resisted – the Germans to negotiate on the debts, and they didn't want to do that. They went to the Bundestag and the Bundestag turned it down.

So what happened was that the high commission would then report back to the three governments that the Germans wouldn't accept the document and we hung in tough. Again, this being basically the French and ourselves simply saying, "No, we're not prepared to change this." The result was that the revision to the occupational statute, which we had agreed on in early September in New York, didn't go into effect technically until I think the following spring when the Germans finally accepted it. Germany accepted it but they then in effect saw the political advantage which we had built into the formula of saying the federal government is the only legitimate German government established in Germany. It didn't say it's the government of Germany; it's the only government legitimately established in Germany. They embraced that document. I think they called it the "Hallstein Doctrine," or something like that. Germans, in various things, took American ideas; took them over and pretended that they were people who thought them up. [laughs]

Q: Doctor Hallstein being the number two man in the German foreign ministry.

REINSTEIN: That's right.

That did then open the way to the establishment of diplomatic relations with governments other than the three occupying powers and the communist governments because – I can't remember the exact formula - we and the French had agreed that we wanted to keep control over relations with the commies. We were not prepared to let the Germans operate independently in that area.

That didn't bother the British. I remember that I had dinner with Sauvagnargues one time and he said, "The British are very strange people. They say in their relations with the Russians, 'the Russians can do whatever they want,' but then when it comes to foreign trade and foreign exchanges they say, 'This involves important matters. We can't let them do that.'" [laughs] It's an interesting commentary on the British, I must say.

Q: So no German ambassador in Moscow at the time?

REINSTEIN: Oh no. As a matter of fact, until Adenauer made a trip to Russia and established the beginning of relationships, technically those were all subject of our control and review and the Germans knew it. They pushed slowly, independently, to establish relations with the Soviets, but it wasn't until much later that we allowed them to have true relations with the communist countries.

We then moved on to establish new procedures for the German debt settlement. Meanwhile, of course the Korean War had broken out and one thing that we had agreed on in our policy document in early 1950 was one issue that we didn't want to deal with in the short run was German rearmament. When you were just starting off a new government, to have them get involved in military matters was not a good idea. That was the policy that we had thought we would adopt, but events took over and forced the issue. I have written of the role played by Hank Byroade in the formulation of our policy in that regard.

Q: Well with his military background he would've certainly been very good at this sort of thing. He was head of the Bureau of German Affairs at the time, wasn't he?

REINSTEIN: Yes. What happened was, I think as I mentioned earlier, we had this interim organization planned for the State Department take over of the responsibility of occupation, of which Bob Murphy was the head; and Byroade, who hadn't really been involved in these matters, but who impressed the State Department people extraordinarily as a person, was brought over and made Murphy's deputy. In the fall of '49 Murphy was named ambassador to Belgium and at that point Dean Acheson decided that he wanted to have Byroade run German affairs. That was when we had the reorganization of the Department, the establishment of the bureaus, and the Office of German Affairs was elevated to the status of a bureau – there were the other four geographic bureaus – and functioned as such for some years. At a later stage, at one point I was director of it, as a matter of fact. We might get into that later because we got into some policy issues. [laughs] But there was a gap between the departure of Byroade and the arrival of Jimmy Riddleberger as director of the bureau, during which time I was acting director of the German bureau and this was just the beginning of the Eisenhower administration and the difficulties that the State Department was having with Senator McCarthy and his man in the State Department.

Q: Scott McLeod.

REINSTEIN: Yes.

Q: Back to the question of arms for Germany and the Korean War.

REINSTEIN: In effect, what happened was that the American military was pressed by the Germans. The Europeans got scared to death by the Korean War because this was the first time where the troops had crossed the de facto lines of separation. They were afraid this presaged a Soviet invasion of Western Europe, which the Soviets were militarily capable of doing without effective resistance. The American military forces in Germany were one division and then elements of another division and the line of communications with our troops ran in front of the deployment of our troops so we had no position to effectively resist it.

The Europeans screamed their heads off for American forces and we did respond. We sent the 2nd Armored Division and another division over even though we were fighting the war in Korea. It was at that point that the French in September put forward an idea of using the Schuman Plan as a model for a European Army. The idea was put forward in the meeting in New York in September, but it was a decision which had to be taken by NATO and there was a NATO ministerial meeting in Brussels in December and the agreement, in principle, was made at that meeting, which I attended incidentally. I went from London and sat in on those. It was the only ministerial meeting that I actually fully attended. I went to something like eleven or thirteen meetings of the NATO council, but I never sat through a meeting except the one in Brussels.

At the Brussels meeting they accepted, in principle, the French proposal and initiated two negotiations. One was to set up the European Army which would carry on in Paris, and then a provision for the relationship with the Germans, which would involve political changes and define the status of military forces in Germany. Those negotiations were entrusted to the high commission. The State Department – the German bureau – wanted to have me carry on those negotiations and deal with them at the governmental level and I objected to that because I felt that the negotiations involved matters of such detail affecting all kinds of relationships with the Germans that we were incapable of dealing with them at that remove and that the high commission was better qualified to deal with them. In effect, the high commission spent the better part of two years negotiating on that subject and didn't do a very good job. *[laughs]*

Q: Was there German reluctance to consider the idea of rearming?

REINSTEIN: Not really, from my observation. I don't know. I think they had mixed feelings about it. They, I think, would have preferred to say – and you then have to say which Germans you're talking about. The SPD (Social Democratic Party) was headed by Schumacher at the time and Schumacher was a very belligerent fellow. He'd say, "Give us 200,000 men and we can take care of this."

Q: Well he'd been in a concentration camp.

REINSTEIN: But the idea that a German force of 200,000 men could take care of the Soviets was ridiculous. He was strongly for rearmament. The government was a coalition of the SDP and the vice chancellor of the government was from the SDP. I had talked with Brentano on this subject back in early 1950 in my office in the State Department, which leaked to a newspaper. We didn't have any security and I didn't realize there was a newspaper guy hanging out in the corridor and listening to us and wrote a story saying that we talked about the Germans part in

rearmament.

Q: Before the Korean War then, yes.

REINSTEIN: As an issue which we would eventually have to face. The Vice Chancellor was the highest ranking German who had ever come to the United States at that point. I think this was at the point where I was still working on my paper on the response to Byroade's request; I'm not quite sure. It was about February of '50. I did talk about what was politically necessary in Germany to provide a basis that we could live with for the creation of German forces. It was a very general discussion of what political conditions did you really need before you could take this thing on, and it was one we wanted to put off.

Q: How did he react? Was he shocked that you raised the question?

REINSTEIN: No, no. He understood what we were talking about, which was that we were in the process of trying to think out our policy toward Germany and that at some point the question would arise, 'what were the political conditions that you should look for in Germany that would enable you to begin to undertake that discussion'. No, he was not shocked. He recognized that as a legitimate political issue, which was a political issue for us, but also a political issue for the Germans because the Germans up to that point wanted the allies to protect them and they didn't want to get involved. The German enthusiasm for arming was not very great because one of the things involved was presentation of the German debt settlement to the Senate, which did involve substantive undertakings by the United States government – compromise of our claim and the like. I guess the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee had done its job properly. It's fascinating to me; we had no briefing of Pearson or Riddleberger. Riddleberger had had no connection. I guess he was director of German affairs then. But he had never had any connection with the negotiations at all and Pearson had been in and out but had not been a party to the very complicated negotiations we had with Wall Street and the like. But the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee apparently did their job because during the course of the hearing the Senators asked a question about every single major question which had arisen in the negotiations. To me it was absolutely fascinating that they put their fingers on every single issue that we had as a major point in the negotiations. We had good answers on every single one of those. Anybody connected with the negotiations could've answered. If I had testified, I could've testified in detail and told them exactly how we had handled it.

At one point a question was asked and neither of the people could answer it. One of the people who had worked for us on the delegation was Walter Louchheim from the Securities and Exchange Commission. Walter was in the audience and he stood up and said, "I think I can answer that question," and the senators all looked at him and he was asked to identify himself and he gave the response. But it was fascinating. They wanted to know, but they were not getting a response from the official representatives. Then after Walter gave his presentation they were satisfied. They were pleased. There was somebody who knew what he was talking about and told him what the answer was and the answer was a satisfactory answer. In spite of the mishandling of that, they approved the treaty.

That particular agreement was badly mishandled by the State Department. I don't know whether

I've said this before, but the principal witnesses were Warren Lee Pearson, who was then head of Trans World Airlines. He was the nominal head of the delegation and had participated actively at various times, but he had not been really a part of the handling of many of the visible issues. James Riddleberger, who was the director of German affairs, recently had been given that assignment, and who had had no connection with the negotiations at all. It was ridiculous to have those two people present the case for a treaty.

We did not have the customary preparation with the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee that we had in other cases, where we would go over the material and identify all the significant issues and the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee would make sure that senators asked questions about those issues, and we would make sure that the State Department representative – normally the Secretary of State – answered them so that there would be aware exactly what was being approved. That was not done in this case. Nevertheless, I assume that this was mainly the work of the staff but I would also give credit to the senators because during the course of the hearings they put their finger on every single major issue which had arisen during the negotiations, and they asked questions about it. We had good answers on every single one. We didn't present them very well in that hearing. Nevertheless, the interest in getting the treaties through was such, both on the part of American interests involved and German interests which were able to bring pressures to bear on one or two of the senators in ways that I didn't quite understand. Nevertheless, it turned out very well.

One interesting aspect of the treaty was that the Germans were concerned that the mark would decline in value against the dollar and they wrote in certain provisions which would cover that. In practical terms, later the dollar declined in value against the mark. *[laughs]*

Q: Yes.

REINSTEIN: And the issue arose to whether the Germans had to pay more than the nominal amounts in the treaty. As a matter of fact, I think that the way it worked out was that they did have to pay more because the way in which the exchange rates had fallen. The decline in the dollar was due to the very large expenditures which the U.S. was making for military purposes. There was a time when we still had fixed exchange rates, but the dollar was under extreme pressure at that time. Perhaps that takes care of the German debt settlement.

Q: I gather it satisfied all parties in many ways because it lasted.

REINSTEIN: We had a major difficulty in the negotiations with one key issue that almost wrecked the negotiations, which was the gold clause. The obligations, particularly under the Young Plan, debts were in fixed amounts with the gold clause in it. Because of the legislation which was pushed through at the beginning of the Roosevelt administration, the gold clause was abolished. It was made ineffective in American contracts. The result was that the Europeans were able to insist that they be paid the full rate. The Americans couldn't ask for that and the result was that the Americans got paid considerably less than the Europeans.

Q: So the British could ask for gold and get it from the Germans, but we couldn't. Is that it?

REINSTEIN: That's right. The obligations to pay were fixed in terms of gold. The net result was the British and the French got paid more than the Americans, and the Americans at one point walked out on the negotiations.

Q: Walked out of the debt negotiations in London?

REINSTEIN: Yes, walked out. They walked out. I remember I went up to New York and at some point Willard Thorpe, who was my boss, went up once and we had rather lengthy and very difficult discussions with the American representatives. They had an organization for representing the bondholders, which represented the holders of foreign bonds, and it was a very important and effective organization for some period of time. For all I know it still exists. But they actually walked out of the negotiations and the negotiations almost broke down. We finally persuaded them to return to the negotiations. In my view, as I said probably earlier in this discussion, I did not see how you could ever get the German commercial relations well established unless you dealt with this problem of the debts because the debt problem would overhang commercial payments.

Q: Well Jacques, I want to move on to something else now. You were in a sense a bridge on our German policy questions between Secretary Acheson and Secretary Dulles. You were active in both their administrations in regard to Germany. Could you contrast for me something of their approach to problems concerning Germany?

REINSTEIN: That's rather difficult to do, I think, because there is, if you go back and look at it, a continuity in American policy toward Germany. I think in the earlier stages of our discussion I have outlined for you how we developed a sort of general conceptual approach to dealing with Germany which covered everything except rearmament. I'm not sure to what extent we dealt with the armament issue and the creation of secure NATO military structure. We'd better go back and have a look at that and see how that's covered because that's a very major development and one that incidentally I have written up briefly in an appreciation of the work by Henry Byroade, who was the real brain behind it.

Q: That was a letter to the Washington Post, as I recall.

REINSTEIN: The letter which I wrote to the Washington Post was never published. Did I give you a copy?

Q: Yes, you did.

REINSTEIN: At any rate, we had a basic concept which we developed very early in 1950 which was understood and agreed by in the State Department. The State Department ran German affairs. The military got into it, of course, to an important extent in connection with the rearmament of Germany and the position of the military forces stationed in Germany, but they did not play a role in the political concept of our deal with Germany. It was very complicated. I don't know whether the name of Miriam Camp registers with you?

Q: Yes.

REINSTEIN: I remember Miriam saying one time she felt so sorry for the people who worked on Germany because every time we had a meeting on Germany the first half hour at least was spent by people from German affairs giving the background, which was always very complicated, and you had to understand the background before you could get to the substance of the problem. There really wasn't much question about our policy towards Germany in the executive branch because the issues that we raised this way went up to the cabinet level where all was approved and the Congress was in agreement with the policy.

As a matter of fact – I don't know whether we touched on this before; I think we probably did – when the Marshall Plan was in the process of development and the Europeans sent a delegation headed by Oliver Franks to Washington to consult with us on how to develop the program, there was no German representation because there was no German government. There was only military government and the military government was not represented. The State Department was initially rather hesitant about pushing German participation strongly because of concerns about the political attitude of the countries which had been invaded and maltreated – that's a mild term – by the Germans during the war. When the Marshall Plan legislation went to the Congress, the Congress was very insistent on full German participation in the plan because they had the sense that a significant German contribution in terms of production and trade was important. And they were right. Germany was the machine shop of Europe and the bad state of the German economy was a general drag on the European economy. The Congress was quite insistent that there be full German participation. Well, the participation only took place through military government until the formation of the German Federal Republic.

As I say, there was a sort of general agreement on how to deal with Germany. There were obviously criticisms. You can't have any good government policy that doesn't attract a certain amount of criticism and difficulty. A certain amount of it actually came from the press. I remember at one stage when I was director of German Affairs, talking with the New York Times about the coverage of Germany. I complained to them because it seemed to me that any time that anything came up – if it concerned a former Nazi – they gave it very broad, significant treatment. I said to them I didn't think that they were portraying what was happening in Germany accurately. I said if you pick up a stone, you find a worm or some unpleasant things underneath it and if you describe that, that's a factual statement but it's not an accurate description of the landscape. It seemed to me that they were digging up small things to bring into question the validity of the development of democracy in the Federal Republic by concentrating on these incidents involving former Nazis. The answer they gave was that the State Department was misleading the American people and they felt it was their duty to present the other side.

But by and large I'd say our policy toward Germany was a policy which was broadly accepted. It did not come under public discussion and public disagreement. At a later stage questions did develop as to whether we should maintain the level of forces that we had in Germany and whether we should reduce them or even remove them. Those issues were raised over and over again at various points. That was really at a later stage; and certainly in the earlier stages of the development of our policy toward Germany it was not a subject of great debate or disagreement. It was generally accepted. So, to come back to your question about the two men; in effect, Dulles continued the policy of Acheson. As a matter of fact, the Republicans had made during the

course of the campaign rather significant criticisms of the Democrats on various subjects and suggested that when they came in things were going to change. In practice, there really wasn't all that much change. I can't speak with knowledge, for instance, about Far Eastern policy, but I can only talk about our European policy. European policy was carried on exactly as it was.

I do need to make one point here – and I may have mentioned this before – which was that Dulles – and this is going back a long time and I think I've mentioned this in connection with the debates that took place over Austria at the Moscow meeting and then before. Dulles was convinced that the American people would never consent to the continued stationing of American forces of significant numbers in Europe. He kept looking for ideas about taking them out. I think, in fact, he backed away from that. But intellectually he was never really convinced that the American people would continue to support a significant American military presence in Germany and in Europe, and that we ought to get out.

Q: That's very interesting. I have never read that in any of the books about him or heard him ever speak about it.

REINSTEIN: He certainly voiced it vocally in meetings that I attended, and as a matter of fact, when he was Secretary on one occasion we were having a meeting in his office and we were on a different subject and we got to the end of that discussion and he said, "Well when are we going to take our troops out of Europe?". Things like that. He had a lot of the top people in the department, at least those concerned with Europe, sitting around the table and there was a kind of silence. Then the director of the Office of Regional European Affairs said, "Mr. Secretary, you can't do that," and he started arguing with the Secretary. I got into the argument and the two of us were arguing with the Secretary. Bob Bowie had not been in the meeting and while this discussion was going on he came in and sat down and he heard what was going on and he really sailed into the Secretary. Dulles was very fond of Bowie. I think he kind of looked on him as almost a son or something like that. I have never heard any officer ever speak to the Secretary the way Bob did on that particular case. He sailed right in with both fists and finally Dulles said, "Alright, I'll be good – for a while," [laughs] which meant alright, he wasn't going to push the issue then, but he was not persuaded.

I was going to say, you're quite right. These issues came up really in meetings in conversations and they're not reflected in any official papers.

Q: [laughs] Well, that's a very interesting story.

REINSTEIN: As people to work with, there are all kinds of things you might say about the two people, but your question really had to do with policy. I think the answer is that Dulles carried on the same policy. Of course he was not very popular when he became Secretary of State. The State Department had, I think it's fair to say, become quite emotionally involved with Acheson. Acheson had been there; he had held one job after another, winding up with everything. He came in as an assistant secretary.

Q: And he was under attack by McCarthy vigorously at that time.

REINSTEIN: He came in in 1941. He was assistant secretary for economic affairs; he was assistant secretary for relations with Congress; he was undersecretary; he left and then he came back as Secretary. One of the things that was very difficult when he came back as Secretary was everybody had been in the habit for years of addressing him by his first name. *[laughs]* It was hard to break that habit. I remember one time Chip Bohlen and I were sitting there in a meeting and he addressed him by his first name *[laughs]* and he corrected himself and said “Mr. Secretary.” He had been one of us in so many ways that when he came under attack, that attack wasn’t just against him, it was an attack on the State Department too and we were all emotionally involved.

I don’t know whether this is a matter of record or not, but it was in the days when we had the original building on 21st Street and there was this big open space behind it and he made his farewell speech to the staff. We all stood out there and it was a very emotional experience. About a week later Mr. Dulles came in as Secretary and he had a meeting in the same place. He addressed the staff and he said to us that he understood how we felt. He tried to tell us, “Look, you’ve got a new administration and you take their orders,” and he used a term that stirred up all kinds of ill feeling in the department; he said we should have positive loyalty, and that term “positive loyalty” was just like a firebrand. It made almost everybody angry. It didn’t make me angry because I had been a personal assistant to Acheson in his office back in 1941 and ‘42 – I had this long association with him – but my own feeling was this needed to be said. Maybe the phrase was unfortunate – he could’ve found a better way of saying it – but it had to be said. Unlike most of my colleagues in the Department, I did not find Mr. Dulles’ remarks offensive. *[laughs]* But as I said, people did know him – after all, he had been associated in one way or another – and I remember one of my friends saying John Foster Dulles was the only guy crooked enough to follow the same policy and pretend that it was a different one. Certainly, in terms of Europe, there was continuity.

Q: Differences in personality but not in policy, I guess you could say.

REINSTEIN: Let me add to that. The working relations between the people in the Department and the Secretary were not good.

Q: Now you’re talking about Dulles here?

REINSTEIN: Dulles, that’s right. I remember talking with Eleanor Dulles about this and she said people were kind of extraordinarily stupid. Why didn’t they send several people up to New York and go to his law office and sit down with him and say, “What kind of a guy is this?” and “How do you deal with him?” and so on. That would have been the sensible way to do this. The ease of working relations between the staff and Dulles was not a good, easy relationship. They didn’t thrust in; they had a hangover of loyalty to the previous administration, and to Acheson in particular. They didn’t work very well with him. I worked very well with him. I had an extremely good working relationship with him. I got along fine.

Q: Let’s move on now to, I believe, 1955, when you became director of the Office of German Affairs, an office which you held for a number of years. What were your principal problems as director there? We had competent ambassadors in Germany, I think, in Mr. Conant and

Ambassador Bruce. You were working for Assistant Secretaries Merchant and Elbrick during those years.

REINSTEIN: The principal problem which we faced at the time – I guess you have to go back; it isn't '55 which is significant, '54 is the really key date in the development of our European relations. And that was the date of the collapse of the European Defense Treaty.

At the risk of going back and repeating some of the things that we've said, we can eliminate. The issue of German rearmament arose after the outbreak of the Korean War, which was the first time that the communists had breached the de facto lines which the troops had come to at the end of the war. That got the Europeans very excited. They were afraid that the Soviets would invade Western Europe and they were screaming for American reinforcements. The American military didn't want to send any forces to Europe. They were unenthusiastic about having forces committed there anyhow. The pressures were very strong and we did send some significant reinforcements in 1950.

The military took the position that Europe was not defensible without German participation and if they were going to commit forces of significance to Europe they wanted to have German contribution. How to handle that was the brilliant conception of Hank Byroade, who came up with this idea of the integrated NATO force under American command, which eventuated in the creation of the NATO military structure. The concept of a European defense force of the kind the French had proposed was approved by the North Atlantic Council in Brussels in December of 1950. Negotiations got under way in Paris and they went on for several years in a very complicated way. There was considerable annoyance on the part of the people who were not involved; the Americans and the British said things weren't getting done. They spent an awful lot of time developing a very complicated structure for the European defense community, which was not well conceived, I think, because as I recall in effect it called for the creation of a military force without accompanying political structure. That was a failed era, I think, because it meant that you tried to get all your safeguards into the military structure. It got very complicated. Acheson and Eden fussed and fussed and finally great pressure was put on the European group to come to some conclusion.

I was in and out of those negotiations in the period of '51 and '52 peripherally because I was involved in two related issues. One of them really had to do with the German rearmament and the other one the responsibilities. The one that was related to the German rearmament was a discussion of what armaments the Germans would be permitted to have. We had a negotiation in London; we had actually two negotiations carried on simultaneously in '51, I think, one of which had to do with limitations on German forces; what equipment they could have. I was the head of negotiations with General Carter Magruder, later commander in Korea, as my chief military adviser at the larger delegation. The American military didn't come up with any significant imaginative ideas about it. [laughs]

The other negotiation had to do with the phasing in of the financing of the European army. At that particular time our forces in Europe, in Germany, were being supported by occupation costs. When a European defense community would be established it would have a budget and that budget would be responsible for arming the Germans, the Germans would have to contribute to

that, and that would mean that there would be reduction in the funds available for the support of the allied forces in Germany. We had a separate discussion on how to phase the occupation force out and the European budget in. Those negotiations took place in London and they didn't really get anywhere very much. There was a three power foreign ministers meeting in Paris and I just cut off these negotiations and went down to Paris to see what I could do with the foreign ministers.

Q: Our foreign minister was still Acheson or was it Dulles?

REINSTEIN: Acheson.

There was a meeting of the ministerial council in Rome and we went down there and on the side the French and the British and I worked out a formula with which we tried to reconcile these conflicts. It was really a very curious kind of thing. One difficulty I had with dealing with Acheson was that when these major matters came up, somehow or other I was never allowed to brief him ahead of time, which got us into a certain amount of difficulty at various times. Apparently, in this particular case, there had been some discussions. We had a very informal meeting at the American embassy in Rome with Dean Acheson and Schuman. The British and I had worked out the formula, agreed with the French, actually negotiated the thing in French, and then he and I went off and made an English translation and when they got the English translation they didn't like it very much, and then we translated it back into French. We had a meeting at the French embassy. It was in one of the marvelous buildings in Rome, one of the great palazzi. When we brought it in it involved the use of grammar which we hadn't used in some years and we weren't sure of our grammar. *[laughs]*

Q: In French?

REINSTEIN: Yes. So we presented this draft to our French colleague. *[laughs]* You know, the French were absolutely wonderful. What he concentrated on was putting it into beautiful French, not focusing on the substantive changes that we made, and we wound up with a text that was recommended...well, we submitted that informally to the foreign ministers. Well that evening we had a meeting and there had been no discussion at all on the American side about what this was all about. This was something that I had been working on for a couple of months and there was a tough question about involving significant amounts of money, and no opportunity to talk with the Secretary of State about it at all.

We got into this tiny little meeting room and Acheson said that he got this draft but he didn't particularly like it. The French number two was Herve Alphand and Alphand said, "Well, why doesn't Mr. Reinstein explain this." So they all turned to me and I explained how the Americans and the British obviously wanted to keep as much of their occupation costs as possible. The French were in a sort of different position because while they were getting occupation costs they were going to be shifting over to this different financial system, so this involved conflict. I explained how we had attempted to resolve the conflict and then come up with a formula. At that point Herve Alphand said, "Well the French attach no importance to this point at all." So where did that leave you then, because presumably we had been trying to negotiate a compromise between the British, the Americans, and the French and the French said they weren't really

concerned about it.

At that point Eden said he thought this was really a very bright solution that these young fellows had come up with and so he defended our proposal. They sat around; I remember one of the things – Eden got kind of hungry and somebody went up and got a candy bar for him *[laughs]*. Anyhow, he supported the proposal of the experts, the French said that they weren't interested, the Americans said they didn't like it; but they didn't come to any conclusion. So, in effect the proposal was adopted with the support of one foreign minister and was sent off to Germany as guidance *[laughs]* even though the other two foreign ministers hadn't indicated that they had any interest in it at all.

Q: And Mr. Acheson just sat there and didn't do much?

REINSTEIN: It was one of the strangest meetings I've ever been to. It went off and the negotiations proceeded.

Then early in 1952 we had a NATO ministerial meeting in Lisbon and it was at that meeting that Greece and Turkey were admitted to the alliance. The subject of the financial negotiations had been sent to the allied high commission in Germany to discuss with the Germans. While we were there we got a German proposal. It came in something like a Friday to all three delegations. The German proposal was absolutely unspeakable. The French and the British went off for the weekend and I stayed in Lisbon and worked on redoing the German proposal. What I did was a technique I've used in other cases of taking the form of a proposal, so that superficially it looks attractive, but substantively putting in your own position. I worked out a counterproposal.

We were not organized in any way at all. Somehow I guess we passed our paper around to the British and the French – I don't think we had any discussions during the day – and they decided they would have a meeting of the foreign ministers. The foreign ministers went and had dinner at the British embassy and they decided they were going to have a meeting after dinner. This was the darnedest meeting I think I've ever been to. I walked in and I was met at the door by Eden. He put his arm around my shoulder and said, "Come on over and have a drink." He said, "Am I going to catch hell when I go back to London because I have agreed to transfer the headquarters of NATO from London to Paris." Anyhow, we had drinks and we went into the living room. There was no table. We were not organized by delegation. So there were foreign ministers here, experts there, and we had an extremely disorderly discussion in which experts and ministers were arguing with each other. Instead of having the normal setup with the ministers at the table and the advisers behind, they were spread all over the living room and they were arguing back and forth. At one point Acheson, who had dug into this issue at an earlier stage and didn't understand it, made a proposal that would have gotten us into a lot of trouble – and I was over on the other side of the room and I went over and I grabbed a chair and I sat down next to him and I said, "Mr. Secretary, look, this is going to get us into all kinds of trouble, this proposal that you've made. Get out of it." It got him off of it. We carried on this discussion of the drafting of the document in this disorderly way and finally came up with a draft.

It was agreed that they would send this to the Germans with a more or less ultimatum. *[laughs]* I had never had this experience before, but the three foreign ministers were really very pleased

with themselves. They thought that this meeting in Lisbon had been a great success and they more or less dictated the message to go to the German cabinet saying that it was an extraordinarily successful meeting and they hoped the Germans *[laughs]* weren't going to spoil everything by refusing to agree to the arrangements which we were proposing, and they were sending this document and they wanted a positive answer to it by five o'clock the next afternoon. This was around about ten o'clock in the evening.

We did not have any kind of mechanical communication between Lisbon and Bonn and so the only way I could get it there was to have it on a OTP, one time pad, which, as you probably know, is a very slow process, and then take it to the military and have them send it in their code to be delivered in Bonn and it would be headed to McCloy at nine o'clock the next morning. By the time I was able to get this worked out through the code people there, my heavens, it was about three or four o'clock in the morning. I remember carrying this to where our military contingent was – this was early February and it's a beautiful time in Lisbon; soft air and flowers in bloom and absolutely quiet. I remember carrying it to this installation and giving an instruction on sending it. I doubt whether our message got there. Probably the British got through or something.

The next day in the morning there were NATO meetings and then in the afternoon the three foreign ministers got together at the French embassy and we had a meeting room there and we dealt with a variety of things. I had set up arrangements for publicizing this agreement if it went through and I had to give the signal to USIA (United States Information Agency), I guess it was, or whatever organization we had at the time, to release the document I had drafted because we wanted to take credit for it. Anyhow, we had a meeting of the three foreign ministers and they had various things that they took up. Then they didn't have any other business that they had to transact and they all arranged to leave later, so they just sat around the room chatting. It was absolutely fascinating. Eden read his dispatch box and said, "Here's an interesting telegram from Cairo. Read this," and he was handing it out *[laughs]* for his colleagues to read.

Q: No worries about security there, right?

REINSTEIN: No. Schuman, Acheson and Eden really were friends and they enjoyed each other's company. It was fascinating.

Schuman said, "You know, I think we really got on top of the communist problem." There had been a strike by the communist trade union which did not have an economic basis – it was purely political – and they broke it. And he said, "I think we now are on top of the situation," and he gave that analysis. It was absolutely fascinating to listen to.

Q: Yes.

REINSTEIN: Then Eden said, "I wish somebody would explain the Korean negotiations. I cannot understand them. So Acheson sat back and he gave – I was fascinated; I would've loved to have somebody explain this – a detailed explanation of the entire Korean armistice negotiation. What the issues were, what the status was, and where he thought they would come out in the end. To me this was extraordinarily fascinating because remember when Eisenhower

was elected he said, “I will go and I will settle this,” and so on. Having heard Acheson’s explanation in February, where we came out – somewhat over a year later – was just about where Acheson had predicted. That’s really fascinating.

We got our answer back from the Germans. The deadline was five o’clock. We got it back at four o’clock. *[laughs]*

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: They accepted and so I had to run out and leave the meeting to let the press release go and I came back and I slid into my seat and nothing was happening. Nothing happened. They were just talking. Perry Laukhuff, in German Affairs, was there and I said, “What’s going on?” He said, “Nothing. It’s all over.” They had still had one thing that they were going to settle and apparently they had settled it while I was out of the room. It was rather interesting because these people enjoyed each other’s company so much that they were really reluctant to take leave from one another. That was that.

The negotiations for the European Defense Treaty went along and they never seemed to come to an end. Two things happened. The British and the Americans were getting more restive about the fact that nothing was happening about German rearmament. We were still fighting the war in Korea, of course subject to these two military pressures of having to have forces of some kind in Europe, adequate for the purpose to confront the Soviets, and to carry on the war in Korea. The other thing was that a good deal of disenchantment had developed in France about the idea and you had a change of government with Mendes-France coming in, who really was basically unsympathetic to the idea at all, but who, when he came in, said, “I am going to make sure that there is a vote taken and we get a decision on this issue.” Various things happened, but basically two things happened, I think. One was that Mendes-France took a series of positions which tended to be contrary to the positions which the French government at taken, and which raised questions about the basic validity of the concept of the agreement. The parties agreed to bring the negotiations to a conclusion and I do remember sitting in on a telecom in Washington in which I suppose we were getting reports from Paris because the negotiations were going on in Paris, although there were side negotiations also going on in Brussels at the same time. I was never quite sure how those related to one another.

Q: Brussels was the seat of the Five-power Defense Commission in which the British and the Low Countries and France were at heads.

REINSTEIN: I forget the name of that. It had a small secretariat, but it didn’t amount to anything.

Q: But they used that later as a stepping stone to move Germany into NATO.

REINSTEIN: Well, they used it because they had to find a place to put some things.

What happened was that at the end there were a vast number of unresolved issues and they simply swept them under the rug. They didn’t resolve them at all. So the document which they

signed was an absolutely unworkable document. I don't think the basic concept ever really made much sense. The French negotiators, in an effort to tie the Germans down, put so many powers into the supranational organization that it in effect destroyed a great deal of the independence of the French military. So the agreement as it emerged was unsatisfactory to France and was rejected by the French parliament. It all collapsed. We had worried about that. Three of us went secretly to London in June to talk with the British about what we would do if the negotiations collapsed.

Q: Was this June of '54 or '53?

REINSTEIN: This was June of '54 and we wanted to keep it secret so Cecil Lyon and I and a lawyer – Ben English, I think it was – all went to London and we all went by different routes. Cecil went directly, I went to Paris and then quietly went over, and Ben English went by way of Brussels *[laughs]* and when he got to Brussels he had great difficulty getting to London. And we had these meetings with the British to try and figure out what to do if the negotiations collapsed. They didn't have any ideas and we didn't have any ideas. Apparently Eden himself, or somebody on his staff, came up with the idea of what was the ultimate solution of bringing Germany into NATO. The tricky part was that the EEC treaty involved commitment by the Germans not to have any ABC weapons, and you had to find a place to put that. And that was what was put in the Brussels treaty, which had originally been written as an anti-German treaty *[laughs]*. They made the Germans a party to it and they incorporated these undertakings in the western European treaty which continues in effect and has got a small, ineffective secretariat. Every once in a while it has a meeting just to indicate that it still exists or something. Every once in a while they think maybe they should do something about it, but they never seem to go anywhere. We found ourselves faced with a crisis; so that was a major crisis and the biggest crisis that we had confronted, I think, until that time.

Q: Now German rearmament reoccupied the countries for a number of years and I gather you were at foreign ministers conferences where this was discussed.

REINSTEIN: I attended all the meetings of the three foreign ministers practically – I think I may have missed one or two – and all the meetings with the Soviets up until '56, when I guess was the last one I attended.

One of the problems was just to find the time and place to meet. This was sometimes the problem where you had these NATO meetings and the conference facilities were completely used by NATO so that when you wanted to have meetings of a bilateral character, or a tripartite meeting, it was in a place where one of the occupying powers was not the host. Finding a place to meet was not very easy and fitting in a time, sometimes doing it at lunchtime. You'd be eating lunch and keeping notes while the ministers were talking and if you got a bite in here and there you were lucky.

I remember a delegation meeting where we were discussing how to handle negotiations with the Germans and part of the problem was the carry over of occupation costs. We had the controller of Düsseldorf there, a brigadier general – a real accountant type. This is getting away from the business meeting, but it's a reflection on Acheson and how these things get done.

Q: It gives it flavor, yes.

REINSTEIN: Acheson said, "Well, I'll tell you, here's the way we'll solve this problem," and he came up with a very neat solution, and the controller said, "The trouble is there isn't just one carryover; there are two carryovers." "Well," said Acheson, "alright. We'll take the following way..." and when he finished his exposition the controller – General Binns, his name was – said, "Well, Mr. Secretary, the trouble is there aren't just two carryovers, there's three carryovers."

Q: [laughs]

REINSTEIN: And that's when Acheson said, "Well I'm not sure we should try and deal with this." *[laughs]* I don't know whether it was his background in the Treasury or what, but anyhow he liked to dive into some of these things and solve them. He was given to solving problems, I guess. *[laughs]* I had to tell him off. He accepted what I had to say to him.

The negotiations went on and on and on for some time in 1955 and finally we reached an agreement but we discovered that Schuman was no longer there.

Q: The French foreign minister?

REINSTEIN: He had gone off and gone to bed, *[laughs]* leaving the matter to Sauvagnargues.

Anyhow, we were all set to endorse this but there was no Schuman. So Eden got quite annoyed; he said, "Well here I've been sitting up and he's got up to go to bed. Someone go and get him out of bed and get him to approve this thing." So Sauvagnargues went off and came back after a while with Schuman's approval. I remember, maybe it was some considerable time later, I was talking Sauvagnargues and I recalled this particular incident. I said, "I have a question for you," and he said, "What?" I said, "Was he wearing a white nightshirt?" and he said, "No, he was wearing pajamas." *[laughs]*

Q: Ah. Papa Schuman.

REINSTEIN: In point of fact, that put into place one piece of negotiations being carried on in Bonn, but none of those negotiations ever came to a conclusion because of the fact that the French didn't ratify the treaty.

Q: The European army treaty?

REINSTEIN: Yes. We had the signing in the spring of '52.

Q: In May of '52 there was the signing in Bonn.

REINSTEIN: Yes, I was there. Before that, I can remember in the last stages of the negotiation of the economic treaty we had a major telecon. A group of people at one end and a group of people at the other end sending messages back and forth and flashing on the screen.

Q: Oh. yes. A telecon, yes.

REINSTEIN: A telecon, yes. T-E-L-E-C-O-N. We had a large group in Washington, of which I was a part of, and they were reporting to us, because pressure had been put on the negotiators to wind up the negotiations, how the negotiations were being brought to a conclusion. It was very clear to me. I had followed the negotiations in general terms.

Q: Now at this time you're back in London, are you?

REINSTEIN: Let's see. I was in Washington at that time.

Q: After Lisbon what happened to you? Did you go back with the secretary to Washington?

REINSTEIN: We went back to Washington. In the fall of '51 there was a Paris meeting which was a three power meeting. Then we had a NATO ministerial meeting in Rome, and I was at both of those. I was the principal negotiator on two working groups that were supposed to work on solutions for dealing with the German armed forces. One of them was to deal with the handling of the occupation costs; and the other one was to deal with the military limitations which should be placed on the German armed forces to prevent them from having an independent military capacity not subject to allied control. In the fall of '51 I was sent back to London to work on both of those. I was in London, I went to Paris. They had a meeting in what was later my office when I was in the embassy. *[laughs]* I had authority to travel and so I invited myself to go to the meeting and I sat down by Byroade and he wasn't aware of the fact that I was there. At some point I leaned over to say something to him and I said, "Hank," and he turned around and looked and he said, "What the hell are you doing here?" *[laughs]*

Q: [laughs] Talk about a surprise.

REINSTEIN: I had these two enormous delegations which I managed to get rid of. I had advisers from a half a dozen government agencies, including Defense and Treasury. I figured nothing was going to happen with a delegation of that size, so I'd get rid of the delegations.

I went down to Paris, taking Dan Margolies with me, and then on to Rome. We began by struggling with this question of finding a formula for agreement to reconcile the allied requirements and the EDC treaty requirements financially. We worked out some kind of a formula where – it was just four of us and we met in the French embassy in Rome and we carried on our negotiations in French. The French gave us a proposal which we negotiated on, and then the Brit and I went off to put this into English and after we translated it into English we discovered that we didn't like some aspects of this. So we worked out language that we thought was acceptable, but then we had to put it in French.

Q: "We?"

REINSTEIN: The Brit and I. This involved getting into past subjunctives and things of that kind, things we hadn't touched on in our use of the French language for some time. Anyhow, the next

day we produced our draft with apologies for errors that we may have made in the grammar. This is all rather typical of the French – they’re always fascinated by the beauty of the language – and so Valéry sat there making the language beautiful and not paying attention to the substantive changes we had made. *[laughs]* So he produced a paper in perfect French, which we then did in English text, and we had a very small ministerial meeting that night at the American embassy in Rome and I had had no opportunity, again, to talk with Acheson about this, to discuss what it was that we’d done. We got into a small room at the embassy. There was only a handful of us.

Q: Now this was not a NATO meeting? This was just a meeting of the three powers?

REINSTEIN: The three foreign ministers. *[laughs]* One of the things that I remember about that meeting was that Eden got hungry and had to go out and get a chocolate bar.

Q: [laughs] In the land of good pasta, too.

REINSTEIN: I don’t think he was eating pasta anyhow. *[laughs]*

We were at the Villa Margarita in Rome and...

Q: Excuse me, how could the three ministers meet there and not include the Italian foreign minister? Did he make any noise about that?

REINSTEIN: The Italians made noises at various times about participating. They felt that they were left out. We did have provisions for periodic consultation with the Benelux countries, but the Italians didn’t fit in anywhere. They eventually made a political issue of this. So we set things up so that we had the three powers and then we had another committee which included the Germans, a four power working group, and we had the Italians and the Benelux; and they were allowed to come in and talk to them. But in a sense it had a rather curious result because at some point this committee came up with a proposal and it had to be considered. The proposal probably was never adopted. It was discussed, I think in the NATO meeting, and there was some criticism of it; and the Italian Foreign Minister said he thought that the experts had come up with a very sensible proposal and defended it. An issue was made of this in the Italian parliament and the government fell as a result. *[laughs]* So the major accomplishment of this particular committee was to cause the fall of the Italian government. *[laughs]*

Q: The crisis of the Italian government.

REINSTEIN: The negotiations were carried on in Paris in those temporary buildings that they had at the Trocadero, in which I had sat in at some point, but not as a delegate. But because of my need to deal with the tripartite negotiation I had to follow and know what was going on in the European army negotiations. When we had this telecon it was obvious to me that what they had done at the end of those negotiations was to leave a vast number of major issues unresolved, simply swept under the carpet.

Q: You say “they.” The French?

REINSTEIN: The negotiators of the European army treaty.

Q: Oh. Among the six countries that were negotiating. Alright.

REINSTEIN: They just swept a whole series of major issues under the carpet. I suppose if they had decided to go ahead they would've had to deal with these issues at some point. I can't remember how the treaty was drafted in terms of decision making. It probably required general agreement so that they were simply postponing the issues and going through the form of making an agreement. The trouble was the French, in their desire to pin the Germans down, put in so many limitations that applied to everybody – they applied to French forces as well in Germany, that the solution was unacceptable to the French parliament. For a long time they wouldn't even submit the agreement to the French parliament and when they did they did so knowing, and practically insured themselves, that it would be rejected. This was in '54, in that crisis.

In between was the German debt settlement. Do we have time for that? We'll deal with the German debt settlement, which is a subject that we can cover sequentially as a unit.

All right, let's talk about the German debt settlement. You'll remember that I said earlier that one of my initial reactions to the several months that I had spent in Germany in the fall of 1949 was that things were going very well. I didn't mention the general economic situation, but that was progressing quite favorably. This was before the German economy received two stimuli in the following year. One was the Korean War because the Germans benefited from the fact that American production had to be geared to war production and they were able, with Marshall Plan aid, to take advantage of the markets, which otherwise the Americans might've held. The second thing which I think I'd like to deal with first – maybe it doesn't fit into the time sequence, but I did mention it earlier – is the fixing of the rate on the deutschmark.

During the occupation, as you probably remember, there was no exchange rate. When we first went into Germany we had a rate which we set against the mark for troop pay purposes, which tended to become a kind of exchange rate, and then it was more or less carried over, I guess, at the time of the currency reform. So it in effect continued. But I think it's worth spending a few minutes recalling how German foreign trade was carried on. It was carried on in principle through state trading agencies. In the case of the bizon the famous JEIA, Joint Export Import Agency, and the comparable and cooperating office in the French zone. For practical purposes they eventually worked together closely.

One effect it had was to make export proceeds. Trade was carried on by German firms. In principle, the money went to these government agencies and therefore was beyond the reach of creditors to attach. The Americans played an important role in this because we, as the principal supplier of aid to Germany, had exacted an agreement between the British and the French that we had first call on German export proceeds for the satisfaction of the German debt to us for our aid. That was incorporated in some legal document. I accepted the fact that it existed but I don't know where it existed. Nobody ever disputed it.

That was not, in our view in Washington in the economic side, a very efficient way of carrying on trade. It was not in accordance with our principles. We were not convinced that the results of

this were highly efficient. I think the whole concept ran counter to our state principles. So the abolition of those agencies was a kind of unspoken objective of our policy.

Q: Those agencies being JEIA and its French counterpart?

REINSTEIN: Yes. JEIA was really the one we were after. There were several organizations set up by the military government that we were anxious, for political and policy reasons, to get rid of. That system was kind of backed up also by a piece of bizonal legislation which precluded the payment of prewar debts. So you had a system in which domestically, in Germany, you couldn't make a claim and internationally you couldn't make a claim on the export proceeds.

Q: Who put that into effect? Was that done by the German laender, or by the high commissions?

REINSTEIN: No. This was a piece of bizonal legislation.

Q: Which means that it was done by the two governments, British and American.

REINSTEIN: The military governments. Military government legislation.

Q: We forbade them to pay foreign debt.

REINSTEIN: Yes, that's right. It suspended pay. I never saw the law. I simply knew that it existed.

That was not a situation that you could continue to live with and there were pressures to move on from that. One of the principal sources of pressure on the American government was the New York banks, which were Standstill creditors in 1931, I guess, when the intergovernmental debts were suspended by the Hoover moratorium. The New York banks agreed not to collect on their extensions of credit to German banks. The Standstill Agreement, it was called. The banks had been pressing the military government to do something about that, to let it be paid.

When I began to deal with this situation it seemed to me that what you should not do was to have special treatment for particular classes of creditors. There would be pressures for that. We were getting into the Standstill creditors claim that they would be first in line. And then you had special provisions under both the Dawes Plan and Young Plan loans for the benefit of the bondholders, and those raised a problem for the United States because those agreements had gold clauses and gold clauses were not enforceable in the United States. So if you gave effect to the gold clause in the Young and Dawes Plans loans, the European creditors would be favored at the expense of the American creditors.

Beyond that I had a certain amount of personal exposure to some of these issues through family connections. My father-in-law was a lawyer and among his lawsuits was one against the National City Bank in connection with their administration of an estate. They had done – and this was not just that one case, this was repeated over and over and over again – what they had done in this particular case was they had sold off very good American investments. The trust department of the bank administered the estate. The trust department sold off very good American investments

and invested the money in Latin American bonds, which the bank was selling, and German bonds and the like, all which were defaulted on. So the value of the estate was considerably reduced. My father-in-law brought a suit against the National City Bank and the directors of the bank, individually, on behalf of the estate for mal-administration. This came along just at the time of the hearings on what turned out to be the Securities and Exchange Act.

Q: In the '30s, yes.

REINSTEIN: Ann, my first wife, was working in my father-in-law's office as his law clerk. As the hearings progressed they got admissions from the banks that they knew that these loans were no good. I must say that my father-in-law got a very handsome settlement from the National City Bank on that case. Through that particular case, and I guess maybe otherwise, I had learned that in effect what happened was that the New York banks which sponsored these loans pushed them off onto various of their correspondent banks around the country and said, Look, your quota for such and such is so much. You take that or you don't get any more business. So the general effect of this was that they had palmed these no-good bonds off on the widows and orphans around the country, which was the kind of thing that the Roosevelt administration was trying to prevent in the Securities and Exchange Act, and was the kind of thing I got exposed to in the early New Deal.

Anyhow, we had the gold clause, we had the special position that the New York banks, which were responsible for these bonds, were also the ones who were asking for first preference in Standstill credits. My reaction was, oh no, you don't. One of the basic principles, it seemed to me, was that – and also through experience and negotiation you know how people try to get special preferences and the pressures which are put on say a government like the Truman government, one way or another to go along with the special preference of one kind or another.

Q: By the way, bonds that were say issued by places that are no longer German, were they declared worthless?

REINSTEIN: Well, we didn't attempt to deal with the East German bloc. We were dealing only with the obligations of the German Reich and entities which had a continued existence in Germany.

Q: In the Federal Republic of Germany.

REINSTEIN: In the Federal Republic.

Q: And West Berlin presumably was included.

REINSTEIN: I assume so. It must've had Berlin in it. Berlin involved some special problems. I can't remember what they were because a lot of the banks had their headquarters in Berlin, of course. Berlin had to be included, I think for that reason.

Anyhow, the sort of general position that I took was no special treatment for anybody. Everybody comes in and gets treated the same; and that means that your meetings are open and

everybody is there and everybody sees what is going on.

Q: Now these are the debt meetings that were open?

REINSTEIN: Yes. This was my proposal, my position.

The British screamed their heads off. We began these discussions in the spring of 1951 after the Germans accepted the revision of the occupation statute, with the understanding that debts would be dealt with. What I proposed to do was that we have a conference at which everybody would be represented, but that before the conference it would be organized and outlines of settlements and things like that would be worked out among the three western governments with a commission that they would set up. The British didn't like this at all, of having everybody in. They said it would be crazy, this mass meeting. The French went along with this I think because their interest in the Dawes and Young Plan loans perhaps. Anyhow we did have initial difficulties with the British. But if they wanted to get anything done they had to agree with us because we were in the driver's seat. Not that we took undue advantage of our position, I don't think, but we made it very clear that there would be no agreement unless it were acceptable to the United States government, and the United States government was sitting there with a claim against Germany for I think it was three to four billion dollars.

Q: And we were by far the largest claimant.

REINSTEIN: We were the largest claimant and obviously we were not going to collect all of that. But without concessions on our part there couldn't be any settlement. So we were in a position to protect the forward American interest.

We set up a preparatory commission, tripartite, which sat in London. The American representative, who was there only part of the time, was Warren Lee Pearson, who at the time was the head of Trans World Airlines. And then I managed to get a Treasury expert, who has just died recently, John Cotter. John, at the time, was an outside representative controller, a fellow who was watching the Bank of Athens. If you go back over a period of years, you discover that at various times people have had to do something to grease and reorganize their finances. There's a history going back to the '90s at least, usually involving some kind of international control. John was the fellow who was supposed to watch the Greeks at that time. I guess I had known him vaguely, but I had a very high opinion of him and I thought the kind of background he had would be helpful. To find somebody who really could work on this and who would be possibly available was not easy. But I managed to pry him away from that job in Athens and install him in London. He played a very important role. .

Q: Was that the conference that Dick Kearney was with you?

REINSTEIN: Yes. Dick was our lawyer on that.

Q: The legal adviser.

REINSTEIN: Yes, he was the lawyer there. I forget who was on that delegation. It was at the

very end of the intercontinental study group on Germany when we began to work these things out and I actually began my hiring of people for that while I was in London in the spring of '51. Anyhow, we did set up this tripartite organization which did a good job and laid the groundwork for the conference. It began at the time of the death of King George the Sixth.

Q: February 1952.

REINSTEIN: Yes. It was right at the end of the foreign ministers' NATO meeting in Lisbon because I went from Lisbon directly to London, and unfortunately I had put on a tweed suit – you know, with an eye to the kind of climate you would have in London on arrival – and was taken to the initial reception where everybody was clad in mourning except me. I stood out like a sore thumb [*laughs*] with a red necktie and everybody else was wearing a black necktie.

Q: They had to wear black armbands for six months, I remember.

REINSTEIN: Well I was in and out of London in all that time and I was wearing the black tie. I didn't wear the black armband, but I did wear the black tie. As a matter of fact, I went out the next morning and bought a black tie.

Q: Yes, we did wear the black tie.

REINSTEIN: Yes, and I wore the black tie for six months. I went out and bought a black tie the first thing the next morning and then as soon as I could – I got a rather ratty one at first and then I got a proper silk tie which I wore for the balance of the mourning period because I was in and out of London. I was in the curious position – I ran the thing from Washington. And I also put myself on the delegation in London so I could go back and forth.

Q: I see. I'll have to correct something I asked you before about whether you'd gone directly back to Washington from Lisbon with the Secretary and you said yes, but apparently you went to London.

REINSTEIN: No, I went to London. As a matter of fact, as I recall now, I went to six international conferences in a row in that particular stint. Just one right after another, and different subjects. Anyhow, I got there and I did attend the initial meetings in London and they were orderly. They were set up the way we had wanted to. The negotiations were extremely difficult because of the conflict of interest between the American and European creditors.

Q: How many countries were represented at the conference?

REINSTEIN: I think a dozen. I don't know.

Q: Probably the Benelux countries were there.

REINSTEIN: Yes, the Benelux countries were there.

Q: Perhaps Sweden. I don't know about Finland. Switzerland – did they come?

REINSTEIN: The Swedes were there because – it was very interesting – inadvertently we included in that agreement a clause which the Germans much later – and I tell you I know the Swedes were there because I worked with them on this *[laughs]*. We managed to get the Swedes to mobilize the German assets in Sweden and turn them over to us as reparations. The Swedes were very cooperative; the most cooperative of any of the other countries. The Germans, relying on a clause in the debt agreement, came to the Swedes and said, “You have to give us back our assets or the equivalent value, based on the clause in the debt settlement.”

This put the Swedes in a very difficult position and they kept sending us complaints; they made the mistake of doing it through their embassy in Washington, which would send us official notes – formal notes – which the ambassador would bring in and give me and then tell me not to pay any attention to them. So I didn’t pay any attention to them. His advice was very bad because in point of fact what I discovered later was that the Foreign Minister was personally involved in this and he was the fellow who was sending these instructions which the ambassador was telling me not to pay any attention to. This all happened in 1956. We can perhaps leave it for discussion then.

Q: Were the Swiss there or not?

REINSTEIN: The Swiss must’ve been there because they obviously had to be a party.

Q: How about any South Americans?

REINSTEIN: Well the South Americans were not in the business of lending money.

Q: No, they were taking money.

REINSTEIN: These were people who lent money.

Q: [laughs] The Canadians may have been there, too. Or perhaps the British may have represented their interests.

REINSTEIN: The British wouldn’t represent Canadian interests. The Canadians have to do it themselves.

Q: The South Africans?

REINSTEIN: The South Africans, I don’t remember. Anyhow, I don’t know whether the South Africans are great lenders either. It was basically the continental Europeans and the British and the Americans.

The negotiations practically broke down over the gold clause because the Europeans insisted on being paid in accordance with the contractual terms of the agreements and the Americans were prohibited from seeking the benefit of the gold clause by American legislation which made the gold clause unenforceable, adopted by the Roosevelt administration. At one time the negotiations

practically collapsed. I used to go back and forth between Washington and New York – Wall Street – all the time during the course of those negotiations.

Q: Your position was, I presume, that Germany would not pay in gold to these other countries, despite the clauses in their contracts.

REINSTEIN: That's right. We wanted to get rid of the gold clause and they insisted. The various American creditors managed to pull themselves together. You had at least two organizations to start off with – the banks, the Standstill creditors, and then the Council of Foreign Bond Holders. They worked out a coordinated position and at one point I think the Americans actually walked out of the negotiations. Willard Thorpe and I had to work our heads off to get them back in. I'm not sure exactly how we did this but if they walked out then there would have been no settlement and that would have let a lot of people in a position which they didn't particularly care for politically. I think they finally recognized that they really didn't have a leg to stand on. They could not enforce their view.

Q: They didn't want to go home empty handed then.

REINSTEIN: Well the negotiation would have collapsed. Heaven knows what would've happened at that point. The Germans would not have been precluded. I'm not sure what would've happened.

Q: You would've been blamed, I think – the Americans.

REINSTEIN: I beg your pardon.

Q: We would've been blamed if this would've happened.

REINSTEIN: The American creditors, not necessarily the American government. The American government had been trying to work out a settlement.

Q: Tell me, was there a German presence at this meeting or not?

REINSTEIN: Oh, yes. The German leader of the German delegation was Harman Abs.

Q: Oh, yes. A very astute man.

REINSTEIN: Yes, well he was the head of the German delegation.

One of the things that was going on simultaneously and which the Germans were trying to make connect, and which we would not allow them to connect, was the negotiations on reparation to Israel.

Q: Ah, yes.

REINSTEIN: The Germans were trying to make a connection between the two negotiations.

Q: So they could extract from one what they're giving to the other.

REINSTEIN: We were slapping them down and saying no soap. Our position had been – I think I may have mentioned that when we were first discussing with McCloy in the summer of '49 the takeover of our responsibilities and some of our general approaches that we would follow, one of the things we agreed on was that we would not get involved in this. We would take the position with the Germans that if they wanted to have decent relations with the rest of the world they had to do something about it, but we were not going to tell them what to do about it. This was their moral responsibility. In point of fact, at various times we did have to put pressure on the Germans. I've been to the archives, I've been through the record on this, and we consistently said to the Germans, We're not going to tell you what to do, but on the other hand, when they were really dragging their feet, at various times, we did make sort of informal representations and on one occasion – it may have been at the time of the signature of the Bonn conventions – Acheson had a talk with Adenauer on the subject and told him, "Look, you've got to be more forthcoming." He didn't say anything more than that, but he did say to him, You're not doing enough.

Q: But the chancellor got the point, I gather.

REINSTEIN: Yes, because Abs was carrying on both negotiations, you see, and the Germans were really being difficult as to the discussions with the Israelis. I think probably it was after the Acheson conversation with Adenauer. The negotiations with Israel were going on in the Netherlands, as I remember – in the Hague – while the other negotiations were going on in London. Abs was handling both of them. I found no record of anything after that.

Q: How then did you bring the debt settlement to closure, Jacques, with this big difference with the other creditors?

REINSTEIN: In effect, what happened was that the U.S. agreed to settle its claim for a billion two hundred thousand. We had a little bit of a problem there. The claim for aid came to some three billion dollars. We also had a claim for the settlement of some kind of property which we'd sold to a number of countries, on which we insisted on full payment – probably in response to congressional pressures [*laughs*]. There was a \$200 million claim against the Germans under that heading and somehow we found a formula by which we got the 200 million and could meet our congressional obligations and not louse up the settlement. But we managed to work that one out. We more or less fixed a deadline and the deadline was a sensible one. It was through the end of February of '53, as I recall. We signed the agreement on the 28th of February and it went to the Senate; and it's one of the few treaties of which I've been associated in which I didn't have anything to do with the presentation. All the rest of these treaties I worked on a presentation to the Senate and worked closely with the staff; first with Francis Wilcox and then with Macy – I'm trying to remember the name of the fellow who succeeded Wilcox as chief of staff of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Q: Macy, I believe. Yes.

REINSTEIN: You know, what we would do is we would go through these things and identify all the important points and make sure that the senators asked questions about them and then it was generally the Secretary of State who responded. There was no doubt at all as to exactly what the thing meant.

There was a question about Acheson's attitude on the EDC which made me think of this thing that happened in Paris in Thanksgiving of '51. I can be sure about the Thanksgiving because we were there at Thanksgiving and Bob Cleveland had me for dinner and I remember it very well. As I said earlier, I had been conducting these two negotiations in London, both with massive delegations and neither of them getting anywhere, and I decided just to wind them up and got rid of the delegations. I knew that they were going to have the three foreign ministers' meeting in Paris and the NATO meeting in Rome and I decided I would just go on down there. I had Dan Margolies with me. Anyhow, I went to Paris and I walked into a meeting in the embassy in the office which I later occupied when I was minister for economic affairs *[laughs]*. Acheson was sitting there in a chair and there were a number of people sitting there facing him. Anyhow, what came to my mind as we talked about this was they got on to talking about the EDC negotiations and Acheson made a comment that the people who seemed to be the most enthusiastic about this were the Americans. He had questions about the French commitment to it. I think he had reservations himself about the idea. On the other hand, you had a situation in which everybody had become committed to this idea and there wasn't any way of getting out of it except by concluding the negotiations. But I think you're quite right; Acheson had reservations about it. We did push ahead and finally they signed all the documents. The EDC treaty was signed in Paris and then there were complimentary agreements with the Germans which place our relations with them, removed them from being occupational relationships and put them on a contractual basis and threw them a whole series of complicated agreements. Those were signed in Bonn and we had a meeting in Bonn. It was very interesting because we went to Bonn to sign the agreements.

Q: In May of '52, this was?

REINSTEIN: Yes, that's right. I'll just make an observation which is that those agreements never came into effect.

Q: They were called the contractual agreements.

REINSTEIN: That's right. Because they substituted an agreed relationship for the exercise of the reserved powers, which derived from the German surrender, and put all kinds of limits on the Germans of one kind or another *[laughs]*. But everything was written down and that laid out the basis for the German surrender. The interesting thing about both that and the subsequent agreement which we did make in '54 was that it was signed in Germany. It was signed in Germany. There never was a peace treaty with Germany; this was the closest thing that ever came to a peace treaty and it was signed in the parliament building. The '54 agreement was signed in the parliament building of the elected German government – an extraordinary contrast with what happened at the end of the First World War. I was really responding to your comment about Acheson's attitude.

As we were saying, the EDC negotiations collapsed completely, the treaty was rejected by the French parliament, and Eden came up with this idea and he went around and visited each of the countries involved to sound them out. He got, he thought, mild encouragement from the French. Enough to operate on. Dulles went to Germany to talk to Adenauer. There was a very nasty Herb Block cartoon at the time which I remember showed Acheson standing I think in front of a dresser or something like that, with his head detached and on top of the dresser. Herb Block thought it was an absolutely stupid thing to go and talk to the Germans.

He only took two people with him. He took Livvy Merchant, who was the assistant secretary for European Affairs, and he took Coburn Kidd, who was on the German Desk at that point, and went off to Germany and then they went to London to talk with Eden. They came back on a Saturday morning and that Saturday I did something I don't think I ever did any other Saturday; I didn't go to work. It was a beautiful September day and I thought, I'm going to stay home and enjoy myself. I was in the shower and my wife said, "They want you down at the Department right away." I threw on clothes and dashed down and went to Merchant's office and walked in; a meeting was in progress. Coburn Kidd was just at the end of giving an account of the conversations that had taken place with Adenauer. He was just finishing up.

Merchant picked up the account and gave an account of the meeting with Eden, Eden's proposal and Dulles' reaction; and Dulles' reaction was rather negative. Dulles said, "Maybe this will work, but if it doesn't work then we're in even more trouble than we are now." He finally allowed himself to be persuaded by Eden to try it out, to do it. He said, "Well, this involves three separate negotiations. One negotiation was for the admission of Germany into NATO and that was to take place in Paris, which was the center for where the council was located. The second negotiation was for the revision of the western European Union treaty. That, as you pointed out, in itself, was technically located in London. That was to take place in London. The third negotiation was we would have to revise the various agreements with the Germans and there would have to be another negotiation with them.

At that point Merchant looked up at me and he said to me, "By the way, you're supposed to go to Germany. Can you leave today?" I looked at my watch and it was noon. There was no service from Washington; you had to go from New York and the plane left at four o'clock and I said, "No, I can't go today, but I can go tomorrow," and he said, "Okay," and went along with it. That was the end of that. I never did find out what the discussions with Adenauer were about. I was just told, "Go to Germany and carry on these negotiations." There was a fellow from the Pentagon who was to go with me. I can't remember his name now; it'll come back to me.

I then set about trying to get myself organized to go, Saturday. The first thing I had to do was to find a transportation request. I usually kept a book of them in my files so it would be handy. You were supposed to hand them back but I found I had these slips.

Q: Well you were doing a lot of traveling.

REINSTEIN: Anyhow, my secretary had reorganized the files and the TRs (travel requests) had disappeared. Oh, I went through all kinds of things and then I had a brilliant idea. The administrative part of EUR had been up on the same floor as we were, the seventh floor, and they

had been moved down to the second floor; and I went around to what had been their old offices and I opened up drawer after drawer after drawer thinking maybe somebody had left a book of TRs in his drawer, and darned if I didn't find one. So I just took it. I could've paid for it myself. The trouble was if you paid for it yourself you had to pay the tax and the government wouldn't reimburse you the tax, so I wanted to do this TR.

Off we went the next day, me and this fellow from the Pentagon. We flew to Frankfurt and there was a car there to meet us, and we went up to Bonn, and we encountered the most enormous military convoy. It was vehicle after vehicle after vehicle, crawling along at between five and ten miles an hour.

Q: British or American or French?

REINSTEIN: American. We were in the American zone.

Q: Yes, but part of that is British zone, up to Bonn, you know.

REINSTEIN: No, we were still in the American zone.

Q: You were still in the southern part.

REINSTEIN: Finally, what did we come to? Two atomic cannons. Do you remember these were the original tactical – they were something like 280 millimeter cannons.

Q: They were huge things.

REINSTEIN: These things were crawling along at something like five miles an hour.

Q: And you were crawling behind them, I gather.

REINSTEIN: We were passing them and I remember turning to this fellow from the Pentagon and saying, "This is our fast tactical weapon now." They didn't keep them for very long [laughs]. It was an absolutely incredible scene.

I guess we got in and I went and found lodging. They had a place where they put people up and the next morning I got a car, went to the embassy – this was when the embassy was the high commission's office – and Elim O'Shaughnessy was in charge of the political section.

Q: He was the political counselor, wasn't he?

REINSTEIN: Yes. I walked into his office and he looked at me and said, "My god, what are you doing here?" I said, "Haven't you read your morning telegrams yet? I came to fix the plumbing." [laughs]

Q: Good for you.

REINSTEIN: There must've been a telegram advising him that...

Q: Well there should have been.

REINSTEIN: Yes, there should have been and I assume there was. Anyhow, I was supposed to be in charge of the negotiations but he didn't have any particular background on this and I talked to him, but we set up a working level negotiation which had a legal adviser as the chairman. The Brits were in the chair and the legal adviser of the British embassy was the chairman and the French were sitting in and they initially were sitting in just for the information because they hadn't been authorized to participate in the negotiations.

Q: Excuse me, Jacques. The negotiations, these concerned the revision of the contractual agreements?

REINSTEIN: That's right.

Q: Thank you for clarifying that because I wasn't quite sure.

REINSTEIN: They were a series of agreements. There were the agreement on the status of forces, there was a financial agreement, but the basic agreement was the agreement on political relations. This was the agreement which in fact restored, as it eventually came out – we didn't get that far; we didn't start there – we gave Germany its sovereignty because we had, in the earlier agreements, retained sovereignty which we assumed under the Potsdam Agreement. What we did in '54 was, I think, to find a formula under which we preserved whatever powers we had without alleging that we were sovereign with respect to Germany as a whole. In other words, we did maintain our position that the termination of the ultimate status of Germany I think was to be negotiated with the Soviets, and it was important to keep that. We also retained our position with regard to Berlin.

Q: Now the time period of the negotiation you were having in Bonn is the fall of '54?

REINSTEIN: This was September, October, of '54 and the negotiation took place in three places. Then there was a ministerial meeting in London at which the results of the negotiation were reviewed, additional instructions were given to the negotiators and we went back to the three working groups and then there was a final negotiation and signing in Paris.

Q: It must have been the spring of '55, or the winter.

REINSTEIN: No, it was in October of '54.

Q: That quickly? Not if you'd been negotiating in September, October.

REINSTEIN: September and October, yes.

Q: And the foreign ministers met then in October?

REINSTEIN: They met in early October in London and one of the things I remember that was worked out in London was the financial arrangements. Then we went back to the negotiations in the three different places and then we had a final meeting in Paris. Now, let me be very precise about the dates. I carried on those negotiations without any instructions. The British and French were on the same time period and their capitals could call up on the telephone and could discuss things. The negotiations were going on rapidly. If I had sent a telegram at the end of the day and it had to be considered the next day, then it would be a day later, at the earliest, before anything came back. I just figured it was impossible to carry on negotiations that way and so I carried on the negotiations without any instructions of any kind.

At the end of the negotiations – and this is something that would be interesting if you could check in the library – I sent eleven telegrams and I drafted them so that each of them would have a single action office in the Department. They were reports on the negotiations, on the unresolved issues, and on what they should brief the Secretary about. I’ve always been curious as to whether those telegrams were ever printed in foreign relations to the United States.

Q: Well we could check that easily because those documents have been released.

REINSTEIN: Unfortunately I haven’t been able to do that at DACOR (Diplomatic & Consular Officers Retired) because those volumes are on the bottom shelf and I’ve never been able to get down there and find that particular set of...

Q: The next time I’m there I’ll try to do that. Foreign relations in the U.S., Germany 1954, ‘55, I guess.

REINSTEIN: ‘54 really. There would be eleven telegrams.

Then I got on the telephone and I called Geoff Lewis. You remember Geoff?

Q: Yes. He was deputy director of German Affairs at one time.

REINSTEIN: I said to Geoff, “Look, I’m just sending these telegrams. Would you get onto them right away?” and Geoff said, “We’ll do the best we can, but a hurricane is just about to hit Washington and we have been told to get across the river while it’s still safe to do so.” And Geoff lived over near where you live. Anyhow, I gave him all the material to brief the Secretary and he knew the issues when we met in Paris.

Now, among the papers that I came on to in my review that you may like to look at is a letter that I wrote to Livvy Merchant in September of ‘71 telling him I was retiring. Livvy and Joe Fowler, Henry H. Fowler, who was secretary of the Treasury and also at that point head of the Atlantic Council, and Ted Achilles all had houses at Chatham, Massachusetts, on the Cape. They all knew each other and they would have dinner every night, circulating around among the houses, and I had a very nice letter from Livvy from Chatham saying he was very sorry that I was leaving and saying that he had often heard Foster say that if it hadn’t been for me Germany wouldn’t have gotten its sovereignty and might not have gotten into NATO.

Q: Well, that's a tremendous compliment, Jacques.

REINSTEIN: Yes, it is.

Q: You can be proud of that.

REINSTEIN: We got through the negotiations successfully and wound up and the treaties went into effect in '55.

Q: May the fifth of '55, yes.

REINSTEIN: That date I couldn't remember.

Q: 5-5-55. It's always easy to remember it that way. And that was the same time practically that the Austrian treaty went into effect, too. The same week, I think.

REINSTEIN: I'm not sure about that because the Austrian treaty was a year later. I was in Paris for a ministerial meeting and I always had this great big fat briefcase, which I still have – it's in the other room – stuffed with documents. They always had these damn three power meetings on Sunday afternoon and I was supposed to go to the meeting because they might take up Germany in some form or other and I walked in and I looked around, and no matter how high I rose, it seemed to me I was always the most junior officer in the room, *[laughs]* and I said to Livvy, "Should I keep a record?" and he said, "Would you please?" So I kept the record. They gave the final instructions – they didn't talk about Germany at all – to the negotiators in Austria, in Vienna, and boy were they tough. Ooh. And I said to Livvy, "Shall I do up the recording telegrams?" and he said, "Yes, if you would, please," and I said, "Do you want to look at them?" and he said, "No, you just send them." So there were two decisions made in that meeting. One was the final decision on the Austrian treaty and the other was the decision to hold the summit meeting in Geneva. That was '55.

Q: '55, the spirit of '55.

REINSTEIN: And they were both made in the same meeting. I thought, My god, am I supposed to tell the president that we've committed him to go to a meeting? Actually, it turned out that Dulles sent a telegram, too.

Q: Now we've got Germany in NATO, Germany has been given its sovereignty, you were director of German Affairs.

REINSTEIN: I became director of German Affairs in the fall of '55.

Q: Did you have other problems besides the EDC and this type of problem?

REINSTEIN: You had always all kinds of problems. You couldn't work on Germany without having lots and lots of complicated problems. I remember going to a staff meeting one time and as I went around somebody said they were having these problems with the Treasury affecting

something in Berlin and they weren't getting anywhere with it, and it was very annoying politically. So I said, "Well would you like me to talk to the Treasury about it?" "Would you please?" So I called up Don Curtis, who was a fellow I had dealt with. *[laughs]* He was their principal fellow for Western Europe. I called him on the phone and I said, "Don, we seem to have a problem with you folks about Berlin that we can't resolve. Can I talk to you about it?" I can't remember what the problem was; it may have been about the importation of hog bristles from China, if that rings a bell with you.

Q: It was a long time ago, yes. I do remember.

REINSTEIN: Hog bristles from a communist country were no soap, no dice. I don't know whether they were coming in there and we had to cut them off – maybe that was it, maybe it was something else. I can't remember what it was. I said, "What is it you're trying to do?" and he explained. I said, "What you're trying to do seems perfectly reasonable and it's okay, but the way you're doing it is creating real political problems in Berlin. Why don't we do so and so?" and he said, "Well let me try it out." He called back in a couple of days and we finally worked it out. What I came to realize was that the person I was negotiating with at the other end was the Secretary of the Treasury. You had a delegation of authority, and of course with Germany nobody knew anything about Germany except for German Affairs. *[laughs]*

Q: I think George Humphrey was the Secretary of the Treasury then, too. He's a pretty tough negotiator.

REINSTEIN: I don't think it was Humphrey.

Q: He was Secretary during the Eisenhower years.

REINSTEIN: But in Treasury they did not have the kind of delegation of authority that you had in the State Department.

Q: I wanted to ask you: this was the period when Secretary Dulles was running the Department and his sister, Eleanor, was in German Affairs. How was she to work with and your relationship with her?

REINSTEIN: Eleanor was a difficulty. She was and she wasn't. She would go off on tangents and I would have problems with her about that, but by and large I kept her under my thumb and I found her very useful in some ways. Foster used to go out to her place in Virginia and swim – she had a swimming pool – and sometimes I would find it useful to say, "Look, if you see Foster tomorrow, would you tell him so and so?"

Q: Ah. The back channel, as we say.

REINSTEIN: Well I had a very good back channel on Saturdays if I had to use it. He worked at the house, remember, mainly, unless there was a NSC (National Security Council) meeting and if I ran into something that I really had to get to him, I'd simply do a memorandum and I'd send it up to the secretariat and I'd say, "Please send it up to the house."

Q: Yes, we did that – send things out to the house.

REINSTEIN: I remember we had a significant problem with Adenauer on occasion. *[laughs]* This is a very entertaining and unwritten story. We couldn't keep our thumb on him because he would get these invitations, which I'm sure he arranged, to get an honorary degree, and unlike other state visits, you didn't have to get approval for that, but then if he came to this country he obviously had to come through Washington. So he was able to escape the normal control. He, on this particular occasion, was coming over for an honorary degree and Friday evening we got a telegram from Bonn saying that they had gotten wind of the fact that the Germans – well, for background, they were about to have an election and Adenauer was going to come over and get this honorary degree and then he was going to go and visit with his friend, Danny Heinemann. Danny Heinemann was the head of an enormous public utilities company in Europe and he was a great friend of Adenauer's. They were going to have an election in Germany.

Q: That would've been '57 probably. That was the big election year.

REINSTEIN: Danny Heinemann, whose headquarters were in Europe, in Brussels, had a big place in Connecticut – the Greenwich area, I think – and he was going to go and stay with him. And then I had fixed it up for him to go and visit the President at the farm on Sunday to have his picture taken.

Q: The farm in Gettysburg?

REINSTEIN: Yes!

Q: I didn't know people were allowed up there.

REINSTEIN: Oh yes. That was a favorite Republican business, having a guy go up there and have his picture taken with the President at the farm. Thank you very much and goodbye. *[laughs]* Anyhow, it occurred to me that we didn't particularly want to have the SPD win the election at that particular time, so I thought I'll fix it up for the chancellor to go and have his picture taken at the farm. So I set it all up. Well, Friday night in comes a telegram from Bonn saying that they had gotten indication that when the Germans came they were going to propose that we agree with them on a Potomac Charter, which would lay out how the world should be run. I read this and thought how crazy can these people be. Saturday morning as usual I was at the office and I got a call from the number three guy at the embassy. They had a paper that they would like to get Bob Murphy or the Secretary to look at.

Q: This was your call from the German embassy here or?

REINSTEIN: This was a call from Greenwich, Connecticut.

Q: I see.

REINSTEIN: From Ralph Powes, who was the counselor. I said, "Ralph, what is this all about?"

“Well, the chancellor is going to talk to the president about it, but he’d like to get an opinion on it.” I said, “Look, that meeting at the farm in Gettysburg is purely social and the President is not going to have any advisers. The only person that is going to be there is Major Eisenhower and the President is not going to want to talk about anything substantive that he hasn’t discussed with the Secretary of State.” “Well, can we get the Secretary to look at his idea?” “The Secretary is in an NSC meeting. It isn’t possible to get him.” But I said, “If you’ve got some kind of piece of paper you’d better get it the hell down here. I assume it’s in German.” I said, “This is a weekend. We don’t have the staff to do an interpretation. It’s not clear to me, if you have a piece of paper, how we could even get it interpreted. You better get it down here right away.” The next thing I get a call from the Hill. The same business. I said, “Look, the President is not going to want to talk about this. There is not supposed to be any substantive discussion.” He said, “Could you imagine the President of the United States and the chancellor of Germany getting together and not talking substance?” I said, “Certainly. The President would not wish to discuss anything that he had not had a chance to have the advice of the Secretary of State.” And I said, “If you’ve got a piece of paper, you better get it down here in a hurry.”

I can’t remember the exact sequence then, whether it was the ambassador who then called.

Q: [laughs] They’re escalating you now.

REINSTEIN: And you know I gave him the same answer. Anyhow, at that point I found my secretary and I wrote a little note to the secretary and I sent it up to the secretariat and said, “Please send this out to the house.” And I said to my secretary, “At some point the telephone will ring and somebody will ask for me. Don’t ask who it is. Just buzz me,” because he never identified himself. I sat there and waited and sure enough the phone rang and the secretary buzzed me and I picked it up and I said hello, and he said, “I have your memorandum.”

Q: You knew who it was.

REINSTEIN: And I said, “Yes, sir.” He said, “These fellows are getting awful big for their britches, aren’t they?” *[laughs]* I said, “That was my reaction, sir.” He said, “What do you think I ought to do about it?” and I said, “Well, I wondered whether you ought to warn the President and he said, “Well, he’s playing golf. I think I can get a message to him.” But we never heard anything more about it.

Q: Now of course in ‘58 we had the trouble on the access routes to Berlin.

REINSTEIN: We were always having trouble. There were sort of two constants in the things that I worked on. One was the access problem. They would make difficulties of different kinds. At one point they wanted to open up and look in the back of our trucks and we said no. And then they hit on this business of the troop trains. As you probably know, we didn’t have any troops to send back and forth; *[laughs]* we just ran the train to hold down the franchise. They were relatively few people on the train, but we ran the train regularly.

These things would drive you crazy because what would happen was there would be an incident. It would get reported to the military, the military would talk about it, they would then report to

the political people, the political people would then consult about it and they would come up with a conclusion as to what should be done, and a telegram would come around about six o'clock in the evening, which had to be answered right away – which was a damn nuisance. There was a period of time when I swear I never got home for dinner because of these retched telegrams coming in night after night. Finally they laid off, but they were just a nuisance. What was that little place that was disconnected with an exclave of Berlin? I can't remember the name of it. We used to fuss about that. Actually these things were relatively minor.

The major thing I did work on a lot was the possibility of a summit meeting. We had an extremely complicated correspondence with the Soviets about the possibility of a summit meeting. It got so complicated I finally said you can't work on this sensibly unless you work on it full-time. I turned over practically all of my business to somebody else to work on it.

Q: Now we're not talking about this Geneva meeting of '55, are we?

REINSTEIN: No.

Q: Are we talking about possible subsequent meeting?

REINSTEIN: Yes. There was a very complicated negotiation on the conditions and what you talk about and so on. It was the most complicated thing I think I've ever worked on. I finally said you just have to work on this full-time. I tried to get Ed Freers, who also was involved. Ed and I were the two people who handled this.

Q: Ed was on the Soviet side then.

REINSTEIN: Yes. We were the two people who handled this. I tried to get Ed to let go of over things and just focus on this and the two of us just work on this together. I never could get Ed to do it because he couldn't let go of all the other stuff, whereas I could. I spent a lot of time working with the Secretary on that.

Q: Well now this was the year of the Khrushchev ultimatum. Were you still in German Affairs when that came in in November of '58?

REINSTEIN: No.

Q: That was the ultimatum on Berlin, yes.

REINSTEIN: No, you see I went to senior seminar in '58, '59.

Q: In '58. Yes, you would have been at the senior seminar when this happened.

REINSTEIN: I was in the first class. I actually was in Paris when I got a telegram saying I had been designated to attend the first class.

Q: Before we wind up your period in German Affairs I wanted to ask, while you were director

did you get much interference from the White House or did you get help? What was your relationship with them, as regards Germany?

REINSTEIN: Let's put it this way. When a telegram came in I could look at it and I could tell immediately was I authorized to do it, did I have to take it one level up, two levels up, assistant secretary, the Secretary, or maybe the White House. I don't think I had but a couple of matters that had to go to the White House. I got bawled out indirectly by the White House one time. That was because the President didn't understand things very well. I'm not sure that Eisenhower really quite understood what the implications of nuclear warfare were. This particular episode involved tanks for the German forces.

When I was carrying on these negotiations about the financing of forces, once the Germans started arming, I was aware of the fact that the military had been stockpiling stuff to provide the Germans. I assumed that they were expecting to get paid for it *[laughs]*. Anyhow, while we were in the middle of this negotiation – right about '53 – I went to the Pentagon and I said, "What are you people planning in terms of supplying the German forces when we get them set up?" They gave me a piece of paper which had figures and a certain number of weasel words. The figures were heavy equipment for six divisions and twenty-four squadrons. So what I did was I took the paper and I took out all the weasel words and we had a meeting with Adenauer in Washington at 1776 Pennsylvania Avenue and Frank Nash was then the assistant secretary for ISA.

Q: In the Defense Department. Yes, I remember Frank Nash.

REINSTEIN: We got onto talking about this problem and I had this piece of paper and I went around to Nash and I said to him, "Look, we don't seem to be able to work this damn thing out with the Germans. If we could be clear on how they're going to get started then that would give us a basis for negotiating on. Could you service this?" So he read it out. I hadn't said a word to the secretary about it *[laughs]*. I got the paper and I gave it to Adenauer. This was between rounds of negotiations that were taking place in Paris and so I went back to Paris and I had a meeting with the German minister of finance. McCloy called him "that Bavarian cow." I can't remember his name. A crooked son of a gun. We had a breakfast meeting and I said, "Well what about this commitment we gave you on heavy equipment?" and he said, "What commitment?" It turned out he didn't know anything about that paper that I had given Adenauer. So I gave him a copy of it. What we discovered was that Adenauer looked at it and decided it was so secret that he wouldn't show to anyone. *[laughs]*

Q: Oh, God. He just put it in his pocket.

REINSTEIN: It loosened up the negotiations. So we've got a star? That was for six divisions. That left open the question of the equipment for the other six divisions. What the government provided were M-47s. The military were extremely anxious to get rid of the M-47s...

Q: The tanks.

REINSTEIN: That's right. Because Congress had told them they couldn't buy any M-48s unless they got rid of the M-47s. There was a great difference of opinion about the two tanks. The

tankers didn't like the 48. They had several objections to it. One was the profile was too high; there was something about the fuel tank and some things like that. The tankers weren't all that enthusiastic. But the procurement people were extremely eager to substitute the 48s for the 47s, so any time they could get rid of a 47 they got rid of a 47. If they could give it to the National Guard, they gave it to the National Guard. They were desperately eager to get the Germans to take the 47s for the other six divisions. The Brits, on the other hand, were producing the Centurion and their production line was coming to an end and they were desperately eager to sell the Centurions to the Germans and keep their production line going. So, what do you do under the circumstances? You take it up with the President of the United States.

Two things happened at about the same time. One was that the Germans said they would like to see field tests of the 47 and the 48 and we got a telegram from Germany saying that they had this request and what should they do about it. Well, a telegram came into my associate subordinate in the economic branch, Bill Miller, and he brought it in to me and I said, "We'll deal with it. If they want to see these things, well sure, obviously we should let them see them. Send them a telegram and tell them 'okay'." Meanwhile, the prime minister of the U.K. – I can't remember if it was Eden-

Q: Macmillan or Eden.

REINSTEIN: Eden perhaps. Had written to the President of the United States and somehow or other these two things managed to get to the President's desk about the same time. I don't know how the President found out about the testing, but anyhow he was furious. He said, "What damn fool authorized this?" He said, "Why didn't they take out the carburetor?" Well, this showed how much he knew about a tank. The 48 didn't have a carburetor. The big argument that the Brits were making, which he thought was great, was that these tanks would be used by the northern army group and their line of supply would run directly from the U.K. Perhaps start having nuclear warfare ...

Q: There isn't going to be any line of supplies.

REINSTEIN: No line of supply at all. I just was never convinced that Eisenhower really understood the implications of nuclear warfare.

Q: What was the decision of the tanks finally? Did the Germans buy both of them? British and American? I imagine they did. They didn't want to make enemies of either side so they probably bought some of each.

REINSTEIN: Either that or they built some of their own.

Q: Yes, and then they built the Leopard, wasn't it?

REINSTEIN: The M-5. Probably by the time that got resolved I had left. So I never did hear the end.

When you worked on Germany you really were working on relations with the Soviet Union.

There were three offices in the European bureau which dealt with the Soviet Union, or relations with the Soviet Union in one way or another. It was the opposite of Eastern European Affairs, which was directly responsible for relations with the Soviets. So much of your relationship had to do with Germany that the German office was constantly involved in a range of matters relating to the Soviet Union, and particularly because we kept talking with the Soviets at various times about the possibilities of reaching agreements.

Now, I think at an earlier stage I had mentioned a rather elaborate study that we had given to the entire subject of whether it was possible to come to an agreement with the Soviets. That was back in about 1948, '49, before the Palais Rose discussions in Paris. It did not appear possible to find an arrangement that we thought we could safely live with that we could work out with the Soviets. I think subsequent events have demonstrated what somebody once said, which is that the problem with the division of Germany was not ended until one side or the other gives up, and in fact that's what happened. But over a long period of time the two sides kept angling for position, pressed by their own needs, pressed to some extent on our side by requirements of public opinion because there was constant pressure for bringing this situation in Europe to an end; and periodic pressures to withdraw our military forces from Europe.

Q: And by "public opinion" you would include congressional opinion, too.

REINSTEIN: Oh yes. As a matter of fact, I think congressional opinion was much more important than public opinion in the sense that I don't have a feeling that there was a great deal of public dissatisfaction with our having forces stationed in Europe. I mentioned I think earlier that this was a point on which John Foster Dulles had very definite views. He did not think that the American people would put up with having American forces stationed in Europe for the longer run. And the American military had not been particularly keen on having forces committed there. They came around though because they got facilities there. There were a lot of advantages to having headquarters stationed there, in terms of intelligence and a great variety of things. The intelligence activities that we could carry on against the Soviets were absolutely enormous. There are several books just on that subject. We found increasingly, and particularly with the development of newer technology, it more and more useful to have European bases from which to work on the continent and Germany.

Q: It's always good for the psychological structure of NATO, too, to have us there.

REINSTEIN: We had a very strong presence in Britain. Our working relations with the British were extremely good and I think there's been a gradual deterioration in recent years with the relationships, but the fact is we were providing nuclear weapons for the British and giving them support for their nuclear position. So you had pulls in different directions, but I don't think that there was a great deal of resistance on the part of the American public or people in Congress who wanted to withdraw forces. Dulles' judgment on this was basically wrong.

But you did have a continuing set of conditions that would lead one side or the other to get negotiations going again. The Soviet interest, of course, was to do everything possible to weaken our situation and to limit the effectiveness of the NATO forces because they weren't very happy with having them there, even though they had built up the East German forces. They were never

very sure how reliable they were. The East German authorities themselves really had no sense of security. Remember that we managed to attack into the East German communication facilities.

Q: Through the famous tunnel, right?

REINSTEIN: Yes. It was the Brandenburg Gate, I guess. When I was running German Affairs they set these things up, but I didn't know about them for a while and then they finally told me and they laid out a whole elaborate structure. And also including the plans for demolishing this thing, it was discovered they didn't do the demolishing as we planned; they just had to admit that they had been caught with their pants down *[laughs]*. I used to get briefings periodically on the traffic that they intercepted. It was fascinating. You got to know the actual people. They were extraordinarily insecure. One guy would get on the telephone and he'd call somebody and he'd say, "I understand there's some meeting that's going to take place outside of [such place]. What's going on? Get into that. Find out what's going on." They felt very insecure in their own power and of course that lack of clarity, that sense of insecurity, must've existed among the Soviets.

Q: Let me ask, Jacques, were the West Germans cut in on this intelligence, too?

REINSTEIN: No. This was kept very limited. I'm not sure how our intelligence relations were. The Germans were in the process of just getting themselves organized and establishing armed forces that they were supposed to have. And of course they had a very considerable leadership gap because they had brought up a whole new generation of military leaders because there had been this break in their experience and the top leadership had all been discredited and killed off or put in jail. You had a considerable period when no Germans were being trained at all, so that they really had very limited human resources. They had a major job of building ten divisions. That's no mean task.

Q: I was thinking more of the intelligence side of things.

REINSTEIN: The CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) was not all that open in disclosing information about what it was doing. I was not aware of much of the activity that they carried on in Germany. As I say, they set up this thing at the Brandenburg Gate and I was in charge of German Affairs for some time and I didn't know about it at all and then they decided that they probably ought to bring me in. But I was one person and I'm not sure to what extent – there was nobody under me who knew about this very much. I had no inclination at all about what activities they were carrying on on the other side of the line in Germany. There was no disclosure at all.

Q: Presumably our people in Germany worked closely with the British on some of these things.

REINSTEIN: I suppose so.

Q: Because we would've gotten information from them, too.

REINSTEIN: This is a subject I really don't know a great deal about. What I was concerned with

was what was in the public domain.

Q: Of course.

REINSTEIN: We were in constant relationship with the Soviets in Germany. Periodically they would engage in harassment of our communications with Berlin. Any number of weekends I sat around waiting for a cutoff of Berlin. This is one thing we were getting a good deal of intelligence on, and that is on the Soviet side they were constantly experimenting with the techniques of cutting off Berlin. We would periodically get a series of indications that they might move. Usually there were expected to move on a weekend. Weekends were when you'd catch people off base. Any number of times I can remember that we had a buildup of signals of one kind or another – intelligence reports that indicated that they were experimenting in one way or another – which might lead to some cutoff. Now the cutoff actually did take place, but it took place after I left German Affairs. The Soviets didn't dare to build that wall until I was no longer there. *[laughs]*

Q: [laughs] Well that's comforting to remember that.

REINSTEIN: Obviously they were looking at me all the time. To what extent they were able to get any reading on me, I don't have the remotest idea. This is the essence of the business that you're looking at the people that you deal with and the people that are making decisions. And they knew damn well that I was making a number of decisions and they knew that I had very good relations with the three most important superiors I had, up to the President, and the assistant secretary for European Affairs, and Bob Murphy. Bob Murphy was the deputy undersecretary for political affairs, who had special interest in the relations with the military. There were certain types of things that I knew I had to check out with Bob. He had his channels and ways of communicating with the Pentagon, about which I didn't know anything. I didn't know how he did it. But I knew there were certain types of questions that when they came up I went to Bob and laid them out and got my instructions from him and then the Secretary of State, himself, with whom I had really good working relations. I think one of the things that you want to come back to is...

Q: Excuse me. You're talking about Secretary Dulles in this case?

REINSTEIN: I'm talking about Secretary Dulles, yes – about my working relations with Dulles and with Acheson, but let's not do that now.

When something came in and we were presented with a problem, I'd look at it and I'd make a judgment almost immediately: is this something I'd deal with myself, do I take it up the line – and to which level do I take it. We operated on a fairly tight basis. When I had to take things up with superiors I didn't have any long delays or great complexities in getting things to whatever level they needed to be considered.

Now, as I said, for various reasons, particularly on the Soviet side, if they thought we were making progress that would improve our military posture they would try to slow us down by getting us involved in a negotiation. At one time or another there were all these feeling the other

side out on having a get together, but a considerable reluctance to having a meeting unless you were absolutely forced into it. Generally the pressures for meetings came from the Soviet side because it was in their interest to try and slow us down. They tried to block the making of agreements with the Germans. They tried to block the implementation of those agreements and slowed them down. It was just a constant feeling out and at times these got very, very complicated. As a matter of fact, in the latter part of my time in the Department, we were involved in an extremely complex negotiation with the Soviets. I guess first I ought to say we did have a meeting in Berlin in 1956. I can't remember now what the origins of that were.

The Geneva meeting, which incidentally was the only four power meeting I'd ever attended.

Q: Oh this is the one between Eisenhower and Bulganin and Khrushchev and Eden and so forth?

REINSTEIN: Yes. And somehow or other I didn't get on that delegation. The one meeting I did not attend and so I don't really have a very good feel of what transpired at the meeting except that there was a disposition I think on both sides, which we'd had before in Paris in 1947, a recognition that we were living with a dangerous situation and that it could get out of hand, with absolutely terrible consequences for parts of the world. In '49, at the end of the Palais Rose meeting, we did come up with what was known as a *Modus vivendi*. It was written down in the final communiqué as a recognition that we weren't able to reach an agreement. We were too far apart.

The Geneva meeting grew out of the fact that we had successfully worked out a solution of the problem of German rearmament in the west. The initiative, I think, for having a meeting came from the Soviets. Let me back up here to get my dates straight. Geneva was when?

Q: In '55.

REINSTEIN: The Soviets I think having found out that they were unable to block the lengthy process that we'd been engaged in – let me go back just a moment and talk about the Paris agreement of '49. There was a final which recognized that we couldn't reach agreement, but we agreed that we would try to avoid making the situation more difficult. The Soviets ratted on that. They ratted on that in two ways. One of them was that they proceeded to arm the East Germans. At that stage, of course, well, we were talking about German contributions to the European army but the thing wasn't going anywhere very fast. I don't know what caused them to decide to build up a significant East German force. I guess maybe they figured they better have something in case the European army went through. The other thing was the Korean War. The Korean War changed everything. That was really what gave the strong impetus to the eventual rearmament of Germany and Germany joining NATO, because the Europeans were scared to death of what the Soviets would do in Europe. The only deterrent we had was the economic one.

At some stage the Soviets apparently came to the conclusion that it would be desirable for them to have an easier relationship with the West and they did two things. They gave us the Austrian treaty, which really involved the complete surrender of the positions they had been hanging onto for about ten years. The two things were linked because we had a three power meeting and at some point they began bringing Adenauer in and telling him what was going on, but they didn't

do that right away [*laughs*]. There was a meeting in Paris at which the – it must've been the spring of '55 – three western powers gave the final instructions to the negotiators in Vienna on the Austrian treaty, and they agreed to accept the summit meeting with the Soviets at Geneva; and those two things were settled in the same meeting one Sunday afternoon that spring. I think that reflects what was happening on the Soviet side, at any rate. They felt they better have a more comfortable relationship with us.

I can't recall seeing minutes of the meetings in Geneva. I never got a good, full briefing of what went on there. They apparently knocked around various ideas of things that you might do because I remember at some later stage – and this is one of the things I worked on in this time period – Foster Dulles said to me one time, "You know there was an idea that they talked about in Geneva that I thought had some promise and I'm sorry we never tried to see whether we could do anything about it." That was an agreement on the redeployment of our forces in Europe to get them away from facing each other; an agreement on the deployment of forces. I said to him, "Mr. Secretary, would you like me to try my hand at seeing what I can do about this?" and he said, "Yes, go ahead. But leave me out of it." "Leave me out of it. Don't mention me."

So I carried on a rather complicated negotiation which started off with us and the Germans. We had to talk with the Benelux countries, and the Italians at that point got rather annoyed with the fact that they were being left out of major discussions that they thought they should be in on. We had two committees: one which was just the three western powers and the Germans, and then a NATO committee which included the Benelux and the Italians; and I sat on both those committees. At that point we still had forces in France. We still had our French bases. So that gave us depth and a possibility of taking some of our forces and moving them to France, but relying very heavily on our French airbases, which were very important.

Q: President de Gaulle was there then, wasn't he?

REINSTEIN: The French were still cooperating at this point. The so-called "French Initiative" came later. I was operating under the assumption that we had our French base and of course we were running the red ball express through – we were in the red ball express for a long time. They continued to run that through France even though it was uncooperative in many respects. The French Initiative didn't come until some time later. Anyhow, I managed to work out some kind of a plan and I took it to Dulles and I had talked with the Pentagon – they were not very enthusiastic, obviously, but I was bringing them along, I thought – and I thought I had the elements of an agreement and I took it to Dulles and I got him to authorize me to try to negotiate this, still leaving him out. When they settled down and looked at it, it was torn apart by the Pentagon and by the Germans.

Q: By the Germans?

REINSTEIN: The Germans and the Pentagon. So the whole idea fell apart. So we never tried that. There was this recognition that you had a dangerous situation and that it would be desirable if you could make it easier to live with. That was the spirit of Geneva. It did give rise to an agreement to have an early go at discussions on Germany, which they originally had at Lugano.

Q: Lugano? A beautiful Swiss place.

REINSTEIN: I told them they were crazy as hell to want to go there in January. It would absolutely ruin the tourist business. I said why didn't they go to Lucerne, who had no tourists at that time of year and where they would fall over themselves setting up the amenities. We actually did preparatory work on a tripartite basis in Paris, which I sat in.

There's an interesting point in connection with this meeting which is that it was the first time that the three western powers had done preparatory work *prior* to a meeting to coordinate and develop positions at an earlier stage. For example, in Paris in that Palais Rose meeting in 1949 there were meetings in the morning at various levels, including the expert level – my level – to prepare for a meeting with the Soviets in the afternoon, but in the case of the meeting which eventually did take place in Berlin in '56 which was originally planned for Lugano, there were preparatory meetings in Paris maybe starting in November, and certainly in December, to lay out the recommended positions for the ministers.

Q: Now, I must get this clear – November, December '55.

REINSTEIN: '55, that's right. The American delegation was headed up by Douglas MacArthur and there were about five of us, I think – I can't remember who all they were; one of them was Charles Yost – and we all had different topics. I was the one who dealt with Germany. We were preparing on I guess a rather broad scale to have discussions with the Soviets. MacArthur had to return to Washington and the latter part of the meeting the American delegation was chaired by Ted Achilles, who was the deputy chief of mission in Paris at that time, who just dropped into it and who did an absolutely splendid job.

Achilles I think is probably one of the most competent, able Foreign Service officers I have ever known. He could turn his hand to almost any kind of a job and do extremely well. His understanding was extraordinary. He was a very simple fellow. None of us realized, I think, when we were working with him how immensely wealthy he was. His father or grandfather was a partner of George Eastman and he owned a quarter of Eastman Kodak. We weren't aware of the fact that this man was an extremely wealthy fellow. Incidentally, he was quite an internationalist. He was a member of an organization that probably doesn't even register with anybody anymore, a very liberal republican organization – the Ripon Society.

Q: That's a very old one, yes.

REINSTEIN: Very old. Yes, it goes back to the origins of the Republican Party. I doubt whether any of the present leaders of the Republican administration would qualify for membership of the Ripon Society *[laughs]*.

At any rate, we prepared for discussions on a broad basis. The decision at some point to have this meeting in Berlin was, in my view, a great mistake. We had never had a meeting in Germany before and it really...

Q: I'm sorry. Is that true? Dulles had met there in '54 with the foreign ministers in Berlin.

REINSTEIN: '54 was when we were picking up the pieces after the defeat of the EDC treaty.

Q: But you said there had never been a meeting in Germany.

REINSTEIN: Not a meeting with the Soviets.

Q: Oh yes! Molotov was there in Berlin in the winter of '54 – February, March. Check that out. I know some people who were there at the meeting and they've told me about it.

REINSTEIN: I was up to my neck in these matters and I would've been there if there had been a meeting, but there wasn't a meeting. At that point we were struggling to try and see if the EDC treaty could somehow be brought through and the last thing in the world we wanted to do was to have that complicated by meetings with the...

Q: Well this was before that treaty failed, I believe. The treaty failed in the summer of '54 and this was held in February and March. However, I don't want to distract you from 1955.

REINSTEIN: I don't remember it.

What I was saying was I thought it was a great mistake to have this meeting in Berlin because the origins of the meeting stemming from Geneva really gave you a broader approach to the whole set of issues confronting us and the Soviets, and by holding it in Germany it focused the meeting really on Germany, to the exclusion of these other subjects; and the German problem was not a soluble problem, certainly not by itself. If it was going to be dealt with by agreement, you have to have a broad set of understandings that would get involved in disarmament and things of that kind. Incidentally I had not mentioned disarmament. But the disarmament discussions were also a part of the picture that we were dealing with. At some point along there our principal negotiator was Henry Wallace. Wallace used to call me in at various times and consult with me about what German reactions were likely to be to various positions that he was thinking of taking. So I was in and out of the disarmament picture. When you worked on Germany, you worked on everything practically, except the Far East *[laughs]*. We even got into that sometimes by backwards. I'll tell you a story about that at some other point.

One of the things you asked me was where were the meetings. We wanted to have them in the Allied Control Council and the Soviets wouldn't agree to that so we wound up with a compromise in which one day we would meet in the Allied Control Council and the next day we would meet at the Soviet headquarters, alternating. One of the unfortunate aspects of this was that at the beginning of the meeting they directed the discussions more at influencing German opinion than carrying on serious negotiations. They got the negotiations off on the wrong foot at the very beginning and it was nothing but a propaganda exercise on both sides. It was really interesting though because what happened was that gradually they forgot about trying to influence German opinion and got down to arguing about what's the best way of dealing with the Germans, who are very difficult, unreliable people, and who could get you into a lot of trouble if you don't deal with them properly.

An awful lot was between Mr. Dulles on our side and Mr. Molotov, who had returned to power, on the Soviet side. I can remember Dulles saying in response to the Soviet proposal, "What you are trying to persuade us to do is what we tried out in 1919 and it didn't work and it got us into trouble. What we're proposing is not to try to control the Germans, but to make the Germans part of the solution so basically they've got an interest in the continuation of what we work out, and not an incentive to try and get rid of it." And that was really what the argument boiled down to and it didn't come out anywhere and the negotiation failed. The idea of having some broad negotiations still had life and for the next couple of years there was a continuing dialogue that went on between basically the U.S., in consultation with the British and the French, and the Soviets.

In spite of the breakdown in confidence, at some stage – I can't remember exactly when it was – we began carrying on exploratory conversations with the Soviets. I think I remember mainly the Americans took the lead, clearing with the British and the French. We had a tripartite committee in Washington in which we cleared our positions, but a lot of the basic work was done really by the Americans. The negotiations were extremely complex. I was on the coordinating committee in Washington and this went on for so long that after I went to Paris I wound up on a subcommittee. We sat in Paris and were still working on these poor problems *[laughs]*.

We lived, of course, always under the threat of some kind of action by the Soviets against Berlin. The Soviets would try and fuss with our trucks; they would try to fuss with the passengers on the troop trains. We went through a long process where they insisted that we provide them with a list of all the people on the train. One of the issues was whether the American train commander would get off the train and go to a table where the Soviets sat, and we finally gave in on that. It was something that went on almost every night. What happened was you would get interference with the train one day; the next day the three military would consult and they would talk to the three embassies in Bonn and then at the end of this they would come up with a proposal.

Of course the British and French always had the possibility of talking to their people on the telephone while things were going on. It always wound up with a position that had been worked out and then they had to have Washington agreement and so an immediate action telegram – what we used to call a NIACT; the abbreviated words meant originally "night action." A telegram would arrive at the end of the day in Washington which required an immediate answer. There was great fussing around. Obviously Washington really had no way of having any influence on it, but it certainly raised hell with the dinner arrangements *[laughs]*. The idea of trying to find a basis for another set of high-level discussions continued as long as I was there and for some time thereafter, until they built the wall and that sort of killed it.

During this time period I had decided to go into the Foreign Service. I had promised my first wife, for family reasons, as a condition of getting married, that I wouldn't go into the Foreign Service; and my hands got forced on that by the Wriston Committee Report and the program it initiated and I finally decided that I really had no future in the Department as a departmental officer and I had no choice but to go into the Foreign Service. So the latter part of my time in German Affairs was spent exploring various possible assignments. I put in for several when the discussion started and I was planning to leave German Affairs. I was chosen to go to what is now known as the senior seminar.

JONATHAN DEAN
Kreis Resident Officer
Limburg (1949-1951)

Political Officer
Bonn (1952-1956)

East German Desk Officer
Washington DC (1956-1960)

Political Counselor
Bonn (1968-1972)

Jonathan Dean was born in 1924 in New York. He attended Harvard College and Columbia University and served in the Canadian and US Armies in World War II. His Foreign Service career took him to Germany, in which he was very much involved, Czechoslovakia, and Katanga. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.

Q: You became a kreis officer?

DEAN: Right, a kreis resident officer.

Q: By that time had you taken the oral exam?

DEAN: Yes. Actually the group I was with that I still associate with today -- we were all on the waiting list for the regular Foreign Service when they engaged us, gave us FSS staff appointments and took us over to Germany. They gave us about three months training and we went to our assignments as resident officers, local representatives of the High Commission.

Q: Do you remember any of the sort of things you were asked during the oral exam?

DEAN: One of the examiners asked me whether I would need a Foreign Service salary to live on and I assured him that I would. I must have given him the wrong impression. They asked me a question about the balance of payments which I was unable to answer and one of the examiners helpfully provided the answer.

Q: When you were taking the kreis resident officer course, KRO course, what were they teaching you?

DEAN: It was in the hands of a gentleman named Moran who was an ex-FBI agent. Part of it was language training of a straight forward kind which I was glad to have. Most of it was the structure, activities, and programs of the High Commission.

Q: When you went over, where was your initial assignment?

DEAN: It was in Limburg on the Lahn, which is the seat of the bishopric of Frankfurt am Main. I also was responsible for the adjoining Oberlahn kreis.

Q: What was the purpose of this KRO program and what were you doing?

DEAN: What was I really doing in it or the purpose?

Q: Let's state the purpose first.

DEAN: This was a residual function of the U.S. occupation of Germany. By the time we got into it, in the spring of 1950, the High Commission was actively engaged in the effort to democratize post-war Germany. That was also then the main function of the kreis resident officers. Their work involved attempting to set up youth organizations, women's organizations, mobilize voters, trying to get town meetings going, things of that kind. For most of us, as well as for the Germans, it was pretty much an educational experience on the fundamentals of democracy.

Q: Talking about educational experiences, I was thinking here you go out; yes you had been in the military which gave you a feeling for structure and all. All of a sudden to be tossed into what amounted to what could have been a fairly responsible administrative position in a foreign country under very difficult circumstances considering where the Germans were at that time, how did you operate?

DEAN: We did have an extremely good U.S. Land Commission, responsible for occupation matters in the Land or state of Hesse. It was very active. The Land Commission had a gifted man responsible for coordinating the kreis resident officer program, Linton Lovett. He called us frequently, and called us in frequently, for discussions of what we were trying to do or supposed to be doing. He and his colleagues had a pretty clear idea of what they were trying to do and I think they got some fairly good performance out of these young men. In some of the other German Lander, they had less gifted organizers. But we had a high commissioner, James Newman, who had been a power in American education. He had a clear concept of what he was trying to achieve. I had quite a bit of opportunity to compare with the British and French occupation systems (we were on the border of the French occupation zone). In my opinion, we did corporately achieve a great deal in the direction of democratization, voter education, formation of free trade unions, free press and free radio.

Q: I understand part of the reason for the kreis officers was to have a gradual transition away from the military role to put in civilians so it would be an easier way of doing it. It would sort of free the military from this and also to get them out of the government.

DEAN: That's correct. That's right. That's why the function was handed over to the State Department to civilianize the operation. Of course, it did then train quite a number of people for the occupation who then, as I did, stayed on in German affairs. It was very good training for that, because you experienced German society from the ground up.

Q: I know because I've interviewed quite a few. I remember my first post abroad was in '55 in Frankfurt and I replaced Kennedy Smertz, who was one of the KROs.

DEAN: Right.

Q: Can you describe what a day or any experiences you had as a resident officer?

DEAN: I would go around and talk to the local burgermeisters and try to get them to organize town meetings to discuss affairs of the community with the citizens and report to them. That was an alien concept and the burgermeister didn't like it much, but usually they would give me a glass of schnapps or two and we would have a convivial time and ultimately hold a meeting. Occasionally, I would go to a county fair to fire air rifles (regular fire arms were forbidden at that point) at a target with the local Landrat or county supervisor, who usually beat me (he was a professional soldier). Or I judged cattle, at which I was not very knowledgeable. I would talk to women's groups and urge them to form associations of their own and to inform themselves systematically on voter issues. I did speak a fair amount of German then, but I also had some quite capable German assistants. The group of Germans that we had working for us in the occupation were by and large of very good quality.

Q: Did you find, as most of us have in the Foreign Service, that the equivalent to your local employees were sort of behind the scenes making sure things worked?

DEAN: Oh yes, they had to do this because they had most of the contacts. They were very active and some of them were very devoted to the cause of German democracy; I've heard from them over the years since then.

Q: What was your impression of Germany at this time which was about five years after the end of the war?

DEAN: It was still flat on the ground. Frankfurt, which you saw, was just a rubble heap. Berlin was a rubble heap. Cologne was a rubble heap. Most Germans were extremely vigorously denying any complicity in the Third Reich. I found only one or two -- in later years I found more -- who would admit some degree of responsibility. As I looked at the situation and thought in particular of what I had read, and studied and heard from Franz Neumann, I began to feel that nearly any country with the unfortunate history of Germany and its hierarchical and military values might have developed the same way -- even ourselves. That most of us had the capacity to do evil things in a banal, unfeeling way. I had answered in part a question that had motivated me to enter the Foreign Service, what really had happened, why World War II and Nazism had happened. I formed a theory of that development, right or wrongly.

Q: You arrived in Germany within a year or two of two big events. One was the coup, or whatever you want to call it, and the takeover by the communists in Czechoslovakia and the other was the Berlin air lift. Both of these played a prominent part in getting the Cold War started.

DEAN: The third, I would say, of nearly equal importance was the beginning of the Korean War.

Q: Yes, in June of 1950. What was the attitude at this time? Did you sense a change in the approach towards Germany and what our adversaries would be and all, at that point?

DEAN: At that point I actually got involved with some exiled Ukrainians who were in Limburg where we were living. There was a rather clumsy KGB effort to assassinate me and my wife. There was a camp for so-called Ukrainian slave laborers in Limburg. We had a man from the camp as a gardener. They got to him and told him that the Red Army was coming and he was supposed to demonstrate his loyalty by doing something significant. He thought assassinating me and my wife would meet the requirements and the KGB agreed. Many of the details came out and I got in touch with a man from the fledgling CIA. He gave me the sterling advice to ride along with the plot. In that way, the CIA would find out who it was who was doing the contacts.

Actually, the complicity of our gardener was revealed by a fellow Ukrainian who came to me in my office and spilled the whole thing about this other Vasil. Each was called Vasil, and they had had some kind of falling out. Anyhow, I demonstratively flourished a shotgun around the place and fired it off over the wall and so forth. The gardener had been trying to figure out how to drive our car to make his escape. He had never had any driving lessons and he wasn't doing too well on that. He was amateurish, but the affair was sinister at the same time. Anyhow, Vasil Sleva, poor man, he disappeared back into the refugee camp but I don't think anything ever happened to him. I did not take the advice of the man from the CIA.

Those were big events. People felt that war was definitely in the air. I didn't come into contact with the rearming of Germany until I went up to Bonn and then definitely so. Of course, that was a major, major topic. For a short time – before we went to Bonn, this is the way the Foreign Service often tweaks you this way and that -- my next assignment was in the High Commission in Frankfurt where part of the U.S. High Commission still remained during the slow move to Bonn. My job was to follow the neo-Nazi developments, to analyze reports, to pull them together, and so forth. I did that for about three or four months and I was shipped up to Bonn and found myself more or less helping to organize the new German army.

Q: In the first place was there anything in the way of a neo-Nazi movement at the time?

DEAN: No serious movement. There were about five percent of absolutely unredeemed people. I've met more of them over the years in Austria than I ever did in Germany. There it was sort of like the British colonial carrying to the absolute extreme the values of the British – in this case of the Nazis. I picked up a man on the road in Austria one time and he wanted to bomb Russia immediately again. This must have been in the late '50s. In Germany, the neo-Nazis, people that really believed in Nazism and so forth were very small. The Republican Party as you know today are lucky if they can get four or five percent.

Q: Is this the FDP?

DEAN: No, those are the Free Democrats, who are a liberal party. Republikaner, the right wingers called themselves.

Q: *Just to go back, when did you get married?*

DEAN: I got married just before we left for Germany in March 1950.

Q: *Where did you meet your wife?*

DEAN: She was our next door neighbor from Darien, Connecticut. Her mother and father had died and meanwhile she was living in New York. My own father brought us together. He got tired of my rootless condition.

Q: *So he fixed you.*

DEAN: Exactly.

Q: *During this you were a KRO from '50 to when?*

DEAN: It was about two years. I went to Bonn in late 1951.

Q: *Was there much concern about a Soviet attack on Germany at that time?*

DEAN: There was indeed. This whole incident that I told you about with our Ukrainian gardener, was based on the idea that the Red Army was coming and that he had to demonstrate his loyalty to the Soviet Union in advance. Yes, people were worried about that definitely and continued to be.

Q: *Did you see any change in sort of the German attitude towards Americans? Although the occupation was getting close to ending about that time, was there still a change between seeing the Americans as sort of occupiers into defenders?*

DEAN: I didn't notice it, not at that time. The era of good feelings probably started in the mid-fifties. From the outset, I never saw a great deal of overt hostility. Obviously, people who felt it restrained it. Others seemed to think that it was fairly good that they had the Americans instead of the French or something telling them what to do. The British also had a resident officer program and a fairly good one. I went to a couple of their conferences. The French had nothing of that type on promoting democratic institutions, although they did do some cultural politics. I did run into two or three unreconstructed German nationalists. There was the mayor of the second kreis I was responsible for who was a very unpleasant man, had dueling scars, schmissee, all over his face, and was very dour, although superficially polite.

Q: *We're talking about Dönitz guys.*

DEAN: Yes, and he had been a professional officer. He gave me a hard time but not excessively. The man that owned the house that we were quartered in, which was sequestered, had also been a Nazi party member of some distinction. We had a few harsh discussions, but nothing else. By and large, and I think as I asked my colleagues they had the same experience; there were

relatively few indications of overt hostility. Distance, but not hostility. Even before the Korean War and before the cold war became a serious source of concern for Germans, it was a relatively small number who openly expressed enmity. In Frankfurt did you see any of it?

Q: I got there in '55 and by that time I think the Cold War had really set in and it was in concrete at that time. I think it would stay for the next 30 years.

DEAN: There was also a certain amount of hierarchic servility in some Germans which created the artificial politeness.

Q: If you were an official and went somewhere, even no matter how young, I remember going into police stations as a vice council I felt very low down and all of a sudden the heels started clicking and it was almost a little heady I think. You moved up about '52 then to Bonn? I take it by this time you were fully into the Foreign Service as a regular FSO?

DEAN: Right.

Q: You were in Bonn from '52 until when?

DEAN: '56.

Q: You really had a very long time in Germany.

DEAN: Yes. I was very lucky. I had two assignments and worked on Germany in the Department. In Bonn, I was assigned to the political section. I went with my chief from the section following neo-Nazi extremism, Roger Dow, who was an academic folded into the Foreign Service, up to Bonn. I ended up in the political section under the distinguished leadership of John Paton Davies, one of the old China hands who had been attacked by McCarthy. Davies was a man of remarkable imagination and subtlety of mind. Knowing him was an education. A great leader with a real feel for developing younger officers.

Q: What were you doing then?

DEAN: I was just one of the reporting officers. But rather soon, I got assigned to an activity called the Liaison House. This was a contact place with the new German government. We served good food and good lunches when it was still somewhat scarce. We worked mainly with the parliament, the chancellor's office, and with the Amt Blank, as it developed with the new German army.

This liaison activity was run by Anton F. Pabsch, a German-American of remarkable qualities who had been one of General Clay's interpreters. Among his remarkable qualities, Tony Pabsch spoke about the most strongly accented Silesian German I have heard. But he was a very affable, very astute man and I just sort of acted as his sidekick. The second person we had there in the Liaison House was a Foreign Service officer, Norris Chipman, who had been one of those who trained with George Kennan in Russian in Riga and was an expert on communism. My goodness, what an education he gave me on communism in Europe.

Q: You said you got involved rather quickly into the complexities of rearming Germany?

DEAN: Yes, because that was our main job then. It was to liaise with Theodor Blank, the German trade union leader who was chosen to set up the new democratic German armed forces, and his Amt Blank, his fledgling Defense Ministry and the officers they had there, men like Ulrich de Maizière, who later became inspector general, senior officer of the new Bundeswehr. I mention him first because I just took his grandson from the airport up to Georgetown University the other day. It was quite a group of men there who were screening officer candidates for the new German forces. They were trying to develop a new form of discipline, based more on teamwork and less on the hierarchical system of the old Wehrmacht. I took the first group of deputies from the Bundestag Defense Committee to the United States in 1955 to look at how we did it and as a prelude to their own defense legislation. I proposed this trip to the State Department and I was asked to escort the group.

Q: How did these German Bundestag members react to the American system where congressional committees can have so much power over budgets, programs, and all?

DEAN: That was an eye opener to them. They were also very impressed by the comptroller in the Department of Defense who was a very powerful official and in effect kept the forces in line. The Congress impressed them and of course the country impressed them. Some of them were professional soldiers. One of them was General von Manteuffel, who had been the commander in the Battle of the Bulge. He told me he understood now how Germany had been defeated because of the huge size and the big military establishment. In any case, the deputies were very hostile towards each other at the outset, but they were quite friendly with one another at the end and that did make it possible to pass some quite sensible defense legislation.

Q: You are talking about the officers and the Bundestag members?

DEAN: Most participants were Bundestag members. There was actually a General Ferber who was assigned from the fledgling Defense Ministry to go with us and a second man, Dr. Wolfgang Cartellieri, a civilian from the Defense Ministry. The rest were all members of the Bundestag, including their chairman, Dr. Jager, who was from the Christian Social Union in Bavaria. At the other end of the spectrum was Fritz Erler, who was the defense expert, later chairman, of the Social Democratic Party. The two detested each other thoroughly. But my point is that, at the end of the trip whatever else they learned, they learned about each other and they were quite friendly and constructive towards each other. They passed good legislation including a law providing for a wehrbeauftragter of the Bundestag, a kind of ombudsman who is supposed to ensure the democratic conditions inside the armed forces. So that was a good project.

Q: As you started getting involved with this rearming of Germany, what were the reactions about this from some of the fellow officers, particularly more senior ones in the embassy, from our military, and other Americans? Was there any disquiet about this that you know of?

DEAN: At this point, I ran afoul of the same CIA guy who had advised me to stick with the Ukrainian assassin to find out more about his backup. This time it was the Gehlen organization

that we had taken over. I knew that from my own experience with the more democratic German officers who were selecting senior officers for the new German forces that Gehlen had a bunch of real villains within. I complained about this myself to the senior officers of the political section and they were worried about it. Then I had an interview with other senior CIA officials, including Richard Helms, later head of the CIA, who said we've got to do this and tried to explain the possibilities. But there was still a good deal of friction because of this issue.

Q: You might explain what the Gehlen organization was.

DEAN: The Gehlen organization was the military intelligence structure of the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front against the Soviet Union which was taken over more or less intact by the United States and acted as a resource for it during the Cold War because of its great knowledge of the Soviet army. The action was understandable but the objections were also understandable. But to return to your original question, the main objections that I encountered to the rearming of Germany were from the Germans themselves and that was very violent. Part of my job was doing the Bundestag reporting and I covered all of the debates, including the opposition by the Social Democrats to the rearming.

Q: We want to cut off about now. Were there any other things you were dealing with in Germany before we move on because I would like to put it at the end of this so we will know if there are some other things we should cover in Germany?

DEAN: I stayed there for the next three-four years working on the military buildup and doing the domestic political reporting about all of the treaties that brought Germany into NATO and formally ended the occupation. I went back there in '68 right at the time of the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia and of the Brandt Ostpolitik, that is what I did.

Q: We'll pick this one up and leave it about '53 or '54 and we'll still cover the time that you were a political officer in Bonn. We've talked about the early dealings with the new Germany army and developing the Bundestag Germany army relationship and all. The next time we will pick up some of the treaties bringing Germany into NATO, the end of the sort of full power of the German government, about repressions of Comrade Adenauer and how we looked at that. During this mid-'50s time we might also talk about East Berlin and in '53 there were some disturbances.

DEAN: There was an uprising in East Berlin among the workers.

Q: Today is the 16th of September 1997. We are still in Germany. You were in Germany from when to when in this particular time?

DEAN: Until 1956.

Q: Let's talk about some of the occurrences. There was the East Berlin uprising in '53 which was a workers uprising wasn't it?

DEAN: Yes it was but it was not very large scale.

Q: As I remember, I was a GI and I was confined to barracks in Darmstadt during this time. I was in the air force and we weren't quite sure what was going to happen but it was enough to cause concern. How was it viewed from Bonn?

DEAN: Some dissatisfied workers demonstrated and were repressed by Soviet tanks. In Bonn I remember discussing this with John Paton Davies who was the political counselor then. We thought it was a demonstration that the East German system could not hold and that some of the things that Adenauer and others had been saying about the magnetic attraction of West Germany, Western Europe, western culture, on the East would be vindicated. Of course he and those of us who felt that way were right. But it was a very long time before that became evident.

Q: Was it a case of sort of the embassy mobilizing to think that maybe there might be something more to this than just a workers uprising and this might gather momentum and might cause us a problem?

DEAN: No, the events didn't appear to have that potential. There were pleas for help that we failed to do anything about, which reminds one of the much more dramatic circumstances in Hungary in 1956.

Q: You're talking about October of '56. Were you there at that point?

DEAN: No, I was here in Washington and I was having dinner at the German minister's house with Walter Lippman and Lady Barbara Salt who was the British minister at that point. There was a dramatic confrontation between the two.

Q: We'll come back to that later on if it's pertinent. What were the amalgamation or the German joining of NATO, this happened during your time didn't it?

DEAN: Yes, definitely. In the early '50s, with the outbreak of the Korean War, the conclusion was reached in Washington and finally with the German leadership that there would have to be a rearming of Germany. It was feared then that there would be a worldwide military conflict. Actually we got some hints of that possibility as I was a resident officer in the early '50s in Limburg on the Lahn because our Ukrainian gardener who still lived in a refugee camp was subverted by a traveling KGB operative to prepare for arrival of the Red Army by assassinating us and the other few Americans who were in the town of Limburg on the Lahn. The Korean War cast its shadow, a personal shadow, on us. The fledgling CIA representative whom I knew pretty well said this was marvelous, just string along with this effort, and he would be able to find out who was behind it.

Q: Were you involved in any of the manufacturing of the treaty, negotiating the treaty and if you were could you talk about some of the issues that concerned us?

DEAN: I was involved in trying to get the German parliament to vote for the enabling legislation

for ratification of the London and Paris treaties which returned a good deal of sovereignty to Germany and were the basis for German entry into NATO. Several years preceding that there had been strong efforts to get a European Defense Force, EDF, which would have had been an integrated force of the kind that you find in today's Franco- German corps, but associated with NATO and an important component of a future European Union, which I more or less automatically supported as the logical answer to the wars of the past. This was conceived as a way of making German rearmament more palatable and acceptable to Frenchmen and other Europeans. Right up to 1954, after a lot of ups and downs, it appeared that there would be some chance of that but under the government of Mendes-France, the French parliament finally turned it down, by making clear that they were not going to vote positively. So we had to go into high gear to bring German acceptance of an alternative agreement providing for their direct entry into NATO.

Germany held out then for the return of more sovereignty than the three allies were willing to give it. The net result was a very contentious group of laws and treaties. The Free Democrat, in coalition with Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democrats, split in half over this, with part of them voting for these treaties and part opposing. We had day-to-day dealings with two of those who were willing to vote for the treaties: the minister of housing, Emanuel Preusker, and a second leader, Euler, as well as Erich Mende. I remember one dramatic moment in which we assured them that the French parliament would vote on this positively and told them that to the best of our knowledge, that they had in fact done so. This later turned out to be incorrect, but in the meanwhile this group of Free Democrats joined the CDU and voted the treaty in, so I guess insufficient information was at the basis of this positive outcome.

Q: What were the objections of the members of the FDP that split off?

DEAN: Even those that supported the treaty represented a national interest viewpoint. They questioned whether Germany was getting enough, whether German rights were going to be respected, whether sufficient German sovereignty was being returned. The opposition group carried these views further. The political future of the pro-CDU faction seemed very much to be on the line. In fact, Preusker, housing minister in the Adenauer cabinet, dropped out of circulation fairly soon thereafter, branded as an excessive collaborator with Adenauer.

Q: Adenauer remained didn't he?

DEAN: He stayed for many years, that is right. But the Free Democrats underwent one of their continuing divisions which comes from their position in the narrow terrain between Christian Democrats and Social Democrats. Even today they are either splitting up or on the verge of disappearance but still surviving.

Q: What about the SPD, the Social Democratic Party, where were they?

DEAN: From the outset they had been very strong opponents of German rearmament. They thought it was socially wrong, politically wrong, morally wrong. At this time, after the death of Kurt Schumacher, they were led by Erich Ollenhauer, a round faced, very pleasant quiet man, not at all charismatic. Yet he contributed to organizing a democratic constructive opposition in a

very important way. Anyhow, the Social Democrats did have demonstrations, many of them, and they did vote consistently against the treaty. It wasn't until some years later under the impetus of Herbert Wehner, whom I was seeing quite a bit in those days, that they finally reconciled themselves to German membership in NATO and accepted it as desirable. Today, in 1999, the Social Democrats are pushing for NATO enlargement, so they have come a long way.

Q: Were we giving, I don't want to use a basketball term of a full court press, but were we pushing the Social Democrats at all from our embassy or did we just consider they aren't going to vote for it so let's work on others?

DEAN: The latter was the case, but we were surely pushing all the potential votes for the treaties - and thus for the German Army. There were a few Free Democrats like Thomas Dehler, the one-time minister of justice, who were very much for reconciliation with the Soviet Union. They feared with the Social Democrats that German membership in NATO would destroy for all time any possibility of peaceful German reunification. The stakes were very high for many people and that is the reason in part why the Free Democrats wouldn't vote for the treaties and why the others were on tenterhooks because of the pressures brought to bear on them. The Social Democrats were very strong proponents of the view that not only were the treaties wrong, but would end prospects for German unification. Of course, later on, they became the agents of a policy of reconciliation which enabled German unification, in my view, but that was still in the distant future.

Q: What was our reading on Konrad Adenauer at that time? How did he fit with our policy and our working with him and all?

DEAN: I didn't have a great deal to do with him since I was too junior at that point but I did participate in meeting in groups with him. He was revered, respected and he sometimes exasperated our own leaders, but he knew what he wanted. He always explained clearly what he wanted and we were committed to supporting him. There were moments of friction, but the overall relationship was never in question.

Q: What about the French at that time? You mentioned that they weren't voting as we had hoped they would regarding NATO; what was the view from the lower ranks of the political section about the French?

DEAN: The French believed then and for many years to come that the best means of dealing with Germany was repression. They seemed to have the view of the First World War occupation still in their minds. As a Resident Officer, my district was right next to the French occupation zone so I had something to do with the French resident officer, Commandant Roquefeuille. He was a Gaullist and had a large group around him of the people who played very important roles in domestic politics afterwards, and I met them through him. Members of this group were always advocates of control and fearful of losing control and that the United States would be gulled by the Germans into unwise relaxation. This was a very different view from the embrace-them view of Robert Schuman.

Q: Were we seeing any glimmers of Adenauer's desire to really embrace the French which came

later if I recall, as far as seeing that the French-German relationship was sort of the key to everything?

DEAN: Adenauer did speak of it often and of course the historical record was there that as a Zentrum Party representative he had spoken of a kind of separate status for the Rhineland like that of the Saar. He was in fact absolutely devoted to the idea of reconciliation with France and it was in that period that the Coal and Steel Community and the Schuman Plan got under way; while German cooperation with the United States was on a clear rational basis, they invested enormous amounts of emotional, political, and economic capital in their effort to reconcile with France. I remember Albrecht Krause who ran a network of youth exchanges. Germans were really committed, and remained committed, and developed a kind of partnership with the French government which in fact made the main decisions for the emerging European community then and in the future. This despite our own more skeptical view of the French.

Q: One of the latent motifs of our foreign policy and particularly among the professional diplomats has been a certain skepticism about the stand of the French and almost a dismissal that the French are always going to be on the other side. Did you find this developing among your political officer corps?

DEAN: This was a very familiar attitude then and I guess I shared it after the very serious disappointment that we all had with the failure of the European Defense Force which many thought was going to be a lead element in European integration. I think we can see now that military integration tends to follow integration of other kinds. But at that time, we hoped for a big breakthrough and the French were regarded as antiquated and not modern in their thinking, inflexible, and so forth. Later, in the Bonn Group and in the Berlin talks, I experienced other difficulties with the French who were perhaps understandably intent on maintaining their dwindling legal hold over Germany.

Q: What about the press corps, did you have any dealings with them while you were there?

DEAN: No, not at that time; I stayed out of their way.

Q: Were there any other areas that we ought to chat about while you were in Germany?

DEAN: At that time I did have a fairly recurrent relationship with Herbert Wehner who was the deputy chair of the Social Democrats. He had been the chairman of the German Communist Party in exile in Moscow. It was later revealed that he apparently fingered with the Russians some colleagues for imprisonment and execution. At that time he was suspected as still a communist by many of our people. But I found him, as I did later Egon Bahr, more a deeply convinced German nationalist than anything else and perhaps the leading exponent of that sentiment.

At any event, I was sent by my boss, political counselor John Davies, always an imaginative and insightful man, around to Wehner and other Germans who knew something about Russia. John Davies believed that the Germans had a long knowledge and deep acquaintanceship with Russia in enmity and in peacetime, and might have many insights not shared by U.S. experts. He sent

me around to a whole collection of rather eminent German specialists on the Soviet Union of the old kind: Arthur Just, and Professor Schiller, an expert in Russian agriculture. I also used to visit Wehner and other Social Democrats who had that knowledge.

Q: You were saying that you were dealing with various people in the SPD.

DEAN: Yes, I had fairly close contacts with them, and I don't know if I mentioned the Bundestag trip to the United States?

Q: You may have but let's go through it just in case we haven't; we can always edit this.

DEAN: I suggested to the embassy and to Washington that we should help with the German defense legislation by inviting the German Defense Committee to the United States to see how we did this kind of thing, especially civilian help with control of the military. We were especially concerned that the new Germany Army be thoroughly controlled by civilians to avoid mistakes of the past. They asked me to be the guide for this group. We took a six week trip around the United States with the result that the members of the committee, who were at swords' points at the outset, were personally quite friendly with one another and able when they got back to cooperate on this legislation. One of the participants was Fritz Ehler, who was the Social Democrat. He was to emerge as the leader and renovator of the party, opening the way to their ultimate takeover of government under Willy Brandt. He insisted on the acceptance of NATO, acceptance of capitalism, of the free market economy, and generally a very modern, Social Democrat today. Unfortunately he died of leukemia in his mid-50s. He had been a political prisoner under the Nazis and was put in one of these penal battalions forced to attack very tough military positions.

Q: Did you find that there was difficulty in presenting the SPD to the American political establishment? I mean if you're simply called Christian and Democratic Union, this is a nice name, but Social Democrats is socialist implied.

DEAN: True. They had a very low standing and there was a great deal of suspicion about them. Of course this was the period of McCarthyism and I don't know if we discussed that but it had very strong reverberations in Bonn, very strong.

Q: Again it has been some time, what were the reverberations?

DEAN: Among other things they forced the resignations of our Deputy High Commissioner and of a couple of our USIA officers, including Ted Kagan. This was the work of Cohn and Shine.

Q: That lovely comic duo from McCarthy's committee.

DEAN: Yes, exactly. They were a really revolting pair but people would quaver in fear of them. They caused the resignation of our assistant high commissioner, Samuel Reber, and of the consul general in Munich, Charles Thayer. In the latter's case, they got his medical records through the head of the medical service of the State Department and used them as leverage against him. They were a very damaging gang and they were not stopped by Secretary Dulles or anyone.

Q: It was not one of the best times of American diplomacy.

DEAN: My boss then, he's dead now, Elim O'Shaughnessy, told me that they came to him even as he was recovering from a stomach ulcer operation and asked him questions about his relationship when he was posted in Egypt with Ambassador Caffery.

Q: This is Jefferson Caffery.

DEAN: Yes, I gather his personal behavior may have been open to question, but he was a skilled professional. O'Shaughnessy was promoted a couple of times while serving with him, and so the security service idea was that O'Shaughnessy was affected by this, which of course was ridiculous. But this was really pervasive.

Q: Yes, this was an extremely difficult time.

DEAN: My boss, John Paton Davies, whom the Department had sent to Bonn because it could not get Senate confirmation for an embassy for him because of his involvement in China.

Q: He was the DCM under I guess Patrick Hurley wasn't he?

DEAN: Yes. We had also another officer a little bit later, Ray Ludden, who was consul general in Dusseldorf, also another China hand. That's when I joined the American Civil Liberties Union, because nobody was protecting these people and they were all fair game. These gunmen would come into town like Roy Cohn and Shine and destroy the whole embassy.

Q: It does not reflect well on basically President Eisenhower and on Dulles.

DEAN: It was a time of fear, consternation and misery; I remember it very sharply.

Q: Were we concerned about dealing with the Germans and also even within our own embassy with Soviet penetration?

DEAN: I didn't hear much about that then, but I did later. Of course Cohn and Shine and McCarthy were very much aware of this issue. It wasn't until the '70s, when I started negotiating in Vienna that I became aware of this activity in pretty lurid detail. Our own delegation was penetrated. Yet, overall it didn't play a big role. Of course Cohn and Shine said that these people were affected by communist association. At that time, I had my first experiences with the CIA, because I was arguing against the hiring of certain officers who later turned out to be part of the Gehlen Organization.

Q: The Gehlen Organization being a German intelligence organization well versed on particularly the Soviet Union.

DEAN: It was actually the organization of the Wehrmacht which had been used to gather intelligence against Russian armed forces, which we then took over lock, stock and barrel and

incorporated into our CIA system in Germany. I complained about it then and Richard Helms (whom I guess was in charge in Germany at that time) told me that I was mistaken in my appraisal of these characters and nothing bad would happen.

Q: The Korean War had started and we were really gearing up and rearming Germany and all, was there within our political section a hard look at closet Nazis and Nazi movements and concern about this at that time? This was only about eight years after the war.

DEAN: That's the subject I worked on in the High Commission for six months before going to Bonn after I was a resident officer. However it didn't seem that the percentage of these people in local or state or land elections would get much beyond five percent even though we were all afraid of it. Our people greatly feared that widespread unemployment in Germany would be a multiplier. Later, with unemployment rates of over 10% in the 1980s and '90s, it was demonstrated that didn't happen. There was the BHE, the Bund der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten with Dr. Theodor Oberlander. This was a party of expellees from former German territories in the East, which looked rather threatening. However they were gradually absorbed by the Christian Democrats and some also by the Social Democrats, particularly some Sudeten Germans. In this way, they were pretty well neutralized. However, these people held out as a separate party until the late '50s or '60s and always had to be paid off in one way or another. It was a real achievement of the German political system that it took in these refugees with a cause who were very often advocating very extreme action against Poland, Czechoslovakia and so on. The CDU neutralized them and made them democratic citizens.

Q: In contrast to the French dealing with the Pied Noir and then Algeria who had a much more difficult time including having an army revolt.

DEAN: Yes, an assassination attempt on DeGaulle. Today with le Pen in France, they have about 15 percent or so, while the neo-Nazis, Republikaner and so forth in Germany are still not much over five percent. That was part of a remarkable democratic achievement even though everybody was very fearful for many years, quite understandably after the Nazi experience, that something like it would arise again.

Q: Was there any discussion within the embassy of an eventual recognition of East Germany at that time?

DEAN: No, although that was a period of the Soviets proposing ever new foreign ministers conferences on Germany. Russia put forward a proposal for alleged free elections leading to German unification. Herbert Wehner and others told me they felt it was a serious mistake on our part not to have exposed this proposal by discussing it in more detail. That Soviet offer was followed by the Eden Plan in which the West put forward its version of free elections. But Western governments never really looked into the Soviet proposal, so it led a kind of sub-surface life as an opportunity for unification which had not been really tried and which had been missed.

The real fact of the matter was the Western countries, the United States, Britain, France, really didn't trust Germany and Germans enough at that stage to undertake what they considered to be a major risk of neutralization. That was the real red thread that went through Western policy at

that time. They feared that, through astute Soviet policy, Germany would become neutralized and therefore Europe would not be any longer defensible and Russia would gain the dominant position, possibly militarily also. It was an overassessment of Soviet propaganda capabilities and of German gullibility.

Q: I know when I came into the Foreign Service, one of the things I heard in my first assignment in Frankfurt, was actually we were rather comfortable with a divided Korea and a divided Germany.

DEAN: Yes, considering the conditions under which we feared at that time Germany might be unified. That is a subject that I followed a lot, the German unity question, and various Russian offers, German responses, what the Social Democrats were saying about it, and so forth. Usually the Social Democrats were more impressed than the Christian Democrats were.

Q: Was our embassy making any recommendations at that time? You say you were looking at these offers that were coming through at that time.

DEAN: I always urged that we go further in trying to discuss these proposals in order to expose them and to demonstrate that there was nothing behind them. But I don't think the embassy was going on record with Washington for much of that type of thing. It was decidedly unpopular at that point. The fear was that German opinion would become so impressed that they would force their own government to have these free elections under conditions of enforced neutrality for Germany and that we would in fact lose our position of control over Germany. Actually the apex, the peak of the Soviet propaganda effort directed against Germany, came in the early '70s in the controversy over the IMF Treaty and the SS-20 missiles and the new Pershing deployment, when they did get a million demonstrators out on the streets in support of what was the then Soviet position.

Q: You left Germany in '56. The date in '56 is kind of important because a lot of things were happening in '56. You left when in '56?

DEAN: In the summer of '56.

Q: All hell broke loose in October of '56 both in the Suez crisis and the Hungarian uprising. Where did you go? What was your assignment?

DEAN: I went to the Bureau of German Affairs and I was working on East German matters. I was the East German desk officer for the next couple of years.

Q: Did you see a different perspective of Germany, and particularly East Germany, from the way you had been looking at it in Bonn when you got back to Washington because of the climate in the Department of State or in Washington?

DEAN: Yes. It was a big shift from immersion in German domestic politics to the considerations of operating a big establishment in Germany. I was awfully shaken by the inaction of the United States at the time of the Hungarian uprising and experienced the drama of that just by chance at a

dinner at the German embassy with Walter Lippman and Lady Barbara Salt in which he attacked her for Suez and so forth. Of course it was clear that Suez distracted the attention of the Eisenhower government and it responded, in my view, inadequately to the Hungarian uprising, although the dangers of pressing the Soviets too far was also clear. I thought that they had left these people in the lurch, as many Hungarians did. Anyhow, it was a very sad awakening but the '53 repression in Germany and what the U.S. failed to do in Hungary led me to the conclusion that the Soviet and communist system was now relatively firmly established in Eastern Europe and that the way to deal with it was with what I then called a policy of engagement, something like what we much later applied to relations with South Africa in the apartheid period, and that's what I argued, and that working for a time for the Soviet desk, we prepared the failed Paris summit.

Q: This was while you were on the German desk, you moved over to the Soviet desk?

DEAN: I was on loan over there. We prepared the Paris summit, the one which was destroyed through the shooting down of Powers with the U-2 aircraft.

Q: This was in '60?

DEAN: Yes.

Q: Khrushchev did not meet with Eisenhower. They both went to Paris but...

DEAN: I think they did meet but it was just a violent exchange. A good part of the problem was that Vice President Nixon commenting on the over-flight said, "Yes we did it and we'll continue to do it." That seemed to me to burn the iron deeper and to make it rather definite that nothing came of that particular meeting.

Q: Going back, something I did not mention while you were in Germany in '55, did the Austrian Peace Treaty have any reverberations? This was the neutralization essentially of Austria and the withdrawal of all our Allied and Soviet forces from there. Did that have any reverberations in Germany at the time or was it just considered a unique situation?

DEAN: In Germany, among those who believed that it was permissible to neutralize Germany as a price for unification, it had considerable impact, but the skepticism about the Soviet Union and Soviet behavior was extremely strong. There was however an organization called Indivisible Germany, Unteilbares Deutschland, headed by Wilhelm Wolfgang Schutz, who was quite a skilled and intelligent publicist. He went around the country arguing in a very discreet way, restrained way, for what amounted to neutrality in the Austrian pattern. He did get some support. Our people feared that there would be more support.

Q: While you were on the German desk looking at East Germany, what were you seeing about development in East Germany at that time?

DEAN: My main job was a rather unproductive one of preventing East German membership in international organizations. I thought that our mistake in the Hungarian uprising had been to deal

with the people only, and that we should expand our dealings to include the communist hierarchy and actually wrestle with them intellectually. In the long run I felt we would be able to undermine their intellectual adherence to communism, move them to relax their control, and would in that way emerge victorious. I believe that's the process which did take place but I was arguing for it as a policy.

Q: When you got back to Washington we were still in the Eisenhower administration albeit with a Democratic Congress. The normal course of diplomacy is to talk with the other side and to try to reach agreement and all. Did you find that positions had hardened, things had so frozen in place that the political climate was that this just wasn't going to work very much?

DEAN: As you know, President Eisenhower went to the surprise attack conference in Geneva and made the open skies proposal. He was continuously making efforts to break the logjam with the Soviets, but this was not visible to the public. It looked like we would be locked into position for a long time to come. That is why I suggested we deal with the leadership, instead of the attempt in which we had been engaged since the communist takeover of undermining the legality of these regimes and having as little as possible to do with them, hoping they would be swept away. This approach did culminate in the Hungarian uprising although its causes were more complicated. I suggested that the outcome of Hungary demonstrated that the Warsaw Pact system was going to be there for a long time so we might as well become more insidious and more refined in our approach.

Q: You talking the Hungarian uprising, here the uprising was mainly led by really rather young people who had had 10 years under sort of Soviet indoctrination.

DEAN: And by renegade nationalist communists.

Q: For those who were thinking about this beyond just the Cold War, were they thinking the system isn't really taking there and maybe there is something we can do with it?

DEAN: That's what I thought, but we failed the Hungarians. And we failed in the case of the Berlin Wall in August of '61 to take energetic action against them. In hindsight, it is understandable and probably correct that we would not intervene or risk military intervention. It was demonstrated that the Soviets were willing to engage in military intervention. Hence their hold over the area in the military sense was not going to be contested and would continue. Therefore, how could we work on a long-term basis to undermine their hold over the area? It seemed to me that the only way to do that was through a system of deliberate contacts not with only the general population, but with the regimes themselves in an attempt to change them over a period of time. That is why I applied for Czech language training and got assigned to Czechoslovakia in 1960.

Q: Here you were still a relatively junior mid-career officer on the German desk, did you find you were able to engage in intellectual discussions within the desk?

DEAN: Not much. My two immediate bosses were Jacques Reinstein, whom I still see around here. He is a nice guy but he was as a bureaucrat; a bureaucrat who was able in my opinion to

take the simplest issue and make it complex. The other was Eleanor Dulles who was a very salty lady whom I saw during many years. We had a good personal relationship, but she was very arbitrary and threatened to summon her brothers, John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles, to her assistance at the drop of a hat. However, there was Leon Fuller on the policy planning staff, a very deep reflective mind, who did encourage me to think in other terms. The Soviet desk officer, a bluff character, Jack McSweeney, was also surprisingly subtle in his thinking. They after all considered the Russians to be humans and not cardboard figures. They were always figuring ways of trying to influence them in a positive constructive way.

Q: Eleanor Dulles was known throughout the State Department through administration after administration as the Berlin desk officer.

DEAN: Indeed yes.

Q: How did you find her on Berlin and was there a problem?

DEAN: She wouldn't hear anything of discussion with Eastern governments and was mainly interested in the symbolism of the U.S. support for Berlin. In this way I ended up on one occasion writing a speech for Chief Justice Warren on the eternal principles of justice.

Q: This was Earl Warren?

DEAN: Yes. I suggested that Chief Justice Warren be one of the figures to go to Berlin to show the flag and to demonstrate continuing American interests. He consented to do so and picked me up in his huge Cadillac and took me over to the Supreme Court to discuss details of the trip. I was very impressed and told him that I assumed that he would want to write the speech himself or perhaps his staff. He said, "Nothing of the sort. You invited me, you write it," meaning the State Department. I went back to the Department and went all the way down the ladder of the various legal advisors and Dick Kearney, Jack Raymond, a whole bunch of them all with experience in Germany, but I ended up as the desk officer writing the speech. I put in a quote from George Herbert, an English metaphysical poet, from a poem called "The Pulley." In any case, Earl Warren thought that was far too highfalutin. Nonetheless, he gave the speech and it is in his collected speeches -- principles of eternal justice and how they would win out in Berlin and so forth.

Q: For everyone who has dealt with the world as a professional diplomat for almost the entire Cold War, Berlin has always stood as probably THE place where World War III could start, particularly an uprising in East Berlin followed by the West Germans maybe feeling they couldn't see their brothers die there and they might go in. That seemed to be the scenario.

DEAN: Or the Russians would finally block our military access and so forth, yes.

Q: During this time that you were on the German desk, did we have contingency plans? How were we feeling about this?

DEAN: Oh yes. There was in NATO a whole section (General Lemnitzer worked on it for quite

some time) called Live Oak and they had high level exercises of breaking through militarily which came to a head after I was in Czechoslovakia with the construction of the Berlin Wall in August of '61. Yes, it was continually feared that our prestige and our support for West Germany would be placed into question by some Russian blockage of the access and of course the problem was that in the immediate post-war period, agreements were reached about military access to West Berlin for British, French and American troops. But there were no agreements about access of German civilians. It was assumed, I guess, that movement from all parts of Germany would be at a low level. When West Germany was separated from East Germany and became the enemy, then of course access to and from Berlin, civilian access as well as visits to East Berlin by West Berliners with relatives there and West Germans with relatives there, became a very important issue. But that's moving up in time a little bit.

Q: At the time that you were on the German desk, one of the threats that hung over everyone that the Soviets used all the time was that they were going to sign a peace treaty with East Germany.

DEAN: That's what Khrushchev did threaten in the '61 crisis.

Q: But prior to that, that had also been a threat hadn't it?

DEAN: Yes, sure.

Q: Why was that of concern to us?

DEAN: That was of acute concern because the fear was that the East Germans, who were regarded as unrestrained, adventurous and without the restraint which the possibility of nuclear war gave the American-Soviet relationship, would pull some stunt like cutting off access to Berlin. It would then put both the Soviet Union and the United States at loggerheads with one another and possibly cause a conflict. That's why we viewed possible East German control with great concern.

Q: How did we view the East German government which was then under Walter Ulbricht? How did we view him and his government at that time?

DEAN: We regarded them as creatures of the Soviet system but also as people that wanted to build up their own status. Their intelligence activities in West Germany were beginning to be revealed and of course they were enormous, extending into the chancellor's office at the time of Willy Brandt. Every week there was a new secretary from the German NATO delegation who was compromised by some East German gigolo sent over by Marcus Wolfe.

Q: It did seem that the East Germans were providing the female secretarial staff of NATO with comforts that...

DEAN: That was Marcus Wolfe's policy and it's showing in his memoirs these days. I met him in a conference in Berlin. He is a very tall affable fellow.

Q: What was your impression or analysis of the East German government as far as their

subservience to the Soviets? Was it complete or was there an independent streak that was showing at all at that time?

DEAN: Very rarely, they would act independently. It later transpired when we were doing the Berlin negotiations they acted plenty independent so there was a good deal of this action going on below the surface that we didn't see at that time in terms of trying to get their own status, and so forth. Of course actually each of these Warsaw Pact members was very vigorously trying to do that, Ceausescu most ostentatiously in Romania.

Q: Again going back to this '56 to '60...

DEAN: Yes, it all seemed rather mechanical without the real life antagonists either in East Germany or in Moscow. Things were going on but at that point Ulbricht was consolidating his position and it looked pretty helpless there as well as elsewhere.

Q: While you were on the German desk, did the Hallstein Doctrine begin to emerge or had it emerged?

DEAN: It was just being developed because I think it was only applied once against Yugoslavia which did recognize East Germany as a separate state. It was just emerging because we as allies of Germany were loyally and fairly effectively doing what my job was; I tried to keep East Germans out of international organizations briefing American scientists going to this and that who were often bemused by these considerations to vote against allowing East Germany to become a member. It is true that the East Germans were getting individual breakthroughs at that time -- time was on their side -- and the opinion was crystallizing that they would probably establish themselves as an independent state. This in actuality didn't happen until the early '70s but it was on the way.

Q: I think just for the record could you explain what the Hallstein Doctrine was?

DEAN: The Hallstein Doctrine was named after the secretary of state in the Foreign Ministry, Walter Hallstein, who argued that Federal Germany should sever its political and economic relations with any state which recognized East Germany as an independent country. The ceaseless effort of the Soviet Union especially after the Hungarian uprising was to try to gain international acceptance of these states as ongoing independent, sovereign states and to consolidate its hold over Eastern Europe in this way. They reached their point of success in the '70s with the entry of the two German states into the United Nations and of course as they reached their success, the pronounced decline of the system also began.

Q: On the German desk, what was your concern on the desk about the lack of essentially a Berlin Wall? In other words there was a hemorrhaging of East Germans going into Berlin and then moving into the West through there.

DEAN: That is definitely so.

Q: What was the view about the situation (this was prior to the Berlin Wall) about how this was

working and how long could it be tolerated by the East Germans?

DEAN: They were clearly losing their intellectual cream and of course West Germany was receiving the refugees, taking care of them, and actually subsidizing them. That was a condition which actually continued right up until nearly the time of unification. It was a good deal for these individuals because they received economic help from the West German government but it did place in question the success of the system, not its hold over the situation but its economic and social success, and that definitely was open to question.

Q: Was there thought about how this situation in Berlin can't last and something is going to happen, i.e., there is going to be the equivalent to a wall or something, and what happens if it does happen? Were you thinking in those terms?

DEAN: I don't think anybody did think of a wall then. At least I hadn't heard at that time that they were thinking of a wall and that the East Germans might respond in that way though we had continuing trouble. They had very strong police guards and so forth so you couldn't get through anyhow. A number of people, refugees, did come but it wasn't easy. Anybody that got permission always had to leave their families behind. I guess the East German regime itself recognized more clearly than anyone else the damage that was being done to their economic and social fabric by this lesion.

Q: While you were on the desk were you in consultation with or dealing with the CIA and how did you classify what you were getting from the CIA if you were?

DEAN: We got some political reports on German domestic developments but I never felt that these reports, which came from similar sources to ours - and ours were freely given - did much more than duplicate embassy reporting on this score. That's my conclusion over the entire period. Occasionally you would get something about Russia that was different. The main information problem then, and I am sure it is still the case, was there was a huge amount of material that you had to read. It used to pile up on my desk there and I never got through it completely, but still one felt an obligation.

Q: I think one of the themes as we do these oral histories is the use of CIA material, one obviously the accuracy but the other is one of the major reasons for collecting this data is to have something for policy makers to use. Here you were at the working level and it sounds like you really didn't have time to deal with it.

DEAN: And what I looked at I considered repetitious. They did have very heavy coverage of Germany, understandable because Germany was considered to be extremely important to the United States. What they would cover, politicians that we were dealing with on a day-to-day open basis and try to establish some kind of relationship with them and then produce from them reports which were about the same as what we were producing ourselves. This is what I saw particularly when I was doing German domestic politics in the early '50s. I felt that the CIA were wasting their money there.

Q: I think that this is a theme again that seems to run through that there is an awful lot of

repetition and most of the intelligence was available by using the press and by conversations and contacts by normal diplomats.

DEAN: It's my view that German political leaders were quite open and if you yourself were informed enough to pose the right question then you usually got an answer. Of course you could see enough of them to check one off against the other and get a pretty good picture. Yes, I never saw much benefit from CIA's domestic reporting.

Q: What about Congress? As you were dealing with Germany did you find any members of Congress or any issues that particularly the desk can't deal with as we do in some other countries where you have interest groups and all?

DEAN: Not too many, at least I didn't see those because the East German issues were kind of cut off from that. We still had the House Un-American Activities Committee with its occasional forays. I was reminded of that because we had with us Ray Ludden, who was quartered with us in the East German section some time after he came back from Dusseldorf; he was one of the China hands they were after.

Q: Although the German-Americans are almost pervasive within the United States there wasn't a German lobby as there is say a Polish lobby, an Irish lobby, Jewish lobby?

DEAN: No, in fact it was notorious for its absence.

Q: One of the great pleasures.

DEAN: We got a lot of congressional correspondence but it was not of an unusual sort of ethnic type.

Q: Let me just put at the very end here, is there anything else we should cover on this German desk period?

DEAN: No, I don't think so. I went to language training and then went to Czechoslovakia and then to the Congo.

Q: You left in '68 and went to Germany?

DEAN: Yes, in August.

Q: What was your job when you went to Germany?

DEAN: My old Congo nemesis, George McGhee, who was ambassador in Germany, asked me whether I was interested in becoming political counselor there at the embassy in Bonn. We arrived I think only about two weeks before the actual Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. I remember on that day the ambassador (I have the impression that it was Ambassador Lodge, but I'm not sure.) and I went to see the Chancellor Kiesinger. I saw again for the first time in several years Franz Joseph Strauss whom I knew quite well. He gave me a dirty grin as sort of

triumphant, "I told you so about these Russians all the time."

That same morning, I received a phone call from the EUCOM commander, who was about to launch a very big military exercise along the Czechoslovak border using both German and American military forces. He asked me whether I thought he should go ahead with this. I told him that in my opinion he should suspend it immediately and that's what he did. There was some criticism afterward that we telegraphed the fact that we weren't going to interfere and this made it easier for the Soviets to carry out this invasion. I still think that it was the absolutely right thing to do under the circumstances.

Q: We had no intention of interfering and this could have made it worse.

DEAN: Yes. It could have resulted in a major confrontation.

Q: I would imagine that the fall of 1956 and the Hungarian revolution was very much on our minds, wasn't it, as far as we'd been accused of overstimulating the revolutionaries in Hungary and then letting them down, so this was a factor?

DEAN: Indeed it was. In 1956 I happened to be a guest of the German minister, Albrecht von Kessel, here in Washington, on the day of the Suez invasion. His guests were Walter Lippman and Lady Barbara Salt, minister at the British embassy. Lippman lit into Lady Barbara for carrying out this invasion and confusing international opinion at the very time when this very serious Russian invasion of Hungary was going on. I must say that I and others felt absolutely awful about our inactivity at that time and about the killing that went on. Yes, I had Hungary in mind.

Q: How did this hit Germany and our mission when this happened? Was it sort of expected?

DEAN: I think, as the behavior of Franz Joseph Strauss indicated, the Pact invasion was a classic example of Russian behavior. Dubcek had gone into the Prague Spring and had developed a remarkable flexibility in the country which I had served in several years before, which was then the prototype of the last redoubt of Stalinism under Novotny. So yes, it was a remarkable operation and fortunately there were not many casualties and there wasn't much physical resistance by the Czechs. The Russians carried it out and they had symbolic participation of East Germany and various other of their Warsaw Pact allies who must have felt badly about this, because it could happen to them and many sympathized with the Dubcek policy.

Q: I would have imagined that in many ways, although it was a great tragedy for the Czechs and really for the world, at the same time from your perspective in Bonn it made things easier to a certain extent because we didn't want the Germans to get too far in their Ostpolitik or whatever.

DEAN: That was just cranking up.

Q: So this in a way kept them in line and you can say, see what happens?

DEAN: It did answer our critics in the United States of the American troop presence in

Germany. It did confirm the continuing Cold War and the need for American military presence in Europe. But it didn't hold down the German thinking on the need for change from the Cold War line.

My first interview in the Foreign Ministry was with Ulrich Sahm, who was the head of their political department. He told me of the German interest that something be done to deal with the short-range Soviet nuclear weapons stationed in Eastern Europe. As you know this was the time when the SALT talks were supposed to begin and had to be postponed by President Johnson because of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Germans felt that we didn't take into consideration their security concerns in the preparations to negotiate reduction of strategic weapons aimed at the United States. This concern went on and on and played a role in German thinking, until it finally culminated in the great missile confrontation with the Pershing II's and the SS-20s in the early '80s.

It was just the version of that time of the continuing German malaise about American nuclear and defense protection vis-à-vis the Soviet Union which was a characteristic of the relationship – protection is good, but is it reliable? Can you really trust another country with final responsibility for your own security? It was a very deep problem and remained such throughout the Cold War. It was a recurrent theme in German-American relations together with the other theme which you've mentioned already -- German neutralism or whether Germany would be a reliable ally or not. This time the distrust was on the side of the U.S. These two factors – U.S. nuclear protection and German unity – were the two main factors in the German-American relationship. German unification was always believed by Americans to be the lever by which the Soviet Union could affect the loyalty of Germany and bring it over on its side. That theme of the German Ostpolitik came up in full force after Czechoslovakia, which many Germans regarded as the last paroxysm of Soviet imperialism.

Willy Brandt was the German foreign minister at that time and in December of 1968 he raised the issue in the so-called Bonn Group at the NATO. NATO foreign ministers gather once a year, at least, at the actual foreign minister level. Those having responsibility for Germany, that is the United States, Britain and France, together with Germany, formed the so-called Bonn Group in Bonn, usually staffed by the political counselors, unless a high-level issue was involved. The Bonn Group foreign ministers, the four-powers, met on the edge of the annual NATO meetings and reviewed the situation. This was, shall we say, the core directorate of the Cold War of the Western states in the Cold War.

In that meeting, Brandt raised the possibility of negotiating on Berlin. The other ministers were quite skeptical. Brandt insisted that this would be possible. As it happened, his chief assistant, Egon Bahr, had extensive discussions with a Soviet representative in East Berlin about this issue and they apparently had indicated that they were willing to make a deal on Berlin. Anyhow, Brandt's proposal gestated for another year or so before it really became a prominent issue. Bahr's contacts with the Soviet Union were known to the U.S. and were a source of distrust for the Ostpolitik.

The Bonn Group on the operating level consisted of the political counselors of the British, French and U.S. embassies and the deputy political director of the Auswärtiges Amt, most of the

time an official Gunther van Well, who was later German ambassador to the UN and to Washington. He was a very gifted interpreter of German policy. This man kept the allies more or less satisfied during the most intense and revolutionary period of the Ostpolitik by giving them his interpretation, his version, of what was going on and explaining to them each move in advance.

This stream of reports that the Bonn Group sent in more or less satisfied the home foreign ministries, though not entirely. Kissinger was very worried about the Germans getting out in front and taking the lead, the initiative, in dealings with the Soviet Union and undermining the authority of the United States. He indicated at various times his doubts and dissatisfaction and sometimes that came out in public and we had to answer questions about it.

Q: What about sort of your feeling and maybe of our embassy about Willy Brandt and possibly opening up this Ostpolitik? Was Willy Brandt somebody we were uncomfortable with at that particular time?

DEAN: I think the administration was rather uncomfortable with him. They wanted to be in charge and they suspected the Soviet Union deeply. They saw no benefit and a lot of risk in the Germans getting out in front. They did not trust German judgment and they overrated Soviet cleverness.

Personally, I had advocated various versions of what I call the policy of engagement with Eastern Europe earlier on. I considered this was the right time to try this approach in East Germany and Eastern Europe. I considered that it would contribute to stability in East-West relations, satisfy the German desire to play a more important role in their own future, a role which they merited, I thought, and would actually exploit an excellent tactical opportunity because the Russians and Soviet Union were making such a strong effort to reestablish themselves in world opinion after the invasion of Czechoslovakia. I thought that the Soviets could be brought to pay something in terms of actual concessions, especially on Berlin, the main area of our own security concerns and risks.

With regard to the dealings of the West Germans with the East Germans, I thought West Germany had proved itself to be by far the stronger and I was not worried that East Germany was going to develop some kind of leverage on West Germany and lead it into the political wilderness. For Washington, the question was whether Germany could be brought in some form to throw its weight to the other side – or, whether through this relationship, Germany would in fact contribute importantly to undermining Soviet influence in Eastern Europe, which was the actual outcome.

Q: This is interesting because I think to the general public with the Soviets moving in on Czechoslovakia this was meant to show they were really tough but actually this showed they were weak and this left them in a weaker position afterwards.

DEAN: Yes it did. The Soviets had alienated all of the Warsaw Pact countries including Romania which refused to participate. None of the others liked it. Fear of Germany had served as the only real glue there was for the Warsaw Pact, and here was Germany acting in a somewhat

civilized manner. Later on, of course, as part of the Ostpolitik, Germany made great efforts to regularize its relationships with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and all of the Eastern European countries. These efforts paid off in 1989-1990 as the Warsaw Pact system collapsed in Eastern Europe.

Q: As the political counselor you were also looking at developments within Germany. Did we have a bias towards the CDU or a concern about the SPD?

DEAN: Yes, traditionally, we surely did. As part of this complex of German dependence on the U.S. for security and the possibility of some treasonous German deal with the East, the Social Democrats were suspect because they were supposed to be the ones that were going to sell out and lead Germany astray.

Q: I think we will pick this up the next time with major specific developments that happened during the time you were in Bonn. We talked about the Ostpolitik and the invasion of Czechoslovakia. You were in Bonn from when to when?

DEAN: That time from '68 to '72.

Q: Today is the 28th of July. Were you there when the Soviets and the satellites moved into Czechoslovakia?

DEAN: Definitely. I just arrived a few days before that. I don't know if we covered this point, but we can go over it again. I talked to Helmut Sonnenfeldt a few days before I left. Russian forces were moving around from their bases and he insisted with considerable foresight that Russia would indeed invade Czechoslovakia. That's what happened at the end of August 1968 under the guise of Warsaw Pact maneuvers. Later I talked to East Germans and others who were involved. The involvement of the other Warsaw Pact forces was titular, but none of them liked being forced into it, to repress a fellow Eastern European country, because they could too easily see themselves in that situation.

The issue for us, and I think I did mention this already, was what was the significance of this Soviet action? Was it preparation for military activity, or a political action to repress the Prague Spring? We concluded it was the latter. I think I did mention that General Polk called me the morning of the invasion and wanted to know whether he should continue with a military exercise of the U.S. army and later German army on the Czech border. I urged him not to do that and he did postpone it.

Of course this Russian action did cause considerable concern in Germany about the future but there was relatively little fear of immediate military expansion. It was regarded by most as a confirmation of their views of the Soviet Union. This reaction did put the Soviet Union in the situation where it felt constrained to make various friendly gestures towards Western Europe in order to sort of reestablish itself. We saw that as a possibility for negotiation.

At the foreign ministers meeting that year in December at NATO, the meeting of the four foreign ministers having to do with Germany (France, the United States, the UK, and Germany) the so-called Bonn Group ministers, Willy Brandt insisted that they should negotiate with the Soviet Union about access to Berlin. I don't know if we covered this?

Q: Let's put on here if we have covered it, we'll check it and if we haven't covered it we will come back to it. What about sort of the back staffing that you found in Washington? When you arrived there was the election of '68, Nixon came in and with Nixon came Henry Kissinger, Helmut Sonnenfeldt and all. These were part of the German mafia almost. These were people who knew the area. Did this make a difference because at sort of the seat of power you had people who knew Germany but from their own perspective which was really one of being refugees at one point?

DEAN: I think his past experience contributed in the case of Kissinger to a low assessment of the intellectual powers of the Germans in general and of the Social Democrats in particular. That's why he was so disturbed by the idea that Willy Brandt should take the lead on Ostpolitik and not immediately maintain a respectful position a few paces behind the United States in developing relations with the Soviet Union.

Later, it became known to Kissinger and the administration from intelligence sources that Egon Bahr, Brandt's chief assistant in Berlin and then in Bonn, was continuing to see a Russian KGB man in East Berlin. This confirmed suspicions of the un-wisdom of the German Ostpolitik. There were lots of questions from the press back here and some in Bonn about whether we were losing confidence in the Germans and we at the embassy fended those questions off.

It did turn out that this KGB contact had rather practical consequences, because in effect it prepared the entire sequence of German treaties with East Germany as well as parts of the Berlin agreement which we then moved to negotiate on. It made those fairly smooth. Actually this Bahr contact was picked up by the Russian ambassador in Bonn, Falin, with Ambassador Rush and did facilitate this Berlin negotiation, the Berlin quadripartite agreement. I'm not sure whether we went over this or not because it would be important to...

Q: I tell you what, what I'm going to do is when I get back I'm going to go over this last part again so we'll move on ahead and if not, we will come back if we haven't covered this in some detail. The whole Berlin negotiations are so important on this. I saw Dennis Kux just before I came here and Dennis was saying you were really the key person on all of this. I'm going to review this when I get back and the next time around we'll cover this if needed.

In general was it difficult dealing in West Germany, particularly with the West Germans, when you thought that almost everything you did was probably going to end up on the desk of Soviet intelligence somewhere or was this just an occupational hazard?

DEAN: We didn't think too much about that. The Soviets were surely very active at NATO and even more so later on when we got into the NATO-Warsaw Pact force reduction negotiations. This was also the period when the Kiesinger government was replaced by the Social Democratic government under Willy Brandt. First, he was the foreign minister under the coalition

government with Kiesinger, which was an innovation and marked progress on the long pilgrimage of the Social Democrats towards political respectability. Then we had the Brandt government proper when Brandt was chancellor and Walter Scheel foreign minister.

A great deal was changing in Germany. Fears of the Cold War were gradually dissipating with a more positive relationship with Russia and with East Germany. I remember the status of women, in particular, was becoming much more active. The young socialists with Karsten Voigt, who is now about to retire from the Bundestag having achieved the age limit, were organizing all kinds of rallies and so forth which 10, 15 years later culminated in these immense anti-nuclear demonstrations in Bonn which were equaled here by this big rally in Central Park with a million people on essentially the same thing. That was the time of the real nuclear controversy, which was yet to come at that point.

Q: Did you find that in Bonn you were seeing a different Social Democrat than say Kissinger and, through Kissinger, Nixon were seeing back in Washington?

DEAN: Most of the Social Democrats that we saw running the party were quite savvy about foreign policy and domestic policy and were not especially radical. They were dealing with the problems as they saw them and were managing to maintain public peace, labor peace, although later in the Schmidt government they went through something we were just beginning to see then and that was the Bader Meinhof terrorism. It began in that period. It was a remarkable quintessence of German vices and virtues, a situation where these sons and daughters of the former Nazis turned against the entire society considering it indulgent towards the abhorrent German past. Through a series of cold-blooded crimes they tried to destroy that society.

This development caused the German government to have to establish all kinds of physical barricades and personnel checks of the same kind that we are familiar with today here. It was a real test of the German government. It passed new laws permitting the government to obtain court orders for wire tapping, which up to that time we had been doing under our own occupational authority and ordaining it. Anyhow, they came through this particular phase rather well, without having sacrificed any of their new democratic institutions and without moving towards the authoritarian in their effort to control this really fearsome phenomenon of terrorist strikes. This was yet another test of German democracy, an unexpected, but successful one.

Q: Were we using whatever information we had and did we pass on to the Germans what we were picking up?

DEAN: Yes, but I don't think we had a great deal of information on this. On the other hand, many of the terrorists were trained in the Soviet Union and there was an international network of that so I suppose we were picking up something, but not much that I know of.

Q: During the Bader Meinhof terrorist time, did you see any strengthening of the rightist parties or ones which we consider almost neo-Nazi in order to deal with this phenomenon?

DEAN: That might have been a plausible expectation, but it didn't actually occur. As I say it was yet another test and of course test after test came, but that one struck me as being particularly

difficult because although Bader Meinhofs were in my opinion more fascist themselves than anything else, the general atmosphere of terrorism was left-wing extremism and so forth. The government's severity elicited quite a negative response and seemed to strengthen the left opposition and the Greens. I think if these events had happened here, the American polity might have reacted in a nationalistic, right wing way.

Q: I suspect it could have happened. I think probably more than any other country, we were continually taking the temperature of the Germans because of our concern particularly from the Adolf Hitler time. For some reason you have this type of action happening in Germany and a little latter it happened in Italy but it didn't happen in France.

DEAN: They did have a few incidents elsewhere, but not many, that's right. That's a good question. I don't know. Of course American military officers were targets of the later phase of Bader Meinhof during the missile controversy of the 1980s, and in Italy as well. There, they kidnapped a major general.

Q: Brigadier General Dozier in '81 I think.

DEAN: Anyhow this was a phenomenon. Then of course Japan was another focus. These developments were happening among the young generation in rather straitlaced societies which had been involved in the losing side in World War II. The younger generation in its most extreme members was attacking the older generation.

Another thing that was important at that time in that period in Germany was the development of a critical press and public media. This came out more clearly later, but even at that time the German press was critical of the government no matter what it was. This was most extreme in the case of the *Spiegel* magazine, which was run by Augstein, which I thought was extremely unobjective and crusading in its muckraking attack on all authorities in power, with never a positive word for good performance. Many of us felt that this practice could critically undermine public respect for the new institutions of Germany and that it was not good. But Germans were able to digest this negativism together with these huge long reports of all kinds of facts, some of them rather skewed. Television, too, was very critical towards the German government, both the Social Democrats and later the Christian Democrats. They were criticized with extreme vigor and this was one more, positive sign that the German democracy had passed the test. In many ways, Germany today is a more thoroughly democratic society, with an exception of attitudes toward foreign workers, than the United States.

Q: Was there any women's movement going on at that time?

DEAN: Yes, definitely it was coming up and it was regarded as something strange but the younger generation of Germans at that time, around 30 or so or younger, were very open minded about novelties, very experiment minded and very open to new developments in sciences and all other fields. I think the women's movement in Germany never achieved the vehemence of the American version and it seemed to me to sort of fall through an open door into acceptance there.

Q: President Nixon must have made a visit or two during this time didn't he?

DEAN: Yes. His first visit I believe to Europe was to Germany. He was accompanied by Kissinger. The administration took over the whole embassy. Every presidential visit they would throw the deputy chief of mission out of his house. In the case of Lyndon Johnson they ripped out the bathroom and put in a new bathroom with different-colored tile, the imperial presidency. I remember I was supposed to be doing the arrangements for that visit but then I committed an error. I was supposed to bring Kissinger and Franz Joseph Strauss together but I sent one to an address, the same named street, in Bonn and one to the same named street in Bad Godesberg. At this point I was removed by the harried chargé d'affaires, Russ Fessenden, from this task. I must say he was very forbearing.

Q: I would imagine that Nixon would have been well respected in Germany.

DEAN: He was, yes. We had the imperial presidency. One of the first signs of that was John Ehrlichman, the administration's advance man, got quite a large part the embassy together and gave us a big talk on what the president wanted, what he expected, the atmosphere, the product that was supposed to come out of this trip, and so forth. Today we wouldn't consider that kind of advance team (three or four others, Haldeman was also there) as anything exceptional. But it was the inauguration of that kind of megalithic style that we have maintained since. I saw President Clinton recently had an entourage of 1,000 in Beijing. They had their own communications, their own this and that. President Johnson had the entire contents of a favorite shoe store in Berlin brought to him in Bonn because he couldn't make it to Berlin, and so forth. This was, as I say, the imperial presidency. This was the first sign of that. Of course Nixon's election had been quite hard fought and we didn't know exactly what to expect. Anyhow the visit took place and it was a successful visit.

Q: When you were there Nixon appointed what ambassador?

DEAN: We had Henry Cabot Lodge and later it was Ken Rush. Henry Cabot Lodge was there at the outset, then we had a long interregnum and then Rush arrived.

Q: What was your impression of Lodge?

DEAN: He was a very affable, genial man. He told me he had been a journalist and therefore had intense distrust of journalists. The first thing that happened after he arrived in the business end was that some poor East German was shot attempting to cross the Berlin Wall. I issued a statement saying this was one more example of communist tyranny, barbarism, and so forth. It was nothing extraordinary but Ambassador Lodge took considerable exception to that. He didn't think we should talk to the press about anything. He said never trust them, never say anything to them. This apparently was the result of his own experience in the past.

I remember one event during the time he was ambassador. He had of course been ambassador in Vietnam. One day Major General George Keegan who later became the air force chief of intelligence (he was in my class at Harvard) showed up and gave a long talk to Ambassador Lodge and to me about how the Air Force had won the war in Vietnam, and the Air Force had bombed the Viet Minh trail to powder and pulp so that nobody could ever use it again and

therefore the war was won in Vietnam. I guess this would be approximately in '69 or something.

Q: How did Lodge respond?

DEAN: I don't think he believed anything anybody told him at this point. He didn't say too much about it. In any case, he and his wife were well liked by German leaders. He was obviously an aristocratic type of person, but he was very affable and he was believed to have the ear of the president, so Germans were well satisfied.

Q: How about Rush?

DEAN: Rush was far more vigorous, far more determined. He had of course been Nixon's law professor at Duke and Nixon asked him later on to take on his defense in Watergate for that reason. Rush arranged that the president be told by various other officials in the administration that this would be a terrible mistake because Rush was so involved in serious foreign affairs at that time that he couldn't be spared. That was a later development. But he was a far more vigorous and far more take-charge guy than Ambassador Lodge.

We had already started with tentative preparations for the Berlin negotiations and Ambassador Rush really took it up with great vigor. Unbeknownst to me at that time he established a back channel communication with Valentin Falin, the Soviet ambassador in Bonn, and with the very same Egon Bahr who was state secretary in the chancellor's office. Bahr was Brandt's chief assistant for foreign affairs and particularly for relations with the East. Rush really took charge and he was very decisive, very determined in what he said. He really had a clear mind and a lot of energy. I would say he was quite a good ambassador.

I do remember falling foul of him on one occasion. He didn't like it when his subordinates made arrangements for him that he didn't personally approve. I remember his giving me an awful dressing down about that when I tried to change his schedule without his knowledge. That incident was a reflection of the great tension between the Berlin experts in Berlin and the embassy political section during this Berlin negotiation. It was quite an intensive bureaucratic civil war.

Q: I wonder if you could talk a bit about this. You had I think Ms. Dulles and other people who essentially were there on the Berlin situation and who developed their own sort of cadre and own outlook. Then you had the ones dealing with the rest of Germany. Here we are at a very critical time in the '68-72 period, was there a difference in looking at the situation of people who concentrated on Berlin and the German end?

DEAN: Definitely. Willy Brandt, who originated this on the basis of Bahr's talks with the Russians, told the foreign ministers in December of '68 in Brussels at their Bonn Group meeting that he thought it would be possible to negotiate with the Russians on access to Berlin. This was the neglected area in wartime agreements having to do with setting up the four power control in Berlin and Germany. What had been neglected was German civilian access. All the arrangements had to do with military access and somehow it was assumed that civilian access would be automatic or that there would be only limited travel by German civilians. Of course, the division

of the country was not foreseen at that time during those '44-'45 negotiations in London about the occupation zone, the command authority, control of Berlin, and so on.

Anyhow, Brandt insisted that it would be possible to improve the situation somewhat, you could get more passes for West Berliners to visit East Berlin. Brandt had been active as burgermeister, as mayor of Berlin, in getting some East German passes for people to visit their relatives in East Berlin. He thought something could be done on this, and that maybe the access situation could be improved.

The people operating the western mechanism in Berlin, that is the commandant who was a military officer but also the State Department officers, the permanent staff, in particular David Klein, the minister and the whole staff there I would say, had extremely strong possessive feelings about Berlin. Beyond that, they thought the mechanism that had grown up in and around Berlin was so intricate and so delicate that efforts to open it up in negotiation would very probably result in its breakdown, so they very strongly opposed these negotiations.

I must say I was not fully informed at that point on all of the ins and outs and practices which had grown up over the years in and around Berlin; it was a whole culture of its own. I still had to learn that. However, I was convinced that Soviet efforts to reestablish the foreign standing of the Soviet Union after the invasion of Czechoslovakia could be exploited and that the Soviets could be made to pay with very specific improvements and demonstrations of these alleged good intentions. I also believed that it would be a mistake to try to frustrate, or to be seen to frustrate the Germans in the pursuit of what was after all their most intensely felt national interest. Even on those grounds alone, even if it didn't work, we should support the German policy. In any case we finally did decide to pursue it.

Q: Were you feeling at the time that Henry Kissinger was pretty much calling the shots, (obviously the president was the prime mover) within sort of the government bureaucracy or did you feel that the State Department was part of the process?

DEAN: No, Henry Kissinger was clearly doing it. But Henry Kissinger also didn't like these Berlin negotiations either because they represented in his eyes an excessive German independence in relations with Russia and a dangerous area. I think I did mention last time that, right from the division of Germany, the idea that Russia could neutralize the whole of Germany by propaganda, by seemingly serious proposals to reunite the country, were combined with a low estimate of German common sense and willingness to withstand these appeals to national feeling. The U.S. fear from the outset was that the entire Cold War could be lost with some brilliant Soviet propaganda which Western democracies, being subject to democratic controls, could never hope to equal and that the Soviets would in this way achieve political and military victory. In fact when Europe saw any German brewings, or even any German discussion, of reunification, or conditions for reunification, and so forth, this development was viewed with intense suspicion by successive administrations in Washington and I think it was probably maybe at its most intense with Kissinger.

Q: A move of this nature, the reverse was exactly what Kissinger would have loved to have done had he been sitting in Moscow instead of Washington.

DEAN: Yes, that kind of manipulation would surely have appealed to him. That's right. But this U.S. concern was generic, deep-seated and very widespread. I know from my first service in Bonn in 1951-1956, this was then the major subject or the major concern: German unification, how the Russians could play on German feelings. This is one of the prices Germans had to pay for Hitler and the war. Of course Germany continued to be divided and this fear, and this concern continued of course right up through Willy Brandt and beyond.

Q: Were you seeing any effort on the side of the Soviets to really try to exploit this and to do something about it, or was there in a way the same concern that they had a concern, no matter neutral or not, a united Germany is not what they wanted?

DEAN: At a certain point in the development – it was after Germany joined NATO – the Soviets stopped making efforts to suggest all-German elections, and concentrated instead on bolstering East Germany and indeed the whole Warsaw Pact structure and on consolidating what they had. That of course was the threat behind Khrushchev's renewed blockade of Berlin in '61 when he threatened to transfer to the East Germans the complete responsibility for maintaining Berlin and access to Berlin. It was feared then that the East Germans would be far less responsible and far more inclined to extreme behavior than the Soviets because they did not have, shall we say, the worldwide interest in preventing an all-out conflict with the United States that the Soviet Union did. That was the background for these discussions about Berlin access.

There was a fear in Washington, not only of Sovietphobes, that East Germany would end up with its status increased. Indeed, that was exactly what did happen in that East Germany in practice became associated with the four wartime allies and the Federal Republic of Germany in the administration of Berlin. That was the practical outcome of these Berlin negotiations. And, of course, as part of the whole complex, the Federal Republic recognized East Germany as an independent state. They assumed diplomatic relations with one another and both German nations entered the United Nations as independent states. What some had feared as the outcome was indeed the outcome, but I would say that it was constructive.

Q: In a way with the Soviets behind the idea of creating a more legitimate East German state, it was playing to our hands too wasn't it? It kept this neutralist card from being played.

DEAN: That of course is the case, that's right. Very occasionally, but less frequently, the Soviets would mention German unification. Even less frequently, the East German leadership mentioned it, but the issue was there nonetheless even though they weren't making proposals. The desire of the German people in both parts of Germany was indeed for unification and that played a role.

Q: I would have thought a major concern would have been that all of a sudden East German people would just get tired of the whole thing and the East German government would be so inept or something or shoot the wrong students, or do something. All of a sudden there would be sort of a mass peoples uprising, not a war, and that the West Germans would sort of come in.

DEAN: Yes, there was fear of German military intervention. But German forces were so entwined in NATO that it was not a serious possibility. And that's what happened in a way at the

end when the East German government in order to bolster its standing took up with the East German churches and they started all these meetings in the major cities, discussions which in several cases became mass demonstrations.

Q: *We're talking about 1989.*

DEAN: That's right.

Q: *This must have been almost not a nightmare but something which certainly would be destabilizing as all hell because it could develop rather quickly.*

DEAN: Yes.

Q: *I'm talking about at the time that you were there.*

DEAN: Of course the basic importance of the Ostpolitik and all of these agreements, coming to the final outcome and the conclusion, was that they convinced the East German officials that, if there was some kind of political settlement, they were not going to be taken out and executed by the victors. That eliminated probably the most basic reason for resisting the later unification.

Q: *We can come back to this German thing. I am going to review it to make sure that we've covered the points because there may have been some things that we've missed and this is a critical period. To move on, in '72, you went where?*

DEAN: I came back to Washington where Ken Rush was deputy secretary of State. I asked him if he would help me get assigned to the NATO-Pact force reduction talks that were just getting under way. He did designate me as the official in charge of the preparations for the negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. I was interested in doing this because I felt this was the military component of ending the Cold War which the Berlin agreement had been the first political part.

Q: *You did this from '72 until when?*

DEAN: It was a good idea, but it did not come to fruition in my time. I was involved in MBFR from 1972 to 1981, a long stretch. Most of it was in Vienna itself. The first part of '72 was taken up with negotiations first among the Washington agencies, then with the NATO countries, and then preparatory talks with the Warsaw Pact in Vienna. The MBFR negotiations proper then got started in the fall of 1972.

Q: *In '72 when you arrived on the scene, what was the status of the MBFR talks?*

DEAN: They didn't exist. We started up an interagency group in Washington, developed a position, and then started to talk inside NATO about what we should do. The talks were encouraged by a statement by Brezhnev in Tbilisi that in this issue of force reductions we "should taste the wine." That encouraged the Western countries to move ahead. This was the period of the first SALT talks, as you know. The Germans were quite intent that if there was

going to be a military detente or any form of disarmament between the United States and Russia on the strategic level, that they too should benefit and that there should be also a conventional force reduction. They were the chief instigators on the NATO side, together with the smaller NATO countries, Netherlands and Belgium. They wanted force reductions and they wanted to be part of detente if it was going to take place.

This was the first NATO alliance negotiation with the Warsaw Pact and it started off rather badly. Donald Rumsfeld was our NATO representative at that time. I went over to NATO to present preliminary Washington views on the Western negotiating position for discussion in the Alliance. We had tentatively agreed with the Russians that we could meet in Vienna. This caused a great furor among the NATO ambassadors, because NATO had decided that the venue of the negotiation should be Geneva. The Soviet Union had proposed that the venue should be Vienna. I personally thought Vienna would be better than Geneva because the Austrian government could do better by us than the Swiss government for these talks. The Austrian chancellor was trying to build up, as he later explained to us, an Austrian involvement in the outside world and prevent provincialism. He went out of his way to be a very constructive host to these negotiations. Anyhow, we tentatively said it could be in Vienna and this caused enormous reaction from the NATO ambassadors. They said this was our first negotiation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact and that it had been inaugurated by NATO's defeat over the venue.

Q: What was the theology behind Geneva or Vienna?

DEAN: The theology was that NATO had on the basis of not very serious criteria decided that Geneva was better. Possibly because the SALT talks were moving there, although they had taken place in Vienna earlier. In any case it was NATO's decision which was being contravened or not carried out by us. I had to go and talk with the ambassadors. Ambassador Spierenberg, the Netherlands ambassador, was very strong on this as was the Belgian ambassador. I had to reassure them that we weren't going to cave to the Russians and that we would be tough. Maintaining NATO coherence and unity in this first negotiation was an extremely important value, probably higher in the minds of many of the governments, including the U.S. government, than making any progress on these negotiations. We did a fair job, although the Belgians walked out of the talks at one point.

The cohesion issue arose at the very outset. Yuri Kwitzinski, later the Russian ambassador in Bonn and the acting foreign minister at the time of the anti-Gorbachev coup, and a member of the central committee, had been my opposite number in the Berlin talks. When we arrived in Vienna I called Kwitzinski and he said sure let's get together and we'll deal with these preliminaries. I said I am part of an alliance here. I am not authorized by them to do this on my own, and as a matter of fact, they have decided that the Netherlands representative should be their intermediary. "Pish" he said, "we don't want these small guys interfering with us." This was kind of embarrassing for me, so I finally arranged that both I and the Netherlands ambassador would see him. We used this system of dual intermediaries for quite some time to discuss the preliminaries.

For months in these talks, we were unable to hold a plenary session because of another issue of controversy between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The NATO Council had first decided that

Hungary should not be among the countries whose own domestic military forces should be reduced as well as Russian forces and then had reversed itself and said Hungary should be included. The Russians in Hungary were not forces intended for the central front if war broke out. The Hungarians wanted Russian forces there reduced but they couldn't break ranks with the Soviets. Anyhow, the problem was that, at the outset, NATO and the Pact disagreed over a division of the participants into countries which would reduce their forces and those which were so-called flanks, like Turkey and Norway on our side and Bulgaria on the Russia side. The flanks would not be called on to reduce their forces.

Q: *Italy?*

DEAN: Italy was an observer. In any case, there was no agreement with the Pact on this issue and on the status of participants, other than those on NATO's central front. On the first occasion in which we all met under the then Austrian Foreign Minister Kirschschrager (later president), it was really kind of diplomatically ridiculous, objectively ridiculous, the NATO delegates stood and the Warsaw Pact delegates sat. We stood because we had been assigned alphabetical positions and I ended up next to Bulgaria in the German alphabet or whatever they were using.

So we started off with a controversy about the status of Hungary which went on for six months and because we hadn't agreed what category the delegates should fit into, it prevented us from having a single plenary session of these negotiations. The Belgians who were very strong for progress in these talks, insisted there should be plenary sessions. We insisted there couldn't be any plenary sessions until we established the status of these countries, these representatives, and whether they were going to reduce their forces or not reduce their forces. We were insisting that Hungary and forces in it should be reduced; Russia said no.

Q: *Obviously, the Hungarian military was of no particular importance in the equation.*

DEAN: That's true for clear historic reasons, but the Hungarians deeply wanted the Russian forces reduced there.

Q: *Was this a procedure on the part of the Soviets to block the negotiations?*

DEAN: No. Allied intelligence authorities had concluded that the Group of Russian forces in Hungary would not be used on a direct attack on Germany which was the main access of potential attack but in fact had functions in Yugoslavia and northern Italy. For those reasons, the original NATO position had been not to invite Hungary to be a so-called direct participant.

This is going back in time, but in the preliminaries among NATO members, the Turks went to Ken Rush as undersecretary and said they would leave the alliance if they were not permitted to be present at these negotiations. We did not intend to have observers from other NATO countries but we ended up with observers with all of these countries. Italy decided it wanted to be there too. Then they increased their status.

Q: *And Greece if Turkey went in had to be I'm sure.*

DEAN: Greece had to be there, exactly, so it was. We ended up with a more unwieldy group with all countries except France, and these so-called flank participants or special participants exercised enormous influence on the specific day-to-day tactics of the NATO participants. In the case of Italy they were represented by a brilliant Ambassador Cagрати, and by a very good staff of men who later ran the disarmament section of the Italian foreign ministry. They were a distinct thorn in the side of the United States.

Q: *What were they after?*

DEAN: They had a very conservative agenda: no concessions, no mistakes in these talks; maintain Western unity and preferably let's not have any results out of these negotiations unless the Pact wants to surrender. In any case we ended up with these special participants. They were all massed there at this first session with the Austrian foreign minister and that was when the issue of alphabetical order and what groupings arose.

At the end of six months, I was told by Ray Garthoff, who was then in Political Military Affairs in the State Department, that before the preparatory talks began, Kissinger had made a secret deal with Brezhnev to accept that Hungary would not be a direct participant and the Hungarian forces and the Soviet forces in Hungary would not be reduced in these negotiations. The whole thing had already been cooked up and nobody had bothered to tell me. Anyhow, the tension of not having formal negotiations was beginning to tell. The Belgian delegation walked out and I had to go as a supplicant to Davignon of the Belgian foreign ministry and beg him to return his delegation. He sent an observer.

Q: *One gets the strong feeling that Kissinger was probably more willing to give in than one normally credits him for and also this enjoyment of sort of undercutting the regular diplomatic process. But often there really were principles at stake which he was not that interested in.*

DEAN: I think he had a strong feeling of contempt for the regular Foreign Service, at least that was my strong impression from various reports that we made to him, verbal reports. He was a person that placed great weight on establishing the subordination of everybody around him. He made the crudest remarks about Eagleburger, Sonnenfeldt and so forth, at the beginning of these reporting sessions and seemed to demean them ritually as a part of his satisfaction in life. I thought he was personally abominable for this reason. Otherwise I never had any personal complaints.

Anyhow, he had made this deal with Brezhnev and rather typically I think had failed to inform anyone about it because that was one of the real characteristics of his modus operandi was keeping all the details to himself and nobody else would interfere and bureaucracy couldn't block the deal. That's what happened in this case. In the case of the Berlin agreement, the back channel operation that he had also with Ken Rush broke down when he was out of the circuit and was not available. I think he was on one of his China missions and the State Department ordered us at the end of the negotiation not to sign the agreement because we had not fulfilled all of the conditions which the State Department desk officer, Jim Sutterlin, had agreed on with the National Security Council on these negotiations. The outcome was okay with Kissinger, it later emerged, but we were ordered not to proceed. Rush told me to inform the State Department that

we had already signed the agreement. That was another case in which Kissinger's failure to maintain contact caused considerable difficulties.

Q: In the first place could you talk about what was the goal of MBFR at the time? What was this supposed to do?

DEAN: The basic purpose was to reduce the very large numerical superiority of the Warsaw Pact forces to a position of equality slightly below the level of the NATO forces. We proposed to lead off with quite a minor reduction of American forces of about 20,000, in return for a reduction of many more Russians. We pursued this goal in vain for over 16 years. I was with it for eight or nine years.

When the successor CFE talks were held, Shevardnadze as the Russian foreign minister stated that the purpose of the talks should be equality at a level lower than the level of the weaker side. He accepted our MBFR objective. Since the Russians then for the first time exchanged data on their forces showing huge Warsaw Pact numerical superiority in the first session of that negotiation, he conceded the point that we had been vainly attempting to get for 16 years in these prior negotiations.

Q: You were involved in this process at the beginning. Was there a feeling that this was going to go somewhere?

DEAN: The Germans wanted some progress and I thought it would be good because it was time to do it. Most Western experts were extremely skeptical that the Russians wanted anything. It became quite clear in the course of the talks that the Russian military wanted nothing. Foreign Minister Gromyko seemed to want to move not immoderately. The Foreign Ministry would make small concessions, but they never could break through to the central issue which I've already mentioned and that was to bring about an exchange of information on these forces on both sides, their numbers and armaments. We thought this would be a natural beginning for any kind of talk. Of course that would have documented our point that the Warsaw Pact was superior numerically and should be reduced.

We could have taken a different approach. We could have argued that both sides had formations with a certain amount of firepower and tried to equalize that. That approach probably would have made a somewhat better case for the Soviet forces. But we had started out with the idea that both sides should produce the total figures on their manpower and equipment. We did produce ours but they never produced theirs. We even produced some of our own figures on Pact forces in the effort to get a reaction and comment from them.

Q: We must have had a pretty good fix on what they had, didn't we?

DEAN: When the Pact finally produced their data at the beginning of the CFE talks, it was fairly close to what we had indicated we thought they had. However, our figures were based on extrapolation and estimates. We had very little information on specific units. The contested Soviet security had been too effective. But data exchange was a basic question. That, and verification, if reductions were agreed. They wouldn't give an inch on that either. That too came in with

Gorbachev. He permitted the first on-site verification of the Soviet Union at the Stockholm CSCE talks.

Q: There was the beginning of what was known as the Helsinki Accords at this time too.

DEAN: That was parallel.

Q: Because these things became far more important later than I think anybody realized at the time on either side, I was wondering what was the attitude towards them from the people who were negotiating which sounded like much more of the big game effort?

DEAN: That's right. For the U.S., the force reductions were the main thing and the administration was not willing to go ahead with Helsinki and "detente," a word later forbidden by President Ford, unless the Soviets gave us dates for the beginning of the force reduction talks. Brezhnev turned out to be considerably more interested in the Helsinki talks, which in his view were supposed to lead to the political acceptance by Western countries of the legitimacy of the Warsaw Pact governments, than he was in the force reduction talks. Even though he had encouraged Helsinki to begin, I think that was all just part of reestablishing his credibility after this invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Russians were more interested in that subject, and the U.S. was more interested in the force reductions, not as a route to doing anything, but in terms of the seriousness of the negotiations.

Q: You keep pointing to something that I think is often lost, how badly the Soviets felt about how their prestige and all had been wounded by the Czech thing rather than this is just an exercise in might and we can do what we want. They felt that they really had to do things elsewhere to make up for that.

DEAN: That's right. That is how we saw it at the time. But the dominant Soviet motive at Berlin and Helsinki could have been to consolidate the legitimacy of the Pact governments, including the GDR. In fact, I think the Prague invasion was a weighty decision that they didn't want to have to take. It was just that they felt that, ideologically, continuation of the Dubcek approach would cause the dissolution of the system if they permitted it.

Q: You started this in '72, and you said you kept with this more or less until '81?

DEAN: Yes. I was first in charge of the interagency talks here in the State Department, then of the preparatory talks in Vienna, and then the negotiations proper took place. Stanley Resor was designated as the head of the delegation and I was his deputy and remained that until '78 when I became the head.

Q: Talking about the interagency side, I would have thought that the real opponent would be the Pentagon as opposed to the Soviets for you.

DEAN: There was a very tight and apprehensive view of negotiating this kind of subject matter with the Russians and the Warsaw Pact. The National Security Council, under Kissinger and a series of people that ran the actual coordination, kept a very firm grip on the preparations. We

developed the usual options. Kissinger refused to be confronted with a joint recommendation by the bureaucracy and insisted that the bureaucracy produce options from which the leadership would select. That was another of his mechanisms, pursued in great detail, for preventing the bureaucracy from preempting the decisions of the political leadership.

Q: You're saying the bureaucracy was not allowed to come up and say "this is what we should do"?

DEAN: That's right, it was not permitted to make specific recommendations, but only to describe at least three separate options. This is the core, or one of the chief methods, of Kissinger's system of controlling the bureaucracy. Another one was his use of this NSC coordinating mechanism, which had great authority, to put the various agencies at loggerheads with one another and to split them up rather than to bring them together except when it became finally necessary to do that. In any case, we produced options for reductions. Those were the positions that we then discussed with the allies.

Q: Let me just put at the end here, I'm going to go back and review to see how we stand on the Berlin negotiations, whether we covered that and the detail it warrants. Now we are talking about your '72 to '81 period with Mutual Balanced Force Reduction negotiations. We've already covered the preliminary side. I would like to ask you more about dealing with Henry Kissinger. One question we're talking about is how he wouldn't allow the bureaucracy to make suggestions. Sometimes I have the impression when talking about Henry Kissinger and his group that they may make decisions but they hadn't been dealing with them in great detail. Control is wonderful but you can give away the store or ask for impossible things if you really haven't been following the issue on a day-to-day basis. That is one question that we want to cover and then we'll talk about the continuation of these negotiations to the end of the Nixon period and into the Ford period, did this make any difference? Then move into the Carter period and how the Carter administration dealt with that and also the reaction and what happened with the December '79 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

This is an add on. I have checked on the tapes regarding time in Germany particularly in dealing with Berlin. I would like to have us talk a bit about actually how it went. We talked about the results, why and all but I would like to talk about some the personalities, techniques, and incidents, because this is an important series of talks so I would like to get down and dirty and more personal into it. We had covered sort of the overview but maybe we could have a session just talking about how things went.

Today is the 14th of October, 1998. Could we go back to the Berlin negotiations? Every time I do interviews which deal with Germany they say you've got to get Jock Dean on the negotiations. I did review the tapes and we need more. In the first place, could you give me the time frame and then how you saw it when you went in and what were the issues, then we'll go into it?

DEAN: Let me give a footnote on Henry Kissinger's modus operandi which may be pertinent. He kept everything to himself notoriously, to the extent that, later, in the MBFR talks he did not

reveal to me as the field negotiator that he had made a deal with Brezhnev to exclude Hungary from the area where reductions would take place, much to the disappointment of the Hungarians who were told this by the Russians in my presence late in the game. It was only after six months of playing around, having group marches, and singsongs in Vienna winehouses, that we were able to regularize the status of Hungary and start the MBFR talks.

The same thing happened in Berlin at the end of the Berlin talks on the issue of the Soviet consulate general in West Berlin. This was a rather dramatic turning point because the State Department instructed Ken Rush to stop the negotiations. That too was because Kissinger kept this point to himself and was not available at the critical moment.

Now, coming back to Germany and the Berlin talks, I returned to Bonn as political counselor in August 1968 just before the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. That was our immediate concern. In the meeting of the four foreign ministers that took place in December in Brussels, what we called the Bonn Group foreign ministers, (Britain, France, the United States and Federal Germany) Willy Brandt made a strong pitch for starting negotiations on Berlin and improving access from West Berlin to East Berlin and improving access to the city. Have we gone into this before?

Q: I don't know but let's do it. By the way the Johnson administration is still in power at this point.

DEAN: Yes, August of '68.

Q: You were saying December '68.

DEAN: December was the meeting in Brussels, that's correct. There the British, French and U.S. foreign ministers expressed polite interest but some skepticism and did not agree immediately. The next several months were taken with back and forth debate among the foreign ministers and the embassy in Berlin over whether there should be negotiations on this subject. Our officials in Berlin, David Klein, our minister there, and others (and I think this view was shared by the British and French missions in Berlin), thought it was inadvisable to negotiate on Berlin with the Soviets. They considered the status of Berlin as having been built up with great difficulty, detail by detail, over the Cold War years and they thought that fiddling with it might leave us worse off at the end and taking this intricate mechanism under debate might actually undermine the rights and responsibilities of the Allied position in Berlin, which they considered precarious. They had been operating for years on the strength of willpower and feared that the situation could get a lot worse for everyone in maintaining this four power status.

In actuality, the Soviet Union and the GDR had in practice completely taken over East Berlin and ignored the four power status of the city. They had continued to crack down periodically on civilian access to the city, most notably of course during the Khrushchev period when he threatened to turn the responsibility for Berlin over to East Germany. That was regarded as a genuine threat by most Western observers because they believed that East Germany would not have the restraint, knowledge of the situation and the shared nuclear Armageddon prospects that the Soviet Union had in this respect. I and others argued that we should proceed to this

negotiation. The Soviet Union after its invasion of Czechoslovakia was making strenuous efforts to reestablish itself internationally and was pushing for the beginning of the CSCE talks. To me the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia was not a demonstration of Soviet expansionism but of a determination to hold to the status quo.

Q: Was it your analysis that in a way the Soviet Union was weak and it had done this, and now to restore itself it had to do something?

DEAN: Yes, it was making every effort in diplomacy throughout the world to try to reestablish itself in the status quo ante in terms of acceptance and so forth. Of course, what it had actually done was to repress with force rather limited beginnings of democracy under Dubcek in Czechoslovakia. I felt that we should make the Soviets pay for international acceptance with specific concessions relating to access to Berlin.

Q: William Rogers came on as secretary of State but more importantly you had Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger who had very strong policy projections there. Were you finding yourself melding with these? Where did you feel at that very early stage in the Nixon administration?

DEAN: As I have commented, there was very considerable resistance and suspicion in the administration of the Germans, particularly Willy Brandt, the foreign minister. There was still a big coalition with CDU chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger. There was great suspicion in Washington of the Social Democrats and Willy Brandt's chief advisor Egon Bahr. Beyond that, was the real problem of Germany as I think it was seen by American officials right from the division of Germany on. Germany was so vital to the security of Europe that the main U.S. fear was that someone would take it away. Their fear, articulated in many different ways, essentially was that the Soviet Union would play on the German desire for unification and in some way with devilish skill neutralize Germany, break up the Western military coalition and open Western Europe to communist political or military penetration. This concern was based on a low opinion of the common sense of the German people derived from World War II, but now focused particularly on the Social Democrats, who had made the most consistent efforts to do something about the division of the country. The concern also extended to Free Democrats like Thomas Dehler, who broke ranks and occasionally proposed things which we regarded as unsafe. Kissinger and Nixon wanted to keep full control over the development of relations of the Soviet Union in their hands, and not in any sense let it slip into the hands of the Germans.

Q: Did you feel that the State Department was sort of being kept out of this German issue at this time? Word was that Kissinger came in and all the bureaus wrote position papers to keep them occupied while he went about and did his thing.

DEAN: Kissinger made the policy. The State Department did not. He had just instituted his version of the National Security Council, which took over the policymaking function from the State Department and has ever since. He rejected the idea that departments and agencies should on any given subject make joint recommendations to the White House or even any specific recommendation, even though it was still up to the president to decide. He felt that the bureaucracy could gang up on the president, on him. He obliged the Department, however artificially, to work in terms of options.

After discussions at various levels at the National Security Council, first working groups of working level officials, then at the level of assistant secretaries, and then of heads of departments, Kissinger would retire and write a short memorandum summarizing the discussion and making in effect his own recommendation to the president. That system, accompanied by his steady stream of sarcastic references to the bureaucracy, was the way in which he maintained control. Mr. Rogers was not a very strong personality and he was not able to put up much resistance. I don't know if he even wanted to. But later this system played a baneful role.

Q: What was your role at this time?

DEAN: I had just arrived in Bonn. George McGhee as retiring ambassador came to me one day when I was working for Robert Bowie in Washington and asked me if I would be interested in going back as political counselor; that is what I did. I arrived just before the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August of 1968.

Q: On the Berlin side, from your perspective at the embassy and your staff and all, what was your view of reopening negotiations?

DEAN: The embassy argued for it. I mentioned that I believed that the Soviet Union had placed itself in the East-West context in a somewhat vulnerable situation and should be made to pay off with specific concessions. We did not know at that point that Brandt had actually felt out the terrain in detail and that his forecasts that something could be done were very well founded. Egon Bahr had been dealing with Soviet officials on the Berlin issue, and that process continued. In a way, since the Russians had decided to do business on Berlin, although we did not know this, our debate was with our own authorities. Second, our feeling was that even the Christian Democrats were moving in that direction, although more slowly, and that logically the Germans did not know least, as Kissinger might have put it, but rather, best in terms of their own interests and what they wanted to do. As the Ostpolitik was developed still further by Brandt and put into operation as he took power in '69, my feeling was that we should go with the flow and not attempt to resist and hold back. We should not try to prevent the process because our capacity to do so was uncertain and the effort to do so would alienate us from the Germans and thus in effect deprive us to some extent of our influence over events.

Q: Did you feel from the perspective of Bonn some of the tension and differences between the White House, the NSC and the European Bureau on this while you were sitting there sort of a little out of the line of fire at that point?

DEAN: Yes. We just kept sending in these messages recommending action. We were out of the line of action but we had one advantage if you want to describe it as such. We had very close contact with the Germans and continued to report daily on their views.

Q: Was there any reaching by the White House to the embassy to find out, in a way to bypass the European Bureau?

DEAN: Bypass I wouldn't say but they did ask us to report on their worries. Helmut

Sonnenfeldt, who worked for Kissinger, came to Bonn a couple of times to check up. I had an active secure telephone contact with James Sutterlin, a desk officer in the State Department, a very gifted bureaucrat in the better sense of the term. He would keep me informed that the White House was worried over some specific topic. As the Ostpolitik developed, his suspicions and worries crystallized not the least because it was discovered by the CIA that some of Bahr's contacts belonged to the KGB, the ones he was seeing regularly and so forth. Although I did then and still do consider Egon Bahr a German nationalist, pure and simple, most in Washington thought he was sort of a Russian agent or influence or something of that kind, or might be.

Q: Was there any feeling that the KGB would have a role in Berlin? In other words was the KGB considered to be a player in the politburo at that time or not?

DEAN: I think we had an exaggerated estimate of the smoothness and coordination of the Soviet system and also of their ability to put over their propaganda. Really there were multiple players. This issue of German unification and what was going to happen to parts of Germany was center stage for the German people. This was so all through the years of the unsuccessful foreign ministers conferences where the Russians made a big effort to demonstrate that they were willing to have free elections. But none of these efforts really galvanized German public opinion. The culmination of these efforts came later at the beginning of the '80s, with the missile controversy where the Soviets poured on every possible thing that they could pour on and they failed. At the end, the German political system ratified the deployment of the Pershing II's and repulsed this final Soviet propaganda effort. In any case, Washington did have this great respect and fear for Soviet political manipulation and propaganda and, together with their low estimate of others, the Germans in this case, that was always an element in U.S. policy.

Q: What do you think sort of broke this suspicion or at least removed enough of it so that things began to progress for this German treaty?

DEAN: Willy Brandt became chancellor in 1969 and the administration had to pay attention to what he was suggesting. The Soviet Union was making many efforts to hold a conference on security and cooperation in Europe in Helsinki, which did start in '72. As I look back on the invasion of Czechoslovakia, developments there had frightened them and above all they wanted to consolidate the Warsaw Pact system. We wanted them to pay a price in Berlin as they later did in Helsinki, where they traded Western oversight of human rights for acceptance of the status quo in Eastern Europe. We at the embassy were pushing for a Berlin agreement to use Western leverage to improve our own situation in Berlin, and that was true of the British and French. Later on we did agree to the Helsinki talks. Third, the United States did adopt the idea that there should be MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction) talks with the Russians. These did take place starting in 1972.

The basic idea at this point on both sides was to make the division of Europe, of Germany and Berlin, more livable and less dangerous. This again was a German desire which Brandt had brought NATO. The feeling was shared by other European NATO members, but none more than Germany which was on the dividing line between East and West, that if there is going to be East-West U.S. Soviet negotiation over nuclear reductions, Germany and European NATO partners must benefit through a reduction of the immense conventional confrontation in Europe. NATO

finally did take up this idea that there should be MBFR talks. So a Berlin settlement, Helsinki and MBFR talks were all part of an overall package as far as the NATO countries were concerned.

Q: How did it progress as far as your role in the Berlin talks?

DEAN: Ultimately it was decided first by the four governments and then backed by NATO, that the Berlin talks should take place. The ambassadors of the four wartime allies, the three western ambassadors and Soviet Ambassador Abrasimov were going to be the negotiators. Since the Bonn Group teams, the one dealing with Berlin access, Berlin issues, all-German issues, were right there with the Western ambassadors at their embassies, the three political counselors were in effect co-opted to be the negotiators and deputies for the ambassadors. This outcome was received with some annoyance by our colleagues in Berlin and that tension continued all the way through the talks right up to the end.

Q: Did you bring in somebody from Berlin, the equivalent to the political counselor, to sit there and to whisper into your ear?

DEAN: No. I think that, in hindsight, that might have been a good idea to diminish this sniping that went on, but they also would have loaded us with a lot of Berlin tradition to maintain. The way it was actually done was that the negotiating position was prepared by the Bonn Group. It was reported to the three foreign ministries and also of course to the Berlin people. The Berlin people commented on it as did the ministries and gradually the position was built up. James Sutterlin prides himself, and I think quite rightly, for having developed a summary of negotiating goals for which he gained acceptance by the National Security Council staff. Using this summary he indicated throughout the talks how the negotiators were moving toward these goals; he was able, as he put it, to keep the NSC off our backs and that was useful.

Q: With these goals, could you talk a bit about our other partners, the French and the British? Were we one or were they each coming in with their own agenda?

DEAN: It emerged that their ambassadors, especially the French ambassador, shared some of the doubts of the three Berlin missions about the wisdom of tinkering with a delicate apparatus, so they were generally more conservative than we were. The whole operation was carried out in the so-called Bonn Group which was a meeting of the three political counselors with people from the other sections and the political department of the German foreign ministry, headed throughout these talks by Gunter Van Well, who was then the German ambassador to the UN and subsequently to Washington. Later Walter Scheel was the foreign minister. He was the head of the Free Democrats, and I suppose Van Well had some connection with the Free Democrats.

In any case, Van Well was the man who articulated, rationalized, and formulated what the Ostpolitik was supposed to mean in these talks and indeed in general because he had an important say in the German treaties with Moscow, Poland and Czechoslovakia as well as with Hungary. He would tell us in the Bonn Group what he thought it all meant at any given stage and we would comment on it and express polite skepticism. But, step by step, we developed an agreed position. Van Well was assisted by extremely competent men from the Minister of All-

German Affairs, renamed Ministry of Inter-German Relations under Brandt. They were crackerjacks at knowing the details and they suggested specific formulations. I guess you could say we were a skeptical professional jury on their proposals. There was enormous potential for controversy and dispute, but the Bonn Group stuck together and developed a certain amount of organizational loyalty.

Q: Did you find yourself sort of in the position of trying to rein in slightly the Germans and at the same time trying to urge the French and the British to get onboard?

DEAN: Yes, I think so. Van Well was one to move fast and the British were in the middle and the French were the slowest, the most skeptical and the most desirous of maintaining their legal position as an occupying power, and not taking positions that might risk four power control, i.e. their legal rights of control, over Germany as a whole and over Berlin. I remember I even asked Ambassador Sauvignard, who later became the French foreign minister, to leave our meeting because he wasn't a member of the Bonn Group. He came in when we were holding it in the French embassy and was sort of vigorously dealing, interfering, or participating in the debate in the sense of holding back and holding on, so I reminded him he wasn't a member.

Q: I would have thought the French in a way had more at stake because they put so much onto prestige and their right. Berlin was one of the few places where the French were considered a co-equal in a meeting place between East and West.

DEAN: That was a place where their status, like their status in the UN Security Council, was assured, yes, and they did. But also I think we have to bear in mind that they had of course very deep feelings, as did the British, about Germany; much stronger than ours. They regarded their rights and responsibilities as a security device to prevent negative developments in Germany and they took that role very seriously. One has to respect those views. Nonetheless we did have to sort of shoehorn them along and they were always hanging back, right to the very end.

We aren't yet at that point, but at the end of the negotiations, Ambassador Sauvignard tried to break up an effort launched by Van Well and assisted by us and the Russian Kwitzinski to get an agreed East German and West German translation of the Berlin treaty. The effort did not fully succeed, but it was 80% successful. Sauvignard objected violently to me - Ambassador Rush was briefly out of action with nervous exhaustion, as was the UK counselor, Christopher Audland; the stress was fierce - that the Germans weren't party to this negotiation, the German language wasn't one of the four official languages, and so forth and so on. He said he would not appear at the signing, and he would not sign the agreement if this continued. That's the sharpest illustration. But Van Well and I plugged ahead with the translation.

Q: How did this work? First this Western allies group was put together to come...

DEAN: The Bonn Group had existed for many years and had rather strong traditions of its own, sort of a bureaucratic club of officials. It was quite naturally seized of this subject matter because of its specialization and work. It was then used to develop a position. We met two, sometimes three times a week circulating in maybe three embassies; the Germans always came to us. We would have sessions of two to three hours with advance papers, agendas and so forth. They were

all very professional people and it went very well. We would then present the results to our respective ambassadors who usually would accept them and send them on to the home offices.

Q: Who was our ambassador at that time?

DEAN: Kenneth Rush became the ambassador just about that time. He had been a former executive with Union Carbide, a self made man. He had also been Richard Nixon's law professor at Duke University and was later deputy secretary of State and Defense also.

Q: How engaged was he did you find in this matter?

DEAN: He was an enthusiast with us for this project. He thought it was a good idea. He agreed with me that we might as well try to get something out of this situation and also see how far the German information was correct that the Soviets were ready to do some business. Of course unbeknownst to me, at least for most of the game, he established this back channel operation with Egon Bahr, with Falin the Soviet ambassador, and Kissinger. Bahr, Falin and Ken Rush would sit down periodically and work out the advance moves. I became aware of this situation in about the middle of the negotiations, because Kwitzinski said something to me about it, assuming I was informed. I reported this talk to Rush. He then made me write out the whole circumstances and report them to two men from the White House communications network which they were operating separately from both the State Department and CIA communications channels.

Q: I would have thought that with this cozy little group meeting, it would have blown the whole thing apart if the French and British had become aware of this. Were they aware of it or what was your impression about them?

DEAN: They did not know during the Berlin talks. They did become aware of the back channel in the subsequent negotiations to admit the two German states into the UN which was a part of the Ostpolitik and this whole package. U.S. Ambassador Martin Hillenbrand left some references to the back channel on his desk during these talks and a British or French official saw it there. It was a back channel operation but it may not have had the same people running it as in the case of the Berlin talks as such.

Q: As far as you knew was there any comparable operation by the French and the British with their Soviet colleagues?

DEAN: It would surprise me a lot to hear that. I've never heard that.

Q: I'm not revealing anything?

DEAN: I don't think they would ever have thought of doing it. It would not have occurred to them ordinarily. I believe the U.S., Russian, German back channel was justified. I don't know who instigated it originally, probably Bahr as a way of moving things along. Ambassador Jackling, the British ambassador, had been the chief legal officer of the British Foreign Office and he was inclined to stick on details and the French were holding back quite a bit. They had a

very nice counselor, Rene Lustig, an Alsatian, who later committed suicide because of feeling that he had not been honored and promoted sufficiently. Ironically, the last straw was when he was appointed French representative to CSCE, which the French (and U.S.) held in low regard. He was a very nice man, a very witty and a good intermediary between the French and German cultures. His assistant was François Plaisant, who later worked on the CFE talks (Conventional Forces in Europe), the successor to the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction negotiations. He was a small man with a Napoleonic haircut and he usually managed to hold things back on the details and I'm sure that his people in Paris had a high opinion of him as a result. Anyhow we would prepare these positions and put them forward for negotiation.

Q: Did you have the feeling that as you prepared these positions, that Henry Kissinger or the White House would wade in from time to time?

DEAN: No. I think that as this back channel operated, Bahr, Falin and Ambassador Rush would get together and make some proposal which then was sent to Moscow and to Kissinger in Washington for approval. It was generally approved. The two capitals figured that if the three negotiators, each of whom had their full confidence, could agree on something, it should be accepted. This of course speaks for the desire of all three governments to move ahead.

The agent of this for the Russians was Yuri Kwitzinski, who later became a member of the Soviet Central Committee, Soviet ambassador to Bonn, and actually was the acting foreign minister of the Soviet Union at the time of the anti-Gorbachev coup in August '91. He is the one, being the senior duty officer, who sent the instructions to the Soviet field posts to recognize the new coup government. Of course he was removed later on. He was the one who told me about this back channel operation, assuming that I knew about it.

Anyhow the way the back channel worked after I did find out about it, was that I would make some suggestions to Ambassador Rush who would try them out with this group and then would come back with acceptance or revisions. Then I would go to Donald Weameyer, our legal counsel, and say this is what the ambassador says should be our next move. Don would help me articulate it. Don was very gifted, a selfless American patriot, and we were very lucky to have him.

Q: What about as you were looking for moves to make, obviously a major part of this had to be what would be the Soviet reaction to any proposal we made, the likelihood of it being accepted or modified, were you getting any support from the Central Intelligence Agency or the Department of State Intelligence and Research branch? Were they really players in your thinking or not?

DEAN: No, not to my knowledge. The first part of the negotiations were occupied in a vain effort to bring the Soviet negotiators, mainly Kwitzinski, and in the less frequent meetings of the four ambassadors, to accept the use of the word Berlin and of continuing four-power responsibility for all of Berlin in this agreement. For them, by definition, Berlin was the capital of the GDR and did not otherwise exist, and in particular there was no four-power responsibility for East Berlin. The outcome was an agreement which just mentions "the relevant area" but doesn't mention Berlin specifically.

Q: It's interesting, the Berlin agreement does not mention Berlin.

DEAN: Yes, it does say the talks were held in the American sector of Berlin, but then refers to the "relevant area." That aspect was understandably criticized by Western and Berlin critics. However, it was the slow progress on the legal status issue which triggered the back channel operation. As for day-to-day negotiation, we would go to the allied kommandatura building and discuss the various issues in which this negotiation was divided: passes for Berliners going to East Germany, the presence of the Federal Republic in the western sectors, etc. We had a big blackboard and I would write out what we had agreed to on the Western side. Kwitzinski would comment. In the final period of the negotiation, Van Well and his team were in a nearby room where we could consult with them. But that wasn't the case until the end phase. We did make a real effort to tell them exactly what happened.

Q: In these negotiations, were you, yourself and your team, sitting down with the Soviets?

DEAN: Sure. We had meetings of what amounted to the Bonn Group with Yuri Kwitzinski nearly every day. We would advance agreed allied positions. Kwitzinski would comment. I or UK or France would suggest some modifications of the western position to go toward meeting his comments. These sessions would go on from about ten in the morning until about five or six at night and sometimes seven, then each of us had to go and write up the report of the thing. I'd fall into bed about midnight or one o'clock. Then at 0800 was a meeting with the allies to figure out the specific positions to be taken before the 10:00 session began. It was exhausting.

Q: As you were having these meetings was there a real give and take or were you announcing a position, they would announce a position?

DEAN: There was negotiation on the spot. Kwitzinski was a powerful and competent personality and well connected. Falin and various others were his protectors so he was very self confident. We had very long debates in German which all four of us spoke quite well. On each point, there was long general discussion and I would say, how about this formulation? Then Kwitzinski would give a diatribe the Federal Republic has to get out of Berlin in a long political discussion. Then he would come back to the specific subject and often express practical views.

Q: What were your major concerns as you got into this? Did you see the Soviets as trying to essentially loosen our position in Berlin or were they really trying to come up with some sort of an accord?

DEAN: I think their main interest was to push Western acceptance of East Germany. Western acceptance and acknowledgment of the status quo in Eastern Europe was a cardinal policy of the Soviet Union under Brezhnev, as we saw in the CSCE. In the Berlin talks, we saw an effort to push East Germany. But as we probed we found a somewhat competing desire to maintain overall Russian responsibility for Berlin and Germany as a whole. East Germany was there in the background. Its leader, Walter Ulbricht, opposed upgrading the West German presence in the Western sectors and the maintenance of Russian responsibility for East Berlin and the city as a whole. He wanted responsibility to be turned over to East Germany. The Soviets pushed him out

in May '71, a year before the Berlin agreement was signed. As far as I was concerned, as long as overall Russian responsibility was maintained, bringing the East Germans into the administration of the system and making it in effect a six power system with the Federal Germans, was a good idea. It would create a basis of stability for the operation of access to Berlin, which in practice it did do up to the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Q: Was this felt to be anathema by some people?

DEAN: Yes.

Q: Where was this coming from?

DEAN: From France in particular and from the Christian Democrats. One of the strongest critics of the whole agreement, on the grounds that it weakened Western responsibility for the Western sectors of Berlin and increased the status of East Germany, was a man named Alois Mertes, who was variously a Bundestag deputy and state secretary or deputy foreign minister. He, with unerring analytical ability, would put his finger on the weak points and was a very strong critic but personally a very nice man. Unlike some politicians I think he was a genuine German patriot as indeed were Bahr, Willy Brandt and Herbert Wehner.

Q: As you went into this move to what amounted to recognition of East Germany which we had been avoiding, did you feel more confident because you had a president, Richard Nixon, who had a strong right wing? In other words the very place where you probably expected to find the greatest opposition and sometimes it's handy to have a president who comes from the stronger anti-communist side to support you.

DEAN: He did that. As far as I know, we didn't hear any criticism from Congress at that time. I don't know of any congressional criticism or, at least, any weighty congressional criticism. I have to say that Washington, except at the very end point, left us to do the job. We did report copiously and we tried to show how we were fulfilling the negotiation agenda which had been developed by Jim Sutterlin and we were able to do so more or less. We regulated the questions of providing many more passes for West Berliners for going into East Berlin and we resolved civilian access to Berlin, the point that had been omitted from the four-power wartime agreements on administration of occupied Germany. We considered that we had consolidated the Federal German role in West Berlin and in that way had taken some of the weight off of us and made Federal Germany more responsible more directly. Ultimately, we could leave Berlin, which appeared very desirable assuming as everyone did at that time that Germany was going to continue divided into the indefinite future.

Q: Was the question of the Berlin Wall ever brought up? Was there a thought that maybe we can negotiate the elimination of the Berlin Wall or was that sort of an accepted fact?

DEAN: I would say the wall was an accepted factor. We made no serious effort to do that. Instead, the negotiations started from the effort to emphasize the four power status. We wanted to be sure not to weaken that status and if possible wanted to have it re-endorsed through this agreement. Even though we were unable to gain agreement to use the word Berlin, the agreement

does speak of four power rights and responsibilities. I think there was general satisfaction on the Western side that we had gained this endorsement of continuing Western rights as well as of Soviet responsibility.

Q: Were you all as you did this looking towards one of the outcomes that the Soviets had been seeking of CSCE and that was of the sort of stabilization of the borders and all that throughout Eastern Europe?

DEAN: The Soviets wanted the borders accepted, true, but their main aim was Western recognition of these regimes as legitimate. Most had been put in by a putsch one way or another. That acceptance ultimately did take place. The key to it was Federal German recognition of East Germany as a legitimate state. I had a particular interest in this subject because I had spent a tour of duty, about three or four years, in the State Department as the de facto East German desk officer. My main work there was to try to convince American scientists and other people going to specialist international conferences where East Germany might show up, to be sure to vote against their membership in the organization in order not to advance their international status. We were doing this sort of action in loyal support of Federal Germany's position.

Q: As negotiations progressed, was this a general sort of compromise as most negotiations are or did you feel that it was tilting one way or the other?

DEAN: Aside from the fact that we couldn't get the word Berlin, in the sense of explicitly confirming four-power responsibility "for Berlin," which did grate a lot of people, the agreement was a good one. The Berlin issue would be dealt with on a six power basis, more stable, with an acknowledged Federal German role and yet retained the legalism of the four power structure. I thought it was a good outcome. I thought the Federal German presence in West Berlin could, tactfully done, be actually built up. Unfortunately, Foreign Minister Genscher tried to do this with a big bang within the first weeks of the entry into force of this agreement with the Soviets by opening a new federal government office in West Berlin. That didn't work. It resulted in heavy Soviet protests.

On the other side, the much feared repercussions of the establishment of a Soviet consulate general in the western sector did not materialize. That issue did prove, in my view, to have been a storm in a tea cup. That was the issue that almost derailed the negotiations at the end owing to Kissinger's absence from Washington. Kissinger did not receive Rush's request for authorization to agree to the establishment of this consulate general. According to Sutterlin's agenda, this was not supposed to be agreed to unless we got more specific acknowledgment of Soviet responsibility for Berlin.

Anyhow, we agreed to it and then Ambassador Rush received this telegram, which I guess Sutterlin had drafted, sent out by my former boss Russell Fessenden who was at that time acting assistant secretary of the European Bureau. It told us that we should stop negotiating and not sign the agreement. Ambassador Rush told me I should compose a message explaining why it was too late to stop, implying that we had already signed. I did this with some pleasure, but paid for this pleasure afterward because the system was displeased at Ambassador Rush and me, but could do nothing to him. He was beyond their grasp. We sent the message and we went ahead to sign.

This incident was preceded by the argument about the East German translation, when Ambassador Sauvignard told me he would never sign this thing as long as the U.S. was playing around with the East Germans on the translation of the agreement. But we went ahead and did that.

That was a difficult time because Ambassador Rush was for two days out of action with nervous exhaustion, as was the British counselor. I don't blame them, because the process was really quite grueling. Ambassador Sauvignard used some really choice French foul language to describe the situation. I felt distressed about that, but we went ahead and finished up our efforts. I called Kwitzinski several times, but he went to the East Germans and Van Well would tell me the results. We didn't completely succeed. For example the East German title of the negotiation is something like Four-Sided Agreement and ours was Four-Powers Agreement. The East Germans didn't want to acknowledge that there were four powers that were responsible for Berlin.

More difficult things came up in the English-Russian translation. An important one was that the Berlin agreement states that the relationship between the Federal Republic and the western sectors of Berlin shall be maintained and developed. This is a very important part of the agreement. In the Russian and East German translations, this word appeared as "links" or "contacts," the same word which would be used for railroad connections, or airplane connections, but not "relationship" which is a political concept. Other difficulties of that kind unfortunately persisted.

The East Germans for different reasons than the French had to be dragged into cooperation. The Russians had to deal with East German leader Walter Ulbricht. He was making public statements saying that the negotiation should be broken off. This was because he did not like the reestablishment or the re-endorsement of four power responsibility for Berlin. The Soviets finally forced him into retirement.

Q: How did you treat it, I mean "the entire area consisting of", or something like that?

DEAN: "The relevant area" and the "area under consideration" were the terms used.

Q: Were there attempts by various groups to upset the negotiations either by challenging or doing something in Berlin or elsewhere?

DEAN: No, we didn't have too much trouble of that kind. Except that afterward, as I mentioned, when Foreign Minister Genscher attempted to set up a new Federal German agency, I believe it was the environmental office, or a section of that ministry, in Berlin. That didn't work. The four ambassadors did meet from time to time regularly to discuss applications of the agreement. It worked well from 1972 when it went into effect, until 1989 when the Wall came down. The passes to the East worked and the German civilian access to Berlin worked. The agreement dealt with a big area neglected by the wartime negotiations on occupation zones and the occupation of Berlin worked. This area was removed as a source of friction, and a potential source of conflict before between the Soviet Union and the Western countries.

Q: I would have thought that you would have run into a certain amount of problem by the Berlin establishment. I think of Eleanor Dulles back in Washington and the people who over the years have been fighting, no more tail gates, do you do this, do you do that, these things have been almost set in concrete.

DEAN: That's where the original resistance was, in the effort to protect all that hard-line minutia of an armed and unstable armistice from tinkering. Then there was also a lot of skepticism about the possibility of a possible outcome. But there was little interference. The Nixon and Brandt governments were for it. Berlin official opinion was very supportive. Shutz was the mayor at that time. He was very much for it but he also kept his Christian Democrats with him. We did get a few barks from the Christian Democrats in Bonn. After the whole negotiation was over, Franz Joseph Strauss, the Bavarian CSU leader, gave a dinner for Ambassador Rush which he devoted entirely to very pointed criticism of the Berlin agreement, the absence of the term Berlin, and why didn't you do better and so forth. Strauss didn't like the agreement. But he was the super hawk against Russia. However, as you might recollect, he later became an advocate of reconciliation with East Germany and with Russia. He flew his own plane to East Berlin and various other places, preaching the virtue of detente and good relations. But all in all, we didn't get too much resistance.

Q: It was one of those things where the time had come I guess for both sides.

DEAN: Yes. There was some critical examination of the agreement by a few experts but by and large Germans liked it and they thought it was forward movement. And then of course it got picked up in the general development of Ostpolitik and the treaty between Bonn and East Germany, and with Russia. It just seemed to fall into place.

Q: When this was over, were you and your delegation pretty confident that we weren't going to run across any more of these setting up barricades and turning Berlin into THE flash point that might start the big war or something?

DEAN: We thought that was, for various reasons, over. Of course, the issue to which your question leads is whether in particular we thought the Soviet Union and their henchmen the East Germans, would maintain this agreement. In practice, they did. I suppose the East German reluctance was bought off through the advantages of the inter-German German treaty between the FRG and GDR that they didn't want to drop. The GDR did get big, big payoffs and various subsidies, rail subsidies and other things, with hard currency which they couldn't get otherwise. So it was really to their advantage to maintain those agreements including the Berlin agreement. I don't believe it gave rise to any serious problem the entire time until '89, when full freedom of movement for all Germans was finally restored.

Q: What about your colleagues? You have included the Soviets on this, the ones that were at your negotiating level. Do you think there was general agreement that this was a pretty good deal?

DEAN: Kwitzinski is the one I knew the most and I saw him subsequently over the years. He was always satisfied with the agreement as doing the best that they could. I guess he rationalized

it as preventing a complete Federal German takeover of the western sectors. I think the Soviets came out less well but after all they did, through this agreement and in the Moscow treaty with the Federal Republic, reestablish themselves as people that we'd be willing to talk to. They did finally get the Conference on Security and Cooperation of Europe which they wanted. They did advance the international standing of East Germany, including in Berlin affairs. I guess by and large both sides should have been satisfied. We were and everyone did say so.

Q: What about the Helsinki Accords which were coming up, were you seeing this? Was everyone keeping an eye on this and saying OK this is step one?

DEAN: Yes. At one point the inner German treaty with East Germany and also the FRG treaty with Moscow was being pushed very hard by Egon Bahr and Willy Brandt, and it looked as though they were going to conclude both before we finished up the Berlin agreement. That was a moment of considerable friction to urge them not to do this and not to undercut our own negotiating leverage because the Russians wanted both of these other treaties. Bahr, I think, always claims that he never had any intention of undercutting the Western position on Berlin, but anyhow he was certainly talking a good game. The three Western ambassadors had a meeting with Willy Brandt and Foreign Minister Scheel, telling them that they didn't think this was a very good idea. There was no further effort to push the two treaties through before the Berlin agreement was concluded.

The NATO Council, too, always insisted that the Berlin agreement come first before any of these other things and certainly before the MBFR, before the Helsinki talks. As it happened, we also held preliminary talks for MBFR in the same year in which the Helsinki conference did actually meet. We maintained rough equivalence there.

My feeling from the late '50s on was that we should shift our policy towards Eastern Europe to a policy of engagement. We should stop trying to undermine these governments as illegitimate, but instead work both with the publics in so far as we could and also with the regimes, in what I then called a policy of engagement and then try to undermine their support by showing the Western example and showing that the regimes couldn't come up to the Western standard of living or of personal freedoms, and step by step reducing the core of active believers in the system until it would fall apart. That's the philosophy with which I approached this whole negotiation and I believe that was Brandt's approach with the Ostpolitik. This approach ultimately led to collapse of the Soviet system.

Q: I picked up from other people that Henry Kissinger at one point had a more pessimistic point of view and that was that the Soviet Union might prove to be too powerful and that this was trying to erect lines of defense or whatever you want to call it. The Soviet Union seemed to be on a roll at that time, that he didn't have quite the faith, you might say, in a democracy versus communism? Did you see that?

DEAN: No he didn't. I know in specific terms he was afraid that the Germans would take us on to thin ice. Maybe he had some more general view of the weakness of Western democracy and about the long-term history of the Soviet system. It is hard to believe, but still he might have.

Q: What about as you were doing this and consulting with the Germans, was there a concern that anything you said to the West Germans would eventually end up through leakage, espionage, into the enemy camp?

DEAN: Yes, that was a repeated risk. But aside from back channels to resolve hard points, it was necessary to have complete openness of exchange with all Western parties in order to operate the system, so we didn't hold back too much.

Q: I would imagine you would have to sometimes imagine that this had to be a factor in which you informed them saying, we're concerned about this because we're not sure we'd be able to get this or something like that? It could leak back and it would mean that the Soviets would press harder on a certain point or something.

DEAN: I don't have any recollection of holding back on specific details for that reason. Our general approach was to be completely open as far as this negotiation was concerned and I think that turned out to be right.

Q: As we end this particular session here, as I've mentioned at the beginning, talking to your colleagues in the Foreign Service who dealt with this thing they all say you've really got to talk to Jock Dean because he was very important in this Berlin negotiation. To understand how a bureaucracy responds, do you feel that your accomplishments (I'm talking about your team and all) were acknowledged by the Department or not? Or was it just well that's fine and let's get on to the next thing or something?

DEAN: That's right, there was considerable reserve. I think a certificate of honor (I've even forget what it was) was delayed for two years because they didn't want to specifically acknowledge any achievement on our part. Particularly how we ended up signing the agreement despite instructions from the Department to stop. But that incident was really because of Kissinger's modus operandi and the fact that he wasn't there to be reached when the moment came. Rush had asked him, he told me, but he received no reply so he said to go ahead. It wasn't that much of a gamble in the sense that Kissinger was the one who called the shots and presuming that he got the general agreement of the president to do this so that if it became a major scandal, presumably he would rescue Rush. But it didn't rescue me from their annoyance. It left me hanging in Bonn without an onward assignment even after the Department had appointed a successor for my job. I sat around despondently waiting for a new assignment and hearing most Germans say what a good job the Western allies had done in Berlin. In finally had to go out of channels and ask Ambassador Rush to get me an onward assignment.

There was also substantive trouble. The Eastern treaties were up for ratification in the Bundestag. The State Department had decided on a policy of strict neutrality in what I thought exaggerated fear of the consequences if we spoke out and the treaties were rejected. But there was resounding silence from Washington. Even the leader of the Christian Democratic opposition, Rainer Barzel, who favored the general line of the treaties and later tried to improve them by carrying on his own renegotiation with the Soviets, asked me, where is Washington? I finally sent a back channel message to Ambassador Rush who produced a very alternate but positive State Department position. The Eastern treaties were ratified. I believe it did some good.

CHARLES W. MCCASKILL
Refugee Officer
Schwiefert (1950-1951)

Charles W. McCaskill was born in Camden, South Carolina in 1923. After completing two years of study at the Citadel, he entered the U.S. Army, and returned to graduate in 1947. Mr. McCaskill then attended the University of South Carolina, where he received a master's degree in history and political science. He joined the Foreign Service in 1950, serving in Germany, Greece, Cyprus, Iran, and India. Mr. McCaskill was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on July 7, 1993.

MCCASKILL: I was offered a slot in the Displaced Persons Program issuing visas to displaced persons in Germany. I was sworn in as an FSS-11, Vice Consul, in March of 1950, and shortly thereafter sailed for Germany. Our government had determined that it was easier to take the consulates to the displaced persons than it was to take the displaced persons to the consulates. I was in Schweinfurt, a sub-office of our Consulate General in Frankfurt. Our office consisted of three officers and two American clerks. In each camp, there were a Displaced Persons Commission (DPC), which helped with assembling necessary documents, etc. for the applicants, and an Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) representative. In our case, the INS rep was on the same floor we were on. The applicants were in a real pipeline: applicants would come from the Displaced Persons Commission up to us, they would be interviewed, and, in most cases, visas were issued. Then they would go down the hall to the INS Inspector who would check them out and in effect admit them to the US. If there was any difficulty between the INS and the Consulate on a particular case, we worked it out on the spot. When the DPs arrived at a US port, they had already been found to be admissible and could be processed out to their sponsors. The system worked rather well, since any questions were worked out on the spot by the DPC, the Consulate and the INS.

We were in a rather large, former German Army camp -- the Schweinfurt Panzer Caserne. All of the several thousand people living in the camp had been uprooted by the war. There were Poles, Hungarians, Baltics, some Czechs, people from all walks of life waiting to start a new life. In the camp, the DPs were taken care of by various welfare organizations: the National Catholic Welfare Service, HIAS, the Church World Service, the Tolstoy Foundation and perhaps others.. All of these organizations were doing a great deal toward clothing the DPs, feeding them, etc. And of course, our government was very much involved in the program.

Anyone who had had anything to do with the Nazi organizations, or Germany itself, was ineligible to receive a visa: an application for Nazi Party membership, for example, membership in any Nazi Organization. One of our interpreters, a Latvian, spoke Latvian, Lithuanian, Russian, Ukrainian, German and English; he himself was ineligible because he had applied for membership in the Nazi Party when Latvia was occupied. The old Berlin Document Center records, which we apparently captured before they could be destroyed, were really quite reliable

and did some of the DPs in by revealing their past political activities. There was an occasional moral turpitude case, but most of the refusals were based on political grounds. And there was little attention on, or attention to, the Communist menace.

GEORGE ALLEN MORGAN
Director, Eastern Element
Berlin (1950-1951)

Ambassador George Allen Morgan was born in Tennessee in 1905. He received a bachelor's degree in psychology from Emory University and a Ph.D. in philosophy from Harvard University. He was a university philosophy professor before joining the U.S. Army in 1942. After World War II, Ambassador Morgan joined the Foreign Service. His career included positions in Russia, Germany, and Japan, as well as an ambassadorship to the Ivory Coast. Arthur L. Lowrie conducted this interview in 1989.

MORGAN: Then I moved directly from Moscow to Berlin to my great disappointment. I wanted to round out my normal tour of three years in Moscow because it was a fascinating post and I was delighted with it. In fact, toward the end of my stay there I wrote a dispatch which indicated that the Soviets were likely to start some kind of war somewhere around the world -- a proxy war maybe. I didn't pinpoint Korea, but at least it gave a kind of general alert to something like Korea being on the cards. So I was very pleased by that bit of foresight. Well, I was then yanked to Berlin ahead of time because they wanted somebody in Berlin with some sort of Soviet background who would head a unit that would report on East Germany, in particular, and the Soviet Bloc, in general, as seen from Berlin. In those days, Berlin was not a divided city. You could go over to the East, the Soviet sector, without any difficulty and we could get the East German paper every day, which gave us their news we could report. So I went there and there were several fine officers who became part of my staff, political and economic. I was Director of Eastern Element. It had two divisions, Political and Economic, and it was attached to Berlin Element for administrative purposes. The Berlin Element had to do with local Berlin affairs. The Director of Berlin Element was the Political Advisor to the General who was the Commandant of the US sector of Berlin. So I was able to call my outfit Eastern Element because it was reporting on the East. I had a very happy time there, fascinating work and great freedom to do as I pleased and report as I pleased. I didn't have to clear it with anybody -- just send what I felt like unless I was recommending policy in which case, of course, I did have to clear it with McCloy who was the High Commissioner, stationed in Frankfurt.

I would go down to Frankfurt about once a week to his staff meeting and report, along with lots of the other people. That was about as close as I ever got to him.

I was in Berlin 1950 and 1951. In late 1951 I was yanked back to the States, much to my regret. I was in Berlin when the Korean War broke out. We couldn't help comparing the North and South Korea with East and West Germany. And we noted the arms buildup in East Germany. So, we obviously called attention to the possibility of another proxy war there. This was long before

NATO and all that, and long before West Germany was allowed to re-arm.

KENNETH P.T. SULLIVAN
Political Advisor
Frankfurt (1950-1951)

Land Observer
Tubingen (1950-1951)

Kenneth P.T. Sullivan was born in Massachusetts in 1918. He served in the U.S. Army. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, the Sudan, Austria, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on October 25, 1994.

Q: Then in 1950 you moved down to Tubingen in the French Zone of Germany.

SULLIVAN: Well, actually a little earlier than that I moved out of Berlin. They moved the administrative headquarters to Frankfurt.

Q: The administrative headquarters of the Displaced Person program?

SULLIVAN: Oh no, they moved the administrative headquarters of what was by that time the Office of Military Government US.

Q: From OMGUS to HICOG.

SULLIVAN: The Little Occupation Statute is what they called it. I was the POLAD's (Political Advisor) representative on the board that threw out in effect the bulk of military government law and regulations. Presumably I got this job because of my experience in the adjutant general's department in the military as well as working with the quadripartite group in Berlin.

Q: You were in Frankfurt for some months then.

SULLIVAN: That is right.

Q: And then you moved down to the French Zone. Tell us a little about that and how it came about.

SULLIVAN: Under the civilian occupation there was to be a high commissioner for each of the nations -- the French, British and American -- and each of us had a zone, the same as under the military government arrangement. And to facilitate the uniform implication of the tripartite agreed policies, they had not only a Land Commissioner in each of the constituent states of West Germany, but they had Land Observers from the other two parties. I thought this would be

interesting work and because as a German major I knew a fair amount of the country and had had my fill with working with large departments in the Army and in the embassy, so I asked if I could be considered for one of these posts and I wound up by getting an assignment as the deputy US Land Observer to what was then called the state of Wurttemberg/Hohenzollern, not the Land.

Q: If you were the deputy, the Observer, himself, lived where? In Stuttgart?

SULLIVAN: No, he was, as most of the Land Observers were, a person of some political linkage. He was a very nice person who had first gotten to Europe working with Hoover's Relief Commission after World War I and he met and married a French woman and spent most of his life in Europe in between the wars. He worked for an American electrical company that had branches. Some of the time he was in England, but he was mostly in France. After he got this job he spent practically all of his time on the job in Tubingen with the French members of the command. And he spent more of his time away in Paris with his wife. His instructions to me were that I seemed to be interested in things and I should go about doing things and if he was ever needed to call him up and he would come up and do whatever I asked him to help with.

Q: A subordinate couldn't ask for better instructions.

SULLIVAN: That's right, that's right.

Q: To whom did you report in the American channel?

SULLIVAN: Well, once a month one of us, normally it was me -- I think it was me all except for two times -- went up to a meeting in Bonn which had the U.S. Land Commissioners and Observers from all over Germany come together for a monthly meeting. I think it was just one day, but it might possibly have been two. At that time, if you had business in any particular subsection of the embassy you could stay over and take care of it. But down in the French Zone, the French ran a pretty tight shop and the main business that I had with the embassy was to tell some of the people to let me know before they came down to the area or they might wind up in jail, which a couple of them did. But we got them out.

Q: How did the French authorities treat you?

SULLIVAN: I didn't have any problems at all. The commanding general was actually a civilian banker who had apparently a pretty good military record and stayed on afterwards and was still addressed as General. But he had a civilian attitude and with some staff help he dictated the constitution of Wurttemberg/Hohenzollern, and knew pretty well how it was going. He was a good person to deal with, but there wasn't much dealing to do. The various subsections of this state still had what were called town majors or town mayors by the British, and these were in most cases in the French arrangement, French colonels who had large numbers of dependents because all this could be charged off to German occupation costs. There was really not much to do down there but they didn't want everything seen.

Q: Did the French object in any way with your meeting with German officials and did you have a

chance to meet with many Germans?

SULLIVAN: Oh, yes. I could meet with them. It was a delightful experience as a matter of fact and one of my chief contacts there was a very famous German political scientist, which was a very rare thing, a man by the name of Theodor Eschenberg. He was not a local person and intentionally so because they had a refugee problem in Wurttemberg/Hohenzollern. The natives down there do not like to deal with anything that is contentious, so they got Prof. Eschenberg who had been professor at the University of Tübingen some years before and was actually a north German and didn't mind dealing with such things. He was a wonderful contact and particularly because he was trying to democratize the German political and governmental life. This was not the best place to do it from so he often went out and gave lectures elsewhere for which he would be rebuked by the parliament. He would tell them that he accepted their rebuke and then would go out and make two more speeches. It was a very quiet area.

Q: You were assigned, I believe, next to German language and area training back in Washington or back in the Department?

SULLIVAN: Well, it was actually at Harvard University. There was a program at that time, I believe it had started the year before, which grew out of historical fact that the Foreign Service had essentially operated on what might be called an apprenticeship system traditionally, at least in more or less modern times since World War I. The result of bad relations with Germany culminating in a rather long war was that there was a gap of specialists in Central Europe that normally would have been filled by people who had served there as they had gone up the ladder. They selected a certain number of people that had interest and some particular background such as my German background, to give an opportunity to fill in the middle ranks and pass as German specialists.

Q: Did you find your time at Harvard valuable?

SULLIVAN: Oh, wonderfully valuable. We had a very nice arrangement there. The Department told us that under no circumstances to try to get credit in more than one easy course because they were fearful that the professors would have us writing chapters for their books. They told us in effect that we had carte blanche to attend any classes in any part of the university, undergraduate or graduate, and without bothering to get permission from the professors. So we would fulfill what gaps we thought we had to the best of our ability. Of course, we all had more gaps than time to fill. In some cases the four of us who were there agreed that we all would like to know something about an area that we couldn't find covered by the personnel at Harvard and our faculty advisor managed to find a little money here and there and go out and find some specialist in some other place and invite them up. We had an agreement there that if they gave us a book list...these visitors would give us a book list of at least six titles and each one of us would have read four of them by the time the visitor came. We would have an afternoon roundtable discussion, etc. led by the visiting specialist and then we would have dinner at the faculty club and then we would adjourn to a pub and buy beer for the visitors until it was too late to go on any further. It was a very helpful arrangement.

Q: It sounds to me as a very attractive year for you there.

SULLIVAN: It was, but we had classes six days a week.

HARRY I. ODELL
Kreis Resident Officer
Frankfurt (1950-1952)

Visa Officer
Hamburg (1954-1955)

Economic Officer
Berlin (1955-1957)

Harry Odell graduated from Brown University and later attended graduate school at the Fletcher School of International Affairs at Tufts University. Prior to attending Brown University, however, Mr. Odell had served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II. His Foreign Service career began in 1950 and it took him to places such as Germany, Israel, Sri Lanka, Greece, Jordan, and Switzerland. In addition, Mr. Odell has held several positions within the Department of State. He was interviewed by Peter Moffat in April 2000.

ODELL: Then we went to Germany and stayed for two years. This was in 1950. In November of that year, my FSO-6 appointment came through and I got a diplomatic passport and a salary cut of \$600 a year and became a Foreign Service officer.

In Germany I was a so-called "Kreis" officer. Kreis can mean either "circle" or "district." It was sort of like counties in this country. It was at that level that we were assigned, converting from military government. By the time we got there, the real authority legally was still there, but in practice, there was very little power left. The Germans had by that time pretty much started running their own affairs up to a pretty high point. So, we had a mandate to try and help them become better democrats and so forth. There were a number of programs already in place that we were supposed to help implement, such as a schools program, community action programs, and so forth. There would be people with supposed substantive knowledge in these things at our headquarters - in Munich in my case. I was in Bavaria. Then we were supposed to implement these programs and so forth. Up to a point, we did try. We were totally dependent on the American Army for logistical support. The State Department budget had been taken over from the Army. Such things as housing was still handled by the Army Quartermaster Corps. Our vehicles were serviced by the Army. Our housing was assigned and maintained by the Army. The Army, being the Army, kind of went about its business. Although generally you didn't have any bad relations with the Army, if you wanted... I was transferred partway through my first assignment from a very remote and rural area to a more urban area in Bavaria and there happened to be an armored cavalry regiment stationed there. There, I found that a lot of my job was functioning as the civil affairs officer for the Army. We had certain functions equivalent to being a justice of the peace in this country. If there was a German who broke an occupation law

or an American violated a German law, both categories came before us in the first instance as a convicting magistrate, if you will. If there was anything serious, you simply found whoever was involved, an American who had violated German law, but Americans couldn't be tried in a German court at that time; or a German who had violated our law. There was always something going on. The Army soldiers would get in trouble in one way or the other. I found that a very interesting part of the job. Again, the Department of State was not terribly helpful in 1) giving us clear guidelines as to how to function in this capacity and 2) making certain that the Army through its own channels told its people down the line who we were and what they should expect from us and how they should behave towards us. You were pretty much on your own. Some people had a lot of trouble with the Army. I didn't, partly because of my wife, who hit it off very quickly with the wife of the regimental commander there, a woman who was considerably older than my wife. They hit it off and then somehow the word trickled down through all the channels that we were fairly reasonable people. If Colonel Brown saw fit to think that we were alright, why, then everybody did. It worked out pretty well.

Q: Who did you report to back in Washington?

ODELL: We didn't report directly back to Washington at all. We reported through Commission headquarters in Munich. The reporting was essentially parochial domestic. We didn't do any...

Q: Who would write your efficiency report?

ODELL: We had a district boss who had perhaps six or eight of us under him.

Q: He was a Department of State employee?

ODELL: He was then, but the fellow I worked for had been a Department of the Army civilian. That was another thing. They had never seen these forms before. They didn't quite know what to say and so forth. It was a particularly interesting thing. This happens to be the 50th anniversary of that group getting together. Although we weren't officially a Foreign Service officer class, we always considered ourselves to be one. We all went to the same country, which I think was unique in the history of the Foreign Service. We have remained quite close ever since. We're having our 50th anniversary this next month here in Washington, those of us who have survived. We've kept in touch.

Q: Who among your group achieved particular fame?

ODELL: Talcott Seelye was in my group; Bob Dean; Spike Dubbs, who was killed in Afghanistan; Jock Dean. I think they are the ambassadors.

Q: It's interesting how many of those names left Germany behind and went on to other...

ODELL: I was somewhat different. My third assignment was back to Germany, first to Hamburg and then to Berlin for two years. The same thing happened to Walter Jenkins. He went out to Taipei and then came back to Germany in Berlin. Jock Dean, I think, stayed in Germany. Although Jock was in the Congo once, he spent much of his later career involved in German

affairs.

Q: You then returned to Germany?

ODELL: I was first assigned to the consulate general in Munich. While I was on home leave, I got a telegram saying, "Don't go to Munich. Go to Hamburg." This always stuck in my mind. I wrote the usual letter to him saying how absolutely delighted I was that I was going to work for him and so forth. I got a letter back from him saying, "Thank you very much for your letter. I will be delighted to have you on my staff, but I can't imagine what you'll be doing because there is no vacancy here." Then it was about a week later that I got a telegram from the Department saying, "Don't go to Munich. Go to Hamburg." So, I went to Hamburg and was not terribly happy there because I was, of course, put in the Visa Section, which was a very, very busy visa section in those days (the spring of 1955). Hamburg was a nice city and there was lots to do there and everything, but the job was just visa applicants. You would be there and again it would be filled with visa applicants and so forth. So, when the opportunity came, I was asked would I be interested in transferring to the job in Berlin. That didn't take me very long to say "Yes" to.

I went to Berlin and that was a good assignment. I was assigned to the Economic Section and was assigned specifically to Berlin. In those days (1955), it was a few years after the airlift and everything. They were still thinking of what was going to happen to Berlin. My specific job was to try and keep track of traffic in and out of Berlin and also airlift planning. They were planning in case there was another airlift - stockpile planning and so forth. They had the Kommandatura structure in Berlin at that time. Although it didn't have any real power, it still met and they had subcommittees. One of the fringe benefits I got was that I was assigned to this subcommittee dealing with these matters. I had a British colleague and a French colleague, both of whom were full-time civil servant types who stayed there since World War II. They both spoke fluent German. Our German colleague, ex-officio, in the group (Of course, the Germans were paying for the thing.) didn't speak anything except German, so they had fallen into the practice of talking entirely in German. It didn't take very long for me to realize that it wasn't going to work. I knew some German from my previous German experience. I had kept up with it a little bit in Israel, but it wasn't by any means fluent. I decided right then and there that I was going to have to work at this. It's the old story: if you're forced into a situation of using a foreign language, it begins to... After a while, I discovered one day that I was beginning to at least in that context think in German rather than in English. That was a real big fringe benefit of that job. It made life after that in Germany much more pleasant. Subsequently, much later on in subsequent posts, it was much more pleasant. That was an interesting period.

I met Chuck Johnson during that period. He was a civil servant when I first met him. He was sort of staff assistant to Eleanor Dulles, who was special assistant to the secretary for German Affairs. Eleanor used to come out to Berlin periodically. She was a GS-14 at the time, maybe a 15. She was treated with a considerable amount of deference. Chuck came out with her. I think that was the first time I met him. He was still in the Department. Subsequently, I was assigned to be her assistant and discovered that Eleanor really had some rough edges on her, no doubt about it. But basically, she was quite nice underneath it. We got along quite well. I enjoyed that

because running around with Eleanor got me into meetings with people that I at my level at that point would have never been in otherwise.

Bernard Guthrie was one of our chiefs. He was a senior State Department official. At that time, the structure was complicated. The British, American, and French ambassadors in Bonn were the chiefs of mission in Berlin. Their official deputies were generals. The general's deputy, if you will, was Mr. Gussler. In practice, Gussler dealt directly with the Department of State and so forth. But that relationship with the Army in Berlin was a lot of fun. The Army put its best foot forward there. The officers seemed to have been carefully picked. General Dasher told me at one time that he had a lot of authority when it came to officers being assigned there. If he got the word that somebody wouldn't fit in very well, he could say "No" to them. The first were sharp troops. There were lots of good parades. It was Berlin; of course, the Germans put on a good show there. Berlin was full of good things to do. It was cheap and not crowded and it wasn't full of tourists. We thoroughly enjoyed Berlin.

That was an interesting period. Willy Brandt was on his way up. at that point. Again, my wife got to meet Mrs. Brandt at some kind of function. They took the children to circuses and things like that and I got to know Willy before he became a great man. He didn't become mayor until later, but he was really on his way up. It was during that period that there were a couple of incidents. The riots took place in Poznan, Poland at that time. There was a spillover into Germany and East Berlin. Willy Brandt came to the fore. Chuck Johnson and I went down. Chuck by that time had been assigned to Berlin. He and I went down to the Rathaus, where they had a big rally and Willy got up and spoke to the crowd and calmed them down. From then on, his political star was in ascendance.

TALCOTT W. SEELYE
Kreis Resident Officer
Frankfurt (1950-1952)

Ambassador Talcott W. Seelye born in Lebanon to American parents on March 22, 1922 and lived there until the age of 11. He joined the U.S. Army during World War II. He received a bachelor's degree from Amherst College in 1947 and joined the Foreign Service in 1948. Ambassador Seelye's career included positions in Frankfurt, Germany; Amman, Jordan; Beirut, Lebanon; Kuwait, Kuwait; Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and an ambassadorship to Tunisia. He was interviewed in 1995 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: You came into the Foreign Service when?

SEELYE: Well, I passed the written exam in 1948 and the orals in March, 1949. Then there were delays of a couple of years before they brought us in because they were at that point trying to build up an administrative cadre. The Foreign Service was expanding, as you recall, and they were opening posts all over the world. So evidently they felt the need for a lot of administrative specialists. I didn't know this at the time, I learned it later. They gave these slots to FSSs, not

FSOs. We paid the price since we had to wait. I finally came in, in March, 1951--there is a long story as to why I came in this late. I should have come in a year before that but there was a security problem.

Q: Could you tell us about the security problem just to give us a feeling of the times?

SEELYE: Okay. It so happened that in 1949 a Kreis Resident Officer program was set up for Germany. I was interviewed and selected. There were 27 of us who went over there in March, 1950, all waiting for our FSO appointments. We were appointed as FSS-7s which meant a salary of about \$2,000 more than what we would get as FSO-6s. This made us happy at the time. We had a fascinating two years as Kreis Resident Officers. It was an incredible experience. We were the eyes and ears of the High Commission in these Kreis countries.

Q: I would like to document the Foreign Service's role in the Kreis Program.

SEELYE: Should I continue with the security problem first?

Q: Yes, and return to the Kreis program afterwards.

SEELYE: I had been there about six months when I got a written interrogatory from the security people saying: (1) We understand your brother-in-law, Peter Franck--my elder sister married an American who had been a German and had come to the United States to become an American citizen--who we understand was a member of the communist party when he was a student at the University of Berlin. (2) We understand that your sister is a member of the Washington Book Shop--which is on the Attorney General's list as a subversive organization. (3) What is your relationship with your brother-in-law? (4) What are your political views?

I was astounded. I wrote a strong response saying: "I know my brother-in-law well and he is a solid American citizen and a democrat. I know that he had attended the University of Berlin and while there was active as an anti-Nazi. He was arrested by the Gestapo and beaten up. He finally fled Germany by skiing over the mountains into Switzerland. He is an anti-communist."

Well, it so happened that I should have gotten my FSO appointment around March of 1950 but the security issue delayed it. It didn't bother me much at the time because I was earning \$2,000 more a year. My FSO appointment finally came through in March, 1951, a year late.

I finished my two years in Germany, we will come back to that later, go back to the States in 1952, and I am then assigned to Amman, Jordan. While I am in Amman promotion lists come out and my name is not there. Since my ratings were quite good I began to think: "Uh oh, this security problem has come up to plague me again." So, when my two years in Amman were up (in October, 1954) and when I went back to Washington I started buttonholing people. I first met with the inspector who had visited Jordan. I said that I wanted to get to the bottom of this. If the security issue was going to continue to plague me, I wanted to get out of the Service. The first interrogatory that I received happened before the McCarthy era, during the Democratic Administration. Now we are getting into the McCarthy era, so things were even worse.

Then I went to see Ray Hare, the Director General of the Foreign Service, and raised the issue with him. Then I decided to do something else as well. I had met the security officer in Bonn when I was in Germany and he had seemed sympathetic. By this time he had become Director of Security in the State Department. So I went up to his secretary and said, "I would like to see Mr. Minor." She said to me, "Are you...?" And I said, "Yes." What she presumably meant was, "Are you an agent?" I was determined to see him. He agreed to see me and looked puzzled when I came in. I mentioned to him that we had met in Bonn and then he said that he remembered. I described to him my situation and stressed that I wanted to get to the bottom of my case. He said, "Your case is probably at the bottom of a pile somewhere. You are a junior officer and there are many, many cases being studied. It just takes a long time to get to the bottom of the pile." I asked him if he would do me the favor of examining my case while I was in Washington for two months of home leave. I said that if it wasn't worked out I would quit the Foreign Service.

After one month I got a summons to come down to Washington for an oral interrogatory. So I came down and sat around a table with several persons. There was a guy with a stenotype machine recording the proceedings and three or four other people. They spent about an hour and a half delving into every possible nook and cranny of my family. It was an incredible experience. They started out with my brother-in-law, of course. I pointed out that he was a fervent anti-Nazi. I understood that in his student organization in Berlin there were a lot of communists because most of the militant anti-Nazis were evidently communists. But he was not one of them. His father was totally apolitical. He was a well-known chemistry professor. I pointed out that my brother-in-law had worked with the OPA during the war and no questions had been raised.

Then they went into my sister's connections with the Washington Book Shop. Then I had another sister who had started the Theater Lobby here in Washington. At one point it had had the word "workshop" in its title. "Workshop" had a negative connotation. Then they had found somebody with the same name as my uncle-in-law, Donald Blanschell. This man was secretary of the communist party in Atlanta. Additionally, they had my father on the griddle at St. Lawrence University where as president he had supposedly harbored a communist. I said, "I know who you mean." There was a Canadian professor there who was very bright and intellectually compatible with my father but who had organized a union against my father because my father sought to clean out the academic deadwood. And he had. So a teachers' union was formed in protest, with this professor as its spark plug. Thus, he caused problems for my father, who left St. Lawrence after five years partly as a result of the union's efforts. So I said, "Rather than my father's having supported him, he is partially responsible for my father's departure."

Finally I asked, "What do you have against me?" The reply, "We have nothing against you." After the interrogatory was over and as I was standing aside with one of those present I commented: "Look, I would like to know whether this is going to work out or not because I will have to make a decision about the Foreign Service." He said, "I think you can go on to Beirut to the language school (where I had been assigned)." Sure enough, six months later a delayed promotion came through--and from FSO-6 to FSO-5. By that time I had been in the Service five years! I hoped that my security problem was behind me.

To jump ahead and complete the story on security, from then on promotions came through nicely. I requested my security file about five years ago from the Department of State.

Q: This is after you retired?

SEELYE: Yes. I got my file and a third of it was crossed out. I discovered that at one point in my career the security issue had threatened to rear its ugly head again. In 1961 when I was back in Washington on the Arabian Peninsula desk the Department had just developed satellite intelligence. It was a new thing. It was so new that it was super sensitive. Nobody outside a selected few was supposed to know that we had it. Therefore it was on a need-to-know basis for people who held sensitive positions. It was decided that because of the job I had I should have access to this intelligence. I had noticed that every now and then when I would talk to my boss about things I would say, "I don't really think this is happening." And he would say, "Well, I know it is." And I would say, "How?" He would say, "Well, I can't tell you."

I discovered from my file that when they were re-clearing me for this sensitive access the head of INR requested that I be checked out again in light of my security file. The case was again put before the loyalty board--in those days you had two things, one was the loyalty question and the other was the security question. The board replied, "We have gone through this chapter and verse in the past and this guy is okay. There is no need to review the case." On that basis I was cleared. So obviously the security issue had popped up again and, who knows, it might have again later! But this didn't show up in the file.

Q: Well, it certainly gives a feel for the time.

SEELYE: Well, some day I will have to write a piece for the New Yorker. The case is unbelievable.

Oh, to add another vignette. When I left Germany after two years I had to be re-cleared. I guess everyone was re-cleared after each post. The security person given the task of checking me out was an Army tech sergeant in counterintelligence, who was assigned to the Kreis in which I had served. He had the job of ascertaining whether I was a loyal and "secure" American. He did so by going to the German officials that I had been dealing with, the Burgermeister and the Landrat and to German friends, to find out if I was a loyal American! And I had been there two years trying to get Germany back into the democratic stream. Here is an American asking Germans if I was a loyal American. An extraordinary thing! The first time I got hints of what was going on was when a German friend wrote me and said, "Somebody has been asking about you and we can't figure out what is going on. He wants to know if you are a good American."

Q: I know that the Washington Book Shop was a favorite place because people could get 35 percent off. They would get on the list and then "whammo."

Going back now, could you explain the Kreis Resident Program? It was a very unique experience for a whole series of Foreign Service Officers of your age group coming into the Foreign Service. Could you explain a little bit about where you were and what you were doing?

SEELYE: Sure. First let me say we were all older than the usual entering Foreign Service Officer because we were all World War II veterans. Our average was 29 or 30 when we came in. I was

28. And I might add that I think we had a higher quotient of idealism than many others because of our World War experiences.

Q: It was a selective process. You might touch on this. I think people coming into the Foreign Service certainly had a feeling of mission in those days.

SEELYE: Oh, yes. We were very idealistic. It never occurred to us that we were not going to make much money. That was not an issue. I was only vaguely aware of what an "ambassador" was. We weren't in it because we wanted to make ambassador. We wanted to serve abroad and serve our country.

Anyway, it is interesting how we were selected to be Kreis Resident Officers. As you know, the U.S. Army trained military officers to be military government officers in anticipation of Germany's defeat and occupation. When Germany gave up these people were assigned the task of running Germany, but they left in 1948. The High Commission didn't come in until 1949 and between 1948-49, it was still the U.S. military running Germany. The people who took the places of the trained military government officers were ex-military officers who decided to hang around. A high percentage of them were carpetbaggers, unfortunately. They stayed behind to make money and they did. There were a lot of opportunities to make a fast buck in the post-war situation. You could sell cigarettes for a great profit, gasoline, etc. So those officers--not all of them--were not establishing a very good reputation among the Germans.

So somebody had the idea...I think Glenn Wolf was one of those...in the State Department or out in HICOG that here were these young Foreign Service Officers waiting around for their FSO appointments who had taken their exams in 1947, and 1948. And here were these guys in Germany who were creating a bad name for the U.S. Why don't we take these young Foreign Service Officers and send them out there to take their places? By that time the High Commission had taken over so the State Department could assign people to take the place of these carpetbaggers.

We were in the first group to go. We were first assigned to the Foreign Service Institute to learn German because most of us didn't know German. We had a crash course and were there for almost three months. Then we went out to Bad Homburg where we were briefed by various people at the HICOG headquarters about our jobs, after which we scattered to the various Kreis, Kreis is a county. We were given the choice of going to Baden-Wurttemberg, Hesse or Bavaria. While I was waiting for my appointment I had worked in INR where a former German worked. I asked him for his advice. He suggested that I request Baden-Wurttemberg because it had once had a democratic tradition. So I requested Baden-Wurttemberg and was assigned there with four others. Most of the others went to Bavaria.

By this time the Germans had resumed control of the government/administrative machinery. The U.S. no longer operated by fiat. But since we were the replacements for the military operators it was difficult for the Germans to adjust quickly to the change. Bear in mind also that by 1950 the Soviet Union was perceived as the primary threat. So our earlier policy of keeping the Germans down and making them pay a price shifted to bringing Germany on to the anti-communist bandwagon. So I got there at just the time that we were focusing on building friendships and

creating links with the Germans, which was a nice time to be there, of course. But the Germans didn't always adjust quickly to that. So as soon as I arrived--my first place was Mosbach--I was addressed as "Herr Commandant." I said, "I'm not a commandant." So they would say, "Herr Gouverneur." And I would say, "Hey, look, I am not a gouverneur, I am just Mr. Seelye." So after that they called me "Herr Mr. Seelye."

Well, our mission was varied. In 1952 I wrote a series of two articles for the Foreign Service Journal on what we did. We were there primarily to develop relationships and to get the Germans to understand what U.S. policy was. Also we were to help them democratize, although we weren't naive enough to think that outsiders could come in and democratize them. At least we might do things that would move them in that direction. In a sense we were kind of public affairs officers.

We had certain specific jobs as well. For example, I remember I had to sign permits for any German who wanted to go to East Germany. We also were somewhat involved in legal affairs, not for the Germans, but for the displaced persons and the refugees. We served as liaison with the U.S. military. In Mosbach we didn't have any U.S. military, but I was in Ulm for a while and there we had a U.S. military installation. My job was to smooth relations between the Germans and the military.

One of the things that I did was try to establish citizen committees out in the gemeindes or villages. Each German town had a gemeinderat or town council that worked with the mayor. The feeling was that these were the same people who had been running Germany before the Nazis came along and were stuck in their ways. There was a perceived need for a constructive countervailing group. So we tried to establish these citizens committees comprised of people who were not in the gemeinderat, not in the establishment, who would serve as a constructive opposition--forcing the others to open up a little bit. At one time, I remember, one of the Germans most eager to join a citizens committee in one town (after he had had a few beers that I had paid for) proved to be a former member of the SS! No wonder he was outside the establishment.

I would visit the Burgermeister and Landrat on a regular basis to talk about things. What I would do, since my German was limited when I went out to establish a citizens committee, was to start out in my German and then get my very able German to translate for me. He had been captured in Tunisia by the Americans and had spent three or four years in a POW camp where he had learned English. He was then studying for a graduate degree at the University of Heidelberg. He was a great help. In fact he was so good that he led an English language group that met at our house once a week. He would pick suitable American topics to discuss. For example, I recall that once we discussed Hemingway and another time we discussed Aaron Copeland. The group included some high school students and several scientists because a scientific institute had been transferred to Mosbach from Berlin.

Occasionally I would go to the local high school and take over the history class and just talk about aspects of the United States. I discovered that still in those days, in the early fifties, the German educational system was still very structured, very rigid. I could never get a discussion going. Nobody would even ask me a question. The high school students who came to our English

language group used to tell us that the reason for that was because the teacher always had the final word. Obviously things have changed, but that was the system then.

My whole staff was German. I had a Woman's Affairs Officer who tried to get the women active in community affairs. Another member of my staff would attend meetings, take notes and prepare reports. Maybe this sounds like spying, but it kept me up to date. In those days there were several German ethnic groups who had fled to Germany from neighboring territories. There was for example, a Silesian group and a Sudeten Deutsche group. Sometimes I was asked to address them. My reporter was an ex-army officer whose English was good. This was a good experience for me and it was a great way to come into the Foreign Service! We had the best house in town.

Q: Were you married at the time?

SEELYE: Yes. I had gotten married shortly before going to Germany. We lived in a requisitioned house filled with the best furniture that had been collected by the army from the German community. When we invited German friends to our house I would see them sometimes checking out their furniture. Just before we left we discovered in our bomb shelter an expensive painting (all boarded up) obviously stolen by the previous home owner from some place. We turned it over to the local occupations cost office.

I had been apprehensive originally about going to Germany having been in World War II and having studied modern European history. But the opportunity for a new and challenging experience overrode my reluctance. Once I got there we made some good friends. As self-disciplined people, the Germans I associated with never showed any hostility--though the war was fresh in their minds. They were always friendly and correct.

Q: This is pretty much the attitude. I think the Americans and the Germans got along really pretty well in most instances.

SEELYE: They did. And even American troops got along much better with the Germans than they did with the French.

Q: And even the British, I think. I was a soldier in Darmstadt, in the Air Force, in 1953 or so. Did you ever get any taste of the real world of the Foreign Service? Go to consulates or anything like that?

SEELYE: Yes. We would go to Stuttgart every month for a meeting of Kreis Resident Officers and there would be a consular representative there. I remember being invited once to a consular reception and acknowledging to the senior consular officer that I really hadn't had a conventional Foreign Service experience, which I noticed he put on my rating as a negative factor. Guess I shouldn't have said that. While serving as a Kreis Resident Officer did not contribute to advancement in the Service, it certainly was an experience worth having had.

CARLETON S. COON, JR.
Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany
Frankfurt (1950-1952)

Ambassador Carleton S. Coon, Jr. was born in Paris to American parents. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II and then served in the High Commissioner in Germany. After graduating from Harvard University, Mr. Coon joined the Foreign Service and served in Kathmandu, Damascus, New Delhi, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on October 26, 1989.

COON: June came along and I was finished with my internship in North African Affairs and Bill Turpin, who had been doing something else -- Bill was another classmate of mine -- and I were called into some office in Personnel and they said, "We are going to send you two over to Germany, in Bavaria, to process refugees." And we said, "That doesn't sound very exciting, but what the hell, needs of the Service and so forth." So we went over to Germany. We got to Frankfurt just the day after somebody came in and said there was a looming crisis in staffing Kreis Resident Officer (KRO) positions. The guy there, I have forgotten his name, said, "Would you like to be a KRO instead?" And Bill, who had no idea what a Kreis Resident Officer was, but knew he didn't want to be a Visa Officer said, "Yes." And I said, "I think so, but what is a Kreis Resident Officer?" So he said, "Eddie so and so is the KRO down at Rhinegau, and he will take you down there and you will see a typical officer at work." So he took us down to Rhinegau, in the heart of the finest wine producing region of Germany -- an hour or two drive from Frankfurt. And we sat around the office while he did a couple of inconsequential things, and then he took us to a "wine probe" at the Von Munmsche Vineyards. We got down in this basement where there were about 50 old bottles lined up. And this old guy with a nose like Santa Claus went down the list, and down each bottle we tasted, and he talked about each one in terms of its similarity to a different kind of woman. And by the end I was convinced. I said, "Yes, all right, I'll be a Kreis Resident Officer." So they sent me off to a town called Buedingen, up in the hills, where the only beverage they produced was an undrinkable apple cider. But anyway, it was a great experience.

I was 23 by then, and the German society was at that time, and I guess still is to some extent, highly graded in a chronological kind of way, and it was sort of ridiculous for me to be out there telling them they all had to be good democrats and republicans and go to town hall meetings, and so forth. I think the real facts of the matter -- and I have never really studied this, but certainly it was clear at the time -- was that the military government had a way of hanging on. They had a good thing going. They didn't want to give it up. And all the good people had gone home, and started work again. It was just like the regiment I was with in Bremen in 1946 -- all the good people went home and there was nothing left but the bums, and the drifters, who were staying on. That is a little bit of an exaggeration but not that much. Liaison and security offices had been established out in the county seats, way back when there really wasn't anything, when Germany was flat. The military government had to provide essential services and to exercise control. By the time 1950 came around, their functions had withered away. I mean it didn't take the Germans long to reestablish post offices and police departments, and tax capabilities. They were pretty well organized to begin with and once they got over the shell shock of defeat things fell back into

place. So these guys were left with essentially nothing to do except maybe they controlled firearms and they controlled the passes that allowed Germans to visit their relatives in East Germany. The rest of the time they were black-marketing and whoring around and generally creating a stink in the minds of the Germans.

General Clay appreciated this as did John McCloy. They in my opinion -- I don't know whether the record will justify this -- cooked up the idea of getting some bright young State Department people in to replace these liaison and security officers, as a means of getting them out and cleaning up the act. This was always seen as a temporary thing and by 1952 when I left the program was virtually wound up. The fiction at the time was that we were running a Public Affairs Program, we were running an intelligence program, and we were running a "reorientation" program. What I actually did, that had teeth in it, was to control all hunting permits, and I had personally to sign an inter-zonal pass for every German that wanted to go to the East Zone. I perfected my signature during those days. I would sit down and sign about 100 pieces of paper. So about 100 people from the county of Buedingen could go visit in the East Zone. I answered the complaints of the German hunters who claimed that their lands were being overrun by wild boar, and went off and shot a couple of them myself at one time and another. For the rest of it I had an Opel *Capitaine*, two Volkswagens, and a couple film projectors, and some happy-go-lucky young Germans who knew how to project film and we ran a films program all over 102 villages in the county. I went around -- I got to all but four or five of the villages while I was there -- and I talked to them. As a matter of fact by now my German was quite fluent and very helpful. I organized things, and I participated in debates, and occasionally I sent in a report as to what Pastor Niemoller was doing -- he was from that region, and that sort of thing. But basically I was on my own. I wrote my own ticket. I did what I could and managed to do quite a lot. It was like having your own post.

There was a local communist movement that had its cells and its organizations there. I do recall one or two times when I was in open debate with the communist Bundestag delegate from Buedingen. It was fun. He was talking about unilateral disarmament in West Germany and that was what they should do. I had been reading Wilhelm Busch, the great German poet and satirist of the late 19th century -- a sort of an Ogden Nash of German, who had written a lovely little poem about the fox and the hedgehog which was very appropriate -- where the fox tells the hedgehog, "Now just lay down your quills and we will all live in peace." And the hedgehog says to the fox, "Have your teeth pulled out first, fox, and then we will talk about it." I quoted that, and the audience loved it. I don't remember too many episodes of that nature, but I remember it was a very rich experience for me. It was a time when I was really operating on all cylinders, and learning fast, and doing a great deal -- without getting any credit for it, of course.

WALTER E. JENKINS, JR.
Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany
Bonn (1950-1952)

Walter E. Jenkins Jr. attended the University of Hawaii and graduated from Harvard University in 1941. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II,

including two years in China. He joined the Foreign Service in 1950, serving in Bonn, Taipei, Berlin, Poznan, Warsaw, Stuttgart, and Washington, DC. Mr. Jenkins was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on February 20, 1991.

JENKINS: Something came up with the High Commission in Germany, (HICOG), and they said, "That looks like a good opportunity; if you are interested, take it." HICOG wanted to train a group of young candidates waiting to be Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), to serve in Germany as Kreis Resident Officers, which in essence was to be county representative for the High Commission throughout the American Zone. So after family consultation, I joined 26 other FSO candidates to attend the Foreign Service Institute for three months of orientation and German language study, and then off to Germany. We left in the spring of 1950.

We were trying to really appreciate what we were doing while we were still in FSI. And I remember that at our graduation party there were two of the language instructors, husband and wife, of Saxony lower nobility. They asked, "Well, what are you going to do as a resident officer?" I replied, "Well, we are going to be liaison between the U.S. military and the local government, but mainly we are going to be involved in what we call a reorientation program. We will have youth programs, women's programs, film programs in the school and we will have public forums throughout the Kreis (county) to get people to participate." And she said, "Oh, you mean you're going to make them democrats?"

And I said, "Yeah: oh, we are going to try."

And she laughed and pointed at me and said to the others, "This young man thinks he is going to make democrats out of the Germans (chuckle, chuckle)."

But we got over there and we started out. We made a real try. I would say, at first, the American military incumbents, whose jobs we were taking over, were very suspicious of us; they thought we were going to take over. And so the relationship was not too warm at first. But then a goodly number were retained in HICOG as civilians. They warmed up after many began to realize, "Well, I am not being eliminated; I am going to stay." So we branched out with them into our democratization program, and occasionally "goofed".

I remember I was an understudy in Mannheim, actually in nearby Weinheim, and I was trying to get started with the local youth organization. There was a Jungenring, youth circle, which was having a fest and sport competition. The chairman of the Jungenring was a very handsome, ash-blond boy, and I cottoned up to him and said, "Is there anything I can do to help?"

He looked at me a bit skeptically and said, "Well, you know, we need some prizes for the kids who win these races. Do you have any chocolates, candies or such things?"

And I replied, "Oh, sure." And I got some D-ration bars from our military and I told my driver, "Let's go over and see Herr Strasser at the old Rathaus."

The driver asked, "You know where that is?"

In response to my negative reply, he said, "Well, that is where the Communists and trade unions are located."

Well, it turns out that Herr Strasser was a Communist. But he had been elected by all groups -- protestant, catholic -- to be chairman of the Jungenring. And so on delivering the D-ration I made my first *faux pas*, but it wasn't too bad, for I made friends with several other youth leaders.

There are other anecdotes of that type, too. But gradually, when we moved in to our regular counties, which for me was Schwäbisch Halle in Baden-Württemberg, the reorientation program took shape. And we did have our forum programs; we did have our ladies' program; we worked with the youth and had a school film program. It seemed to be taking hold.

Now, I don't mean that we "made democrats" out of the Germans necessarily; but if you look at it in the context of the broader initiatives we were pursuing -- for instance, the new constitution of West Germany was very carefully devised with our advice, and Americans helped them a lot in establishing a democratically elected parliamentary system, a federal system that was truly federal, and a party election system with a five- percent rule, meaning that a party had to have at least five percent in the election to be represented in Parliament, which prevented a lot of the splintering characteristic of the elections in Italy and France. Against the backdrop of these broader developments, what we were doing in the Kreise seemed to fit in. And so my impression was that, although there were a lot of problems, we were seeing eye-to-eye with them and they were making progress toward democratic institutions.

I was transferred to the political section of the High Commission (HICOG) in Bonn in the summer of 1952. HICOG had the authority to transfer us, as junior Foreign Service officers, directly from a Kreis to Bonn, then notify the Department of the reassignment. But the dear administrative officer didn't do it by wire, but by surface pouch. So I was doing my first job of sorting out files in the political section, when all of a sudden a cable came in stating that I was being transferred to Taipei. Well, John Patton Davies, the old China Hand, who was then head of the political section, wrote a beautiful cable trying to retain me in Bonn. But a fatuous cable came back which said that the Department feels that young officers should have a variety of experiences, and since Mr. Jenkins has already served in China, the Department feels he ought to go back there. There were condolences. One of my friends was sorting through his cables in the file room and said, "I am awfully sorry to see you go."

I replied, "Well, Pete, it has to be, I guess."

And then, looking at a cable, he said, "I will be damned, I am transferred to Taiwan, too!" So we went to Taiwan on the same plane.

So I served in Germany as part of an organization called formally the High Commission because the "contractual agreements" negotiated with the Federal Republic were not ratified until 1955 because of French opposition. But we operated as an Embassy. Within the U.S. Zone the civilian American side was doing well, but internationally there were problems -- East-West problems with the USSR, impact of the Korean War, stalemate over the "European Defense Community", etc.

WILLIAM E. SCHAUFEELE, JR.
Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany
Pfaffenhofen (1950-1952)

William E. Schaufele, Jr. was born in Ohio in 1923. He received a bachelor's degree from Yale University in 1948 and an M.I.A. from Columbia University in 1950. He served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1946. Mr. Schaufele's career with the Foreign Service included positions in Germany, Morocco, Zaire, Burkina Faso, and Poland. He was interviewed by Lillian Mullin on November 19, 1994.

Q: When you were given the opportunity to become a Kreis Resident Officer, how many people were in the first group that you went over to Germany with?

SCHAUFEELE: There were 28, I think.

Q: What kind of preparation did they give you in Washington before you went to Germany?

SCHAUFEELE: There were pretty general briefings in Washington about how the United States Government was organized to exercise its responsibilities in its zone of occupation. In Germany we went first to Frankfurt and were put up in a hotel outside the city. We studied German every day but also got briefings from officials on the staff of the High Commission in Germany [HICOG], which was then still located in Frankfurt. I would say that we must have been there for almost six weeks. I don't remember exactly how long this introduction to Germany lasted, but it was a matter of several weeks, at least. Pfaffenhofen is in Bavaria. Eleven of us went to Bavaria. When we got to the Office of the Land (State) Commissioner for Bavaria, we got a "nuts and bolts" briefing on how that office operated.

Q: That was in Munich?

SCHAUFEELE: That was in Munich, yes.

Q: Do you remember who the HICOG Commissioner for Bavaria was?

SCHAUFEELE: George Shuster was the Land Commissioner. He was a former President of Notre Dame University. The briefing was very general. It wasn't anything in particular.

Q: Were you going to take over a position that had already been set up by the military? Had there been a military officer there -- a colonel or something like that?

SCHAUFEELE: There had been military officers there. I had two "Kreise" -- Pfaffenhofen and Schrobenhausen, but the posts had been empty for some time. I suspect -- and I really should check on this some time -- that the last person there before me had been military, because the

post had been empty long enough. It's conceivable that the military had left and that they hadn't appointed a civilian to take over the job. A lot of resident officers "civilianized." That is, they were discharged from the Army and just stayed where they were. They were military governors of "Kreise." They took their discharges from the Army and stayed on the job for the State Department. I would have to look at the Foreign Service lists of those days to determine just what the proportion was of former military governors and new people.

Q: Just to add this to your review, there was another group. The military had done the same thing that the State Department had done, a year or a year-and-a-half before. At the time at various colleges and universities they were looking for graduates who wanted to go to Germany to train and take over these jobs in the High Commission. A number of people went to Germany about a year before, and they were trained in Berlin, as I recall. Then they were sent out to several of these posts. I think that most of them were sent to posts which had been "empty," but probably not in Pfaffenhofen, since there was nobody there when you got there.

SCHAUFLE: I wasn't aware of that. There was a group there before our group -- about six months before -- but they were nearly all FSO eligibles, as we were. The group which followed us was also composed mostly of FSO eligibles. I am not completely sure that this was the case but feel that most of them were. I'm not sure how many in the last group actually became resident officers. I have a feeling that an awful lot of them were "fed into" the American Consulates that already existed in Germany. We knew that we were going to have to close down because negotiations were going on toward reestablishing a West German state. The Germans had adopted their constitution, which was the "trigger" which transferred authority from the U.S. military to the State Department. However, the final agreement between the three occupying powers in West Germany and the new government in Germany was not reached until 1952, when West Germany regained its sovereignty.

We closed the post in Pfaffenhofen earlier than that -- at the end of 1951, I think. I was sent to Augsburg. Since the status of these entities hadn't yet changed, the resident officer in Augsburg now had responsibility for six "Kreise." We didn't know how long the transition to the sovereign West German state would take. So we agreed that I would live up the road, North of Augsburg, where I could cover the three northern "Kreise" from my house, if necessary. I went into Augsburg most days, but some days I just stayed up there and visited my "circuit." Actually, that situation only lasted about six months, less than some people expected.

So then I had another choice to make. I wanted to stay in Germany. My thesis in my senior, undergraduate year and my Master's thesis had both been done on different aspects of Germany. These were mostly historical.

Q: Before we go any further, I would like to put you back in Pfaffenhofen, your first post as a "Kreis" officer. When you first got there, was the "Denazification Program" still going on, and did they have you continue that?

SCHAUFLE: No. The "Denazification Program" was finished by the time I arrived in Germany. The people who were not eligible for public office were identified. There had to be a fair number of them in Pfaffenhofen because the town had been a good recruiting center for the

original Nazi Party in 1924. There were a lot of people who had what they called, "The Golden Party Badges" in Pfaffenhofen. That is, they were in the first group of members of the Nazi Party. Those men -- they were all men, I think -- were denied any possibility of holding public office.

When the United States Army occupied Pfaffenhofen, they appointed a German Social Democratic Party (SPD) member as the "Landrat," or county supervisor. I can tell you that there weren't many Socialists there, either before or after the war. But it was finally decided to elect the "Landrat." The CSU, or Christian Social Union, the Bavarian counterpart of the Christian Democratic Union [CDU], nominated an elderly, minor noble who happened to be a hop-farmer but who also happened to have a "clean" record during the Nazi period. He was already 77 when we arrived. He served as elected "Landrat" until 1958, I think. He remarried in 1952.

However, when I reached Pfaffenhofen, the really "dominant" party in an ideological sense was the Bayernpartei [Bavarian Party], which was the farthest Right of any party in Bavaria, at least. It had elected one of the county's two representatives in the state legislature. The man elected just before I arrived was a young man my age who became, in effect, my closest friend. The Bayernpartei disappeared, and he went into the CSU, where he always should have been. However, he had joined the Bayernpartei for the sake of his father, who was an old Bayernpartei man. His father was a hop-farmer. My friend was a Ph.D. from the agriculture university. In effect, the Bayernpartei disappeared when we were in Pfaffenhofen, and the CSU became the dominant party. A few of the Socialists who were there -- and there were a few -- were local people. However, most of them were refugees from East Germany. Not only were many of these refugees Socialists, but a lot of them were Protestants. There was a Protestant church in Pfaffenhofen, but the population was overwhelmingly Catholic. The Catholic Vicar of Pfaffenhofen was a very important man, both religiously and politically. He was not a very nice man, as I recall. I didn't see him that often.

Q: Regarding these refugees from East Germany, were there fairly large numbers of them in Pfaffenhofen and in your "Kreise"? When did most of them move to West Germany?

SCHAUFLE: They weren't there in large numbers, because there weren't enough facilities to absorb too many. I can't remember what the estimated East German population was. I had two of them on my staff -- one from Silesia and one from Prussia. Most of them came to the West in 1947. There was also a small group of non-German refugees from the East, including some interesting "Kalmuks" who had been refugees for centuries -- from one place or another. [Laughter] Actually, although there was tension among the "Einheimischen" and the local refugees, including Germans, there were no special problems with them. There was just a kind of psychological attitude.

For instance, I happened to notice -- and checked on it -- that an East German refugee mother was talking to a local teacher. The mother's son was with her. I noticed that the son was talking quite a bit. I managed to get nearer to them and listened. While the mother did not understand the Bavarian dialect, the son did. He was going to a local, Bavarian school and spoke both the dialect and standard German. He was translating from "standard" German into "Bavarian" German for his mother and vice versa. That always sticks out. The difference between people is always

evident. Even while we were there -- and we were only there for a little over a year-and-a-half -- the difference between dialects was disappearing. I noticed that in the elections held just before we left for the City Council of Pfaffenhofen one of the winners was a Socialist woman from East Germany. I thought that the Bavarians never expected to be represented by a woman, let alone a Socialist. So you could see these regional differences starting to break down at that point. Now Pfaffenhofen has a population of 25,000. The world is not as it used to be.

Q: What kind of activities were you involved in as a Kreis officer, or "Herr Gouverneur," as I think you were called by the local people?

SCHAUFLE: You know, there was no guide book to follow for this particular job. There were aims which, one hoped, could be achieved, but they couldn't be achieved by us. They had to be achieved by the Germans. We could only help in that sense.

Personally, my first goal, so to speak, was to visit every town and village in my two "Kreise." That involved 116 localities. I did that -- I visited every one of them. Some of them more than once, I would say. I wanted to get a sense of how the officials functioned at the different levels, from the "Landkreis," the county, to the city, and to the "Gemeinden," the communities or villages. For instance, I went to every meeting of the county council. I didn't say anything, except to officials to whom I was introduced. However, I could follow the politics. I would pick whom I would talk to on certain subjects. In effect, I advised them, to a certain extent, on how things might be done, particularly as they didn't have any experience.

Perhaps I should expand on that a little bit, because what is important, in the first place, is to understand that the German county did not have structures or habits in it which fitted in with American customs. For example, "volunteerism" was not highly developed in Germany. They expected everything to be paid for with government funds. So we were -- and I speak for all of us Kreis officers -- trying to interject elements like volunteerism into a German structure not accustomed to it. The idea behind volunteerism is that, if you do something for yourself, you'll get more help from higher authority.

Quite often I went to the cities. Pfaffenhofen and Schrobenhausen were the only two urban areas that were called cities in the area. Some were called "Marktgemeinden," or places where they were permitted to engage in commerce, particularly selling hops. The other places were just called "Gemeinden" or just communities, although they were self-governing, to a certain extent.

We could talk to people about how things could be done because we didn't have much power any more. We had the power on paper, but it wasn't being used. One of our biggest activities was the films program. I had somebody who did only that. Films were shown about how democracy works and how communities work together. These films were shown throughout the area.

I had two assistants -- one political and one administrative. The political assistant was a Prussian who, through his contacts in the community, more or less kept me advised of things which might not otherwise have come to my attention. The administrative assistant did the same thing. In some respects he was more valuable because he was engaged to a local girl. The political assistant was married to a woman from the Rhineland. In addition, we had my secretary and

three drivers. The office in Schrobenhausen was very small. I had a woman who served as a secretary and administrative assistant. She was very able and very well regarded in the town, but we sent our own people over from Pfaffenhofen to cover most of the activities.

One amusing incident was when the school superintendent came to me and said that they wanted to reinstitute the student sports day in the local soccer stadium. Since these had been militaristic shows with a band, he assured me that they would start marching on the right foot instead of the left. I told him that it didn't matter which foot they started on. That puzzled him a little because he was brought up in a culture where such things were very specifically spelled out. Since militaristic displays were banned, you obviously couldn't start out with the left foot, military style. I told him that I was concerned about more important things.

As time went on, individual members of the various legislative bodies would come in to see me and talk. Perhaps at this point I should explain that the idea of citizens' meetings was deeply ingrained in Bavaria -- not in legislative but in informational terms, to spread information to the people. I went to as many of those as I could. It was interesting to watch the change that had taken place since I first went there. The officials talked the most, but as time went on, more people started to attend the meetings and to question their officials -- not necessarily asking them "nice" questions any more, but taking them to account. That evolved to different degrees, depending on where you were.

As a matter of fact, in one town the Burgermeister, the Mayor, had lived in the United States for about 12 years, and was very impressed with the American system. He had less success in a way because probably the people thought he was importing "foreign ideas" than some others who hadn't had that kind of experience. There were two Socialist mayors in this area, which was surprising. He was one of them, and the other one was in the main hops marketing center. The mayor who had lived in the United States was always the "quiet" one, but he obviously was an effective politician. He was regularly reelected. That was for local, not party considerations.

Q: But they were both Bavarians?

SCHAUFLE: Oh, yes. They were both Bavarians. We didn't have any mayors who weren't Bavarians. That would be an interesting question to look into -- how many non-Bavarian mayors or county commissioners there were. There had been an administrative reorganization of Bavaria. There are a lot fewer "Kreise" than there used to be. I'll bet that there are some non-Bavarian mayors now. However, all we could hope was that we were having some effect. It's hard to measure.

Q: What kind of films were you showing and where would they be shown?

SCHAUFLE: They would be shown at town meetings, to women's, youth and sports groups, and that sort of thing. The content wouldn't be all propaganda because there has to be a certain amount of entertainment. But they were films which were definitely directed at demonstrating how democracy works -- or should work. These various points were mixed in, but since there was very little film activity in Germany at that time, even in Munich, the post-war center of the film industry, the production of major films had just begun. I went to the movie theater in

Pfaffenhofen for the first time and saw Marlene Dietrich in "Der Blaue Engel" with Emil Jannings. I was kind of glad to see the old movies, which I had never seen before -- especially since I could now understand them in German.

I should say, too, that fluency in German is a big thing. It's very important. If you can't speak German and have to work through an interpreter all the time, your effectiveness is considerably less. We got to know a local newspaper reporter who became a very close friend. He was one of four Germans that I would consider close friends. He is still alive. He was a born and bred Bavarian. He helped me to understand the Bavarian dialect. Then he persuaded me to learn to read Bavarian. I hadn't realized until I got there that Bavarian is a printed and written language, too. So he taught me how to read Ludwig Thoma, one of the best-known, Bavarian "folk" writers. I learned a lot about Bavarian society and politics just by being able to read his stories because they were much the same when I was there as when he wrote books about, for instance, a Bavarian farmer elected to the state legislative body. This book was supposed to be an exchange of letters between him and his wife -- all in Bavarian dialect. You could see these elements operating in the society in which we were living, though less strongly. He also wrote for effect, but it was all authentic, although somewhat exaggerated. I found that useful.

I also discovered that I have a kind of "ear" for language. When I was later stationed in the Rhineland, they used to joke with me about my Bavarian accent. When I came back to Bavaria from the Rhineland, my Bavarian friends complained about my Rhenish accent. I didn't even know that I was acquiring an accent.

I conducted business with my staff in German, although four of them were able to speak English. I thought that was the easiest and best way to do it.

Q: But two of them didn't have a Bavarian accent.

SCHAUFEL: No, they didn't. That's right. My administrative assistant was not "language proud," whereas the political assistant was "language proud," because he was a Prussian. I think that the people that the Bavarian Germans liked the least, of course, were the Prussians. That has always been historically the case and still is -- even today. The jokes that the Bavarians tell about the Prussians, or themselves and the Prussians, were always worth listening to.

Q: Tell us what you think about the Prussians.

SCHAUFEL: I can think about one joke about a young lady who got pregnant out of wedlock. She finally told her father, who was terribly upset. She went on to say, "Not only that, it's an American who is the father." Her father said, "Oh, that is even worse, that the father is an American." Finally, she said, "The father is a black American." That really sent her father into paroxysms of rage. Finally, he quieted down and said, "As long as it wasn't a Prussian..." There were a lot of jokes like that. And some of the Prussians did show a certain air of superiority toward the Bavarians.

Q: Didn't the Prussians pretend, at least, that they couldn't understand the Bavarians?

SCHAUFLE: Oh, yes.

Q: *Conveniently...*

SCHAUFLE: The Prussians feel that they speak "high German." It isn't really "high German." That is spoken farther over to the West. There is a written, Prussian language. They claim to speak the most "acceptable" German. That can be a problem in any country.

Q: *During this time, in the Pfaffenhofen area, did you discuss these things or meet with the other Kreis resident officers? Or did they have some kind of program for meeting?*

SCHAUFLE: Well, yes, we did meet in small groups. I remember a couple of conferences, one of them in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and one in Bertchesgaden, where we discussed the experiences we had. Then we also visited each other. We would go and spend a weekend with somebody else, and they would come and spend a weekend with us. We talked a lot about the situation, because this was kind of a first experience for all of us. We had a couple of friends in Baden-Wurttemberg and one, at least, in Hesse, whom we used to see occasionally. We heard of their experiences, which were different from ours, because those states are different from Bavaria. They're not so "folksy," they're not so independent-minded. The Bavarians always resisted the centralization of Germany.

Q: *They had the Kingdom of Bavaria.*

SCHAUFLE: Right. There was a Kingdom of Bavaria, from the 14th century until 1918. But there was also a King of Baden. However, the Bavarians were always more independent on this score. The Crown Prince of Bavaria was a very important military leader during World War I. He commanded an Army Group on the Western Front. He was still highly regarded in Bavaria when he came back from the war. The Royal Family of Bavaria still existed as a family and not as a government entity. In Pfaffenhofen that had a particular resonance because the Wittelsbach family, the royal family of Bavaria, came from a town about three miles outside of Pfaffenhofen. At the time there was an important, Catholic Abbey called Scheyern, and this family became the royal family of Bavaria. So there was a relationship.

The old Landrat was a dedicated Bavarian who tried to help the county in this transition to a new kind of system. He was honest about that, not that he had much experience of it. He gave a reception for me when I left. He spoke on the occasion and said, "Mr. Schaufele came here, hoping to teach us democracy. He didn't realize that we had democracy under the Wittelsbach family." Well, certainly the Bavarians were less tyrannical than the Prussians, but what they had was hardly a democracy. Perhaps I spoke a little bit out of place, but my name helped, even though it was not Bavarian in origin. The letters "le" at the end of my name indicates that my ancestors came from Swabia, or "Schwaben," as the Germans call it. There used to be an "umlaut" over the letter "a" in my name. Many people pronounced it like "Shoy-fel-le," because that's the way they saw it in their minds, with the "umlaut."

Q: *You said that you have written some descriptions of the people that were important for the development of the "Kreise" in this early period after World War II in Germany. You were*

working in the "Kreise." I think that these descriptions would be interesting to add to this interview, when you come to this point.

I have another question. In the outline that you gave me you mentioned that your wife was originally a librarian. She received a grant from the McCloy Fund to establish a children's library. I wonder if you could tell us a little bit about that. Was this unique in Germany?

SCHAUFLE: Grants were made from the McCloy Fund. I did not explain that the costs of the Occupation of Germany, if you want to call it that, including the salaries of the resident officers, their houses and the salaries of the people who worked for us, were considered "Occupation Costs," which means that they were paid for by the German taxpayer. This is proper under international law.

The McCloy Fund also came partly out of Occupation Costs. It was meant to cover small assistance projects. I don't remember all of the guidelines now or how often we applied for such grants. For example, a group of women in Pfaffenhofen wanted a library for the children. So my wife, in addition to being a professional singer and part-time librarian, joined them in this effort. We were finally informed that there would be a grant made to establish a children's library in Pfaffenhofen. One of the conditions of the grant would be that the library would be an "open shelf" operation. That took the German women aback, because the library experience in Germany and lots of other places was that the public went in and asked for a specific book. You couldn't go along the shelves and look for a book yourself. You had to know what you wanted and then ask the librarian for it.

The Germans thought books would be stolen, damaged, and all that sort of thing, but that was a condition of the grant. My wife finally persuaded them that it could work. The Germans weren't any more dishonest or prone to damage books than American kids -- probably less so. So they accepted the condition, and it did work out. The German librarians were surprised at how few books were lost or damaged. For the first time in their lives the schoolchildren of Pfaffendorf were able to go into the small library, look at the shelves, and choose what they wanted. In that sense it was very successful. The school in Pfaffenhofen now has just such a library -- though much larger.

Q: After your year and a half in Pfaffenhofen you said that we closed down that post. Then you moved to Augsburg, preparing to close down more of these offices.

SCHAUFLE: We had to close them down under the agreements reached between the Allied occupying powers and the German Government. In Augsburg we actually lived in "Donauworth" on the so-called Romantic Road. We had a nice house up there, which was convenient for trips to the adjoining Kreise. However, during the six months that we were there in Augsburg, we didn't have enough time to get very much involved in the local community. Besides, Augsburg was a much larger community. We were primarily concerned with three counties and also, to a certain extent, with three more to the south, including Augsburg, a fairly large city. So in six months you could never get really involved in these communities. I have good memories of that period. I think that it added more to my education than anything I actually did.

Q: Did that agreement with the German Government concern when these resident officer positions would be eliminated? Were there certain things to be accomplished beforehand?

SCHAUFLE: Yes. The German Government and the three Allied occupying powers -- the Allied High Commission, in other words -- came to an agreement about various transfers of power and authority which, residually, rested with the Allied High Commission. There were differences in each occupation zone. They had to negotiate an overall agreement and then one with each occupation zone, so that they covered all aspects of handing over authority and power. Of course, that meant that when those agreements went into effect, Germany was sovereign. We no longer received occupation costs. The respective embassies were established. Our office, called HICOG [High Commission for Germany, moved to Bonn, as did the British and French. Eventually, the Embassies were established in Bonn. Anything left over in Bavaria went to the Consulate General in Munich. There already was a Consulate General there, even when we arrived. At that time it mostly occupied itself with issuing visas and providing consular services for American citizens. There were Consulates General in Munich, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Bremen, Hamburg, and Duesseldorf. I guess that Duesseldorf was opened in 1951.

Q: Do you recall how the German capital came to be established in Bonn?

SCHAUFLE: I recall that it was established in Bonn because that's where the Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, lived. Actually, he lived outside of Bonn -- in Rhondors. He was born in Cologne, served as Mayor of that city, and lived most of his life there. He was able, politically, to "force" the choice of Bonn as the "transitional" capital of the Federal Republic of Germany. It's still the "transitional" capital, pending the full reunification of Germany, despite the small size of the town. It was a very small town to absorb a large bureaucracy, but its status as the capital obviously added a great deal to the economy of the area. That was what Adenauer was looking at, much to the disgust of Kurt Schumacher, the SPD leader. He would have put the capital in West Berlin anyway, even though that was not included in the sovereignty agreement.

Q: Wasn't it the expectation all along that the capital would be in Frankfurt?

SCHAUFLE: That was discussed as the transitional capital. I would say that, originally, Frankfurt was the favorite. However, Adenauer had his way. He was a consummate politician and he knew how to make the necessary "trade-offs" to get what he wanted.

Q: You were going to tell us which place in Germany you enjoyed the most.

SCHAUFLE: It's very difficult, if you're honest with yourself, to pick out a single place, because at each stage of your career your background is different and your aspirations are different. I enjoyed my first two years in Germany, which ultimately became five years. However, I've enjoyed every job I've had along the way. I felt that I couldn't pick out a single place which I liked more, enjoyed more, or found more challenging, because I went to serve as a resident officer. This was an unknown title then. I was relatively independent in that job. I was ultimately responsible to someone, but no one was "riding herd" on me, day and night. At that stage of my career that was good. Then I went to more structured situations, where I learned my trade as a political, economic or visa officer, for example. So that became attractive.

Then I got into increasingly more responsible positions. I would never suggest that anyone put in 14-16 hours a day, as I've had to do it, in many places. The length of the day went with the job. If you want those jobs, you have to be prepared to work like that. I liked almost all of these positions. If you put them in the perspective of the time when you held a given job, at a given rank level, so to speak, you learn that you like the job. But you can never go back -- not unless you're a complete romantic.

Q: When you came to Germany the first time, as a Kreis resident officer, you said that the Department of State had sent you and the other class members waiting for appointment as Foreign Service Officers overseas as a Foreign Service Staff officer. When did you become a Foreign Service Officer, an FSO?

SCHAUFLE: I think that most of us received our FSO commissions in March, 1951. This was much sooner than we had been led to expect. There may have been a difference here. The next group probably got them three or four months later, as I recall -- although I don't remember the exact time. All that meant was you took another oath of office, you signed all these commissions -- and then you had your salary reduced.

Q: How do you explain the salary reduction?

SCHAUFLE: Well, we were appointed as Foreign Service Staff officers of a certain grade, at \$5,370 a year. When we received our FSO commissions, the salary structure was different.

Q: You became an FSO-6?

SCHAUFLE: We became FSO-6's. Our salary was \$4,630. So it was a reduction of \$700 per year, which was quite a bit, back in those days.

Q: Was that enough to live on?

SCHAUFLE: Yes.

Q: Then you closed the Augsburg office at what, I assume, was the end of the Kreis Resident Officer program.

MONCRIEFF J. SPEAR
Political Officer
Frankfurt and Berlin (1950-1952)

Moncrieff J. Spear was born in New York in 1921. He received degrees from Cornell and George Washington Universities. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and joined the Foreign Service in 1946. Mr. Spear served in Germany, the Philippines, Yugoslavia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Bahamas, and

Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 1993.

SPEAR: Next, I went to the Basic Officer Course and then was assigned to Germany. After a last minute rush to get married before I went overseas, Lois and I went on to Frankfurt, where Brewster Morris, on the basis of my German experience in the Department, got me assigned to the Political Section of HICOG [Office of the High Commissioner for Germany]. I worked for a few months there, doing political reporting, mainly on what was then the British Zone of Germany. At that point a vacancy came up in Berlin, and I was asked to go up there on TDY [Temporary Duty], working on West Berlin affairs. In due course that worked into an assignment in what was called "Eastern Element" in those days. "Eastern Element" was part of the Political Section in Berlin, covering developments in the Soviet Zone of Germany. It was a fascinating period as one watched the Soviets clamping communist rule onto their part of Germany and the whole series of quadripartite agreements on administration of Germany began to fall apart. As the Bizonal Economic Council was set up developments began to move toward the final split of Germany, and the West German Government was established.

This was a fascinating period to be in Berlin in terms of two of the highlights there. One was that the communists planned to hold a massive world youth festival, to which they brought youth from various communist countries all around the world to attend this monster festival in Berlin. There was great concern that they would simply use this as a cover for a forceful takeover of the Western Sectors of Berlin. Security measures were increased, but the decision was also made that there should be all sorts of cultural activities developed in West Berlin to try to attract the East German youth across the border and influence them positively toward the West. These efforts were highly successful -- far beyond anybody's expectations. The massive takeover did not occur, but one of the more amusing things was that the Western commandants had decided that the West should put forth its best face. So they cleaned all of the "Western" [i. e., cowboy type] movies off the cinema screens in West Berlin. However, it turned out that these East German, or "Free German Youth," were all great fans of Karl Mal, a German author. The East German youth were just crazy to see Western films. So I made arrangements with our military to get them in to see some Grade B "spaghetti" Westerns on the military film screens. We would run down and pick up these "communist" young men and women at the reception centers in the West and take them across the border to see Western cowboy films. So that part of it went off in highly successful fashion.

There were some American participating in this Youth festival, under the sponsorship, I am sure, of the Communist Party U. S. A. We didn't meet any of them in particular. I might add that there was another high point during my time there. Once a year, the Mission [in Berlin] was able to get passes to send personnel down to the Leipzig Trade Fair, which was one of our few opportunities physically to get into East Germany. This was, of course, the area on which we had to do our reporting, most of it second hand. I went down [to Leipzig] in the middle of winter. I took two of my colleagues, Martha Mauntner and Marion Mitchell, with me. As we went out through Potsdam, we had to go over to the Soviet Kommandatura to get clearance to go on down to Leipzig. I remember we had this young Russian GI with us. My guess was that he was about 18 years old, sitting in the back seat with Martha and Marion with a sub-machine gun across his knees. In any event, we got our clearance and drove down over the snowy roads, stopped off at Wittenberg, where, of course, Martin Luther had nailed his famous "Theses" to the cathedral

door. Then we went on and spent a day or so in Leipzig, which was just indescribably drab.

We used to follow the communist press and communist periodicals very carefully. This is a bit like trying to find a needle in a haystack. We did the same kinds of things that the Kremlinologists in our Service did with the Soviet press. All I can say is that it was a mind-stultifying-exercise, trying to find these small tidbits or hints of changes in the political scene over there. I always thought that people who were willing to brainwash themselves with this stuff should have gotten an extra differential for submitting themselves to it. We also had contacts. The West German Socialist Party, which, of course, had been amalgamated with the communists in a shotgun wedding by the Soviets, still maintained contacts there. I remember dealing with Willy Brandt [later German Federal Chancellor] to get some of the information reports on East Germany, which they would share with us. In those days a certain number of East Germans were able to cross over into West Germany, or West Berlin. I inherited quite a collection of contacts from Dave Mark, who had preceded me there in "Eastern Element."

We simply followed developments from day to day. There would be certain incidents which we regarded as having major importance in our analysis. I think we were able to shape some of the guidance we received, simply as events went along. In other words, it was the interplay between the Department, HICOG and the field that one sees in political reporting throughout the world.

JOAN SEELYE
Spouse of Foreign Service Officer
Mosbach (1950-1952)

Mrs. Seelye was born and raised in Connecticut and educated at Skidmore College. She accompanied her husband, Foreign Service Officer Talcott Seelye on his diplomatic assignments in Germany, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Tunisia and Syria. Her husband served as US Ambassador to Tunisia, Lebanon and Syria. Mrs. Seelye was interviewed by Jewell Fenzi in 2010.

SEELYE: We ended up in a village called Mosbach, not very far from Heidelberg. I had gotten pregnant there and had the baby in the American hospital in Heidelberg which was a big mistake because the Germans really wanted me to have the baby in Mosbach. We were the only Americans living there, you see. Each one of the officers lived in these little counties; they were the only Americans in these counties. We were there to educate the Germans in preparation for independence. So anyway I had the baby in the American hospital, which was a big mistake because it was my only difficult labor, my only difficult birth. In this American military hospital they never paid any attention to me. So, the baby is born there. We lived in a great big industrialist's house on the hill, overlooking this village, and we did a lot of entertaining. It was part of the job. We had a lot of cultural activities to introduce the people in the village to things like Mendelssohn, or Tchaikovsky, which they'd never been allowed to hear, and certain literature they hadn't been allowed to read during the Nazi regime. So, that was our first assignment and it was a really unique assignment, just living there, by ourselves, with no one but Germans. I had a lot of German friends and I'd be invited to coffee klatches. The coffee was

always made out of bark, the bark of wood, and I'd come home feeling quite sick because it was pretty awful. I'm not a coffee drinker anyway—in spite of that we got to know Germans very well. We made a lot of long-term friends there.

Q: Go ahead because it's recording here, and I'll play with it.

SEELYE: And the interesting thing is this was an enormous house with a big bomb shelter and a wine cellar with eight bedrooms in it. Before we left, we found in the basement, behind the wine stocks, huge oil paintings, museum type oil paintings, that obviously this industrialist had stolen, so we turned them over to the American authorities. (So that was our only assignment in Europe, this two year assignment in Germany). But it was a really unique one. And every one of the young officers says that this was the most unique experience they ever had in the Foreign Service. Germany became independent two years later.

ARTHUR T. TIENKEN
Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany
Schweinfurt (1950-1952)

Arthur T. Tienken graduated from Princeton University and served with the U.S. Army in World War II. He joined the Foreign Service in 1949, serving in Germany, Mozambique, Belgium, Zambia, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Gabon, and Washington, DC. Mr. Tienken was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.

TIENKEN: I took the Foreign Service examination in 1947 and passed it. I then got on the waiting list, such as happens today. But economy came to the U.S. Government at that time, and they were not taking new classes in. They had taken two classes in right after the war and stopped. The list grew and grew and grew of people that had passed. In 1949, it was decided that people would be recruited off the lists to go to Germany to replace military government officers who were in fact part of the High Commission for Germany.

We were the first group. There were twenty-seven of us. We trained here in the States for about three months. On St. Patrick's Day in 1950, we all went to Germany. Technically, the assignment was to Frankfurt because that was where the High Commission was, but, in fact, we were then farmed out all over Germany to be what were then called Kreis resident officers. Kreis is roughly equivalent to a county in administrative terms. Most of us had two of these little Kreiser where we were kind of the military governor, if you like.

But we were told when we first came into the program that our main concern was not so much to replace the military government officers that were there, but to further and try to spread democracy in Germany as part of the post-war effort to wean the Germans away from their authoritarian history. And that is what we went out to do. We were taught such techniques as how to organize town meetings, for example, so that you could get free expression among rural people. Most of them were rural people who never had that kind of experience before -- standing

up, saying what they wanted, making their views known to the local German authorities, and so forth. That was kind of fun. We did that.

My assignment was first a training assignment at Schwabach in Bavaria -- Schwabach being just south of Nuremberg. We trained with the then military government officer, who also became a Kreis resident officer in what you did as a resident officer. We were there about three months.

Then I was assigned to Naila. Naila is a town that most Germans don't even know about. It is up on the very northeast corner of Bavaria close to the East German border and close to the Czech border. It is the area that Hitler jumped off from when he went into the Sudeten- land in 1938.

If I told a German today my first assignment in the Foreign Service was Naila in Germany, he would look at me blankly. If I tell them it is Naila by Hof, which was the big city close by, sometimes they would know about Hof, and sometimes they wouldn't..

But that was my first assignment. That meant taking my wife and then two children up to this little town of 6,000 souls. No other Americans. I took over an office and attempted to do what we were told we were supposed to, namely, help spread roots of democracy in that area.

There was American military presence in Hof, but simply a border patrol. They would come by once in a while, and that is all we ever saw of the Army except to go down to commissaries and things like that, once in awhile; that was an hour away in Bayreuth.

We were much on our own. We had a whole network in Bavaria centered in Munich called the Land Commissioner's Office -- Land being the equivalent of a state in Germany. Our contact was with them. And then we had another subgroup for Oberfranken, (upper Franconia if you like), headquartered in Nuremberg. We saw those people once in a while, and that was our administrative and policy guidance place. But for the most part, we were on your own.

Our major problem was to learn German fluently enough to get along. That also applied to my wife who had to do the shopping and had to get around. We did. We loved it in Naila. As I say, we were the only Americans in town or even in the Kreis -- I had another one south of Hof called Munchberg, and I would go over there once in a while.

Some of the things you did were traditional Foreign Service, like representation -- going to a variety of things, entertaining visitors, who always liked to see the border, and you would take them up to the border, which was only five miles away. East Germany and West Germany were divided by a river at that point -- the Saale. You could get up to the border and look across and see the East German police, the Volkspolizei, who were busy looking at you. You brought along binoculars and watched them; so what you would see was them with binoculars watching you. That was always a winner as far as visitors were concerned.

For the most part, you went around, and you got to know the local burgermeisters. The Kreis had its own administration, so you got to know those people as well. We attempted to make friends for the United States, frankly, and do what you could by way of furthering free speech, free press, and so forth.

We did have certain judicial authority under the occupation statutes in which we were, in effect, the judge for minor cases that would otherwise be tried by the military courts. Small cases of theft, for example. Basically, that was the only ones I ever had. Maybe I had one or two. My decision was final. But those were rare.

We had the authority of the whole occupation. We could caution. It was difficult to say, "Yes, you did this. No, you didn't do that." That wasn't really what we were there for, and that wasn't spreading democracy anyway although the old military government used to be able to do that.

This was five years after the war. We had not yet regulated our post-war relationships with the Germans. The end of the occupation didn't come until 1952 or 1953 when we established our embassy in Bonn. But even before then, we already had the makings of an embassy in Bonn as early as 1952. This whole Kreis program came to an end in about 1953. But by then, the character of the whole job had changed because the Korean War came along in 1950. It was 1951 when there was a considerable concern that the eastern bloc, specifically the East Germans, would take advantage of the Korean war to supposedly invade West Germany and/or western Europe. So at that time, the U.S. sent, I think it was four divisions back to Germany for the purpose of preventing all this from happening. By that time, my wife and I had been transferred to Schweinfurt, which was best known as one of the three targets of Command Decision -- the saturation bombing during World War II. It was the center of the ball bearing industry. We had kind of expected at Schweinfurt that the Germans there would be bitter about the bombings during the war. Such was not the case, partly because, I guess, the Germans felt that they had been rather successful in fending off the bombings. And, secondly, Schweinfurt was basically a laborers' city, and labor was one of the elements that was largely opposed to the Nazi regime and had lost a number of people to the concentration camps. They were Social Democrats. The people of Wurzburg, on the other hand, which was only twenty miles away, did tend to be bitter, largely because at the very end of the war, a British saturation bombing of the rail yards in Wurzburg also wiped out a good part of Wurzburg.

In Schweinfurt we acted more like a consular staff. We dealt with them pretty much as equals. It became more so when the troops came back because in Schweinfurt they brought back one regiment of the 4th Division, the 22nd infantry regiment, and one artillery battalion. From then on, most of the work of the KROs, the Kreis resident officers, involved liaison between the American soldiers and the local authorities. You were the go-between.

We would do such things as organize joint American-German groups, bridge clubs, for example, which was very successful in Schweinfurt. Athletic events. Until about the time the troops came back, the Army had a non-fraternization policy, hands off. They changed that in 1951, I think. Then they were looking around for ways of getting along with the Germans. Things to improve the image and so forth. They had no idea how to do that, so they mostly turned to people like ourselves, who were by that time basically liaison between them and the Germans, and we did. I can't say that relations were all that great between the Army and the Germans, but still there was a very different change of philosophy than when I first got there.

Our biggest problem was smoothing over incidents. The military is the military. Our very first

incident when we first got to Schweinfurt involved a drunken soldier who was driving a vehicle in Schweinfurt. He plowed into a group of Germans, killing three of them in a single family. This led to a great deal of ill will, to say the least, between the local Germans and the Army. We were successful in persuading the unit to adopt the remaining child, a girl of the family that had been killed by contributing each payday to a fund, which they did. They got the entire battalion to contribute a little to the fund. That money went to the surviving child, to the guardians, really, for use in the upbringing and eventual long-term education of that child. That helped a lot. That was the kind of thing that you tried to do to get over these bad incidents.

We had one small advantage. Namely, that we were the Kreis resident officer and the Germans had always looked to authority and still did then. Whether you had the actual authority or not, you represented authority. You were representing the High Commissioner, John J. McCloy. And so they paid attention to you.

HENRY L. HEYMANN
Visa Officer
Stuttgart (1950)

Chief, Visa Section
Hamburg (1950-1952)

Henry L. Heymann was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1920. He graduated in 1943 from Princeton University with a degree in history. Afterwards, he served in the U.S. Army for four years. In 1950, Mr. Heymann entered the Foreign Service. His career included positions in Germany, Italy, Indonesia, and Washington, DC. Mr. Heymann was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1993.

Q: Where did you go? What was your first post?

HEYMANN: My first post was Stuttgart.

Q: What were you doing in Stuttgart?

HEYMANN: The money for our entering class was provided by the D.P. Program and we were all assigned to that program.

Q: That's the Displaced Persons.

HEYMANN: Yes, the Displaced Persons Program. I was assigned as a visa officer on the Displaced Persons Program.

Q: What type of people were you seeing?

HEYMANN: I would say primarily Poles, but there were quite a few Balts - Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians and also Russians.

Q: Do you remember what were some of the criteria for refusing people visas in those days?

HEYMANN: We rejected few, since the applicants had already been screened by the D.P. Commission. Before my arrival there had been a Consul General in Stuttgart who opposed the D.P. Program. He maintained rather strangely that the D.P. Act did not stipulate that anyone had to be granted a visa. He had fought to a standstill against the woman who was the head of the Jewish Welfare Agency. They were both strong personalities. He had his prejudices and he tried to have her moved from her job. She stood up against him and they were both transferred out.

Q: So when you got there the battle was...

HEYMANN: There was a residual sympathy for the former Consul General. His successor Consul General sympathized with the old Consul General, and didn't back the program very much, but didn't interfere.

Q: I don't want to overcharacterize this and correct me, but was this sort of the old Foreign Service which was basically somewhat belonged to those who were not too interested in bringing new people into the United States, particularly people who were not from "their area," northern Europe or something like that?

HEYMANN: Yes, there was that. And also anti-Semitic prejudice.

Q: How about you and the other consular officers, did you sort of go around the Consul General?

HEYMANN: Well, he didn't interfere much. I don't remember any battles particularly. I guess he had seen what had happened to his predecessor.

Q: You were in Stuttgart for how long?

HEYMANN: Just three months.

Q: And then where did you go?

HEYMANN: I went to Hamburg.

Q: And there what were you doing? You were there in 1950 to about '52.

HEYMANN: I was on the D.P. Program there, and after about three months the head of the program was transferred and I replaced him.

Q: Were they a different...were they still more or less the same mix of people that we were giving visas to?

HEYMANN: The same type for most of my period in the job, but during the last months we issued visas to Volksdeutsch (non-Germans of German extraction). It was pretty much the same as at Stuttgart, but the Consul General was neutral. We had two visa officers who worked for me at the beginning of my tour as officer in charge and who were doing their best to block eligible applicants.

Q: Was this because they were Germans?

HEYMANN: No, this was prior to the Volksdeutsch. It was anti-Semitic prejudice.

Q: Were you getting emanations of this from talking to them?

HEYMANN: Before I was in charge, they talked more to me and about their cases. One said, "I don't know how to block him so I think I will just bury his file." They put others through a sort of third degree - jointly questioning the applicant with one shouting and the other playing the part of the friendly, nice guy. They questioned one who was born on the Polish-German border and they blocked him for perjury because he said he was Polish. They blocked another because of his language. He forgot to say he spoke Yiddish so they got him on perjury.

Q: Where were these consuls coming from?

HEYMANN: They were temporary vice consuls appointed for the D.P. Program. They weren't FSOs. This was before Wristonization and they were staff officers.

Q: How long were you with the D.P. Program?

HEYMANN: I was about 14 months on the D.P. Program, which was in a separate area from the main Consulate General. Then I was transferred to the main Consulate where I was made chief of the regular visa section. My experience had been only on immigration visas and of a special type. I didn't know a thing about most visa work. I remember my first day; a visitor came to my office with some questions. I tried to give the right answers. After he left I got hold of somebody who had the real right answers. I chased down the stairs of the Consulate after the visitor and he left with the correct answers. I learned on the job.

Q: How was your staff? Usually one can rely pretty much, particularly in Germany.

HEYMANN: The German staff was excellent.

Q: You left Hamburg in '52. What was the situation in Hamburg at that time? Just as a city. This is '50 to '52, was the war still very much...

HEYMANN: It was still under the British. Our housing was provided by the British, who were still running the show. The British run a very orderly show, and I must say made very pleasant living for us. I can't say it was very eventful. As I look back on it, Germany was making steady progress then. It already had gone on to its new currency.

FREDERICK H. SACKSTEDER
Kreis Residence Officer
Wuerttemberg-Baden (1950-1951)

Information Officer
Dusseldorf (1952)

Frederick H. Sacksteder was born in New York in 1924. He received his bachelor's degree at Amherst College and served in the US Navy during World War II. His career included positions in Germany, France, Spain, Tunisia, and Mexico. Mr. Sacksteder was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.

Q: I like to put at the beginning here you were Kreis residence officer from when to when?

SACKSTEDER: The whole class went to Germany in late March of 1950, after a send-off by Secretary Acheson. We reported to High Commissioner McCloy in Frankfurt and spent several more weeks in briefings there as well as in Berlin and Munich. We were then assigned to the various states, or Laender, of the U.S. zone. About half went to Bavaria, the largest land in the U.S. zone, a smaller group to Land Hesse, and five to Land Wuerttemberg-Baden. I was assigned to the latter, and to Kreis Bruchsal, on the right bank of the Rhine, and south of Heidelberg and north of Karlsruhe. Bruchsal had been heavily bombed in the last weeks of the fighting, prior to its surrender to the French First Army under Marshal Koenig, in an American incendiary raid. Eighty percent of the city of about 40,000 people was destroyed. This included what had been the summer palace of the Bishops of Speyer, who were Electors of the Holy Roman Emperor, and was known as the "Pearl of Rococo" for its XVII and XVIII century ornate architecture.

In mid-May 1950, I took over a staff of some 12 German employees. I moved into a large residence, situated on a hill, called "Belvedere," overlooking the town, which had been requisitioned from a brewer's malt manufacturer whose former Nazi ties were widely known. A large American flag flew over my residence, as well as over my nearby office, and thus, over the town. We represented the "Besatzungs Macht," or "Occupying Power."

Q: I understand the Kreis Residence Officer system was designed to allow the U.S. military to get out of occupation duty.

SACKSTEDER: Yes. But also because with the establishment of the High Commissions in the three Western zones of Germany (American, English, and French), a considerable degree of authority over internal affairs reverted to the German federal and state authorities, notably in the economic sphere. But certain enumerated powers were retained by the former "occupying powers," and formed the basis for our functions. We retained some supervisory authority over public safety, including the police. We exercised control over fishing and hunting, the latter particularly important to avoid German hunters. We could extend the temporary residence permits of visitors from the Soviet zone. We had jurisdiction over certain categories of persons charged

with violation of German law, and over all violations of High Commission law.

It is not surprising that the local population continued to call us “Herr Gouverneur,” given that we had all the trappings of a Governor.

In May of 1950, shortly after I reached Bruchsal, I had a call from American Consul General Pat Mallon in Stuttgart, who asked me to come by his office and to sign my appointment as an FSO-6. I exchanged my Special passport as an FSS-7 for a diplomatic passport and a salary cut of forty percent!

The next phase of the relationship with the Federal Republic of Germany came in early 1952 with the grant of autonomy over most domestic affairs and foreign affairs. The High Commission apparatus, including the Kreis Resident Officer program, began to phase out.

At the end of 1951, I was given an onward assignment as Information Officer (Films and Exhibits) at the American Consulate General Duesseldorf. For the next few months, I divided my time between Bruchsal and Duesseldorf, half of the week at each, and used the excellent direct sleeper train service between. My new job involved setting up a public affairs program in the consular district of North Rhine-Westphalia, the most populous and heavily industrialized in Germany. It included the Ruhr, and the banking center and business headquarters of major German companies. It was in the British zone, where they had NAAFI's instead of PX's, and where they had called their KRO equivalent “British Resident.”

Q: Before we get to that I would like to talk a bit about the KRO work. I realize you had these various functions, but what were the main things? You can have a variety of functions but in your district, in Bruchsal, what were you doing?

SACKSTEDER: Not only in Bruchsal but throughout the American zone, one of our major responsibilities was the promotion of democratic institutions. In some parts of Germany that was tough sledding. In my area, it was not, because Baden had a well established democratic tradition. The Landrat (who was the head of the County, or Kreis, government) was most cooperative and quite willing to hold open town meetings, and to explain his policies and answer questions. In contrast with the Prussian tradition of issuing orders.

Another was the role of liaison officer between the U.S. military and the German authorities and population. Bruchsal was within the Karlsruhe Military-Post area, but also next door to the Heidelberg headquarters of the U.S. European Command, headed by four star General Thomas Handy. Handy and High Commissioner McCloy issued a directive to clarify the relationship and scope of responsibility between Post Commanders and Kreis Resident Officers: the KRO would be considered to have equivalent rank to the Post Commander. The Karlsruhe Post Commander was a Brigadier General who, as with my Landrat, was old enough to have been my father. Yet we had excellent relations and worked well together. And with Major General Gross, who had led the transportation corps during the invasion of France and Germany as Land Commissioner for Wuerttemberg/Baden at Stuttgart, High Commission and U.S. military relations were excellent. Troop units in the vicinity of Bruchsal included a combat Engineer Battalion. The C.O. and Exec., who were both West Pointers, became good friends. They were always looking for

opportunities to exercise their men and their equipment, and I was more than happy to propose earth-moving projects such as creating athletic fields!

General Gross learned that I spoke French, so he assigned me a very pleasant additional duty: to be his liaison officer with the French High Commission authorities. My immediate counterpart on the left bank of the Rhine and I kept in fairly close touch. When the French held major meetings of their High Commission people, I was invited to represent our Land Commissioner.

An example of coordination and liaison was arranging for a military pontoon bridge exercise across the Rhine in Kreis Bruchsal. This required a temporary stopping of river traffic on the Rhine through German River Navigation authorities in cooperation with the U.S. Navy's Rhine River patrol; it required arranging with the Kreis and local authorities on both banks for access to the river at the point where the bridge was to be floated. Although this exercise was a U.S. Army project, I had to have the cooperation of my colleague on the French side. I invited the Landrat and other German authorities to accompany me and view the completion of the pontoon bridge across the five hundred foot width of the river at that point. When the bridge was in place, and coming from the French side, was a tank. Standing in the open hatch of the tank was a Captain. When I greeted him, I found that he was General Patton's son. We reminded one another that we had met before. We had been dating Vassar students when he was at West Point and I at Williams V-12 in 1944, and had shared a room during a weekend dance.

Q: How did you find dealing with the Germans at that particular time in your area?

SACKSTEDER: Very cooperative in general. At first, I had a little problem with the head of the "Real Gymnasium," the classical secondary school. But even he became much more cooperative when he found that I had access to a special fund High Commissioner McCloy disposed of to match local self-help projects. I secured approval of a project to modernize and improve the school's laboratories, one of three such projects we obtained for Kreis Bruchsal. Another was to build a multi-use community center in one of the smallest villages in the Kreis, which also is the family seat of the Krupp/ von Bohlen family. My Army engineer friends furnished all of the grading work, and provided truck transport of building materials- much of it donated. Timber came from the village forest. And I "shamed" Krupp to donate steel and reinforcing bars!

Of course, there had been some Nazis, and more Nazi supporters, in Bruchsal as everywhere in Germany. But they did not brag about it. Some of the programs we were tasked to implement were looked upon with amusement by the people. I gave the local newspaper, which was C.D.U. (Christian Democrat) oriented, regular interviews and access to meetings with the public.

We promoted a program of "land consolidation" to encourage more productive farming. Largely because of tradition and the inheritance laws, farmland was cut up into very small parcels. The average farm in Kreis Bruchsal might total five hectares (about 12 acres), but might be in as many as 35 little parcels scattered over a wide area. The objective of consolidation was to bring about exchange of parcels to regroup them in larger and more effectively workable fields. It was not easy to convince these very conservative and traditional farmers. The Landrat, Agriculture specialists, and I would hold meetings in the villages that could go on for hours. How often did we hear variations of the conviction of Farmer A that he could not exchange his parcel for that of

Farmer B because “everyone knows that the plum tree on my parcel is much better than the plum tree on his parcel!”

We had a public affairs program that included a popular film program. My two projectionists covered the Kreis to meet requests for showings, to schools, groups, etc. Most popular were the documentaries of the type of National Geographic or Smithsonian. Least were “political education films,” such as those on “grass-roots democracy,” “the electoral process”, or “how to run a town meeting.”

We controlled hunting and fishing. Hunting was a major concern. Hunting areas were either communal or privately owned. Kreis Bruchsal was heavily wooded and rich in game, but as a hold-over of the military occupation, hunting was reserved for occupying forces. Germans were not allowed to own firearms- even shotguns- although it was known that many had hidden theirs away. We Americans, however, could invite Germans to join American hunts on their own hunting preserves, and lend them rifles or shotguns! To meet request for hunting permits, I organized hunting drives (where beaters flushed the game toward a line of posted hunters). Several times I arranged such hunts for the Heidelberg high command, including General Handy and his Chief of Staff, General Noce. Some of the best hunting was along the Rhine.

We also issued residence permits for visitors from the East Zone. More often than not, they would come to us to request extensions of stay. This gave us the opportunity to learn about conditions in the “socialist paradise” of East Germany.

Q: In 1950, the Korean War broke out, the Berlin air-lift had come and gone, Czechoslovakia had been taken over by a “putsch,” so the Cold War was in full swing.

SACKSTEDER: Yes, indeed! I had been in Bruchsal just a month or so, when North Korea invaded the south. We were well aware that if the Soviets decided to capitalize on the situation in the Far East, the U.S. and our Allies were far from capable of stopping a ground invasion through the so-called “Fulda Gap.” We made as many advance preparations as we could: putting up a reserve of gasoline in jerry cans, packing essentials, including food, and determining evacuation routes and safe-havens. I had an additional concern.

My father, recently returned from Lisbon, Portugal, where he had been the managing director of the I. T. & T. subsidiary, had been asked to accept an FSR appointment with the U.S. economic development agency. In March of 1950, he and my mother arrived in Seoul, Korea, where he was to serve as an expert consultant on telecommunications in to the Korean government. On the fateful day of the invasion, they were still in temporary quarters while their household effects sat in a warehouse and the new automobile they had ordered was in their hotel’s garage. We were without news from them for quite some time, until a cable from Washington informed us that they were both safe in Tokyo. Mother had been evacuated immediately with the women and children of the U.S. Mission on a freighter that had just put in at Inchon Harbor (with a load of fertilizer); Dad and the other senior Americans left by air later with Ambassador Muccio.

Meanwhile, in Germany, reinforcements for the under strength “Constabulary” began, slowly, to arrive, drawn from National Guard divisions that had been activated. KRO’s were asked to play

a role in this effort, which included “orientation” briefings for the arriving American troops. The thrust of these was to convey the notion that we were on a new “playing field.” We were not coming to Germany as “conquerors,” but as “friends and allies.”

Q: Were anti-communist efforts pretty strong in what you were doing?

SACKSTEDER: Yes. The communists in Kreis Bruchsal were few, and they were largely known to the local authorities, so that they were more a nuisance than a danger, and they did not do much more than to occasionally scribble some slogans on walls, to the great annoyance and disgust of the population. “Ami Go Home” was their favorite.

Q: Did you have any other functions as Kreis Resident Officers?

SACKSTEDER: We should discuss our role as “Committing Magistrate” for the High Commission court system. We functioned as a grand jury would in the U.S., i.e. deciding whether to indict the accused of a violation of High Commission law, and whether to hold an indicted person for trial, or grant bail. Possession of firearms was one such violation, and, in my experience, the most frequent. Most of the accused were also guilty of poaching, and were vigorously pursued by the German police and Forest Service authorities. We also had jurisdiction over all cases involving refugees, and I had two sizeable refugee camps in my area. Jurisdiction over such cases had been retained by the High Commission on the plausible grounds that such persons might not receive fair treatment in the German courts. However, it was not a very burdensome task. If a trial was to take place, this would, in the case of Bruchsal, be at the High Commission Court in Karlsruhe, before American judges.

Q: What was your impression of the change in Germany? Were you watching a change going on there as far as democracy and all? You say Baden had always been a liberal area but did you find sort of an acceptance?

SACKSTEDER: Absolutely. During my two years there I had the opportunity to observe several both state and federal elections, and believe me, all the trappings of democracy were out there: competing parties, and very open, free and fair election processes. Some of the details now escape me, but for example there were minima that had to be met by candidates and their parties. For instance, the Communist party in Bruchsal never obtained, say, five percent of the vote to elect a candidate under the proportional representation system in effect.

Q: In your area the two major ones were the S.P.D. and the C.D.U.?

SACKSTEDER: Bruchsal was strongly majority Christian-Democrat, C.D.U., but the Socialists, S.P.D., enjoyed the support of many workers in industry, such as the big Siemens manufacturing plant. The elected authorities, Mayors, town councils, county board (Kreirat) and Landrat, who ran the country, were strong C.D.U. supporters.

Q: Which was Konrad Adenauer’s party at that time. Did you and your KRO colleagues get together to discuss your respective problems and experiences?

SACKSTEDER: Oh yes. First of all the KROs in Wurttemberg Baden, my recollection is that we were something like 26 or 27 or maybe 30 in that state in Germany, would meet usually once a month at Stuttgart at the Land headquarters with the Land Commissioner Gross and his staff. I might add that in part it was also to sort of defend ourselves, because HICOG (High Commission for Germany) had built a relatively huge bureaucracy in Frankfurt and sizable bureaucracies in the state capitals like Stuttgart. All of these people had narrow interest in their respective fields, and would come up with proposals for programs to be implemented by the field officers, the KRO's. We would simply try to hold them back a little bit.

Q: I would like your impression that with the American occupation forces, and I'm talking really about the civilian bureaucracy, that there would be a tendency to have those who had sort of been left over from the war to be really rather second rate. I don't know whether this is true or not but when you have a large bureaucracy built up, those people who really didn't have anything to go back to in the States, I mean the KROs are different things because these are aspiring Foreign Service officers who are on the make you might say, as opposed to the sort of bureaucracy that had developed around the large...

SACKSTEDER: Unfortunately that was true and this is what united us, the KROs, both at the Land level, the state level, and for all of the American zone. Incidentally we also met periodically, usually about every nine months or so, at Frankfurt. All the KROs would meet for two or three days and hash over problems with the High Commissioner and his senior staff. There was a good deal of sympathy for our point of view but at the time there was still this large bureaucracy who kept bringing up projects: "we have to do more for youths, we have to do more here, more there, more for women." All of this was great but give us the resources. That wasn't there because the resources were concentrated at the federal and at the state level. The KROs had staff. As I mentioned, I had a staff of 12 people in my office including projectionists, a so-called interpreter who I didn't use because he didn't interpret, he said what he wanted to say which I discovered very quickly. I had a women's affairs specialist, a youth's affairs specialist, a political advisor. We also would be grinding out reports especially prior to and after elections doing the kind of work a political officer does in an embassy or consulate.

Q: You moved to Dusseldorf in '52, is this right?

SACKSTEDER: In '52 we began phasing out the Kreis offices and for approximately two months I was closing my office and opening one in Dusseldorf. I worked it on the basis that I would spend three days in Dusseldorf and three days back in Bruchsal. Fortunately I had good train connections and a sleeper so I could take the sleeper up, spend two nights in Dusseldorf, and come back on the fourth night. I would take care of my business in Bruchsal, partly over the weekend, and then back again to Dusseldorf.

Q: How long were you in Dusseldorf?

SACKSTEDER: Not very long. When I finally did move to Dusseldorf, it would have been March, I was there until the later part of June, just a few months.

Q: You mentioned you were trying to set up information centers?

SACKSTEDER: We tried to set up an information program. I was responsible for films and exhibits for the entire Dusseldorf consulate district which was North Rhine Westphalia, the most populous and business oriented part of Germany. It was mainly a matter of hiring people, getting it organized, getting the necessary equipment, establishing outlet offices in the major cities throughout the land, including the Ruhr and the rural areas.

Q: Did you get involved with the America House program?

SACKSTEDER: Yes. The Amerika Hauser were the information outlets for the Consulate General.

Q: With the material that we were giving out, particularly the films and all, you mentioned that they were rather naive to begin with, did you find that there was a better sophistication or did it still sort of come out of Hollywood at a pretty low level?

SACKSTEDER: We had two types. We had the films that all of the people wanted to see and these would be documentary films of the *National Geographic* type. They were very popular. Then there were those that we would sneak in about how a community is run, little films about elections and the right to vote, and that sort which carried a message but it was pretty juvenile. As I said we would have to pretty much lace it in with a good thing that they wanted to see.

Q: Did you find in Dusseldorf any difference as far as your impression of the Germans that you were dealing with in that whole area in the Rhineland?

SACKSTEDER: Yes. First of all because Dusseldorf was, and may well still be, the financial and business center of Germany, you were dealing there with people who were the CEOs of German industry, much more sophisticated people. Also you were in the climate of the British zone of occupation and the Brits had a quite different approach than ours. They were not terribly interested in making democrats out of the Germans, because they just assumed that it was impossible anyway, so why bother. On the other hand the British were very good hosts to us Americans who were in the consulates in their zone. My experience in Dusseldorf was, as I said, relatively short so I don't have the same kind of feel for the cultural and social climate there as I did in Bruchsal where I knew everybody.

Q: We're leaving Dusseldorf now and this might be a good place to stop for today. In 1952, where did you go?

SACKSTEDER: My orders were to be the vice consul in Madagascar as the vice consul of a two-officer post, after some home leave and consultation with the Department.

Q: So this is obviously good training for you.

SACKSTEDER: I have never known how the Department came up with the Madagascar for this soon-to-be ex-KRO, but I was quite excited with the assignment for purely personal and family reasons. My French-born mother had three uncles on her mother's side, who all had careers in

Africa. The elder, a physician, died of a tropical malady in French equatorial Africa before I was born. The middle one, my great uncle Henri, was a colonial administrator, first in Senegal, then in Madagascar, where he served as Governor-General from the 1930's until about 1942. He was relieved of his duties (read: fired) by the Vichy government for allegedly having failed to resist the British/Free French landings on Madagascar during WWII. Uncle and his wife were held under "house arrest" in Morocco until after the liberation of France. The youngest brother spent a number of years in Senegal running a peanut plantation. When their father died, the latter returned to France in the 1930's to look after the family estate, was mayor of the local town for decades, and was decorated for his WWII service leading the local underground Resistance to the Germans. During my childhood I heard much about Madagascar from Uncle Henri during our visits to the Perigord homestead. He promised me introductions to many friends he still had there.

But this was not to be. In the summer of 1952, pursuant to orders, I shipped to Madagascar household effects from Germany, and an automobile and two-year supply of food staples from the U.S. The German shipment was intercepted in time. The car and staples (and a kerosene powered refrigerator) were not, and were Madagascar-bound via South Africa. The PER assignments office informed me that the Department's Medical Director, Dr. Virgil T. DeVault, canceled the assignment on "medical grounds." He had recently returned from a visit to Tananarive (now Antananarivo), where he had found a serious malaria problem. He would not allow an officer with a family to go there. He was not impressed by my argument that my uncle had not contracted malaria.

WILLIAM N. TURPIN
Kreis Officer
West Germany (1950-1951)

Consular/Political Officer
Munich (1951-1952)

William Turpin was born and raised in Georgia. He attended artmouth College, Mercer University, and Oxford University. He entered the Foreign Service in 1949 and received his first post as a Kreis officer in 1950. He went on to serve in Munich, Belgrade, Moscow, and The Hague. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2000.

Q: *Well then, where were you sent in Germany?*

TURPIN: A place about forty miles west of Marburg.

Q: *Well, I tell you, I think this might be a good place to stop now. I usually put at the end where we are so we know where to pick it up. So we'll pick this up the next time, 1949, you have come to your little town or kreis, in...*

TURPIN: Oh, Beidenholf was so far in the sticks you wouldn't know it.

Q: Yes. Alright, we'll pick it up then. Great.

Today is the second of June, 2001. Well, let's start, year 1950, you were in a small German town. What was the name?

TURPIN: Well, one was kreis Beidenkop. And another kreis, Dillenberg.

Q: We have a dachshund, for this for the transcriber, we have a dachshund who is a little bit leery of this whole process. We are conducting this particular part of the interview in Annapolis, Maryland. What, um, what land were you in?

TURPIN: Hesse. In what had been the Hessen kassel. Dillenberg, Dil kreis, was where the family of Oranion Nassal basically came from. The ruling family in Holland. Anyway, Dil kris was, got shut of fairly soon and then, in August of the next year, I was hauled out in some disgrace.

Q: Well, let's talk a bit about your work in this kris. What were you doing?

TURPIN: Well they said resident officer and I guess the main thing was to be there. We were known, all of us, as der Americaner and sometimes as, I don't know what the army had called it, but we took over, were Foreign Service people - about four or five, I guess, off the waiting list and the rest of the, I don't know where they got them - and we were supposed to go out and be "in charge" of these kris, including city ones. The main sort of official function we had left was to issue (German language), I haven't thought of it in years, permission for people to settle in the kris, which we always granted. It was a matter of signing and stamping things. But the real, we had a staff consisting of an intelligence officer and a rear orientation officer and a secretary and two Volkswagens and an Opel Capitain, with drivers, that we toodled around the crises in. We were supposed to make democrats of the Germans, which was a good trick. I never thought we would pull it off and I don't think we did. But the thing is the place has certainly turned out better than I would ever have believed possible. Mainly, my wife spoke fluent German. She was Dutch by origin and had had German in school. I didn't know enough to have bought a shotgun when I got there. Had had a year in college which did me no good whatever, but I did take lessons.

And we operated on the principle that we would go out and visit Durgemeister or, schoolteachers mainly, and I would put my question in what I thought was German and then either, Seigenhaggen, my intelligence man, or my wife would translate it into proper German and then I would know what I was doing. And I got to where I could understand the replies reasonably well. And we were, I think, the main thing I was interested in was trying to get the teachers headed in the "right" direction. We didn't have much, well the Durgermeisters were all friendly, but this was a real country operation. And the only people in the kris who had anything on the ball were refugees. And this was, I had a bunch of the masters from the local high school and

going down this way, re-education center, or education center, that we ran along the lawn.

And anyway, there were these three “paukas,” as the kids called them, meaning grumpiers, teachers at the local school. And they were all saying, paying no attention to me in the front seat, that the place would be absolutely devoid of anything if it weren’t for the refugees. The Beidendolfers called themselves (German), root citizens, and boy they were, they were. They were back in the, firmly lodged, back in the 18th century.

Q: Was it strictly agricultural?

TURPIN: Yes. Well, Beidendolf had a population of about five thousand people and it had advertised itself as a (German), an air-treatment place, and wanted to be a tourist center, at which its chances were close to zero. It makes no difference. But we did get some activity going with the young people. There was a lady school teacher taught typing at the local factory. And she was, she looked like something right out of the handbook for the (German). But she was, there were two people in that chris that I was convinced would have to be shot before the next Hitler came along. One of them was a refugee, a Sudeten German. I have no affection for Sudeten Germans whatever. He was one of the best people I ever knew and eventually got promoted to running a girls school in Frankfurt. And those two had more idea of what it was all about than anybody in the American occupation forces ever did.

So Frauline organized a youth group and she came around and said “what do you want us to do?” ... do anything, so at the request of the landrat or somebody I had them out marking trails. You know the Germans have got to hike in unison. They did a lot of stuff like that. And they put on plays. I went to the mat with a beisbarden headquarters to try to get some plays that would stimulate the kind of thinking that we wanted to stimulate and be put on my amateur group, of which there were several in the kris, one headed by a doctor, very fine fellow, who was living in sin because he couldn’t, according to the tax system, he couldn’t afford to get married. Anyway, beisbarden had no interest in that whatever.

Q: By beisbarden you mean the...

TURPIN: The land headquarters. The land commissioner was a colonel out of the army and so was his deputy, was a lieutenant colonel and I don’t think either one of them had the faintest idea what they were supposed to be doing. Anyway, my wife had started the practice of having open house on Friday nights for these local young people. He would come around with considerable enthusiasm. And he would do it and this was not to get propaganda or anything like that. Anyway, I don’t know whether making any progress or not. I thought it’d take at least five years to do anything notable.

Q: Well, how did your wife react to this, being Dutch? I mean, no group with solid reason held the animosity longer than the...

TURPIN: Still do! They still do.

Q: Yes, it came as a real shock to the system because they had been neutral in World War I and

being rather close to the Germans and then getting Rotterdam and all that...

TURPIN: Then occupied.

Q: And a real brutal occupation. How did your wife react to this?

TURPIN: Well, she lived in England from the time she was five. So she had no noticeable accent. And when we went to Holland later on it turned out her Dutch was excellent up to the age of about eight. On anything more sophisticated than that she knew as much as I did. But she was one of the first civilians to come into Germany after the surrender. Her father was working for the Quakers, dealing with people out of concentration camps. And he found that he, the British of course, had equipped themselves with German speaking interpreters, but not Dutch. And the Dutch, whatever else they did, they weren't speaking German, period. So they, after a few weeks, months, I don't know exactly, weeks I guess, he said why don't you get my daughter over here, she can speak Dutch perfectly well. And they did and she was interpreting for released concentration camp prisoners, some of whom, she said, couldn't communicate because they'd had their tongues cut out. She was not friendly towards the (German), as they still call them.

And one night we had the local Lutheran pastor and his wife in to dinner. We went to church there fairly regularly. And, father Filings said, well, he had been to Holland recently and he discovered that people somehow didn't like them very much, this being 1950 remember. And he thought this was most un-Christian of them. They were most unforgiving. And Audrey said, "do you have a lot of Dutch friends?" And he said "well, a few." She said, NS Bayer, I bet," meaning national socialist party of Bavaria. And he looked at her like she just said a dirty word. She wasn't supposed to know about that. And "well," he said, "I guess they mostly were." But I don't think the Dutch should be so unforgiving." We were just, (phrase in German), which curls my hair whenever I think about it. Upright German soldier. Great.

And next day, I guess, we were going off somewhere, and Audrey said, "what would you do if you were ordered to shoot babies in their mother's arms?" And I said, "I don't know. I hope I would have the guts to put half a clip into the guy that gave me that order and the other half into me. But I don't know what I would do." Anyway, she was remarkably, she was incredibly good. I mean she hated Germans as a people but she did not hate them as individuals. She was very good with them. And she of course helped me enormously with the language and everything else.

And we rocked along. And then I got in trouble. Because my father-in-law had just, had been widowed, of course the year we were there. And we had a, the occupation forces had a big house at Dillonberg with an office in it and nothing else and at Beidenhoff we just had a second story flat over the local (German). So I conceived the idea, dimwittedly, that we should move to Beidenhoff.

Q: Yes?

TURPIN: Yes. I made the mistake of saying that this was not my purpose, which it wasn't. Not to get my father-in-law although I thought we might well do that. But, it probably wouldn't have

worked anyway. Anyway, the detectives made this big local case of that, made the usual “hoo haa” about it. And I, as I say, made the big mistake of saying that they had misrepresented what I was trying to do. I was thereupon called on the carpet to Wiesbaden and told, quite rightly, that you should never deny anything like that – just puts fuel on the fire – and that I was stupid and that I was going to be shipped off to the consulate general in Munich.

Well when that news hit the kris, uh, frolein Stuckeradt and the school teacher that I was so fond of called my boss at Marlburg, who was a marvelous fellow called Charlie Lloyd, one of the closest friends I ever had, never knew him before but I certainly did afterwards, and asked him if he would get them to Wiesbaden. And he said “yup.” And he did. I didn’t know anything about this. And they went down and told the landrat, I mean the land commissioner, “you take that boy out of here and you tear up everything you have done for the last five years.” And it really shook him up. He said “never had anything like that happen before.” I don’t think it was true but it would have, they were right in the sense that what we were doing took a lot longer than some new kid every year or so.

Anyway, that was the only major complaint that I had, except, one of my drivers denounced my intelligence assistance as a homosexual, which I now strongly suspect he was. At the time, the fact that he had a wife, a child and another one on the way, I thought, demonstrated that he wasn’t. That’s how much I knew about it. So anyway, I went down to see the assistant lan (German for “party”) commissioner and told him this tale. And he said, “well, what do you want to do?” I said, “keep that snoop of yours out of my kris. He parks, or if he does, don’t let him park in front of my office. It gives the place a bad name.” And I told him the story. And he said, “well, when did you hit him?” I said, “well I haven’t yet but it lacks half an hour of quitting time, on your recommendation I go down and cheerfully paste him one.” Well I didn’t and, uh, I mean he, this snoop – I’ve forgotten what his name was – said, “well either you are, you are either too innocent to have lived or you’re mixed up in this yourself.” ...

Q: Was this an American?

TURPIN: Yes. That clown was. Yes. Anyway, that was a thoroughly unpleasant bit of business. They sent me, I only heard about it when the personnel people sent me a OF-57 or whatever the form was that said sack this guy. I called them up, said “damned if I will. You want to sack him, sack him yourself. As far as I know he hasn’t done anything wrong and I’m not about to fire him.” I had fired the other guy. Never could replace him. He wasn’t doing much anyway, except report, we were supposed to be encouraging the Germans to have town meetings and what they call “associations of citizens” and they were supposed to be ginning up grass-roots something or other. I told them at Viesbaaden, that’s silliest thing I ever heard of. There’s no problem getting the Germans to talk. They will do that without end.

Um, the guy that I sacked had reported more of these meetings that never took place than you would believe possible. So they naturally, Viesbaaden, wanted to know why the number had actually dropped off. I said “because I’m only reporting things that actually took place.” Well they didn’t believe that for a minute, of course.

Q: The meetings being?

TURPIN: Well local things. School teachers would usually get them together. And they would, I don't know, complain about something or other. I can't remember. I used to go to the wretched things and remember clearly having my ears deafened by (German), a brass band. It was a small school. And the Germans never heard of playing less than all nineteen versus of anything. And then they would sing all nineteen versus. It was all rather tough. On the other hand, when I went up to Hesshousen, Holshouen, one of them was a so called Musterdorf, a model village, had been from time immemorial. And the other one was where this, uh, Fritz, anyway, my Sudeten German friend lived and ran the school. And his wife was the most marvelous preparer of (German) that I ever ran into in my life and would get furious with us if we came up without notice. Not because we were going to find out anything but because she didn't have two days to fix the (unintelligible German). So we were very careful with our advance notice.

Anyway, on the fifteenth of August 1951 I was called off to go to Munich, where I was assigned, refugee, DP visas. Now, anything you want to ask about that episode?

Q: *In Munich?*

TURPIN: Yes. In Biedenkoff.

Q: *Oh, in Beidenkoff. Well by this time, what was your reading on the former Nazis? You know, they had the fraggables and all that sort of thing. Had the Nazi party at all taken deep root there or were these simple people who said "okay, this is the next phase..."*

TURPIN: I think probably both. Biedenkoff, if I remember correctly, voted ninety-seven percent in favor of the Nazis in the last election they had. But whether they knew what they were doing or not is another question. They didn't have any refugees in those days. Meant there was really nobody who could read and write, practically speaking, in the kris. Wwhen I got there there was a big upset going on because the American courts were trying some German war criminals, and had tried them and convicted them and they were now going through the appeals process. And the German line on this was, you waited too long to do anything. Well the only reason there was any wait was because they were exhausting the opportunities given them under American law. This was not a thing you could get through the German head very easily.

We did have an election while I was there, which led to one of the most flagrant cases of apparently mistaken and self-interested reporting that I ever ran into. The SPD was campaigning very strongly on the principle of "ona-mee" (ponetic), without "mee." We were trying to get the Germans to re-arm. Our official line was, we did not, it wasn't up to us to say, but if the Germans wanted to re-arm, they could. Anyway, this was due, the CBU candidate was an agricultural official well known throughout the kris and well beloved. And the SPD guy was some parachutist from I don't know where. Anyway, the SPD duly carried Hesse, including Beidenkoff, and there was a meeting of resident officers in Viesbaaden the next day and I was standing around yakking with my colleagues and they all agreed that it was "ona-mee" that had elected the SPD.

A dispatch went out from Frankfurt saying that "ona-mee" had nothing to do with it. It was the

social program of the SPD that had won the election for them. Well, that would have made more sense if there had been any SPD program. Anyway, we all agreed, standing around, that this was absolute BS. Went back to the kris and I happened to have a meeting of my forum leaders that night and they all said, “what’s the matter with you guys?” I said, “what do you mean?” “Well everybody knows it was “ona-mee.” And why do you, this was of course in the newspapers, comments of the high commissioner and what not. I said, “well I don’t know. I tell you one thing. Our policy is that if you want to re-arm, we can’t stop you. But I’m concerned, I never want to see a German with a helmet or a gun in his hand unless its across the sights of an M-1 rifle.” And they said, “what’s the matter with you, we are good soldiers.” I said, “you certainly are. But if I go into battle with an Englishman, a Norwegian, a Dutchman, and I’ll take a Frenchman and I’ll take the Belgians on faith, then I know that we know what it’s all about. If you guys are there, I know we don’t.” That I did not report.

Q: Well, when you went to Munich, what was the setup? Were you part of the consulate general?

TURPIN: Yes.

Q: Who was the consul general?

TURPIN: It was Sam Woods when I got there. Husband to Minnie Bush Woods of Anheiser Bush fame. He was relieved fairly soon after I got there by Charlie Thayer, who was one of the real professionals.

Q: He was a Russian expert?

TURPIN: He was.

Q: Well then, how did the refugee program fit within the consulate general operation?

TURPIN: We had a branch office out at the Fookazama and there were about – I don’t know – eight or ten vice consuls. Most of them just staff people, I think. There was one FSO who was in charge. And there were others. I forget exactly who was there. And we processed visas. And, the, when the stuff came in, it started off...

Q: This was part of the displaced persons program?

TURPIN: Yes, this was the DP. But mostly, by the time I got there, we were down to ethnic Germans. Back at the Fookazama. And they, oh yes, we were presented in each case with a dossier which surprised me by being headed “religion.” I said, what in the world is that? And they go, well, my interpreter was a Bavarian Roman Catholic who had been raised in West Prussia and had been tutor, or governess, in her youth to the children of Archduke Francis Ferdinand and Sophie Koltax. Well, she said, “oh, it’s perfectly simple. It says their nationality. If they’re Roman Catholic, they’re Polish. If they’re Orthodox, then they’re Ukrainian,” or something like that. But the main thing is what organization is going to look after them. And if they’re Jewish, Hias, and so on.

Q: *Orthodox, Tolstoy foundation and uh...*

TURPIN: Actually it was the Lutherans, mainly.

Q: *Wow. But Lutheran...*

TURPIN: Church World Service.

Q: *Church world service, yes.*

TURPIN: And the Catholic one of course, they had theirs.

Q: *National Catholic Foundation or some... I can't remember. Anyway but...*

TURPIN: They were the people who were actually handling the refugees. And theoretically, according to this questionnaire "the careful investigation which has been made into the background" bla bla bla bla bla "of the applicant by the displaced persons commission." Well they never saw anybody. The first time any of these refugees ever saw an American was us. And so we had to do, basically, all the stuff. Find out whether they were ex-Nazis or otherwise objectionable and eventually give them a visa, which we mostly did.

And the climax of this was New Year's Eve 1951 when the DP commission dumped on us all the really smelly cases they had. I mean people who'd been fairly high ranking Nazis. They thought they'd push it, we didn't get to go to the bathroom. It was so crowded in that barracks that you couldn't get through the mobs.

Q: *Well, was it that the program ended on...*

TURPIN: Yes, yes, for the DPs, yes.

Q: *I was with the refugee relief program and I remember we ended up with those. In fact we had issued visas and then interviewed them after the time. I mean, it was one of these...*

TURPIN: Well, we didn't do that. But we did, we didn't have an awful lot of time to do any of this stuff. But we had BDC – Berlin Document Center – checks on a lot of them. And, well one guy, that New Year's Eve, had Polish credentials that were impeccable as you could possibly want to see. And he's, after I got through writing my name, he said "does mean I got a visa?" And I said "yes." Then he said, "I want to tell you the truth. I am an first lieutenant in the Russian Army. My name is so-and-so." And, uh, I just, he didn't want to get shipped back...

Q: *Of course not. He would have been shot.*

TURPIN: Would have. Or sent to Siberia in a summer uniform, which is the same thing. More uncomfortable, probably. Anyway, we had a perfectly hellish night. I can tell you that. But I think we did not let any obviously smelly cases through in spite of the fact that it was the last minute.

Well, after that the pressure was off somewhat and we did ethnic Germans. And it was rather hard on occasion when you had to turn a mother down who's had a son who was serving in the American army. But she was Russian. And married to a German, which did not meet any of the criteria set forth in the act. I felt [terrible], but what could you do? And I had one guy who was obviously ethnic German but he was born in Bulgaria because his father was stationed there. And he didn't count. So all you could do was be thorough going bureaucratic.

Anyway, I got pulled off of that about the time Charlie Thayer got there. I think July of 51. And Thayer, I want to say, he was a marvelous boss and a marvelous fellow. Extremely fond of him. A real pro. Assassinated, of course, because Chip Bohlen was his brother-in-law. And the Eisenhower crowd couldn't get Bohlen, so they got Thayer because he'd had a Russian mistress in Vienna during the war. And so on. I had just gotten to the consulate and I was told, okay, you've got to do a certain amount of administrative stuff like the price index and the other stuff... oh, evacuation plan and so on. Thayer came in and said, "now when are you going to get off that stuff and start doing political reporting?" I said, "well, as soon as I can." He said, "well do it right away. I want you to get to work."

Well, one thing that amused me greatly was this evacuation plan, which was something of a farce because we knew perfectly well that the Russians weren't going to wait while we evacuated. Nor was our army, which was occupying officers clubs and commissaries and strung out in a line from the Adriatic to the Baltic, they weren't going to stop a troop of Polish boy scouts, let alone the Russian army. They know besides that, there was never any reason why the Russians should invade Western Germany, as they did not wish to inherit a bunch of smoking ruins, which we could quite easily do. And the army kept coming out with, or the defense department, with stuff about how if we don't have this that and the other by 1955 the Russians will invade. And of course we'd start in 54 and 55 and so on. And they never did anything effective to stop the Russians, anyway.

The only thing that I could do with this evacuation was make sure that the names were up to date and deal with the marine guard detachment which we had just acquired. The NCO in charge was a master gunnery sergeant with so many hash marks they practically had to run them up around his elbow. He had every decoration the marine post got except the CMH.

Q: Congressional Medal of Honor?.

TURPIN: Yes. So I went down and said, "well gunny, what do I do for you guys?" He thought for a while and he said, "I don't know. I guess I hold this consulate general until the consul general tells me to secure, and then we go out and relieve a division of the army." There were eight of them. And he wasn't joking. And I didn't take it as a joke.

Anyway, I got off of that and went to doing political reporting. And I must say I had a great time. My boss, immediate boss, was a Harvard labor type named Bill Nothy. And he had the SBD, mostly. And I had the rest, mostly. So I had a very, very nice German newspaper reporter working for us, I said, frau whatever her name was, I can't remember now, fix me up with lunches with everybody I ought to know, which she proceeded to do. One of em' was the head of

the secret police of Bavaria, a marvelous man, who sent me a wedding invitation when he was about a hundred. And his mother was his hostess.

Q: You were saying you arranged a series of luncheons...

TURPIN: Yes, and I had some of these people to dinner. One night, CSU representative in the legislature – I was supposed to cover the legislature – and his wife, and Dr. Kanine and his mother. Now I don't think anybody else was there or not, but we gave them a dinner. Next day he called up my German friend and said, "I don't know where that boy found out as much about music and what-not as he knows, but I want to have lunch with him once a week." And he would then proceed to spill his guts. He did tell me a good bit that I wasn't supposed to know, I'm sure.

And then there was a blond secretary of the SBD who, I don't know how I got to know him, but he was very pleasant. I remember having a beer with him at the Lantag one afternoon, and he said, "well, of course, we know you have your intelligence organization, the British have got their organization such-and-such, the French have so also, and you have the gayland operation." And I said, quite innocently, "what's that all about." He said, "oh don't be foolish. Everybody knows you got him and got that organization." Well Thayer had told us when he got there, said "well I'm not even supposed to know about this although I was in charge of the political section in Bonn. If you ever hear the word gayland mentioned, let me know at once." So I duly trotted around and told him this tale and he was absolutely livid.

Anyway, about that time the CIA sponsored the Bundes Deutsche unit and ours was the Frier Deutsche unit. Anyway, it turned out the head of ours was a card-carrying member of the communist party. That they were getting training in (phrase in German) making, placing cold, a whole bunch of people, in case of an invasion. The leading name on the list was that of Dr. Wilhelm Honer, minister of the interior, whom we had brought back from Switzerland in 45 and made prime minister of Bavaria. Well Hegner was understandably outraged and he put out the word, you talk to nobody from the consulate general but me. Well I never laid eyes on him. I can only assume Dr. Kanine had told him something or, more probably, he had me mixed up with my boss, Bill Nothy, who had had a lot of connection with the SBD.

Anyway, I told Thayer this and he said, "get him over here." And Thayer had set up a lunch room, or dining room, in the consulate. And I never heard anybody talk to anybody harder than he worked on Herdner. And at the end of that time, Herdner was at least pacified. Later on Kanine told me, every time he told me about any raids that his people – he was the head of the (German) "protection of the constitution" – and he would send his people, and every time there was anything sensitive Thayer would tell me and I would tell him and he would call it off. Which was quite useful.

And one time, over lunch, he told me that he had to go, the next week, to Frankfurt, a big meeting of all the landt (German) people. And I said, fine, and I duly reported this. We sent a cable that said we would appreciate it if consulate general Frankfurt would find out about all this. And they, "what are you talking about, we don't even know that it exists." So when Herger came back, I mean Kanine came back, I asked him what went on and I duly reported it to Frankfurt with great pride. They couldn't find out but I could. And I really think I had that place pretty

well wired for sound, mainly because the Germans were so busy stooling on each other. .

Q: By the time you got there,. what was our concern at that time? Was it communists or was it Nazis?

TURPIN: Oh, communists. We were also very much concerned and rammed through the lantaag (German) a bill compensating the Jewish victims of the holocaust. And I did my duty. And it was duly passed, but not because I had anything to do with it. But mainly we were worried about communists. I made a trip one time up to northern Bavaria, Nuremberg, and what not. Got back and discovered that this weekly secret intelligence report put out by the CIC which had rated C-3 a report that I had been visiting people in Nuremberg and other places. And I called the guy that ran it and said, “well look, I don’t know why you need to have C-3 if you wanted...

Q: C-3 is a way of saying whether it is confirmed or... it’s a rating system?

TURPIN: Yes. The “C” is for probably true and the “3” is for reliable source or the other way around. Not even get it from the horse’s mouth, if they want it. Well he said, “we have to use our own system.” Their system included left wing parties, communists, and social democrats and as well as right wing parties except the CSU.

Q: Which was the Bavarians, uh, Christian Democratic.

TURPIN: Yes. Oh, there were lots of funny things in that period. I don’t know how much you want..

Q: Did you feel at all or see the repercussions of McCarthyism at this point?

TURPIN: Only, I guess after I left. When I got to Belgrade I discovered that, what was that woman’s name that was one of the head squealers, Massy, is that right?

Q: I can’t remember.

TURPIN: Something like that anyway. She had reported that I had made remarks at a party suggesting that I agreed with the policies of the president and the secretary of state. Of course she didn’t put it that way. And the charge in Belgrade called me – this was right after I got there – and said “what about all this?” And I said, “certainly I did. Am I to be crucified because I defended the secretary of state and the president of the United States?” He said, “don’t be stupid. They won’t do anything.” And they didn’t. But, I don’t think anybody was, I can’t remember that anybody was terribly lathered up about McCarthyism then. That came later.

Thayer was worried about communist infiltration into Bavaria or anywhere else, as far at that goes. He was duly concerned – I don’t know that he was as concerned as I was – about the malseys and what not. But they buried Cardinal Phalhopper and I remember watching the funeral procession from the second floor of the consulate. And there were all these border guards in field gray uniforms with shovel helmets. I thought, uh oh, this I did not like to see. It seems to have worked out all right, somehow. But I certainly was wrong about where they were going.

Q: *Well when you left there, your feeling was that there might be a fourth Reich or the equivalent thereof?*

TURPIN: Yes. I certainly thought there was plenty of people in favor of it. Well, it was mostly German nationalism. They were good patriots. I never had any serious discussions about the war, war crimes, any of that sort of thing. Their line, to me at least, always was they were just good soldiers doing what they were told. But they were quite proud in Munich of that brother and sister pair.

Q: *The white rose.*

TURPIN: Yes. That thing. And I can't remember the name of the boy and girl.

Q: *I can't remember. This was a group of students who were guillotined.*

TURPIN: Oh, were they? I didn't know what happened to them. I thought they were shot. But anyway, they were certainly executed in very short order.

Q: *I saw a German movie on them.*

TURPIN: Oh, well, I didn't know that or I would have been even more horrified. They certainly hadn't come to terms with the war but they certainly didn't think they had won it. I mean everybody who thinks that unconditional surrender was a terrible policy ought to remember that it was very difficult to deal with.

Q: *This was no stab in the back.*

TURPIN: No. Absolutely not. They did contend that their equipment and their soldiers were better than ours. Which was probably true.

Q: *Well, individually, but in mass, no.*

TURPIN: We just had more tanks. And they had better tanks. We had more of them.

Q: *Yes.*

TURPIN: And this was more or less what professor Niall Ferguson of Jesus College Oxford has said in his book about the, what's he call it, the horror of war, the tragedy of war, something like that. And I wrote him and I said, "you know, you remind me of the late General Robert Toombs of Georgia who was addressing an election crowd after the [civil] war and somebody said, "general, you said we could lick those Yankees with corn stalks." And Toombs replied, "I did and we could have, but they wouldn't fight us with corn stalks." And that seemed to me... I mean according to Fergusson, the Germans were better at every point, including mobilization, which I don't think is right. I think the British did a much better job of mobilizing their economy for war.

WILLIAM A. HELSETH
Consular/Economic Officer
Frankfurt (1950-1953)

William Arthur Helseth was born in Florida in 1925. He graduated from the College of William and Mary in 1948, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1949, received a PhD in 1962, and served in the U.S. Navy from 1943 to 1946 overseas. After entering the Foreign Service in 1950 his assignments abroad have included Frankfurt, Izmir, Ankara, Tehran, and Kabul. In 1996 Mr. Helseth was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Now, could you tell me the genesis of the KRO program, the Kreis Resident Officer program?

HELSETH: It came about, as I understand it and as I recall, because DOD (Department of Defense) was pulling out of Germany. The occupation period was being phased out in 1950. State Department was going to take over liaison with the German local authorities. It was decided early on that the way to do that was to have a State representative in each of the German counties or Kreis. So, this was, I think, Marshall Barry or someone that worked with the program early on. I think he was responsible for it, at least for the recruiting of the people. Then we started work in the late '50s. I was the first one over. It really got underway in early '51. However, the FSOs-by the time we arrived in Germany, we were FSOs-we went in to have our interviews in Frankfurt and were told that, "Well, since you're now FSOs, we're going to take the FSOs out of the KRO program and assign you to the various consulates in Germany and the rest of the people, the FSSs, will then be in the KRO program and will be assigned to the Kreis." So, there were nine or so of us who were FSOs. We were all removed from the KRO program and assigned to consulates or consulates general in Germany at that time. I myself was assigned to the Frankfurt consulate general.

Q: You were at the Frankfurt consulate general from '51 until...

HELSETH: From February '51 until late '53. On Thanksgiving of '53, my family and I were on the ship, I think, The USS United States, coming back to the States on transfer to Turkey.

Q: What were you doing in Frankfurt?

HELSETH: I had several jobs in Frankfurt. First, starting out in the visa office, issuing immigrant visas there. Then I worked in non-immigrant visas for a few months. Then transferred to the economic section to do some traveling and collecting information for Trade and Commerce. That was because my German was sufficient to allow me to travel on my own to interview the German employers or businessmen who might be interested in an American connection. Or on the other hand, if there were some problems on the American side that needed resolution, where the consulate could appropriately help, I did some of that. I did that for about the last three months I was there.

Q: While you were there, one, the Korean War started in August of 1950. The Cold War had already been sort of heating up. In '48, there had been the Berlin blockade, the airlift. Was there the feeling among your group and the other Foreign Service officers that Germany was a friendly power rather than an enemy power to be treated with some caution?

HELSETH: I can't answer that with a great degree of certainty. I would say though that I don't think there was any feeling amongst the group, whether it be the young FSOs or the older ones, that we were facing an immediate problem with an enemy or anything of that nature. I don't think that was the attitude. I guess the answer is that I can't really respond to that question with any degree of certainty.

Q: Fair enough. Who was the consulate general at that time?

HELSETH: Mr. Pigott.

Q: Montagu Pigott.

HELSETH: Montagu Pigott.

Q: Chetwynd Montagu de Rinzy Pigott.

HELSETH: As a matter of fact, he was not the consulate general when I first arrived. He came later. The first consulate general there was an older man on his last assignment, I think. I forget his name right now, but Mr. Pigott arrived within the first six months I was there.

Q: What was your impression of how he ran the place?

HELSETH: I think he ran a pretty good ship. It was pretty tight. He knew the business, it seemed to us as juniors. He evinced a special interest in training of the young FSOs, taking a few of them not only under his wing, but making sure they got opportunities to experience in some of the higher levels of activities, taking one of us along on various meetings or when he went out on business.

Q: This was the '50 to '53 period. I was actually in part of this down in Darmstadt as an enlisted man in the Air Force. I took my Foreign Service Exam up in Frankfurt. I remember Kennedy Schmertz monitored the exam. I took his place later in '55. Germany was obviously economically really beginning to succeed. Was part of the economic reporting to look at whither Germany economically and particularly in the Frankfurt area?

HELSETH: Yes, but my work as the junior officers in the office was more per se just going out for interviews, gathering information, that type of thing. I was not doing any of the dispatch writing on the whither Germany type of thing. That was reserved for the one or two people above me, Mr. Weast, and one or two others there.

Q: You, I assume, were also doing trade reports and that sort of thing?

HELSETH: Yes, very basic work there.

Q: What was your impression of Germany at the time?

HELSETH: Well, looking at it from several points of view, from the point of view of being this young fellow recently married and interested in history, it was a wonderful spot to be. It was a good spot for travel. From the point of view of Germany and where it was going, they were still awfully hard up, they were still extremely short of funds, Germans were not able to entertain or exchange that type of social activity with the consular corps there, so that was a little restricted. They really hadn't yet gotten their feet on the ground. They still were laying the framework for it. But it was not an area of bustling activity. There was still some work going on to remove the debris from the war, from the bombings, but that was very low-key then. It was only later that Germany really got off the ground. In short, they were still struggling.

GEORGE L. WEST
Political Officer
Frankfurt (1950)

Chief, Foreign Relations Division
Bonn (1951-1953)

George L. West was born in Seattle, Washington in 1910. He graduated from Stanford University in 1933 and began working at Standard Oil's diplomatic services division, where he traveled extensively. Mr. West joined the Foreign Service in 1938 and served in Greenland, Sweden, Finland, Luxembourg, and France. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy February 9, 1990.

Q: So you went to...

WEST: I went to Frankfurt and was under Sam Reber. This is summer of 1950. She'd [Mesta?] arrived earlier. Sam Reber had succeeded Riddleberger as Political Advisor on the High Commission.

They put me in charge of a big amorphous division that had a lot of public affairs and reorientation programs. There were two-hundred-odd Americans.

The only one making any less money than I did... There were two guys, Peter Hooper... They were gradually bringing Foreign Service officers in, but most of these people were reserve, left over from the Army and Navy. There was a male stenographer, Dale Carson. They made less than I did. I was Class Three, I think. But that only lasted a few months. My chief job was to cut it up, cut it to ribbons.

Then I went back on home leave. On the way home, I went through Paris and met up with the

Kirks. Mrs. Kirk convinced me I should get some tickets to this new play in New York, *Call Me Madam*, with Ethel Merman.

So we sat down and wrote a letter to Lindsay and Krause, saying that I'd be arriving in New York at such and such a time and would like two seats, for which I would insist on paying.

So, sure enough I got on this ship. I was going back on the *Liberté*, rooming with Elam O'Shaughnessy, Churchill's Man of Confidence during the war. It was a great crossing.

And I did go see *Call Me Madam*.

My wife was pregnant and had gone back ahead of me. She wasn't in Frankfurt very long.

After my child was born, I went to Bonn, where I took over the... At this time, High COG was still in Frankfurt. Bonn had been selected as the future capitol, and, in fact, it had become the capitol. Most of our political officers were sent up to Bonn, or had been there for some time.

I succeeded a fellow named Bernie Gufler as head of External Political Affairs. My opposite number was a guy named Charlie Thayer, who was in charge of Internal Political Affairs. Bernie went on, Charlie stayed.

So I did all of the High Commission work. Reber would come up to Bonn to meetings of the Political Advisors at the High Commission once a week.

British, French, and American Political Advisors would meet at the Petersburg once a month. And I would do all the backstopping. I was head of the Political Subcommittee. I was his Deputy.

Q: What were your major political concerns?

WEST: As time went on, we were helping to reestablish the German Foreign Office. We were vetting the people they were sending as they established relations with various countries.

Q: By "vetting" you mean you were checking to see whether they were fairly clean as far as the Nazi past.

WEST: They had this diplomatic academy down at Schwerin. For example, each class each year we would send up to Berlin on a U.S. aircraft to see West Berlin. The theory being that anybody who's going to represent Germany abroad should at least have been in Berlin at least once in his life.

We did a lot of things like that, but my chief work was on the Political Committee of the High Commission, that is backstopping Reber for those meetings, but then almost daily meetings with my French and British opposite numbers.

Q: Was that so you'd have a unified approach?

WEST: Well, there were an awful lot of problems. The French kept trying to do all kinds of things. We were trying to return and build, put the Germans back in business as a nation.

During the latter part of my time there, a lot of the stuff was working towards this agreement for abolishing the occupation, modifying the occupation statute.

That was interminable. First, among the British and French, and then with the Germans. First of all, you had to sort out all the questions. Not only did the Political Advisors meet once a month, the High Commissioners met once a month. The Deputy High Commissioners met once a month. And you did all of the backstopping for that.

Then there were all these problems about the French recruiting for the Foreign Legion in the Saar. The French on the Saar was a constant problem, because the French were just really getting all the reparations they could, you might say.

It was a fascinating job. All in all, all of the control also was in charge... The High Commission was in charge of the airport in Frankfurt. Innumerable things concerning the occupation.

These meetings I spoke of, at least one of them would be in Berlin each month. That meant going up to Berlin. The problems in Berlin were infinite. The divided city and people kidnapped. Fantastic variety. I was fortunate in having some very good junior officers. Roy Atherton, for one. I got Renchard on my staff there. This is the way this thing bounced around.

EMMERSON M. BROWN
Kreis Resident Officer, High Commissioner in Germany
Frankfurt (1950-1954)

Emmerson M. Brown graduated from Olivet College with a teacher's certificate, subsequently working with refugees in Algeria, Morocco, Ethiopia, and Egypt. He joined the Foreign Service in 1950 and served in Germany, India, The Netherlands, Canada, and Washington, DC. Mr. Brown was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on February 2, 1990.

BROWN: I started out as a resident officer, Kreis Resident Officer, KRO. We were the last local vestige of military government. We still had a few regulatory duties. We signed inter-zonal passes; we could supervise hunting -- of all things. Essentially it was a public affairs job by the time I got there.

It seemed to me that somebody at State finally wised up. Here was a way to appoint some of the people who were on the foreign service register. There were 27 of us. Our average age was a little over 30. One funny thing was, only three or four of us had German, but we all took intensive German before going over.

But it was essentially to be replacements for the military government officers -- the Kreis

resident officers who were mainly army officers who hadn't wanted to go home and who in many cases had hooked up with a local woman. (Many of them later married.) So there was a kind of attrition in the High Commission, after McCloy took over, and it sort of cleaned up its act. Some of the military wanted to go home anyhow; some of them were encouraged to go home. I think a few of them might even have been fired. We were the replacements. But we were only out there for a year or so at the Kreis level.

Then I went down to HICOG -- the High Commissioner for Germany. In those days it was located in the IG Farben Building in Frankfurt. McCloy was the High Commissioner, Benjamin Battenwieser, the Deputy High Commissioner. High powered people, really. Wonderful staff. I worked in east-west trade for three or four years.

This was the Cold War. It was 1951 -- I left in 1954. Berlin was a standing problem, access to Berlin was a problem. The West German government was just getting going, and though the Allied High Commission had formal jurisdiction over foreign trade, we were in no position to exercise it in detail. The idea in our particular case was to ensure that the Germans installed an effective system of strategic export controls. And they did pretty well. The Germans are awfully good administrators, of course.

I was an inter-zonal trade officer. The two Germanies -- east and west Germany -- had trade agreements. We were supposed to supervise these trade agreements and in a formal sense the High Commission had to approve them. We had the brief, but I don't think there was any real question that the agreements would be upset. But during negotiations, if any difficulties would come up, they would check with us. Two or three things I didn't know at the time. I didn't realize at the time that the West Germans were ransoming East Germans with their inter-zonal trade accounts. We were always concerned that there was such a big surplus on the West German side; it turned out that they were using it to ransom refugees, in effect.

There was one specific episode when there was an arrangement to trade junk steam locomotives from the west to the east in return for some damaged electric locomotives that the East Germans -- the Reichsbahn -- had, and which they couldn't keep in repair. They didn't have parts and couldn't make parts. The specific deal came up and we approved it and I got really slapped on the wrist because somebody back in Washington held that steam locomotives are much more strategic than electric locomotives because they can go anywhere -- they don't have to have a power source. Isn't that wonderful! About a year later, when I was in Bombay, I noticed a change in the list. I had called it to Washington's attention and it had reversed themselves.

When we got to Germany in March of 1950, the currency reform was less than a year old. Cigarettes were about DM 15 a carton, and army wives were doing a brisk business in buying Hummels and God knows what with cigarettes at DM 15 a carton, which cost a dollar at the PX.

We did our orientation, our running in. In our early days we did a lot of traveling around Germany, by rail -- sleepers -- breakfast in the morning, in the dining car, where there would be Germans. The Germans would have for breakfast a *koffee complet* -- a roll and some jam and coffee -- and all of the Americans and Brits -- every now and then you would see a Frenchman -- would have bacon and eggs. When we left in 1954, it was exactly reversed. The people who were

having the *koffee complet* were the occupation personnel and the people who were having the big breakfasts were Germans.

Every day you could see economic growth. They went from bicycles to mopeds (as they were called) -- little motorized bicycles. Then they went from mopeds to proper motorcycles. And they went from motorcycles to little three-wheel cars -- Messerschmitts. But before that there was a tandem Messerschmitt. Then there was a contraption, the *Lloyd* I guess, where they sat side by side, a tricycle. Then of course, the Volkswagen bug took over and literally every day you could see the progress.

It was simple. Hard currency, an energetic and competent population. They worked women to replace the men killed during the war. Those women went to work. Sound economic policies and the Marshall Plan -- that is a little bureaucratic triumph there, you know.

In Germany, we had so-called program aid -- the Marshall Plan Aid -- was doled out for specific programs and projects which the Germans had to plan and then bring to us for approval. In Britain they had what was called budgetary aid; i.e. we just gave the money to the Brits. And at the end of the Marshall Plan the German mark was hard; the German economy was going like gang busters. The Brits had dissipated much of theirs on welfare, which is not to be sneered at, but it doesn't provide for the future as the program aid did in Germany.

Foreign Service people tell how difficult it is to get servants. During the time we were there, we started with having wonderful ones -- an older woman who had lost her husband during the war and who doted on our children -- and we ended up having the oddest assortment of demented women and, one, apparently, a prostitute between engagements. It was the damndest thing.

WILLIAM N. HARBEN
Vice Consul
Frankfurt (1950-1951)

Political Officer
Bonn (1951-1954)

William N. Harben was born in 1922 in New York. He graduated from Princeton University and joined the Foreign Service in 1950. He served in Germany, Colombia, Rwanda, Indonesia, the Soviet Union, Mexico, Cambodia, and Washington, DC. This excerpt is from his personal memoirs.

HARBEN: My first post was Frankfurt, Germany - at first a very boring job in the budget division of the administrative section, later a more interesting one - as assistant to the Map Procurement Officer, actually an employee of the CIA. We absorbed the Publications Procurement Office in Berlin and I began to fly to Berlin to accompany the PPO, Mrs. Zawadzki, to the Soviet Sector to buy periodicals for U.S. Government libraries. Some of these were authorized for sale to foreigners, but the personnel were all German and most disliked the

Russian conquerors and were willing to evade the regulations. One, who said she had kept heirloom rings on her toes, under her shoes, while she was subjected to intimate indignities at the hands of Soviet soldiers, gave us every copy of the organ of the Ministry of Transport, using part of the subscription of the Minister himself and part of the subscription of another official. When we protested that we did not want her to be caught, she replied the minister would think it perfectly normal that he was getting only half his issues, since "we have socialism here now." We got many items refused to our man in Moscow.

Occasionally other items of very minor intelligence interests came my way. A German agency gave me some photographs of a new woman's auxiliary combat unit of the East German army, showing unattractive, slovenly young women aiming machine guns, etc. I thought I could trade them for some issues of the Soviet newspaper, which the Counter Intelligence Corps bought from German urchins along with other documents which they obtained by tripping up and looting drunken Soviet soldiers staggering to their barracks. Captain Thompson of the CIC looked like the gangster "Legs" Diamond, tall, slender, with suspenders chewing a long cigar.

He examined the photos one by one as I looked over his shoulder. "I suppose they think they'll have the advantage over us in that we wouldn't shoot a woman," I remarked.

"Yeah?" he snarled, turning to me. "I got news for dem dollies."

I once complained to his assistant, an uncouth young sergeant that Washington loaded me with impossible requirements -- I was to obtain plans for new Soviet submarines, nuclear weapons etc. which I, a lowly publications officer, had not the slightest chance of getting.

"Yeah, I know," said the sergeant. "They wanted me to get a 20-mm cannon from a MiG. My kids sneaked into the airfield and unscrewed one and brought it here on a bicycle. Now they want me to get the whole plane!" He explained that he employed German urchins even for this work.

Once I and Mrs. Zawadzki emerged from a bookshop with the proprietor. Facing us was a curious four-story building. The windows of the top floor were concealed behind steel plates which leaned outward so that light and air would penetrate over them. A loud noise came from the first floor.

"It's a building of the Staatssicherheitsdienst [secret police] explained the bookseller. They have a sawmill down below which they turn on when they're questioning somebody so you can't hear the screams. They can't jump out the windows, either, because of the steel covers."

The first of May was a great celebration for the Communists, and I reasoned that if we could get into the Karl Marx Platz we would get the official May Day slogans from handbills. These were prized by Kremlinologists as indicating shifts in Russian attitudes toward the communist and socialist parties throughout the world.

I suggested that we follow the May Day Parade into the center of the Soviet Sector. A CIA employee went with us after much hesitation. We started along Unter den Linden or its prolongation beyond the Brandenburg Gate until we came to a bridge over a canal. Here the

parade filled the bridge, and there was no way to proceed without getting into the parade.

"Let's get in the parade. We can get out on the other side," I said.

"No!" whispered the CIA fellow hoarsely. "I'm not marching in any commie parade!"

"Well, go back to West Berlin then. It's just beyond the Brandenburg down the street - that big triumphal arch there."

"You can't leave me alone here!" In the end he agreed to join the parade. But, to our horror, we were unable to leave the parade on the other side. Ropes, guarded by grim Volkspolizei, kept the workers hemmed into their dreary ranks. Loudspeakers wired to lampposts blared the sound of cheering - perhaps some tape of a former Nazi rally - but the mouths of the sad-faced workers were closed.

"Oh, Christ!" muttered the CIA chap.

"Shut up!" I whispered. A Soviet zone news camera atop a low pillar filmed us as we passed. The workers raised their fists in the Communist salute.

"Raise your fist, you idiot!" I snapped at the CIA chap. Together we marched past the bleachers, heads high, fists raised, faces turned toward such worthies as the infamous Walther Ulbricht, Marshal Chuikov, "President" Otto Grotewohl and the head of the dreaded Staatssicherheitsdienst.

The parade disintegrated beyond the bleachers. We waited until it had passed. The Volkspolizei had left their posts at the rope and had gathered in small groups to smoke and chat.

"Let's just act as though we belong here and go back by the way we came," I suggested.

We walked to the rope and I started to lift it so that the others might pass under it.

"Halt!" came a shout. A Volkspolizist came running. "Wo ist Ihre Erlaubis in der Gegend der Ehrentribüne zu sein (Where is your permit to be in the area of the honor bleachers)?" he demanded. I was struck dumb, but Mrs. Zawadzki calmly pulled out her U.S. Army identification card and held it up to his face. He gasped. "Amis!" he exclaimed. Then he looked about to see who was watching and he himself held up the rope. "Okay, *über schnell!*" he said, motioning us under the rope. From that incident I learned the depth of popular support for the regime.

Back in Bonn my superior was fired, and I became chief of the operation, but not for long. An old school friend, Jonathan Dean, had been asked by the new head of the Political Section, John Paton Davies, to recommend young officers for that prestigious section. Jock mentioned me and Davies took me on and assigned me to cover relations with the Soviets, Neo-Nazi groups, and Communist activities in the Western Zones - very interesting and politically delicate work.

Small Neo-Nazi groups had formed in Munich, Hamburg, and Bremen. Their size and influence were wildly exaggerated by the New York Times correspondent, Drew Middleton, whose New York readers were eager to hear the worst. The Times represented the body of opinion that the Germans were still unrepentant and a menace. Reports of resurgent Nazism was grist for their propaganda mill.

Such a large proportion of the members of these groups, each of which numbered only 30-100 members, were spies of the U.S., the British, the French, and the West German government that one aspirant "Fuhrer," Maj. Beck-Broichsetter, in Hamburg, abruptly disbanded his group, alarmed by the many unfamiliar faces at the final meeting. I and Bud Ramsaur, our man in Bremen, became concerned lest we - and the other allied government agencies - were actually subsidizing the Neo-Nazis, because of the dues regularly paid by our many spies in the Neo-Nazi ranks - and seldom paid by the impoverished bona fide members. The leaders of the groups were hardly more than con men. One, in Munich, regularly lunched with a consulate political officer and brought him up to date on his party's membership and activities. Soviet spies were also members, mainly to provoke the groups into unwise political acts which Moscow could exploit in its anti-Bonn-Government propaganda. If a French spy was known to be present, the Soviet agent might shout "On to Paris!" in the middle of a rally. Or tip over tombstones in a Jewish cemetery.

My colleague Culver Gleysteen was about to be transferred elsewhere and I inherited his job as political adviser to the American delegation to the Four-Power negotiations on the use of the air corridors to Berlin.

These negotiations had been provoked by the Soviets by their shooting down a British bomber near the entrance to the British corridor. The British Government was in weak hands at the time and were prepared to "compromise," i.e. yield. Working groups discussed different aspects of the subject, each producing an agreed solution to be incorporated in the final new agreement. One such working group agreement turned out to be to the Soviets' disadvantage. They simply disavowed it, and their member of the group vanished. Enquiries as to his whereabouts elicited the reply that he was "very sick." This continued to be the Soviet strategy: achieve Allied agreement on the basis of "quid pro quo" and then disavow their "quid." They did this by pretending that it had never happened. When the Western allies pointed to the initials of the Soviet air marshal on a particular document he changed the subject. We were losing ground with one concession after the other.

The head of the American delegation was an Air Force Brigadier General. Despite his explicit instructions not to yield one iota of our right to fly unhindered to and from Berlin, he apparently thought, like many others after him, that he would go down in history as the first man to achieve agreement with the Soviets, that "if you can't get a dollar's worth of agreement, then ten cents is better than nothing."

Since only he had the right to sign telegrams to Washington on the progress of the negotiations, I had no way officially to warn Washington what was going on. I could only appeal to my chief, the head of the political section, an utter fool who had replaced Davies, exiled to Peru for alleged sympathy with the Chinese Communists. The highest point reached by his replacement, a former

agricultural attaché, before he was appointed head of the most important political section in the world was delegate to "the Second International Conference on the Use of Unfermented Fruit Juices." He was my first lesson in the dangerous defects of the American political system with regard to foreign affairs. It was rumored that his wife had been a very close friend of the then President Eisenhower, whom she had met as a colonel in the Women's Army Corps during the war. She was a vamp-like blonde given to embracing and kissing young Foreign Service officers, with whom she was scarcely acquainted, when greeting them at cocktail parties.

My chief's response to my alarm was to seek a meeting with the British Deputy High Commissioner. All he said was, "Yes, Jack," many times as the Englishman expounded the British view, which paralleled that of our general, since the F.O. was under pressure from the capitulationist parliament.

I was desperate. One more meeting with the Soviets and the general would agree to permit a Russian fighter to order any Allied aircraft to land at a Soviet Zone airfield. The possibilities were highly dangerous: they would certainly seize German passengers; they could claim to have found on board espionage materials, dangerous insects (a theme of Russian propaganda was that Allied aircraft were dropping potato bugs on eastern German fields). Our secret contingency plan called for U.S. fighter planes to shoot down any Soviet aircraft interfering with our access to Berlin. So an armed clash was possible.

Jim Ferretti, the Civil Air attaché, pointed out that if we could only get safely through the next meeting - chaired by the indifferent French - we could possibly stave off disaster, since a Foreign Ministers' Meeting was forthcoming in Geneva and it was unlikely that the Soviets would resort to force during that conference and perhaps not thereafter.

I went to the Deputy High Commissioner, Walter Dowling, an intelligent career officer, going over the head of my section. I explained the problem, and also the risk I was taking in going over the head of my section. He seemed to have had enough of the fellow himself, and said, "Let's not tell him about it." He summoned our general to Bonn and accused him bluntly of violating instructions. The general retorted, "Well, your man Harben here thinks if we can't get a dollar's worth of agreement, then we shouldn't have any."

"Mr. Harben was quite correct. Your instructions are perfectly clear - no concessions!"

After the general left I said, "That still leaves us with the problem. At the next meeting nothing remains to be done but sign the Soviet agreement, which he has already agreed to do. I suggest that we explain the risks to the French and ask them to drag out the meeting somehow so that the signature would have to be postponed until after the Geneva Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

"No, don't do that!" said Dowling.

One has to know when to disobey, and this was obviously the time. My career was at stake. Antagonizing both Steere and Dowling would finish me, I was sure. But I called the French deputy delegate, an elegant little chap whose name I have forgotten. He came to see me. I explained the insubordination of our general. "France has been a rather passive participant in

these negotiations," I noted. "You have few aircraft flying to and from Berlin. You are in the same boat with us, however; Soviet pilots do not read Latin characters, and "AIR FRANCE" may look like "U.S. Air Force to them."

Fortunately the Soviets had shot up an Air France plane recently, putting a 20-mm. cannon shell through a fat German woman passenger, who survived (!). The Frenchman saw the point. "I'll see what I can do," he promised.

At the next meeting the French came with huge ozalid maps and an extraordinarily complex plan which took the entire meeting to explain. The Soviet marshal sagged in his chair, defeat written on his face. I noticed that his underlings standing behind him were grinning with satisfaction. A hard man to work for, apparently. Ferretti's prediction was borne out. The Foreign Ministers' meeting was held and no more meetings on the air corridors were held. The Soviets had dropped the matter. Incidentally, the French proposal boiled down to simply widening the air corridors by ten kilometers!

That was the only occasion on which I felt that I had influenced great events successfully. As time went on the career Foreign Service was diluted by outsiders who were given high rank and never again was a diplomat of such youth and low-rank entrusted with such responsibility.

Another example of the stupidity of our section chief comes to mind. I handled relations with the Soviets. A moronic Soviet private, Kulikov, had shot his way into West Berlin while drunk, and when he had exhausted his ammunition was seized by the German police and handed over to us. Although he was too stupid to have any intelligence potential, his military captors fed him ice cream and told him he would surely be shot if he returned to Soviet control. He asked for asylum. He knew nothing of interest. The U.S. intelligence authorities found him a room in Frankfurt, gave him a small pension, and ignored him thereafter.

One weekend he tried to break into the Soviet mission in Frankfurt and was arrested by the German police. The Soviets jumped to the conclusion that he had been trying to return to their control and sent a note demanding that we turn him over. American intelligence depended largely on defectors in those days before spy satellites and U-2's. If they got their hands on Kulikov they probably would have shot him in front of witnesses from every Soviet unit and discouraged defectors for years to come. They would have given the impression that it was our policy to return defectors. They demanded a meeting with Kulikov. I called Charles Stefan, head of our Frankfurt office.

"What was that fellow trying to do with that break-in?"

"You won't believe this, Bill. He'd run out of money for booze and thought his old buddies would give him some."

"If we permit a meeting what is likely to happen?" I asked.

"He's so stupid that he might go back if they offered him a bottle of booze."

"So...no meeting!"

"If you can swing it, but the Soviets have two of our soldiers who strayed across the border. If we refuse a meeting they'll probably say we won't get those two fellows back until they get Kulikov."

I reasoned that I had to discourage the Soviets from insisting on a meeting by offering a meeting on terms unfavorable to them. I drafted a note of reply saying that we were ready at any time to arrange a meeting between Soviet officers and Private Kulikov in the presence of representatives of the world press in Frankfurt at which Private Kulikov would express his detestation of communist tyranny, etc. etc. I doubted that the Soviets wanted to run the risk of public humiliation at the hands of the half-wit Kulikov. But I had to clear my draft with the head of our section. He was appalled.

"Oh no, I understand this fellow is very shaky. If there's a meeting he'd probably go back," he said.

"Yes, sir. I know. So I'm pretending that he's not shaky and that we are supremely confident that he will not choose to go back and will denounce their government before the world press."

"I don't understand. We've got to avoid a meeting."

"I agree, so I'm trying to discourage them."

His mind was so unsubtle, however, that I could not explain the deception. He drafted a reply which would have meant disaster.

Again I had to go over his head to Dowling, who wearily said, "Have your original draft typed up for my signature and just don't tell him."

On another occasion I was duty officer. The French, in violation of an agreement always to act jointly with the Americans and the British in approaches to the Germans, had sent a note to the Germans without notifying us. The Germans, however, slipped us a copy confidentially. My section chief was in the office and asked me to translate it from French for a cable to Washington. I did, but my French was not perfect and I was not sure of the meaning of one word.

"Call up Berard (the French Deputy High Commissioner). He wrote it."

"But we are not supposed to let the French know we have it. It was given to us in confidence," I protested. He insisted. I said it was very high-handed for a junior American diplomat to call a senior French diplomat to ask how to translate a word.

"Do as you're told!" he snapped.

A French maid answered, and said that Berard was at dinner with guests. I told my superior. "Well, tell her to get him to the phone!" The Frenchman must have thought the Soviet invasion

had started. Never have I felt so humiliated as when I asked him to translate the word, the context of which also revealed that we had his text. He snapped the translation and slammed down the receiver. I cite these instances to show the damage caused by our habitually careless selection of senior officers and the confusion of others who, forced to work with them, are unable to follow their mental processes.

After only eleven months of his tour of duty, the blockheaded chief of the political section was transferred to a two-man post in Africa. According to report Secretary of State Dulles had been appalled by the man at the Foreign Ministers' Conference.

Another uproar over Neo-Nazis. The New York Times had reported that a new "Fuhrer" had harangued 5000 "jackbooted Storm Troopers" in Lubeck. The Department asked why we had not reported this startling development. I checked with the Consulate at Hamburg. The truth: one of the leaders of one of the minuscule Neo-Nazi groups was a friend of the town bandmaster, whom he had persuaded to let him make a little speech before the Sunday concert in the square. There were 5000 people - music loving *burgers* with their wives and children. The speech contained some pro-Nazi remarks.

When our new U.S. High Commissioner, James B. Conant (former president of Harvard) arrived, I was assigned to him as Executive Assistant. He traveled all over Germany in a private train, visiting our consulates and German regional governments. It was an arduous assignment, for he was extraordinarily energetic. At the behest of John Davies I was able to brief him on the struggle against the administrative "empire" built by the self-designated "Executive Director," Glenn Wolfe, who constantly added administrative staff while reducing the staff of the operating sections of the High Commission.

I was also the barrier between Conant and the American press. Conant did not want to see reporters until he was thoroughly conversant with the politics and economy of the country. The press, with its allies in the High Commission headed by Michael Boerner, constantly strove to break through. Boerner even convinced himself and his henchmen that it was a plot by the Political Section to insulate Conant. Once Boerner and a couple of sensationalist journalists barged right into Conant's office without consulting me, and were promptly thrown out by Conant, who came, fuming, to me. "I thought I told you I didn't want to give interviews!" he said. When I went to our press liaison section one fellow there bellowed, "The people have a right to know!" Their allegiance was not to the Department of State but to the newspapers to which they would return when their temporary appointments ended.

The greatest danger to a Foreign Service Officer is the press, which constantly tries to provoke a statement by a quotable government official which will produce a scandal. They had done so with the former High Commissioner, Walter P. Donnelly, who had assured them that no Nazi war criminals would be released while he was in charge - unaware that the U.S. Government had already agreed to release several of them.

Conant quickly absorbed information and soon was correcting erroneous statements to him made by subordinates. He asked me to circulate at receptions on our travels and make a 3"3x5" biographic card on every person with whom he spoke. These were kept in a drawer in his desk.

When I would announce a visitor I would ask him to wait just a minute. When he entered, Conant would greet him like an old friend, asking if his daughter's leg had healed after her skiing accident, how his wife Gertrud was, etc. Though of a reserved, calculating nature he thus gave the impression of a jolly extrovert.

I was also instructed to draft letters of polite, but very firm refusal to all requests that he become a member of the board or lend his name to any organization, pointing out the grief of the many people who had incautiously endorsed organizations later discovered to have ties with the Communists.

I was transferred to the United States for Russian Language and Area Training at Columbia Univ. and Middlebury College. I already spoke Russian quite well, but, despite the fact that I had received a mark of 100 on the entrance examination in 1947 the Department was unaware of it, so that Middlebury was just a pleasant vacation for me.

ALBERT STOFFEL
Economic Officer
Berlin (1950-1955)

Albert Stoffel was born in 1915 and raised in Rochester, New York. He graduated from the University of Rochester in 1938 with a degree in economics. In 1941, In 1941, he entered the Royal Air Force Civilian Technical Corps in England. After several months, he decided to return to the U.S. and join the Air Force as an aviation cadet. Mr. Stoffel's Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Canada, Vietnam, and France. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on May 9, 1994.

Q: In 1950 you went to Berlin where our paths crossed briefly. Your wife must have recovered sufficiently at that time to allow her to accompany you.

STOFFEL: Yes. Earlier in 1950 I'd gone into the German specialization program, and taken training at the Foreign Service Institute and that summer, at Middlebury College in the German language. My wife, who had rejoined me toward the end of my stay in Toronto, had a relapse and had to go back into the sanitarium.

With the Department's help and cooperation the decision was made that, rather than to go on to the full college year of German specialization, I would go to Berlin and would take our two-year old son with me. Then my wife could join me later after I had set up the house, which she did in about 3 or 4 months.

Q: Now your job there, as I understand it, to report on happenings in the German Democratic Republic.

STOFFEL: That's right. The mission in Berlin was divided into the Berlin Element, which was

responsible for the administration of the American sector of West Berlin. Our element was Eastern Element. We reported on the German Democratic Republic as if we were an embassy in East Berlin.

Q: In that type of work, could you have any personal contacts with East Germans?

STOFFEL: Oh yes, frequently. For example, we could get Soviet permission to go to the Leipzig Fair. We could travel relatively freely in East Berlin, which we did. We would go to the opera and the theater over there, into cafes and restaurants and what not. So we had casual contacts in that way.

Then we had an arrangement whereby the various intelligence agencies would call our attention to interesting individuals. For example, in my case, people that were involved in the economic life of the German Democratic Republic (a term that we did not use at that time. We called it East Germany or the Soviet Zone). We would interview them in a safe house, somewhere in West Berlin.

Q: That was the time, as I recall, of increasing pin pricks from the Soviets and the East Germans, although they never went to another blockade. East Germany and West Germany had barter pacts through which bartered goods moved back and forth.

STOFFEL: Yes. There was a kind of cross-sector trade. In fact, people lived in one sector and worked in the other sector at that time. There were things one could buy, but were restricted, for example, in what we could buy in East Berlin. Mainly because the black-market value of East marks was so low, compared to the official value placed on it in East Berlin. The Soviets wouldn't let us buy much except records or books. The favorite record was called "Ami Go Home," I still have my copy. We bought all kinds of Russian books at very low prices.

Q: As I recall, the outstanding event, the principal event, of your 5 years in Berlin were the riots in June 1953. Did you have a role in that or not?

STOFFEL: Not exactly a role, but I had a Mission car take me to the border with East Berlin. Then I walked over to Alexander Platz where there was a lot of demonstrating. Young East Germans were throwing rocks at Soviet tanks, etc. Of course we followed the whole development carefully in connection with our work in Eastern Element.

Q: Looking back on it, should we or could we have done more at that time to help the East Germans?

STOFFEL: I think probably not. With the benefit of hindsight, I would say we did about as much as we could do, short of stirring up an actual conventional war with the Soviet Union.

Q: Which of course we did not want.

STOFFEL: Right.

Q: What was the end result of those strikes and riots in June '53? Was it beneficial to the East Germans? Did it improve their life in any way?

STOFFEL: No, not really. I think it was similar to what the Soviets did in Hungary in 1956. They cracked down swiftly and thoroughly.

Q: The people in West Berlin offered food, did they not, for those people who wanted to come over and pick it up?

STOFFEL: Oh yes. There were extensive programs in that direction. As I recall, I think this is correct, there were even places where West marks were given out for shoppers that came over from East Berlin. At different times there were different programs.

Q: In 1955 the Soviets, as I remember, gave control of the traffic between West Germany and West Berlin to the East Germans. Was that on your watch or did that come after you left?

STOFFEL: I am not sure of the timing. At any rate that affected the German travelers but we were still under Soviet control.

Q: The Allies remained under Soviet control. This was for the inter-zonal German- German traffic.

STOFFEL: Yes. I crossed the border twice without Soviet authorization. I once went to Leipzig at a time when, for some reason or other, the Soviets were mad at us that year, and would not give us the normal permits for the Leipzig fair. At somebody's request, I went there on my own. Simply with my diplomatic passport and no Soviet authorization, and came back out and had no trouble. Scary!

Q: That was unusual.

STOFFEL: That was unusual.

The other instance was not planned. The normal route that we used between Berlin and West Germany was between Helmstedt and West Berlin. But on one occasion my family and I were going to the Riviera. It was suggested to me that I try a route that was, more or less, on a direct line from Berlin toward Munich, which wasn't used normally by U.S. personnel, but they wanted to see if it would work.

So I got the authorization from the Soviets for that route and drove off with my family. I think at that point we had two children. My wife, incidentally, was now over her tuberculosis. When I got to the vicinity of the West German border, the East German police seeing my U.S. occupation license plates -- they kept waving me through. I assumed they were passing me on to a Soviet control point. To my surprise I suddenly found we were in West Germany and nobody had checked me out of East Germany.

Q: No Soviet check.

STOFFEL: No Soviet check whatsoever which didn't disturb me too much until I realized that in two weeks, I'd be coming back by the same route. Nothing disastrous happened except that I had to wait for a Soviet officer, who came up to me and said, "Did you go through here two weeks ago?" I started to explain. He said, "That's all right, I just wanted to know," and waved me through.

Q: Well there are different ones.

Do you have any unusual or interesting points you'd like to make about your tour in Berlin at that time, those years?

STOFFEL: Two. One that I participated in the 1954 Foreign Ministers Conference in Berlin. One Saturday morning I was in bed with the flu and a temperature of 102. I got a call from one of my superiors telling me to get down to the Allied Control Council building.

I was to be the facilities officer for the conference and the barren building had to be ready in about two weeks, as I remember. So I went down to the little medical office we had and got a shot. By noon I was working on that problem. I had put together the offices for Mr. Dulles, Mr. Eaton, Mr. Bideau, Mr. Molotov, etc.

Q: The building hadn't been used for some years.

STOFFEL: Exactly. We had to set-up restaurant facilities, conference rooms, etc.

Q: That conference got a lot of publicity but it led to little, I gather, in the final analysis.

STOFFEL: Yes, that's true.

Q: Well we heard in later years a good deal about the flight of people from East Germany to West Germany. I believe it was called the "brain drain." Was that something to which you paid much attention?

STOFFEL: Oh yes. Because this was a terrible drain on the economy and the educational facilities of West Germany. I remember one statistic that I saw. A certain technical university in Leipzig, within say a week after graduation, about 98% of the graduates supposedly were in West Germany getting good jobs. This of course is why the Soviets and the East Germans decided to put up the Berlin Wall.

Q: Anything else about your days in Germany?

STOFFEL: There was one thing that has repercussions to this day. It occurred two weeks after I left Berlin, in the summer of 1955 to be transferred to Embassy Paris.

I went home and spent the summer with our two children in a log cabin that my father had on one of the Finger lakes in western New York state. In the fall I reported to Paris and became the

embassy Export Control Officer, that was my position in Paris.

Let me recap: In the Berlin Eastern Element on the economic side, which I was responsible for, we had an American contingent. One member of which, by the way, was John D. Anderson who in 1980 was a presidential candidate. The American staff, of course, handled classified material. On a separate floor we had a German operation where the staff followed newspapers, kept clippings and wrote reports of various kinds, none of them classified. I had a good German secretary, who was bilingual in German and English, and therefore very useful.

A male member of that German part of Eastern Element, came to visit me in Paris at the Embassy. He had come on as a tourist to Paris. He wanted to tell me that 2 weeks after I left Berlin, that secretary and her mother had been kidnaped from West Berlin, through a ruse by a young man who had persuaded her to give him English lessons. When the English lessons had progressed to a certain point, he said that he would like to repay her, to show his appreciation for what she'd done. So he invited her and her mother to dinner.

They got into a taxi cab which he had provided. As he drove away said, "My God, I forgot my billfold, we've got to stop at my house and get it." They didn't think much of it but they did think something was wrong when they suddenly found themselves racing for a gate between Berlin and the Soviet zone.

Without their stopping, the gate was raised and in they went to East Germany. There they were interrogated by the East German secret police and Miss Trapp was asked to spy on our office. They told her they knew I had left 2 weeks earlier, to indicate how much they knew about what went on there. They wanted her to spy and she was smart enough to eventually go along with them. But she said, "You realize this isn't going to work unless I show up for work tomorrow morning." They said, "All right, we'll fix it so that you can do that but if you double cross us, we'll get you."

So she came back to work the next morning and immediately reported to her boss and then to the security officer. Eventually this was publicized because it was related to another attempt where there was an attempt made on one of the German RIAS employees (Radio in the American Sector). US authorities finally decided that maybe these people would be safer if they publicized these attempts.

Some months later, I made a trip back to Berlin. I talked to the people concerned, including the employee involved. She told me that she'd really like to get to the United States. So I said, anything that I could do, I'd be glad to help.

Sometime later, I was visited in Paris by a German artist who had migrated to the United States after World War I. Among other things, had set up a large graphic society. We had met him on board a ship on one of our crossings. He would invite us out to dinner when he came to Paris.

So I asked him on this one occasion whether he could use a bilingual German-English secretary. He said he might, because he was now engaged in publishing the UNESCO series of art books. He was traveling all over the world in connection with this series of very fine art books. So I

gave him the name and address of the employee.

Some months later he returned to Paris with the German employee. They had met in Munich and he was taking her around to meet his colleagues. She went to the United States with her mother. Eventually she married her boss. They had three children and lived in the New York city area. In 1993, at the request of the FBI and the German authorities, she returned to Berlin to testify against Marcus Wolf of the East German secret police. Her testimony was needed to confirm that Marcus Wolf had carried out her kidnapping.

MANUEL ABRAMS
Trade and Payments Officer, Economic Cooperation Administration
Frankfurt (1950-1955)

Manuel Abrams was born in Pennsylvania in 1919, and graduated from the City College of New York in 1939. His career has included postings in Frankfurt, Paris, The Hague, Rome, Brussels and Geneva. Mr. Abrams was interviewed in 1990 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: When was this?

ABRAMS: I applied in the summer of 1950 and I went to Germany in December.

Q: I wonder if you could describe from your point of view as a American foreign service officer dealing with the economics of Germany. How did you see Germany at that time?

ABRAMS: It was a time when Germany was about to change very radically. It was after the currency reform of '48. I arrived in Germany at the end of 1950, several months after the beginning of the Korean War. The Germany I then saw had very severe balance of payments problems which many people thought were incurable. And it just so happened that my job in Germany was dealing with the balance of payments, which was an important factor in determining the level of US aid. After a few months of working there and working fairly closely with the German Central Bank, it became pretty obvious to one of my colleagues and me, as well as to the man we were working with within the German Central Bank, Dr. Emminger, President of the bank, that the balance of payments problem was a temporary one.

Q: What was the balance of payment problem?

ABRAMS: The problem was that Germany had gold and foreign currency reserves totalling less than \$200 million. It had imports that greatly exceeded its exports. The solution proposed by the Marshall Plan Head Quarters in Paris was to stop issuing licenses for German imports. That didn't solve anything but it did at least temporarily stop the hemorrhage of German reserves. We in Frankfurt reviewed the situation and concluded that this was nonsense. The reason that the Germans had this huge balance of payments deficit was that German industry correctly saw that the Korean War would mean a sharp increase in prices of raw materials. So after the war began,

they rushed out and purchased raw materials like mad. And they were very smart. Beginning about March 1951, German imports went down and German exports shot up. In fact within about a year, I wrote a memorandum recommending the end of aid to Germany.

Q: Was this breaking a lot of rice bowls for the aid program in Germany?

ABRAMS: Well, there were several problems. First of all, my immediate superior on his first reading of the memorandum was horrified. Again, the idea that Germany might not need aid had not occurred to anyone. And most Germans were upset that they might no longer be getting aid from the US. This happened in every country where we had an aid program. The initial reaction is great shock. Countries became hooked on aid. But as a matter of fact, beginning in the spring of 1951 the German balance of payments switched to a surplus and has remained in surplus to the present day.

Q: That switch took six months. What was the reaction in our government? Why did we miss see this?

ABRAMS: What had happened is that prior to the period of the currency reform, production was virtually at a standstill. The currency was worthless. There was no incentive to produce because all you would get for the goods was worthless money. But the groundwork was laid by having the work staff set up and the factories reorganized. After currency reform there was a sudden outpouring of production. Incidentally this was one issue on which the Germans were absolutely right and we were not. We opposed the end of rationing but Ludwig Erhard, Economics Minister, prevailed. (He later succeeded Adenauer as chancellor.)

The idea that Germany might not need aid was a shock, but I think the US government reacted quite well to this, after a lag required for rethinking. And it was one of the first--if not the first--major country where we terminated an aid program.

Q: How did you operate in the HICOG atmosphere?

ABRAMS: That was very different from an embassy. Considering the job we had, which involved helping to run the German economy, the staff was amazingly small and unlayered. Which was a marked contrast to Washington.

I was a relatively low level officer dealing with the major problem of whether Germany should get aid. And I reported through a division chief to the director of the US aid mission. I attribute some of the success of HICOG, and I think HICOG was quite a successful organization, to the fact that we had not yet to overstaff to the extent that we later did.

Q: So decisions could be made quickly but also you didn't have as many people really depending on the program continuing. There is self interest built into inertia.

ABRAMS: I should note that the staff was large in relation to that of an embassy. When HICOG was transformed in 1955 to the US Embassy the process involved major staff reductions. But in relation to the job, it was a lean staff.

Q: We were talking about some things in Germany that we hadn't mentioned, not just balance of payments but support costs that were extremely important at that time. I wonder if you could tell me just what that involved?

ABRAMS: So long as we were an occupying power along with the British and the French, we received occupation costs, funds and facilities to help maintain the troops who were doing the occupying. When it was decided that the occupation and Germany would become a member of NATO, the question arose as to the transitional financing of the forces which would remain stationed in Germany. This was around 1952, '53, when the negotiations to end the occupation began. There was a whole host of things that had to be settled before the occupation ended. As a matter of fact, the occupation did not end until May 1955. It took about three years of negotiations to work this out. The big financial question, aside from old German debts, was the financing of the troops stationed in Germany, to help maintain the peace in Europe. This turned out to be the most difficult subject to be tackled and was the last issue to be resolved.

There was an agreement in principle with the Germans early on that for a limited period of time, as they slowly built up their own forces, they would continue to provide funds and help maintain the Allied forces but that it would be limited in time and limited in amount. Then the question was what would be the timing and what would be the amount. This was difficult because the German program for building up its forces was unrealistically rapid, which we knew and I suspect they knew as well. It was finally worked out in time for ending the occupation in 1955.

Q: Whom were you dealing with at that time?

ABRAMS: It was principally the Finance Ministry, as well as the nucleus of what would become the Defense Ministry once Germany regained its full sovereignty.

Q: Were they saying that their superiors said that this was going to occur quickly?

ABRAMS: They were trying to make the case that the speed with which the troops would be built up would limit the amount of money available for support costs. As it turned out, even our own estimates were optimistic as to amount of time required for the German buildup. Interestingly enough, the greatest shortage turned out to be non-commissioned officers in Germany. That's what kept the pace of rearmament very slow.

Q: I'm surprised because what really made the German army great in the two wars was the strength of its non commissioned officers.

ABRAMS: There was a problem in finding experienced non career officers and a considerable lack of enthusiasm. It was a very slow process.

ALAN G. JAMES
Kreis Officer, High Commissioner in Germany

Frankfurt (1950)

Administrative/Political/Consular Officer Munich (1951-56)

Alan G. James was born in 1920 and raised in New York. He graduated from Williams College in 1943. At that time, he enlisted in the U.S. Army. After finishing his tour in the Army, he attended Yale Law School. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, France, and England. Mr. James was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on December 20, 1994.

JAMES: We KROs assembled in the autumn of 1950 and went through intensive training in German, German history and politics and United States policy toward Germany. We spent from September 1950 to March 1951 in this concentrated "Germanization." In mid-March we sailed to Germany on the French Line, like young princes, in first class accommodation, with our personal automobiles stowed in the ship's hold. After arriving in Germany, we were ordered to Bad Homburg where we all lived together in the faded splendor of that famous spa while awaiting assignment. The FSO eligibles were soon commissioned, which meant that we would have to leave our friends and the Kreis program and take assignments at various consulates in Germany. I went to Munich.

I was sorry to leave the Kreis group. Many had become, and remain, good friends. How close knit we were is attested by the fact that over the years we have, with some regularity, reassembled for jolly reunions. Many of our KRO group finished out their contract as Kreis resident officers. Some later went into the information program and a number became directors of an Amerika Haus.

Q: *Which is basically a U.S. Information...within today's terms, but a library.*

JAMES: That's right. But let me go on a bit about the KROs. They helped the local German authorities in their Kreis in a variety of practical ways. I recall being told, for example, that Jonathan Dean, later an ambassador who was our chief negotiator on mutual and balanced force reductions, and was in the first KRO group, made a major contribution to the rebuilding of the town where he was located by obtaining a quantity of scarce concrete for the Burgermeister. It would have been an incomparable experience to remain in the KRO program and help directly to rebuild Germany as a democratic state.

Q: *I understand that they were often known as the Kreis fuhrers, but they really weren't. But that it was designed essentially to get the U.S. Army out of the running of Germany, and as a transitional program, and to put it in the hands of people who were not doing things in the military way, although everyone in it practically, of course, was a former soldier or sailor of some sort.*

JAMES: Oh, that is very true. As you say, ours was a totally different operation from military government. The KROs were to try to produce a more normal political climate. We arrived in the spring of 1951. The war had been over for six years. West Germany was beginning to recover

with American help and to experience an economic miracle, Wirtschaftswunder, the Germans called it. I suppose that most people in military government were honest and did not try to take advantage of the plight of the Germans, there were quite a few who were greedy and unscrupulous. Our KRO groups were clean hands groups, and I think they made a tremendously favorable impression on most of the Germans with whom they came in contact precisely because of their probity. They were dedicated, responsible and idealistic. But they were not naive. As you observed, most had been in the military during the war. They had experience, skills, a sense of realism too.

Q: Just one backward glance. Can you recall anything about the entry exams -- both the written and the oral -- that you took?

JAMES: Yes, I can. The written exam, I think, was three days long.

Q: I think three and a half.

JAMES: Maybe three and a half. It was a tough examination but I was well prepared. There were largely essay questions, some true/false questions as well. I really can't remember. But it was essentially a written examination. I did rather well. My marks in math and reading comprehension were not impressive, but I think I got one of the highest marks in our group on the history part, which pleased Bob Scott, whom you undoubtedly knew at Williams and who, incidentally, was one of the tutors at the cram course I took.

In the early spring of 1950, I sat for the oral examination, going down to Washington by train from New York for the day. The Chairman of the panel of examiners was Joseph Greene, Director of the Board of Examiners. Who were the other two members of the panel I cannot remember. The interview which was cordial but put one on one's mettle, did not last very long, perhaps 45 minutes to an hour. I remember only some of the questions; one was about why I wanted to join the Service; another was what were some of the major international problems of 1950. I must have addressed those questions and others with some success. Toward the end of the examination, Mr. Greene put a question to me in French. It was something like "Avez-vous visite la France?" Having returned from that country only a few months earlier, I felt comfortable in the response I gave. Then the grilling was over. I was asked to step outside while another candidate entered the room. A couple of hours later I was asked to return and informed that I had made a good impression and had passed the oral. Incidentally, another candidate examined that day was Bill Graves, later Editor of the National Geographic Magazine, and a good colleague during several years in Germany.

Satisfied with my performance that day, I treated myself to a first class seat on the train and toasted my success with a long drink.

I stayed on in New York, at Kirlin's, for another six months. Since there was no indication that I would be commissioned soon, we decided it might be a good idea to go to Washington in the hope that by being on the spot I could get a job in the Department and perhaps speed up my commission.

Q: I spent 30 years in the Foreign Service, and until I started doing these interviews, I didn't really realize how important it is to hang around the corridors of the State Department and ask questions. If you want to get ahead, you find your own job, usually. Maybe I did know it, subliminally. It's one of the early lessons one really should know, but it's not necessarily passed on. You've got fancy personnel systems, but, gee, if they want somebody now, and if you're there and somebody knows your name, all of a sudden, you've got the job.

JAMES: Well, that's what happened. When I arrived at the Department I fell into an interesting job with Mr. Berry. I liked working for him and felt I was profitably occupied, even though my commissioning was nowhere in sight.

Q: You went to Munich in 1951.

JAMES: Right, we arrived on April Fool's Day, 1951.

Q: What were you doing?

JAMES: I began as General Services Officer of the Consulate General, a man of all work. The Administrative Officer, my boss, was a doughty, very capable lady, Lucy Lentz, an old line Foreign Service Officer who was one of the early women entrants. We got on quite well. She liked my wife, and that helped smooth our relationship. I was teased by colleagues who went to Germany with me for being the Consulate's chief light bulb changer. The experience was salutary, however; it helped one to keep a sense of proportion about one's indispensability to the foreign policy establishment.

I knew little about Munich, of course, although over time I got to know it well, its galleries, museums, palaces, shops, markets. My job was made infinitely easier by a kind, elderly retainer of the Consulate, Rudolph Messinger, who knew nearly every nook and cranny and purveyor in the city and could procure whatever item we needed at the Consulate. Messinger, who probably was in his 70s when I arrived, had been a consulate employee in the time of Robert Murphy. He told me how in the days before the war he would meet the night train from Berlin and pick up the diplomatic (classified) pouch which he would take to his office in the consulate for safekeeping until the next morning when an officer would open it. He was a nice man and generous. To him I owe a splendid 18th century map of Munich, "as it is to be seen from noon to midnight," with a profile of the city skyline at the bottom.

My assignment as GSO did not last long, possibly less than a year. I then moved into the Visa Section where I was an immigrant visa issuing officer. There was a separate program for issuance of visas to refugees. I issued visas for about a year, and then went into the Political Section where I worked for the rest of my Munich tour.

Q: Well, let's talk a bit about the visa business before we move on. I came in some years later. I went to Frankfurt, where I was a refugee relief officer to begin with, and then I did some other things. With the immigrants and all, it was a fairly complicated business, in a way, because we knew an awful lot about these people. We had the Berlin Document Center, and we had American investigators all over the place. So you had an awful lot of information, didn't you,

about people?

JAMES: We did have a lot of information. I don't remember much about visa issuance. It was for the most part a terribly routine process and little memorable happened. I think I managed the interviews competently. We had had short but intensive German language training at the Foreign Service Institute and I felt comfortable in the language, more so than in French which I had studied for a much longer period of time.

I remember turning down one applicant for an immigrant visa. He had been a Nazi party member, as we knew from the BDC. I was determined not to give him a visa, although he was apparently qualified in other respects; he had not been a concentration camp guard or anything like that. He may have been a non-active Party member. I don't know. But I turned him down flat. I have not lost sleep over doing so, but I have wondered whether I did the fair thing.

The visa people who were really busy were my friends and colleagues in the refugee program.

Q: My class, which was July of '55, went out there. Herb Okun and others went there, and they were swamped in the refugee program. As a political officer in Bavaria, you were really doing political work from '52ish to '56.

JAMES: Yes, about that period of time.

But let me first talk about Sam Woods who was the Consul General when we arrived in Munich. Some years before, he had been in the U.S. Commercial Service and served in Berlin from 1937 to 1941 when he was interned and later exchanged. There was a story that through his extensive contacts he learned that the Germans intended to invade Russia in June 1941. If the story is true, Woods's discovery of the German invasion plan was a coup for him and helped his career. But he was astute as well as lucky, and was Consul General in two important posts after Berlin, in Zurich during much of the war, and later in Istanbul. He had excellent domestic political credentials, counting among his friends fellow Mississippian Catfish Miller, influential and long-time door keeper of the House of Representatives.

Q: Yes, for years he was the man who used to say, "Mr. Speaker, I have the honor to introduce the President of the United States." For years.

JAMES: Woods was married to Wilhelmina "Minnie" Busch, heiress of the Anheuser-Busch empire. She was an ample lady, who had been married several times before she married Woods in 1948, and had lived in a schloss south of Munich throughout the war, without herself or her immense trove of furniture and art being molested by the Germans. Being then married to a German (Nazi?) probably gave her immunity. She and Woods gave lavish parties to which came everyone of importance in Bavaria. I was once tasked as GSO to locate a missing shipment of yards and yards of organdy or taffeta which Mrs. Woods had ordered to be made into a dress for some imminent function, possibly their 1951 Fourth of July party. I was lucky and succeeded in tracking it down. But that chore made me the brunt of yet more jokes by my colleagues.

Woods was a jovial, likeable man. A few days after my wife and I had arrived in Munich, we

were invited to his Munich apartment for luncheon. It was a comfortable, buergerlich place, crammed from floor to ceiling with art in the Bavarian genre -- cows, peasants, alpine meadows. It was a pleasant occasion. Another guest that day was the widow of impresario Max Reinhardt, who, among other things, staged the Salzburg festival. She was representative of the company in which Woods moved. My wife and I much appreciated Woods' gracious gesture.

I served under Woods for roughly a year until he was replaced by someone who really livened up the Consulate General -- Charlie Thayer.

Q: *Oh, yes.*

JAMES: Thayer had style and dash. He was a very vivid character, and as Consul General gave a bravura performance. He came loaded with ideas. Clearly, he did not intend to be merely a provincial consul general; he was going to have an active reporting program that would keep Washington well briefed on developments in Bavaria -- political, economic and social. He was also determined to make his own personal contribution to policy making, based as it was on extensive experience of Balkan, eastern European and Soviet affairs. One example: when Stalin died in the spring of 1953, Thayer immediately sent a telegram to the Department recommending how to react to Stalin's death. His prescription was: don't say too much publicly about Stalin's demise; "let the yeast work," those were his very words, for, as he pointed out, there was not much the United States could do to influence ensuing internal developments, and outside interference would only help to keep the Russians united.

Thayer's reporting program called for the appropriate sections of the Consulate General to prepare studies of important institutions and trends in Bavaria. As one of the political officers, I wrote or helped to draft a number of such reports.

Thayer cultivated a wide circle of politicians, media people and business men. He gave excellent luncheons in a dining room he fixed up in the Consulate General nearly every working day, to which I or other officers were invited depending on the responsibilities and interests of the German guest. It was fun working for Thayer. He made the Consulate General into a small embassy.

Q: *I'm a bit vague on details, but he was, in the first place, a brother-in-law to Chip Bohlen, was that it?*

JAMES: He was Chip's brother-in-law, yes.

Q: *And also he was under some fire because of McCarthy, wasn't he? He was sort of put there out of the line of fire, in a way.*

JAMES: I cannot say whether Thayer was sent to Munich so he would be out of harm's way. He had been serving in Germany and it was logical for him to be sent to Munich after Sam Woods left. But he was certainly one of McCarthy's targets. In point of career, personality and private life, Thayer was suspect to McCarthy and his allies. He had served all his career under Democratic administrations. He had spent long years in Communist countries, Russia and

Yugoslavia; had held an important post in VOA, an institution not liked by the hard right; he was slightly unconventional; and he had had a liaison with a Russian woman, a dancer, I believe. It appears that McCarthy's spy in the State Department, Scott McLeod, who was in charge of security, told McCarthy about Thayer's affair with the Russian dancer. In March of 1953, Thayer was summoned to appear before McCarthy's committee where details of his private life were sure to come out. At this time, Thayer's brother-in-law's nomination to be ambassador to the USSR was under consideration in the Senate.

Thayer was told that McCarthy had details of his Russian indiscretion and would likely use it against him. According to Bohlen, Thayer decided not to fight and was allowed to resign "to write books." I have just refreshed my memory by perusing Bohlen's autobiography "Witness to History" in which he gives an account of how Thayer fell victim to McCarthy. Thayer's motive in resigning, Bohlen states, was to spare his mother the embarrassment of a public airing of his morals. Personally, I think there was an additional reason for Thayer's resigning. Bohlen's confirmation looked like being a close-run thing. His chances of confirmation would certainly not be enhanced by revelation of Thayer's private life, given the evident closeness of Bohlen and Thayer. I have long firmly believed that Thayer also wanted to protect Bohlen and that that consideration played a part in his decision to quit.

He broke the news to the committee on March 26th when he called U.S. officers to his office. I do not recall that he elaborated much on the reasons for his decision, but I have a faint memory that he made some linkage to Bohlen's confirmation hearing.

Incidentally, I met Scott McLeod a few months after Thayer resigned. He came to Munich, possibly on a routine visit to consular posts in Germany. It was a Saturday and I was duty officer. I took some papers to him and he said something about troubling me on the weekend. The only riposte I could think of quickly was: "Dienst is Dienst and Schnapps is Schnapps." I am not sure he understood my attempt at sarcasm.

I immediately telephoned my wife whose pregnancy was about at term to tell her of Thayer's resignation. This shocked her into labor that evening. She delivered our son Alan Jr. the next morning. Everyone close to Thayer keenly regretted his resignation; was deeply saddened for him and Cynthia, his valiant wife; and angry because it was apparent, even if we did not then know exactly how, McCarthy was responsible.

Thayer left quickly and was succeeded by Allan Lightner, with whom my wife and I became very friendly. Lightner and his wife Dorothy were delightful, considerate and good company. Lightner had had an interesting career. He was Charge in Seoul during the Korean War, and acquired distinction by the way he handled Syngman Rhee, to whom he stood up forthrightly. He was also noted for what I am told was perceptive policy telegrams he sent to the Department while Charge about U.S. policy toward Korea. Lightner was our Consul General for the next two and half years.

Those were busy years. I had a range of fascinating reporting responsibilities. I covered internal Bavarian politics, with special emphasis on refugee and expellee affairs. In the early 1950s, American authorities were concerned about the direction the refugee and expellee movements

might take. The essential question was whether those groups would remain militant and form a radical element in German politics, or whether they would assimilate, work through the established political parties and enter the mainstream of German political life. The Sudeten Germans were of particular concern.

Q: After World War II, the Sudeten Deutsche, as well as the East Prussian Germans and many of the Germans who had been in what became Poland, had moved back to Germany and were a distinct group.

JAMES: The Sudetens and Silesians were the largest of the expellee groups. They were quite distinct. The Silesians, who were led by a man named Hupke were less militant, but they had their grievances as well. The Sudetens were the potentially explosive crowd. I got to know some of them rather well by attending their rallies and visiting their settlements. I saw a great deal of one of their top people, a man named Becker who was a sort of assistant to old Lodgman von Auen, leader of the Sudetens. Through Becker I could, I thought, be pretty sure I had access to authentic Sudeten ideas and attitudes.

In the Consulate General we also observed closely the activities of the radical right and left. There was a Bavarian Communist Party and a couple of rightist, but not openly neo-Nazi, parties. It was instructive to see how tough the Bavarian authorities were in dogging the extremist parties and how determined they were that these minorities should not flourish because democrats slept. One high official of the Bavarian Interior Ministry, Dr. Werner Kanein, became a friend and a most informative interlocutor. His brief was the extremist parties and he took his duties very seriously. He was determined to do everything necessary to keep the radicals from making headway in Bavaria, even if the government's control measures were something less than wholly democratic. The way the Ministry shut down communist rallies when the discourse became anti-state was a revelation. Kanein wanted no return to the 1930s.

In our political reporting we were assisted magnificently by a German employee of the Consulate General, Talitha von Heyden. Miss von Heyden had been in the German foreign service before the war and served in the Rome embassy. She was a splendid resource. She was well-informed and had wide contacts in the political parties and the press. She complemented our own efforts nicely, giving us briefs and comments on developments, reporting on her own talks with political types, calling our attention to matters that might have escaped us. She was completely loyal and most agreeable to work with.

And, of course, we spent a good deal of time talking with Bavarian politicians, assessing their programs and reporting on the activities of the main democratic Bavarian political parties, the socialists, SPD; the liberals, FDP; the provincial Bavarian party; and the conservatives, the CSU.

Q: It's not the CDU, but the...

JAMES: Christian Social Union, a peculiarly Bavarian party allied with the CDU, but proud of its own identity and Bavarian origins and dynamic. As the name implies, it is rather more liberal than the CDU, at least it was when it was founded. It is a political force in its own right.

Q: *Strauss was the...*

JAMES: Franz Josef Strauss was the leader of the CSU for a number of years until he died a few years ago. I got to know CSU people quite well, thanks to Strauss's friend, the late Dr. Ernst Deuerlein, who was chef de cabinet of Dr. Hans Ehard, Minister President of Bavaria for most of the time I was there. Deuerlein became a good friend. He lost a leg at Stalingrad and was a bit coy that Hitler personally awarded him the Iron Cross. Deuerlein was a noted historian and authority on the Catholic Church in Bavaria. He taught at the University of Tuebingen and died too young. He was an absolutely invaluable source of political information, about the CSU and other parties as well. It was immensely gratifying to enjoy a relationship of confidence with a man of such erudition, character and humor.

I might back up and say another word about the kind of reporting we did under Thayer. Among the basic factors we looked at was the separatist tradition in Bavaria. There was much less likelihood that in the post World War II period Bavaria would go its separate way from the rest of Germany than that the expellees might radicalize German political life. However, given Bavaria's past, it seemed important to spot and report on trends that might set Bavaria apart from the other states of West Germany, at least make Bavaria less disposed to cooperate with her neighbors.

In a paper another officer and I wrote, we reached the conclusion, endorsed by Thayer, that the prospects that Bavaria would not be a wholly integrated part of Germany, politically and economically, were almost nil, although culturally the proud Bavarians would certainly try to continue to distinguish themselves from their neighbors.

I also collaborated on a study of the Catholic Church in Bavaria. The Church there has long been a major force in the lives of Bavarians, not only spiritually but politically as well. The long reign of the CSU in Bavaria after the war owed not a little to the "guidance" the church gave voters. Doing these Thayer-inspired studies was fascinating and instructive. For one who majored in history at Williams it was particularly gratifying. All this merely shows how intellectually lively it was to work for Thayer. As you know he wrote a number of books.

Q: *One was "Bears in the Caviar."*

JAMES: "Bears in the Caviar" was probably his best known. There was a sequel titled "Hands Across the Caviar." He also wrote one on unconventional warfare, "Guerrilla;" and on Germany, "The Unquiet Germans." After being forced out of the Service, he retired in Bavaria and died some time ago at age 59.

I keep wondering from time to time whether John Foster Dulles had a hand in forcing Thayer out. He and the Department did not behave well in the affair. I should note that Cynthia Thayer told us that in a Christmas card Dulles sent her parents, Ambassador and Mrs. James Clement Dunn in 1953, he added a note to the effect, "So sorry about your son-in-law." That to my wife and me seemed a bit hypocritical, considering that at the very least Dulles did nothing to stand up for Thayer.

Q: Well, I've heard stories about maybe it was Dulles, after the bitter hearings that went on, on Bohlen, saying never make me go through that again, or something like that. In other words, he didn't want to have problems. This is all very vague. Tell me, you were there during the McCarthy period, and obviously you weren't under the gun, as many of the junior officers, it was a generation ahead. But you were seeing one who was, if not a target, somebody kind of involved in being a political liability under the Dulles/Eisenhower/McCarthy period. Did you get any feel about the McCarthy period at all from that particular vantage point?

JAMES: We had another taste of McCarthyism when Cohn and Schine were swarming around Europe and came to Germany not long after Thayer resigned to investigate the loyalty of officials, particularly those in the information and cultural programs.

Q: These were two staff members of McCarthy.

JAMES: No one who was in the Service at that time could fail to feel directly or indirectly the hot breath of McCarthy. It was in the late spring or early summer of 1953 when these two henchmen of his came to Munich. They had visited a number of other consulates, summoning to appear before them officers much their senior and with records far more distinguished than their own, to grill them about policy and programs and I guess evaluate their loyalty.

They did not grill me; I can't remember whether they had Lightner on the carpet or not. If they did examine him, he came through unscathed. There was, however, one prominent local casualty of the McCarthy campaign to root out officials he considered disloyal. Lowell Clucas was head of the U.S. Information program in Munich, Bavaria. I remember that around the time Cohn and Schine were on their witch hunt in Germany, the Director of USIA fired Clucas. It is probably hard to prove, but my friends in the information service believe that Clucas, who was able and certainly loyal, was considered by the head of the Agency, for some now forgotten reason, a liability to the Agency which was then under McCarthy's scrutiny. You can imagine how the Bavarian press ridiculed the antics of Cohn and Schine, who behaved badly.

Let me give you an idea of the atmosphere created by McCarthy. In the spring of 1953, officers in the Consulate had to complete a form for renewal of one's security clearance. As I filled out the form, I observed to someone, possibly a security type, that I thought I would put down Thayer as a reference. "I wouldn't do that, if I were you," warned this forgettable person. I am afraid I did not list Thayer. But I did list two other esteemed friends which, as I recall, led to questions being raised about them. One was the late Joseph E. Johnson, then President of the Carnegie Endowment, who as much as anyone encouraged me to join the Foreign Service.

Q: Who had been a professor of both mine and yours at Williams.

JAMES: Was very, very...

Q: ...influential in setting up the United Nations.

JAMES: Exactly. Well, Joe had worked for Alger Hiss in the Department, and putting him down as a reference seems to have had repercussions. Possibly the sleuth who talked to him about me

had the audacity to probe into Joe's loyalty as well. The same thing seems to have happened to Judge Edgar Nathan (Williams 1912, I think) who married me and my wife. A former Borough President of Manhattan whose forebears had been in this country for three centuries, Judge Nathan, too, seemed to some cretin like a questionable reference because he had been active in Russian war relief.

Finally, let me give you one more small but telling example of the climate created by McCarthy. After Lightner came to Munich, I came across an article that was particularly apt and condemnatory of McCarthyism. I cut it out and left it on Lightner's desk while he was out, leaving a note to the effect that this might please him. When he read it he thanked me but remonstrated that I should not have left it unattended on his desk, for someone, you could not tell who, might come along and read it.

Q: Really, it shows an atmosphere.

JAMES: One could not help but be depressed. I toyed with the idea of quitting the Service and wrote to my friend Joseph C. Harsch, of the Christian Science Monitor, asking his advice. He strongly urged me to stay in. Lightner was staunch. He was a fine Consul General. He was loyal to, and expected loyalty from, his staff.

Q: As a political officer in Munich, at the time, did you have the feeling that what you were doing was of use up in Bonn, or did you report directly to Washington? How did it work?

JAMES: We reported directly to Washington, copying Bonn and other posts in Germany, as appropriate. There were periodic conferences of consulate political officers in Bonn which were enjoyable. There was always time for a detour to the French Club which had an excellent cuisine and cellar. These conferences were also instructive. Senior officers of the Embassy considered us political officers from the consulates part of the team. I remember during one conference the Minister "Red" Dowling, came to our meeting to fill us in on an important conversation Secretary Dulles had just had with Adenauer. Even before he drafted the reporting telegram, Dowling spoke from his notes and gave us a long account.

Officers in the Embassy's political section were always interested in developments in the various laender, states, and we were encouraged to make full presentations on significant trends in our regions. The political section in Bonn was, I recall, a strong one. Elim O'Shaughnessy, courteous and wise, was the Counselor and our host. Another able officer was Francis Williamson, a nice man. Jonathan Dean was there at the time, I think.

In the mid-1950's, as I have suggested, Germany politics was in flux. Probably more so than today, 40 years ago, the Embassy depended on the consulates to spot rising political figures, observe and analyze trends that might affect national politics. Always the big question was whether the German people wanted Germany to evolve into a democratic state firmly anchored in a united, outward looking Europe.

Q: Well, it was viewed with a great deal of care, since two wars had come out of this country. It was not accepted as a given that everything would be sweetness and light in the future.

JAMES: I think that's right, and that's why the reporting of the consulates was important in the development of American policy toward Germany. I had the feeling that I was doing something worthwhile. I enjoyed my work.

One had great scope under both Thayer and Lightner to develop contacts, be as active as one wished. My job was made more agreeable and rewarding by working with Chris Petrow, the other political officer, a fine officer who spoke excellent French and good German, and wrote elegantly. In my opinion, Petrow was one of the most accomplished officers I met in the Service.

I enjoyed talking with Bavarian politicians, who were affable for the most part and very accessible. I frequented the Landtag, State parliament, to seek out key members for a chat which often was accompanied by beer and wurst. Party conferences were informative and entertaining, especially the Bavarian Party's which were quintessentially a folklorique. There were characters galore on the political stage, but many politicians were high-minded, able and patriotic who wanted Germany to be a respected member of a new Europe. One man of notable good will was the head of the Bavarian socialist party, SPD, Högner, who later became Minister President of Bavaria. Högner had been a member of the ill-fated Reichstag that had voted Hitler into power in January 1933. In his wallet, Högner carried a paper, frayed and yellow with age, showing the tabulation of votes that were cast against Hitler, including his own. Högner was an unforgettable character.

Q: How did you find, in that time (enough time has passed so it's not any secret), the influence, as political officers, of the CIA? I remember, in Frankfurt, Joe Strange was the CIA type in there doing things. What was your impression of what they were up to?

JAMES: I did not really know much about what they were up to. I knew many of the officers in the Munich Station socially. Virtually all were from Ivy League colleges, with nice manners and a taste for parties and skiing. They were agreeable company. I could not comment on how capable they were, but there was no question about their loyalty. The Station Chief seemed like a real professional. And I became a close friend of one officer, now dead, Hiram Mallinson, a jolly, adventuresome man who, it seemed to me, took his job seriously. I can only add that the Station in Munich was probably keeping a close eye on radical movements in Bavaria and helping train German secret service people.

I had only fleeting contact with the CIC.

Q: This is the Army.

JAMES: The Army's Counter Intelligence Corps. They were running agents into East Germany from Bavaria with some frequency, and one day I was asked to give an opinion whether an agent should be sent across. Why I was asked and what I recommended I forget.

I was in the dark about most U.S. intelligence operations in Bavaria. But I did know about the CIA connection with Radio Free Europe, which operated out of Munich. For a while I filled in for the officer who was the Consulate's liaison with RFE, and sent assorted reports and

intelligence to its Political Director, Bill Griffith. I am fairly sure that the CIA station people read my political reports, for I received a number of compliments about them from CIA acquaintances.

Q: Just to get a feel for the time. You were in Munich. Czechoslovakia and East Germany were abutted on your lawn. What was the feeling towards the Soviet threat at that time? You were there from '51 until...

JAMES: Until 1956. To be frank, I was not, as I recall, deeply concerned about the Soviet threat. I did not lose sleep about having my family so close to the line between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. There were people who were much concerned, but I wasn't one. Parenthetically, I should note that when I was recruiting the KRO group, one of the people I interviewed, a capable man we should have liked to have had join us, alleged he was privy to highly classified intelligence reports which led him to take the Soviet menace so seriously that he declined our invitation to join the KROs.

Of course, I was cognizant of the tremendous Russian capability, but I did not have the feeling that any time they might be so rash as to attack NATO. I suppose I was well aware of our nuclear capability and that deterrence was working. The Army organized periodic evacuation drills for civilians but none of us consular people took them very seriously. We were busy with our own work and problems and refused to let fear of a Soviet attack bedevil us. I might observe, however, that in June of 1953 when there was an uprising in East Germany, we felt some apprehension that the situation might deteriorate and a confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact ensue.

Q: And in Berlin, too.

JAMES: We were, of course, concerned that something might go wrong there as well. But to repeat myself, I cannot remember being in any prolonged state of anxiety.

Q: I was in the Air Force as an enlisted man. I remember we were confined to barracks during that uprising, just for a few days, because we weren't sure what was going to happen. What about a very important institution, particularly for a political officer, but also for democracy... And everything was so new in Germany, it's hard to imagine, it was really a new country, almost. How did you find the media, the press particularly?

JAMES: The most important of the serious newspapers in Munich were, and I think still are, The Sueddeutsche Zeitung and The Münchner Merkur. Of the two, the Sueddeutsche was intellectually far and away the better. In fact, it was arguably one of the finest, most stimulating papers in Germany. The Merkur had a conservative, pro- business bias, while the Sueddeutsche was slightly left of center. The stars of the Sueddeutsche were its editor, Friedman, and principal political commentator Probst, who signed his column "Junius." Both were men of considerable attainment and influence. The Consulate cultivated them as well as journalists of the Merkur.

Looking back, I can fairly say that both dailies were objective in their reportage and editorials on the United States and American policy in Europe and Germany.

I should also say a word about Bavarian radio, the Bayerische Rundfunk; there was no television in my day, as I remember. The Rundfunk offered programs and commentary of first quality and to my recollection was objective but not uncritical of the United States. Its star was Erik von Cube, a Falstaffian figure, highly literate, with a sharp tongue who presented penetrating analyses of the issues of the day. He was also stimulating company.

Finally, I should note that the Bavarian press was constructive about the building of Europe and about Germany playing its part. The press unquestionably was a force for building a democratic German state. The Sueddeutsche in particular took a consistently pro-French line; it clearly believed that Franco-German amity was essential for the creation of a stable European order.

Q: Speaking of this, the French always play a role somewhat askew from whatever the United States is interested in. How did you find the French influence and French representation, and the German view of France from that area, which has been probably closer to France than some other ones, and French troops were in the area, too?

JAMES: French interest in Bavaria has deep historical roots. My paper on Bavarian separatism discussed the French connection in extenso. If I remember my history correctly, the French engaged in some machinations after the first world war to try to pry Bavaria from the rest of Germany, at least to encourage local separatist tendencies. By the end of the second war, France was realistic enough to abandon any idea of playing the Bavarian separatist card. Nonetheless, during my time in Munich, the French consistently had a high profile official presence. Even in the 1950s, the principal French representative in Munich had the personal rank of Minister. Before the first war, a French diplomatic mission was accredited to the Wittelsbach court.

I knew the French consular officers fairly well. With two in particular I became quite friendly. I found them well informed about the Bavarian political scene and agreeable.

France always made a strong cultural showing in Bavaria. Oh, incidentally, no French troops are stationed in Bavaria. French forces in Germany were and are now in Baden.

The French mounted superb art shows. When we arrived in the spring of 1951, we were greeted by one that we would now call a blockbuster, "From Poussin to Ingres," at the Haus der Deutschen Kunst, one of Hitler's architectural extravaganzas. The French also sent top-notch performs arts companies to Munich.

Q: Did we see, at the time, much of a difference between the CSU and the SPD, and was it one that we were nervous about?

JAMES: Washington distinguished sharply between the CDU/CSU and the SPD. It seems to me that for President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles, the CDU/CSU stood four square for integration of Germany into Europe, a strong defense within NATO, including stationing of U.S. troops and weapons in Germany, and a staunch anti-communist position. On the other hand, the SPD had neutralist tendencies that I think worried Washington, even though by the mid-1950s the socialists had, thanks to Carlo Schmidt, dropped much of its "Marxist baggage." So in

Washington the conservative parties were regarded as more reliable than the socialists. I guess we in the Munich consulate shared the views of our masters in Washington as to which of the two main parties best promoted U.S. interests.

I must add, however, that in the Bavarian SPD there were many moderate, responsible, broad-gauged people, and we developed good connections with them.

Q: Well, Konrad Adenauer was certainly the leading figure in Germany at the time.

JAMES: Oh, yes, very much so.

Q: How was Adenauer viewed from Bavaria? He was very much a creature of the Rhineland and all that.

JAMES: I think he was more congenial to the Bavarians than a protestant from the former Prussian lands would have been. After all, Adenauer was a Catholic and Bavaria is overwhelmingly of that faith.

He was an extraordinarily effective leader, and the CSU so regarded him. I do not think there was any realistic expectation among CSU politicians that as long as Adenauer was able to carry on anyone else in the CDU/CSU could replace him. He was a commanding figure, a powerful speaker, as I can attest having heard him speak several times to thunderous applause at CSU conventions. In a word, he was the right man at the right time for Germany, the right blend of democrat and authoritarian. Most Bavarians in the CSU probably felt that way.

MARTHA C. MAUTNER
Political Officer
Berlin (1950-1958)

Martha C. Mautner was born in Pennsylvania in 1923. She received a bachelor's degree in history and political science, and a master's degree in international affairs from the Fletcher School. In addition to serving in Germany, Ms. Mautner served in Russia and the Sudan. She was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on November 7, 1995.

Q: Then you arrived in Berlin the summer of 1950?

MAUTNER: Yes. We were all dumped in Frankfurt until they figured out how assignments in Berlin would work out. On my arrival in Berlin I started out right away in the political section with Rebecca Wellington and Eric Wendelin.

Q: That is where we met. What was your reaction on arriving in Berlin?

MAUTNER: I had been through Berlin before, in 1945, '46 and '47, and, of course, it had

improved tremendously. But you know how much of a cocoon you lived in in Berlin in those days of the military occupation. I found it quite enjoyable, made lots of friends.

Q: Did you find any sense of discrimination as a woman trying to operate as an officer in Berlin?

MAUTNER: Not at that time. In fact, you know there was usually no discrimination against youngish, unattached females. The theory was it wasn't a bad idea to have them because it provided something for unattached male Foreign Service officers to latch on to, so they wouldn't have to go through another security check. I never was conscious of any problems except from the wives of some senior officers who had been accustomed to kowtowings from all females at a post.

Q: What were your assignments there?

MAUTNER: Well, I was first assigned to the political section and began just reading the newspapers and trying to get a feel of the place. A little later I was assigned to the Kommandatura, and had that job as well.

Q: Tell us a little about the Kommandatura.

MAUTNER: It was an Allied tripartite agency, US, British and French, supervising Berlin municipal affairs. Our political committee met once a week with the chairmanship rotating on a monthly basis, by country. The food situation altered by country as well. When the French were in the chair, one always liked the lunches there. Basically, the work involved Berlin domestic issues affecting Allied rights, or the occupation legislation that applied to Berlin. We went through a great exercise before I left, trying to eliminate all obsolete pieces of legislation, get them off the books. It was a great education to see the difference between the British, French and American viewpoints on all of these issues. We on the American side were allowed considerable amount of leeway which, I must say, is something you really appreciate as a junior officer. Nobody rode herd over what you did. You were allowed to make your own judgments on subjects. If you screwed up, it was your own fault. Otherwise, you were allowed to act alone and use your own initiative.

Q: Who was your supervisor in Berlin?

MAUTNER: Rebecca Wellington was my immediate supervisor and Eric Wendelin was over her.

One of the things that I got into on the side, although we had a whole office that covered Eastern affairs and I was not part of that office, but because I was always interested in Eastern affairs, I used to read the *Tagliche Rundschau* and the *Neues Deutschland* on a regular basis. Once in the *Neues Deutschland* I spotted...

Q: The Neues Deutschland was the newspaper of the German Communist Party and the Tagliche Rundschau being the Soviet Army main paper in Germany.

MAUTNER: ...I spotted big excerpts that were alleged to have been taken from the diary of an American army general who was commenting indiscreetly on the local scene in Moscow and elsewhere. It turned out that the general was the military attaché in Moscow who had been on a visit to Frankfurt and his diary had been stolen from one of the hotels by a East German agent. Well, it struck me rather amusing that this sort of stuff was appearing in the *Neues Deutschland*, so I cut out the article and mailed it to Jack McSweeney who was back at the embassy in Moscow. Anyhow, Jack took one look and discovered what it was. The embassy went through the ceiling because here was the military attaché's private diary being exposed. Of course, we realized later there was a big dichotomy between what the East German intelligence service did on their own and what the Soviets did, despite a lot of coordination. This was an East German operation and Moscow wasn't yet even aware of it so the poor general was railroaded out of Moscow immediately before anybody found out. I got calls from all kinds of security people afterwards. It turned out that nobody else in Berlin seems to have spotted this article, including the many intelligence agencies reading these papers.

Q: I was in London at the time and I remember shortly thereafter we received a warning about keeping diaries.

MAUTNER: It was funny that with all the occupation establishments in Berlin, nobody had spotted that article or had registered what it meant.

Q: And we had a lot of intelligence people there too.

MAUTNER: We had a whole panoply. And then I got a blast from security: why did I send that in the open mail?...a newspaper clipping!

Q: Did you have a chance to use your Russian at all?

MAUTNER: Not much and only in one respect during the latter part of my stay there after Khrushchev came in and we began to have more contacts with the Soviets. A couple of times they would come over to various social functions. However, I did have a Russian teacher while I was there, doing it on the side. Karl and I made a trip into Moscow from Berlin in 1957. It was an eye opener for Karl because he had never been there before. For me it was an eye opener to see how things had relaxed and improved.

Q: Did you have any opportunity of getting into the Soviet Zone of Germany?

MAUTNER: Several times. There wasn't much incentive to do it. We would go over to East Berlin on a regular basis, that was no problem. I went down to the Leipzig Fair, each spring, drove down there. Other than that, very little, except when you were going to or through Poland.

Q: Did the mission in Berlin get its instruction directly from Washington or from the embassy in Bonn or from both?

MAUTNER: It was always both. The embassy in Bonn would have liked to give us instructions,

but Berlin always maintained its sense of autonomy, not independence, but autonomy, wherever possible and had free initiative. It could send things directly in to the Department.

Q: Even though the blockade had ended, there were still continuing harassments by the Soviets interfering with the traffic in various ways. Did you have any unpleasantness with that?

MAUTNER: We were never personally harassed or stopped or anything of this nature, but it was always there hanging in the background. There was always this sense of pressure and tension that you had to be alert, especially if you had a family there or anything like that. You never knew what could happen. At the time of the Hungarian Uprising, for instance, when the reaction in Berlin was so passionate at the Soviet invasion in Hungary. That, of course, was the time that Willy Brandt made his first international impact when he stopped the crowds from marching on the Brandenburg Gate. That night in particular was a serious affair because the East Germans had water cannons out already and the Soviets were...

Q: It could have been an ugly incident.

MAUTNER: Yes, it could have been an ugly incident. For us, personally, it had a decidedly positive consequence because it was the night of November 3, 1956 that the Russians marched. The afternoon of the third, one of our children, a three-year-old, came down with meningitis and, of course, this is always a shock to parents who got her down to the military hospital. Well, the whole hospital was put on the alert because of the demonstrations in Berlin and the fear of a war starting. The doctors had nothing to do but stand around and take care of this 3 year old child, so she got the best of all possible attention. It was a harrowing evening, but on the other hand, something turned out for the better.

Q: You were there also when one of our Foreign Service officers, Greg Henderson, was arrested, I believe, in East Berlin. Did that cause a major incident between the East Germans and ourselves?

MAUTNER: Well, it was an incident, but everybody who knew Greg didn't take it all that seriously. They figured he would get out fairly quickly, and he did. But, it had to be dealt with as it was. Every once in a while something similar happened. The Americans didn't suffer extraordinarily. It was what happened to a lot of the Germans like Dr. Linse, and others, who were kidnaped and never appeared again, or the police who were arrested and came back ten years later from Siberia, or the student activists treated the same way.

Q: Now you were also there during the Communist Youth Festival in East Berlin in 1951 where we in the West, I gather, had some propaganda triumphs. Can you talk a little bit about that?

MAUTNER: Oh, that was a great occasion. We worked very hard trying to figure out activities that would entice the youth being brought to East Berlin over to West Berlin. We had a little task force that came up with all kinds of ideas and, of course, the city authorities were doing the same and we coordinated our activities with them. It was an eminently successful affair of, shall we say, suborning young impressionable people by showing them the outside world. A long lasting effect? Who knows? But it was the exposure to that kind of thing that led to a lot of later

defections. It was one of the reason Baryshnikov and others defected later on. They had been part of the Soviet delegations to world youth festivals, saw something of the outside world and decided to leave.

We were over to East Berlin for all of these fairs, walking around. We had free access at the time being members of the allies. And, there was a relaxed atmosphere. But that was when, of course, Greg Henderson got himself picked up because of his contact with the North Koreans. They were probably more under surveillance than anybody else at that time.

Q: I believe it was in 1952 your status changed when matrimony hit you and you married Karl Mautner, who was in the Foreign Service in Berlin. Did you have to resign or were you told to resign?

MAUTNER: Well, the Foreign Service regulations at the time specified that a woman officer had to resign with marriage. We got married in October, 1951, and I wrote to Elbridge Durbrow, who was at that time head of Foreign Service Personnel and told him I had no desire to resign. I wanted to stay on, and felt I was doing useful work. He said fine, since I was on the promotion list that year and he would stick to it. So I stayed on open-endedly and then got caught in the big cutback on staff when the Eisenhower administration came in. They were looking for any bodies that they could lop off. So, Durbrow's decision to let me stay on was overturned. At that point I had to retire and spent a year domesticated and, I must say, going stir crazy.

Q: But in that same year, 1953, there were some very interesting happenings. For instance, Mayor Reuter died. You might say a word about his effect on the situation in Berlin.

MAUTNER: Well, his death had been preceded in 1953 with the revolt in East Berlin.

Q: Yes, perhaps you could tie them together.

MAUTNER: The revolt in East Berlin, of course, was the first real revolt against Soviet occupation in any part of Eastern Europe and it was quite a violent affair. We only discovered recently from the declassified Soviet and East German documents how many people were actually executed. About 400 or so died in the violence at that time; some were executed, some killed in the fighting.

That was really the first big, dramatic scene of violence in the city. Of course, we were there at the time and experienced the after effects. It also highlighted the variations between the various allies on the subject. The British were worried stiff that the occupation forces might be attacked and they might have to take action.

Q: Yes, I was in London at that time and I well remember their concern.

MAUTNER: Oh, God, they were worried. Those of us with a Soviet background knew that the only way you dealt effectively with the Soviets was to stand up to them. The French, I think, backed us up on that stance. But the allied authorities did not want to be identified with any heroic actions on the part of an occupied population, and had very differing views of how you

distanced yourself from all of this. They didn't want Adenauer to come to Berlin. They didn't want to make a great show. A ceremony was held in the City Hall as a tribute for those who were killed; I think there were six or eight West Berliners who died in East Berlin during the turmoil. There is a nice photograph of the assembly in the City Hall which shows the three Allied liaison officers' regular places, and only the American liaison officer was present in his.

Q: I should mention that the American liaison officer was Martha's husband, Karl Mautner.

MAUTNER: The other two places were empty. And, at the funeral services for the ones who died in East Berlin, the commandants did not go with the official corteges out to the cemetery. They did attend the Rathaus (City Hall) ceremony, but the liaison officers were delegated to represent them in the cortege. I will say this for Cecil Lyons: he gave us his big long Cadillac, so the US liaison officer went in style. We drove off from the Rathaus with the cortege, but stopped as soon as we were out of sight, pulled out the American flag and put it on the car so that the Germans would know there was an official American presence. Five or ten minutes later, suddenly coming up behind us was a car with the French liaison officer, who wasn't going to miss anything.

Anyhow, that was June 17 which reverberated for a long time. Reuter died in September. We were on vacation and heard the news somewhere in Bavaria and came back immediately. He obviously left a big gap because Reuter was more than just the Mayor; he was a symbol.

Q: He was a hero, a symbol and a lot of other things in Berlin.

MAUTNER: Yes, and he had a political sense that held everything together. It took a long time before the city got another one like him.

Q: Can you say a thing or two about the Foreign Ministers conference that was held in 1954?

MAUTNER: Malenkov's proposal a few months earlier that the Russians join NATO caught everybody by surprise. But there was hope when the conference opened that the Russians might be prepared to be accommodating because after Stalin's death in 1953 there had also been signs of easing up. But Molotov was as cold as the weather and everybody went home disappointed that nothing was going to change. Of course, not realizing that the big problem had less to do with Molotov's attitude than it had to do with domestic politics back in Moscow, where they were fighting over this whole issue of East-West relations. Eventually Molotov was out when Khrushchev consolidated his control.

Q: Since you had to resign as a Foreign Service officer, did you take up any other work while you were in Berlin?

MAUTNER: Oh yes, I got picked up then by the military doing the same kind of reporting I had been doing at the mission, dealing basically then with East German matters, technical development in East Germany, etc.

Q: Did they give you a civil service ranking?

MAUTNER: Yes, and that was very handy because it kept the continuity.

Q: This was a period when the East Germans were gradually getting more control given them by the Soviet Union such as border control and access to Berlin. Did your reporting in any way get into these matters?

MAUTNER: Oh, yes. It involved really a consolidation of their position, a very definite evolution there after the effects of June 17 had worn off. You had a lot of to-ing and fro-ing between the East Germans and the Soviets. The Soviets' idea, particularly under Khrushchev, was to find something in the way of a more normalized *modus vivendi* in Europe instead of this constant confrontation over Berlin. So, the East Germans were given a lot more leeway to consolidate local matters in their own way, while the Soviets remained responsible for higher echelon issues. The basic idea was to assure East Germany permanent status in the great Soviet world plan, if such ever existed.

So, about 1956 or '57, the East German intelligence services rolled up most of the activities of the West German services; the famous Gehlen Organization which thought it had penetrated the whole system. The East Germans just rolled up their operations and dropped the curtain very firmly, making it harder and harder to get data out of there.

Q: Speaking of that sort of thing, this is the period of the tunnel. Could you say a few words about that?

MAUTNER: Oh, that was a lovely operation. It operated for quite some time. They are still fighting about whether it was found because of Soviet moles in the West - some say they tipped off the Soviets - but a lot of the people on the intelligence side claim the Soviets got wind of it because of power variances in the telephone lines going through East Germany and began tracking them down. It may have been both: somebody told them of the existence of a big operation somewhere and they found it by monitoring variation in power levels.

Anyhow, it operated very effectively for a long time. One of our good friends in Berlin, the journalist Lothar Loewe, always proudly claimed he was the first Westerner to get in that tunnel when the Soviets, with great fanfare, opened it up. He ran right through from the eastern end and said you could still see evidence that the Americans had left in a hurry. Coffee cups were still sitting on the table. But he thought it was a wonderful operation.

Q: It went on for several years?

MAUTNER: Not years. I think it operated for about a year effectively.

Q: We were tapping into the telephone communications?

MAUTNER: Into the telephone lines and you got all kinds of stuff. Not only good intelligence information, but all of the claptrap that surrounded daily military life - officers' wives complaining about not being able to get out, or chewing out their husbands. Some of it was quite

juicy.

Q: Some of that landed on your desk I presume?

MAUTNER: Oh, yes, we saw most of the useful material.

Q: Did the uprising in 1956 in Hungary and Poland have any resonance in Germany, East Berlin or East Germany?

MAUTNER: Very much so. I mentioned earlier about what had happened on the Western side in 1953, emotions running high and pressure to do something. Inside East Germany the impact of Poland and Hungary was significant. On one hand, you had a situation where the Soviets did not have to use force because the Polish Communists were strong and trying to bring the situation under control, but in a Polish fashion. The Chinese very astutely, Zhou En-lai was there at the time, warned Moscow that the Poles could handle this themselves and you would just get a blood bath by bringing in Russian troops.

But, in the Hungarian case, the Party had lost control of the situation and it took outside force to subdue the population. So you got this mixed message seeping throughout the whole system. The East German party's reaction was, "See, we told you so. You start loosening up and this is what happens." They used that as an excuse for tightening controls and put pressure on the Soviets to do something about Berlin.

Q: Which led to the Khrushchev ultimatum in 1958, to make Berlin a self-governing entity of its own.

MAUTNER: Yes, he tried everything to resolve the Berlin question because Berlin was a constant point of East-West friction, and constantly creating all kinds of problems inside the Eastern empire of the Soviet Union.

I was back in Washington at that time. The ultimatum was issued but, if you read the East German press, you smelled it coming almost nine months, a year, ahead. Articles kept appearing hinting that some move was in the mill. The East Germans were putting the pressure on Moscow to get action.

Those of us who knew the scene didn't believe the ultimatum would actually be implemented. On the other hand, we knew Khrushchev wanted some kind of a deal, any kind of a deal he could get, that would ease international tension and the Berlin problem. Of course, what he got out of the ultimatum was an invitation to Camp David, the 1959 visit to the United States.

Q: And later the Wall.

MAUTNER: Well, that was because nothing really changed after Camp David. He kept trying and then took the halfway measure of dividing Berlin instead of trying to take it over completely. The East Germans, I think, never approved of that. They wanted the whole city.

TERRENCE CATHERMAN
Kreis Resident Officer
Heidelberg & Bonn (1950-1952)

Amerika Haus Director
Bonn (1952-1952)

Information Program Officer, USIS
Bonn (1953-1955)

Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIS
West Berlin (1970-1974)

Public Affairs Officer, Director USIS
Germany (1985-1990)

Terrence Catherman was born in Michigan and attended the University of Michigan in the early 1940s prior to joining the army. He completed his bachelors and master's degrees in political science. He joined the Foreign Service and received his first post in Tel Aviv, Israel. His Foreign Service career also took him to Germany and Yugoslavia. He was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in January 1991

CATHERMAN: I came to Washington and spent about 7 weeks as an intern and heard about the Kreis Resident Officer program in Germany. Germany was still occupied at that time, although the occupation was coming to an end. The Federal Republic of Germany had been founded the fall of 1949. We were still doing some work with the Germans as far as the construction of their society was concerned and the Kreis Resident officers were the representatives of the State Department at the county level in Germany. I heard about that program and it appealed to me very much. I was interviewed and accepted and went from the Intern Program right into a Kreis Resident Officer training program which took me to Germany in the winter of 1950-1951.

The Kreis Resident Officers, there were 165, maybe 157, were the brain child of John J. McCloy, who was the American High Commissioner for Germany, and Shep Stone, who was his director of public affairs. We essentially were engaged with Germans in helping them to construct a democratic society at the community level. We used our own experience, the experience of American experts who were brought over by the American Military Government at first and then later on by the Embassy. It was a huge program and was one of the pivotal experiences of my life. I spent the first year and a half of that tour in Germany as a KRO, as we were called. I learned how to deal with a language that was not native to me. I learned German, which I think became quite good, and I learned how to handle a variety of aspects of democratic society which I had perhaps practiced in the United States but was not really so aware of. It was a great educational experience for me. And I think it was quite a profound experience for the Germans.

I jump now for a moment to the present. German academics specialists are now getting into the study of that era and I am encouraged to find that they are finding that our efforts were beneficial to the construction of German democracy.

So I have a philosophy about that era. I spent four and a half years in Germany my first time, and my philosophy is the following. The Americans pursued a triad in their foreign policy in regards to Germany. For one thing, we had the Marshall Plan, of course, and that was the big money game. The success story was patent. We saw the Germans come through with their "Wirtschaftswunder," as they called it, their economical miracle.

So we had that and, of course, we had our security policies which very quickly involved the Germans. By 1952 the great debate about the form that the new German army would take and how it would be incorporated into NATO was going full blast. We did bring the Germans into NATO and they did once again form a very efficient military establishment.

So those were two legs of the triad. The third leg of the triad, essentially was democratization. It was a big effort. When the Americans were going full blown in Germany we had about 350 Americans and about 4,000 Germans devoted to this effort. In addition to the Kreis Resident Officers we also had 52 Amerika Häuser, so-called America Houses, which were full-blown American cultural and information centers, usually with one or perhaps two Americans running each one, and a competent German staff. There was a library, a full-blown film program, cultural program, concerts by Americans and much, much information about how the Americans run their democratic society.

Shep Stone had told me just before he died that he had a budget which was roughly \$50 million a year to run this program. So it was big and I take pride in having participated in that.

1952: Catherman Leaves Kreis Resident Officer Ranks
To Become Amerika Haus Director In Heidelberg; Then To Bonn

After I left the KRO ranks I became America House director in Heidelberg, 1952-53 and then went on to Bonn to run, what we called a speakers and artists programming office which essentially made available to a variety of German institutions, and of course the American institutions which were big in West Germany at that time, prominent American speakers and performing artists who were interested in coming to Germany to show what America has to offer.

Post OMGUS Information Program Under HICOG

CATHERMAN: They were in the HICOG operation...

Q: Now at what point did the information program become individualized and distinct from the Kreis Officer program? Shep Stone, I think, headed up the information program or else he was a deputy, but he was one of the top officers in there I know.

CATHERMAN: Yes. He was the director of public affairs for John J. McCloy and this all started in 1949. The military government ceased to exist when the Federal Republic of Germany came into existence which was in October 1949. At that time the High Commission for Germany which comprised the American High Commissioner, the French High Commissioner and the British High Commissioner took over as civilian representatives from the Military Government. General Lucius Clay had been the American Military Governor prior to that. He left at the time that John J. McCloy, a civilian, came in and took over the civilian component. Shep Stone was his public affairs officer. He was responsible for all these informational and cultural activities that I mentioned until...I think Shep Stone left that job in 1952, but the primary impetus of that work continued until roughly 1955.

Q: At that time it initially went in under the State Department. It was an information program run by the State Department until USIA became an entity in 1953.

CATHERMAN: In August of 1953 USIA was established and those of us who remained in the program became foreign service officers in the USIA. I have some theories about that, but I don't know if you want to go on to that...

Q: Yes, why don't you go into it, because I think it is all very pertinent background.

CATHERMAN: Right. USIA became the information and later on the cultural arm of American diplomacy abroad. I just happened to be in Washington in the summer of 1953 on home leave from Germany, I went back to Germany then and spent 2 more years there. So I was here when this whole play about the establishment of USIA developed. My impression, this is my personal impression, is that USIA was established essentially for negative reasons. It was established because John Foster Dulles simply did not want to face Joe McCarthy and his committee and others in the Congress who were hearing, mostly from the Voice of America, denunciations of their colleagues, people with whom they had disagreements about philosophy or ideology. John Foster Dulles just decided to get rid of all of that to purify the State Department, to make the State Department a vehicle of the conduct of traditional diplomacy and move the information arm out of the State Department.

So USIA was established essentially under a cloud. There were people who had been accused of disloyalty to the United States. Most of them were in the Voice of America, but not all of them. I remember, for instance, that year Mr. Cohn and Mr. Schine who represented Senator McCarthy, came to Germany and grilled the Embassy's press attaché, who was a USIA member. They also grilled the director of RIAS, Radio In America Sector, in Berlin who is, of course part of USIA and several other USIA representatives including me, although they did not have any particular ideological reason to talk with me. I was director of America House in Heidelberg and they looked at the book collection there and were dissatisfied to find, among other things, that Howard Fast was on the shelf.

Well that was the atmosphere as I remember it when USIA was founded. I was not particularly happy with that era and with the sort of foundation upon which our Agency was built on in the beginning. I am glad to say it developed and created its own positive *raison d'être* fairly soon and then, in the late '70s, when John Reinhardt was Director, we also got the cultural side of

American foreign diplomacy when the State Department cut loose those cultural activities which were assumed into USIA.

At any rate, those first four and a half years of my diplomatic life were full of this verve and excitement of watching a German society evolve into a democratic one and a strong one economically. I even observed the beginning of the establishment of the German military.

I was one of the first USIA foreign service officers to get an additional year of education at the Russian Institute at Columbia. I did this primarily as a preparation to going to the Soviet Union. That was in 1955.

Q: I want to ask two questions. One has to do with the work you were doing in Germany, really three questions. First of all, you said that you were in the States at the time the Executive Order of August 1 or 3, I'm not sure which one it was, created the Agency. Were you given the opportunity to elect whether to remain with USIA or return to the State Department where you started?

CATHERMAN: We were transferred from the State Department automatically. I could have protested that transfer and sought another job in the State Department, but I chose not to essentially because I was involved in the work I was doing and I rather enjoyed it.

Q: The reason I ask the question is because I had been in the State Department a couple of years before I went into the foreign service with the information part. The change over occurred while I was in Japan. I was given the option of staying with USIA or going back to the State Department. I too elected to remain with the Agency because I felt that what I was doing was so much more exciting than what I would be doing otherwise. I guess because you had a shorter stay you would have had to make a specific...

CATHERMAN: Yes.

Q: Because you had a shorter time in State, I'd had two years or more, you probably just were taken over and would have had to ask specifically to return.

CATHERMAN: That is exactly right. We were simply assigned to USIA. I don't remember resisting that idea at all.

Q: The second question that I want to ask is: I gather from what you say that you felt the thrust of the program that you were in was being highly successful in converting the German thinking over to a democratic point of view and denying their Nazi background. You think it made tremendous progress at that time.

CATHERMAN: I don't think they made tremendous progress. I am not a radical thinker about our success there. I think we had a good success. The Germans who were engaged in that process, for instance, the participants in the major exchanges program, we had very large exchange programs with the Germans then. In 1951, for instance, we had almost 1,200 young German leaders visit the United States for periods of up to six months. I think we can be satisfied

that we did a good job with competent people. I think we can be satisfied with what happened to the German society. I can't quantify that any more. I don't think it was by any means a sensational success. We did okay. It was worth the expenditure of money and brain power that went into it. We have a stable democratic German society with which we must deal now. It is not going to be easy to deal with the Germans, but at least we have a democratic society, a society dedicated to essentially the same approach to running public affairs as we Americans have. That was certainly not guaranteed in the immediate post-war era.

Q: Did you, yourself, get into the educational institutions and the work with the universities in Germany as a result of your work in the America House?

CATHERMAN: Yes, I did. At that time my main contact was with the University of Heidelberg and we had an intensive relationship with the University of Heidelberg. We facilitated an academic exchanges program between the University of Heidelberg and several American universities. Helped them set up formal agreements with American universities, used their professors in our programs and supplied American academics for their university programs. I was very happy with that academic relationship. And I must say it was good preparation for the future because as I stayed on in the foreign service I became chairman of four Fulbright commissions--the Israeli-American Fulbright Commission, the Yugoslav-American, the French-American and finally the German-American Fulbright Commission. So it was good training at the beginning. The relationship was very active and very positive.

Q: I don't know whether you dealt with universities other than at Heidelberg but did you feel any sense of underlying reluctance or opposition to what we were trying to do in their universities or did they accept it fairly well?

CATHERMAN: They did not accept it, they never accepted it. I think what we can attribute to our efforts at that time, the success side in Germany is the opening up the universities. The universities ceased to become the elitist, authoritarian institutions that they had been before. They became more democratic, frankly more than I would have liked to see them, but then I am not a German. By the time I came back in the '70s to Germany and this last period which ran over five years from 1985 -1990, I saw what I thought was a pretty anarchistic situation in the German universities. They were overwhelmed with students. They could not turn any students away and their concepts of democracy essentially wiped away most discipline. In that respect the open universities, as the Germans developed from the American idea went probably farther than I would have liked. But at any rate, as far as university reform in the American sense of the word, I would not say we were very successful. We encountered a lot of resistance and I would certainly not list one of my successes as in reforms at the University of Heidelberg. What we did do was supply an exchange of academic professors and students and that is as far as my success extended.

Q: What was your experience with the professors from Heidelberg University when they returned? Did they fall pretty much back into the old German pattern or did it have some influence on them?

CATHERMAN: Well, they were very frustrated when they returned. I think this can be said of a lot of Germans, not only academics. They came to the United States which was an enormously widening experience for them whether they were academics or leaders in other aspects of American society and came back to see this sort of cramped authoritarian tradition. Although it was breaking up it was still there. The German society is a completely different thing than the experience we have had here in the United States. I don't remember one single case of Germans not being frustrated at their inability to get things moving in the academic sphere. That applied across the board. Essentially they came back malcontent and some of them devoted their lives after that to democratic reform with some success. Others simply disappeared into the German society and went about their lives. But there was a lot of discontent.

Q: Much the same thing I imagine happened in reference to the library situation too where the libraries were open and they first saw an example of an American open library. I don't know what the case is today, have you found that they more or less reverted to the old pattern?

CATHERMAN: That never took hold. That is another American reform that we worked hard on, on the open shelf system, the open library. With a few exceptions, and there were some, it did not take hold. The exceptions were essentially American financed. For instance, the John F. Kennedy Library in Berlin is more open than most. It was financed almost totally from American funding, from the Ford Foundation essentially. There are a few of those around, the American Memorial Library, again in Berlin, which was heavily financed by Americans is more open to the public. Generally they are not, generally they are pretty much on tight hold.

Q: I am glad to get your assessment of this because a substantially large number of other people that I have interviewed from the German program, who came away fairly early, left with the impression that we had had much greater success in the long run than you seem to feel that we have had. Probably your return trips to Germany refined your own thinking in that regard more than the others had an opportunity to do.

CATHERMAN: Well, I think we did a good job. We simply had a lot of very good people working. If I can just give you one example in the field of women's affairs, the Nazi woman essentially was used as a breeding mare and had no real role to play outside, sort of a toy for the men during the Nazi period. We came in with a large and determined and very talented group of people to work with German women and bring them up to having a sense of self respect. I think we did a good job and certainly at this stage of the game the German woman is playing as much of a role in the development of her society as is the American woman--perhaps even more in the political sphere. I don't want to denigrate the effort, the effort was substantial and there were some wonderful people there.

Maybe now is the time for me to say something I hold very deeply about that generation of Americans who went to Germany with the intent of helping the Germans form a democratic society. One of the things that really amazed me, always right from the beginning, was the return of the Jew from the United States to Germany. Some of the best people we had in that period were Jews who had been forced to leave under harrowing circumstances in the '30s and who came back and sat down with the Germans and helped them democratize their society. It was a remarkable thing for me to see. A phenomenon that I have not completely resolved in my mind

to this day because I know so many American Jews who would never think of doing that, who certainly did not return, and who to this day have not returned to Germany. But there was that group and they did some really good work. It is something that I hope someone will look into some day.

Q: Who was in charge of the women's program at that time?

CATHERMAN: The woman who stands out in my mind, she was the last major contributor, was Mildred Allport. She was really quite a substantial figure and played a big role in that period. But she came relatively late. She came in 1950, but she took over that job at the end of '51.

Q: She remained several years...

CATHERMAN: She remained several years and she was a big figure, but also had some good people with her.

Q: One final question before we go back to your training at Columbia, did you pick up the German language just from experience or did you also study it?

CATHERMAN: I was not a student of German, I did Russian at the university. I had about 2 1/2 months of concentrated German training in the Foreign Service Institute in Washington before the group of KROs went to Germany. So I arrived in Germany with a rudimentary speaking knowledge. But I kept working at it. Of course I was thrown into a small community in lower Bavaria, Niederbayern, where I was the only American. My wife didn't come with me down there, so I spent over a year as the only American within 30 kilometers.

Q: That's the best teacher.

CATHERMAN: Yes, I had to speak German.

1970: Deputy PAO, Germany (As Director, West Berlin)

Q: So then from there you went where next?

CATHERMAN: I went to Berlin, West Berlin.

Q: And were you the so-called deputy PAO for Germany?

CATHERMAN: Yes, that's right. In those days we had no program in East Germany, but we did have RIAS, Radio In American Sector, and that was part of my portfolio. I was called the senior deputy PAO, the country PAO was located in Bonn and I was his senior deputy because of the importance then of Berlin to the effort.

Q: Who was PAO in Bonn?

CATHERMAN: Gordon Ewing, followed by McKinney Russell.

Q: What were your primary concerns in Berlin?

CATHERMAN: We had the four power talks which led to the Berlin Agreement and they took up about a year and a half of my time there. Once again I spent most of my time engaged in briefing, or trying to convince, the Western press about our aims in those talks. I represented the American negotiator, Ambassador Kenneth Rush. It was again lots of press work. I did not have as much cultural work then as I had had when I was in Israel or previously in the Soviet Union. It was pretty much hardline political work.

After the conclusion of the Berlin Agreement we began to go to the East Germans and negotiate what eventually was the establishment of diplomatic relations with East Germany. My job was to talk with the East Germans about their treatment of the Western, specifically American, press. In other words I had to defend the First Amendment in a communist country. I would go over from West Berlin to East Berlin and talk with those people and try to get their agreement to a relatively relaxed arrangement for American newspapers to cover Eastern Germany. I didn't succeed very well, but at least the attempt was made and was made persistently. So for the last six months of my stay there I did that, not exclusively, but a preponderant part of my job was precisely that, dealing with the East Germans.

Q: I would think that your office in Berlin would also have a great deal to do with the things that were transpiring there at that time. What were the problems you faced there with the Green Peace people and others of that ilk?

CATHERMAN: Let me put it this way. When I arrived in Berlin in November, 1970, the Amerika House, our cultural center in downtown Berlin, did not have one window left. Every window had been shattered. This was a tremendous cultural shock for me. I had left Germany in 1955 with the feeling that we, the Americans, had helped the Germans reestablish a viable society; we integrated them into the Western community; we got them into our security apparatus; they were developing a good firm democracy. I came back in 1970, fifteen years later, to find the students on the streets on rampages against the Americans. Essentially at that period because of the Cambodian campaign. The run up had, of course, been Vietnam earlier. So I had that atmosphere in Berlin. Berlin was a specific place anyway--a special place in Germany because young men who did not want to be drafted came to Berlin where there was no draft. There could not be a draft because it was still under occupation law--Four Power Occupation Law. So we got a lot of people up there, of course, who were against the military anyway and who certainly were against us. So we lived through many mass demonstrations. Some of them reasonably threatening, although to my knowledge, none of us ever got hurt, it looked as if we might. It was tough dealing with the Berlin students from the Free University, the university that we had been instrumental in founding and had put millions of dollars into in the late '40s. The Free University and the Technical University turned into hotbeds of student disenchantment with the United States. As a matter of fact, the Lutheran student home where Red Rudy Duschke lived in Berlin was right behind my private house in Berlin. I use to watch the students storm out of there and jump into their VWs with their red banners flying on the way to these demonstrations with some amusement. For one thing they had cars and I never thought of the workers movement

in communist terms as going to demonstrations in their own cars. But, secondly, there they were right behind me, all around me, as a matter of fact. I lived right in the area where the Free University was located and I never once had an ugly, unpleasant encounter with those students on a personal basis. I had many of them when I tried to explain American foreign policy in meetings.

Q: I was going to ask you to what extent did you and others in the staff attempt to communicate with the students?

CATHERMAN: We communicated.

Q: But did you get anywhere?

CATHERMAN: We got nowhere at all. They were very emotional and reason was not the way to handle them. As a matter of fact, I don't see any way we could have handled them. I remember getting many, many turndowns. I would volunteer to come over to speak to groups and they would send notes back saying we don't deal with the CIA and things like that. So it was a charged political atmosphere as far as the students were concerned. But the city administration, of course, was SPD, firmly pro-western, Klaus Schutz was the governing mayor, and we had very good relations with them. We had excellent relations with the cultural establishment, the administrations of the universities and so on. So it was bifurcated, really. As long as we did not get entangled in anti-American mass student demonstrations we could live a pretty comfortable and satisfying life in Berlin.

Q: This prompts a couple of questions. Was there any segment of the student population that was not taken up almost completely in this radicalization? And the other question is: I have heard it said that the students gained so much power, particularly in the Free University that they practically dictated the appointment of professors and even administration and practically ruined the value of the Free University. I would like to get your view point on both of those questions.

CATHERMAN: Frankly I don't have readily in my mind the number of students who were engaged in this political activism. It was a minority, it was not the majority by any means. Although they could turn out big demonstrations. They could turn out 30 to 50,000 with no problem at all. They were a minority. You are absolutely right, the self-administration that they perpetrated on the universities, and not only the Free University in Berlin, were dangerous. The open university simply became a gathering place for masses of young people, many of whom had indifferent academic interests but it seemed to be the place to be for many for 7 or 8 years. Some of them were very serious about their studies and others were not. They did have an enormous influence on the way German universities were governed and administered. You are right that the rectors and later on the presidents of the universities lost their power to control what was going on in the universities. They had a collegial system where the cleaning personnel had as much of a voice as did the professors in appointments in faculties. And of course the students had a big role in these appointments too. So the tendency was, obviously, to bring in professors who were radical, and who were not too exacting in their standards. Saying that, there were faculty who remained rock solid throughout all this. The physical sciences remained

typically German in their disciplined approach, and although the self-governing apparatus applied to them too they managed to keep their professorial appointments pretty much on an academic basis. The social scientists and humanities were the ones that were really rent by all this.

Q: Was there any opportunity to talk to the larger segment of the student population which was not involved in this radicalization or was that pretty much foreclosed to you?

CATHERMAN: It was not foreclosed, nothing was foreclosed, it was an open society. They were not very interested. The engineers had their own things that they wanted to do so I didn't find much enthusiasm for hearing about why Americans should be in Vietnam or Cambodia. They were really not interested in hearing from me about why we had Watergate and those things. Those were the events that were on everybody's mind, it seemed to be everybody's mind.

Q: From the standpoint of other than physical destruction, what did this mean to the America House and its attendance?

CATHERMAN: Well, actually we had reasonably good attendance during those days. More for cultural events than the political events. The popularity of the Americans as purveyors of political information in Germany had already waned considerably. We were not looked upon as a creditable political source. But the culture still went on unabated, and it still does today. The American cultural offerings in Germany are as popular now as they were in the early '50s.

Q: I will get to this a little later when you get to your last tour over there, but do you think that this loss of credibility, as far as America being a source of political sophistication and interest, has remained in Germany? Have we pretty well lost it permanently?

CATHERMAN: That is the big question. I don't really feel that I can give a creditable answer to that. My feeling is that we lost a lot because of Vietnam. We lost a lot because of Watergate. Before those two phenomena, the United States was considered more or less the paragon in West Germany. Of course, there had been American brutality in World War II and we carpet bombed cities (and the argument was raised whether that was necessary or not) but essentially we were the paragon. We came in there with our democratic ideas. After the de-nazification period people were free to go where they pleased. The economy flourished, etc. And then along came those events. They were followed by the great debates about missiles. The answer to the SS-20s and the debate about the emplacement of the Pershings on German soil and cruise missiles with atomic warheads, etc. That brought out all of these young people who had been nurtured on the anti-Americanism of Vietnam and Watergate onto the streets with the question of why was America doing this to us. We want to be left out of this, we have other things we want to do. Those were the three big phenomena that tipped a lot of Germans thinking about the United States away from that euphoria that we had in the immediate post-war World War II era; during the high point of the cold war when we were the defender of liberty and all of that and rescued Berlin from Stalin.

Q: Which probably accounts for the opinion recently that some 75-80% of the Germans disapprove of the US action in the Gulf.

CATHERMAN: Well, yes. But of course a lot of it stems from our immediate post-war approach to the Germans. They lost a war and shouldn't be running around the world creating all that trouble. There is a lot to be said there. I want to qualify what I said about German attitudes about the United States. Invariably when Germans come into physical contact with American society they have a positive impression. They get a very positive impression. That applies today as well as previously. If a German comes to this country as a tourist or as a participant in one of our exchanges programs he comes back to Germany with a positive impression. It practically never fails, although it has in a couple of instances. It failed with Oskar La Fontaine; that didn't work with him, although he certainly is not an enemy of the United States. He is sort of sour about what he saw here. But in most cases that is not true. So I cannot as an individual give you a direct answer to your question. It is the dilemma as far as German attitudes about Americans are concerned.

1985: Return To Germany As PAO/Director Of USIS

Q: Lets go on. What were your observations during your last tour? How do you think the German-American relationship had progressed by that time and where were we from your stand point as USIS head at that time?

CATHERMAN: When I came back to Germany in 1985, I had two years in France before coming to Germany. I was in Paris from '83-'85. That was quite an experience too. I arrived in Germany at the time the debate about short range nuclear weapons was at its height. It was an anti-American debate. One can characterize it differently, but I don't. I characterize it as a debate against the placement of American Pershing II and cruise missiles on German soil. They just didn't want us. We could go through the whole business that the Soviets had SS-20s capable of destroying Germany and all of that, but it made no dent on these young people who did not want on West German soil atomic weaponry capable of striking the Soviet Union. That was the atmosphere I encountered when I came back to Germany for my final tour. The Ambassador was Rick Burt, a young, I think about 40 at that time, intellectual, a strategic arms expert who had things that he wanted to tell the Germans. He had been a New York Times correspondent and knew exactly what the media were doing. He wanted in on that. So I found that USIS on the press side, the information side, was sucked completely into this debate. Our job was to support the Ambassador, to write his speeches, to get the widest possible coverage of those speeches, to get him into the right fora, and to keep moving on the short range nuclear weaponry--to keep it going. We worked very hard on it. I was in on it. I had to learn a hell of a lot, some of which I had either forgotten or never known, about that form of weaponry. I had to encounter tens of thousands of mostly young people around the country who were dead set against that.

However, at the same time we had several other things going which functioned reasonably well. The heyday of the Amerika Haus was past. It was past 20 years previously. We still, however, did have those installations and they were still open, lending books, having conferences and seminars and American speakers talking about subjects, including nuclear missilery and so on. So there was a program going to which the Germans paid attention. I never had an unpleasant personal encounter of my own during those five years I spent in the concluding time of my career with the Germans.

Q: What was the audience for the programs of this nature that were carried out by the Amerika Haus?

CATHERMAN: They tried to get young people, but youth didn't really have much time for it. It was professional people, mature people, although I don't want to sell the attempts to get young people engaged short. Because there were young people there. I think it was a pretty good mix. It was not big, but there were people who were willing to talk with Americans, and in that respect I noticed a difference from that period of my intense combat in Berlin. I had no problem ever talking with people. I remember one memorable evening when Rick Burt invited the entire Green representation from the Bundestag to his house for dinner. Lo and behold they came. I don't think anybody turned that invitation down. We had a great evening with those people. Although I don't want to sell the fervor of that anti-short range nuclear weaponry debate short, we were able to do business. We had a fine leaders program, the international visitors program, the biggest in the world. We had a wonderful academic exchanges program; I think that was the best work I did, with those academics. Charlie Wick came along and installed a television station at RIAS in Berlin and I worked on that tirelessly, still am working on it.

So I think USIS functioned as well as it could given a couple of factors. The people who work for USIS today are not the same type of people who were working for USIS in the 1950s. You don't have those really prominent scholars, people engaged in the women's movement, who came into the USIS foreign service. Why should they? We don't have that kind of mission anymore. So, we are dealing with a foreign service officer who spent some time in Germany, but he or she also spends a lot of time in the Third World or other countries, and who does not have that intense loyalty to the German-American relationship, let's say that I do. I spent a total of 12 years in that country.

With the result that as the fruits of my initial work with the Germans began to ripen, as the German nation unified, I felt in many respects that my work had borne some fruit. That we had in the Germans a democratic society, we were working on that. We now have a unified Germany which was one of our goals. A unified, democratic Germany, a prosperous Germany. I can look back to a speech that Jimmy Byrnes delivered in September 1946, four years before I came to Germany but which set, even in those early days after World War II, the tone for American attitudes towards Germany. He concluded that speech by saying the American people want a prosperous, unified, democratic people and we will help you achieve that. In December 1989, Jim Baker in Berlin said that he was proud to be a representative of the Americans who had stood by the Germans as they democratized and united. I can only echo both of those statements and they more or less encompass my life in the USIA foreign service.

Q: This may not be a fair question, but what do you think the unification of Germany is going to do to that feeling, inasmuch as the East Germans now are having their own difficulties with the West Germans and vice versa, coming from a completely different 40 years of political and economic background? They have very little, I would guess, feeling of what the Americans did to democratize the country after World War II. Do you think it is going to dilute whatever feeling is left among the Germans of favoritism towards the US?

CATHERMAN: I would like to deflect that question, if I could. I don't think, for me at any rate, that that is a germane question. The way I look at the Germans is that those differences between East and West will be taken care of very quickly with generous application of what the German characterize--discipline, working together. The East German attitudes towards the United States that I was able to observe before I returned home were not at all negative.

Q: I wouldn't think so much negative as perhaps just apathetic.

CATHERMAN: Or uninformed. But we are going to make up for that. Chancellor Kohl wants to emphasize East Germany in our exchanges program. He is very concerned that East Germans have a good picture of the United States as quickly as they can get it. And I think we will cooperate with him in doing that. He put some German money on the line to take care of that. I don't look upon that as a big problem. What I see, however, is a burgeoning democratic power, Germany, sitting in the middle of Europe. I would be foolish not to say that we are going to have enough problems with that democratic Germany as it evolves and takes its place as the most powerful country in Europe, and I mean Europe East and West. I guess the final proof will be how Germans and Americans interrelate as the Germans look upon us completely as equals. We will see whether these decades that we stayed with the Germans pay off for us. I am an optimist about that. I think we will get along with them reasonably well, but there is not going to be any free lunch. By no means.

Q: Do you think that as the younger people age and assume the positions of leadership in the country, their radical youth is going to be mitigated somewhat and we may not see the built in antipathy that existed for a time with the youth as they were growing up, or do you anticipate any difficulty in reference to our German relationships as a result of that?

CATHERMAN: No I don't see any great difficulty although if we keep getting into wars that the young Germans don't like, they are certainly going to go to the street, and they are in the streets right now and they will be tomorrow which is a big demonstration day, the 26th of January--a big day of anti-war and anti-American demonstrations in Germany. But the relationship between the two governments is not too adversely affected by those demonstrations. The relationship between the two governments will be put under stress as the Germans reassume what they feel is their rightful posture in Eastern Europe and as they intensify their relationship with the Soviet Union at a time when, perhaps, we can not for a variety of reasons. Ideological as well as economic.

Q: Unless the current attitude of the Soviet Government mitigates even friendship with Germany.

CATHERMAN: Yes, but those are temporary things. The Germans, as far as I am concerned, are on a roll as far as East Europe and the Soviet Union are concerned. They are going in that direction. That is where their energy will be absorbed. It will be absorbed in that part of the world and not in the Persian Gulf. That is a fact of life I think.

JOHN A. MCKESSON, III

**Economic Officer
Berlin (1951-1953)**

Ambassador John A. McKesson, III received his early education in France. He later received a master's degree from Columbia University and then served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Ambassador McKesson's Foreign Service career included positions in Berlin, Reykjavik, Saigon, Paris, Senegal, and Dakar, and an ambassadorship to Libreville. Arthur Day conducted this interview in 1990.

MCKESSON: From Iceland I went back to Washington briefly in the Director General's office, then I got into the German area training program where I spent some time in Washington and Middlebury College, and then I had a full academic year of German studies at Columbia. Following that I was assigned to Berlin for three years and then Bonn for two years. In 1951, I went to Berlin.

Things were still quite primitive then. I had been to Berlin in 1937 as a child. My parents had taken me there, and I still had recollections of a city that was thriving, full of energy, and storm troopers marching in the streets, shiny cars all over, great activity. Of course the Berlin I saw when I got there in 1951 was a totally dead city, block after block had been laid completely to rubble. You might have one or two houses standing in the whole block, and the rest were all in ruins. The streets were virtually empty. The few of us who had cars could park anywhere because there was no traffic.

Diplomats could go to East Berlin with no problem. I even got to Leipzig for the fair there on one occasion. Berlin was beginning to pick up by 1951. The spirit of the Berliners was amazing. There was a great esprit de corps among the Allies and the Berliners, more than at any of my other posts. The French, the Americans, the British, along with the West Berliners, we were all, in a sense, behind the Iron Curtain together.

I was doing economic work. Part of the time I was in commercial work, reporting and trying to help local firms that were setting themselves up in West Berlin. I was also involved in East-West trade. That was the only occasion when I got involved in the Cold War. This was after the blockade, and it looked for a while as if the Soviets might be starting trouble again. The Soviets and the East Germans began refusing to give permits for goods moving between Berlin and the West. There was a document called a *Wahrenbegleitschein* and they would approve some and disapprove some. The number they approved and disapproved varied from month to month. It was a stranglehold on the city, reducing supplies while at the same time never really cutting it off. The situation never reached a dramatic stage threatening war, but it was causing real problems.

Q: At that point, the German government, such that it was, in Bonn, the nascent government, really played no real role in Berlin at all. Of course it was very interested in Berlin, but that was strictly the three Western Allies running the show in the West. The fiction of a quadripartite Berlin had already broken down with the Soviets running East Berlin.

L. MICHAEL RIVES
Refugee Relief Program
Frankfurt and Bonn (1951-1952)

Michael Rives was born in New York, New York in 1921 and raised in New Jersey. After one year at Princeton University, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps, serving until 1945. He graduated from Princeton University in 1947 with a degree in French. Mr. Rives' Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, France, the Congo, Burundi, Cambodia, Indonesia, and Canada. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on July 25, 1995.

Q: So where did you go?

RIVES: Frankfurt.

Q: That was my first assignment. I was in the Refugee Relief Program, which was exactly the same thing... Can you talk a bit about how you saw Germany in 1950?

RIVES: Being completely new to the Foreign Service, and never having been in Germany before, I was fascinated by it, especially the destruction still visible after the War. I was very fortunate, though, because three of us were sent to a little DP camp in Butzbach, which was north of Frankfurt, but we lived in Bad-Nauheim in the Kaiserhof Hotel, which was very nice.

Q: Ah, yes, this was a cohort (?) of...

RIVES: That's right, a really tough place. That was interesting. I served there, and went to Berlin for DP on TDY, and to Austria..., places like that.

Q: Tell me about the Displaced Persons Program. What were you looking at, and can you tell some of the types of people you were dealing with?

RIVES: Well, all types. A lot of them, of course, were Jewish refugees, but there were all sorts of other types also. What we mainly were doing, we were trying to stop Nazis from sneaking in, and there were plenty who tried that. Well, we just did the usual thing. They all had sponsors, mostly religious groups, who sponsored them entering the U.S.

Q: How did you find out the background of these people?

RIVES: The Germans were terribly well organized. I suppose they still are today. In Berlin they had the Document Center...

Q: The Berlin Document Center, yes.

RIVES: They had files on absolutely everybody, you can imagine. That was the basic document we had.

Q: Did you feel while you were working on the DP program that you were under any particular pressure... were there Congressional cases saying why weren't you doing this or that, or...

RIVES: Only one that I was involved in.

Q: What was that?

RIVES: I went to Berlin. The lady in charge of the Jewish Refugees Program -- HIAS -- as I recall was a Jewish lady, a refugee. She applied under the refugee program and I refused her, because (I must say I was very young)... she had been hidden by her husband all during the War (he was a very prominent German doctor), so she had never been persecuted or in a concentration camp, fortunately for her. I thought she should go to the United States as an ordinary immigrant, if she wanted to go, since she hadn't suffered. So I turned her down.

I flew back to Frankfurt and went into the Consulate, where I was told to report immediately to the Consul General's office, who by that time had already been contacted by Washington, who had been contacted by Berlin at the highest level. He said to me, "Sign." And I said, "No." So he signed. He said, "You're young, so I'll let you get away with this." My first experience with pressure.

Q: Good training in American politics!

You were in Frankfurt, then, from 1950 until...?

RIVES: Just till 1951, then I transferred to Bonn.

Q: What were you doing in Bonn?

RIVES: I was with George West in the contractual negotiations for independence.

Q: Had Germany gone through its Verschafst, Wunder, and all that?

RIVES: No, no, it was still Occupation. The contractual agreements I was working on took effect just after I left, in '52.

Q: Did you get any feel for negotiations?

RIVES: Not very much. I was so junior... I was doing bio-reporting on the various officials we were dealing with, and that sort of thing.

**L. BRUCE LAINGEN
Displaced Persons Program
Hamburg (1951-1953)**

Ambassador L. Bruce Laingen was born in Minnesota in 1922. He attended St. Olaf College and the University of Minnesota and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Ambassador Laingen entered the Foreign Service in 1949. His career included positions in Germany, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Washington, DC, and an ambassadorship to Malta. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

LAINGEN: I came into the Foreign Service in November, 1950. At that time the military government program in Germany was still in existence, run largely in terms of out reach in the districts -- Kreis.. The State Department was taking over some of the responsibilities of local government in Germany from the Army and I was a member of the Kreis Resident Officer class that began in November, 1950. Therefore I didn't take whatever the basic course was at the time - - perhaps it was called the A-100 course even then. I took instead a somewhat modified course which was destined to lead us to become Kreis Resident Officers ...KROs. We were a class, I think, of 32. We went through the course which was an intense program of German language study and to some degree a look at German culture, etc.

I went off to Germany in the spring of 1951. The entire class bundled aboard the former French and now defunct French liner Decross. The class of 32 officers, most of whom were married -- I was not -- occupied most of the first class quarters on that ship. It was nine days, nine leisurely days to party, to prepare, if you will. I had on board my green Chevrolet convertible, as did others. We got to Le Havre, off loaded and drove to our posts, beginning with a program in Frankfurt, Germany, at the headquarters of the military government -- HICOM -- the High Commission in Frankfurt. From there we were farmed out to our assignments for the next two years. At that point, for reasons that I suppose I will never fully understand, some of us were diverted to other programs. I never became a KRO. I think I would have made a rather lousy *Gauleiter*. Most of my colleagues did become what we joking called *Gauleiters*; i.e. the Nazi term for those district governors. *Gau* was a local district and the *leiter* was leader in that area.

I was diverted from the program to the Displaced Persons Program and went off to Hamburg, Germany and served two years operating out of the Consulate General there in the British zone -- not the American zone. I spent the first year issuing visas virtually non stop to the end of the Displaced Persons Program.

The Displaced Persons Program was a special program designed to facilitate entry into the United States of those qualified peoples displaced in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as a consequence of the war and particularly as a consequence of the Soviet advance across eastern European countries and into Germany. I forget the numbers but it was a very large program. It included people from places like the Ukraine, Romania, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. A lot of them came from the Baltic states. I have often thought, as I watched in the past 18 months here in Washington, D.C. the demonstrations by Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians demanding that the Soviets get out of their countries, that among those people were some I probably gave visas to. Or, if not to them, I gave visas to their parents.

It was a very liberal program in the sense that the requirements were not all that stringent. There

was a screening process, particularly effecting their political orientation, health and other considerations. We operated out of Hamburg in what were called displaced persons camps -- many of them being former German military barracks, which was the case for us outside of Hamburg in a place called Wentorf. It was a half hour drive east of Hamburg.

We issued visas almost around the clock. The last day of the program which was December 31, 1952 we issued visas until midnight.

I enjoyed the work. I enjoyed meeting and talking with the refugees. In most instances it was complete families, who benefitted under this program and went to the United States and are now part of the large Ukrainian, Polish, Estonian and Yugoslav communities.

I mention Yugoslavs because it seemed to me that everybody leaving from that area was headed for Libertyville, Indiana. For some reason that seems to be where they found the most sponsors. All of the families and individuals had to have sponsors under the program.

Then when that program ended, I left that displaced persons camp and worked full time at the Consulate General in Hamburg on the ethnic German program. This was another program designed to facilitate relief and entry into the United States of those qualified of ethnic Germans who had lived in the Soviet Union areas and had fled as the German army retreated to the West - the *Volksdeutsch* program. Many of those had fled the advancing Soviet Army and found refuge in Western Germany and elsewhere. This program was designed specifically for them. That program operated, for me, out of the Consulate General in Hamburg. I enjoyed Hamburg as a first post, because it was and is still a very impressive city with a lot of spirit. Happily in World War II, even though it suffered as much bombing, perhaps, as any city in Germany, the core of the city was not so badly damaged; so it didn't lose its face. It lost much of the port area of the city and much of the suburban housing, residential area, but the part of the city around those magnificent lakes, the Inner and Outer Alster, was not that badly damaged. The Germans with their remarkable perseverance and dedication and hard work by 1951-53 had restored much of the core of that city to its original splendor.

The checking of the applicants' backgrounds was pretty much a pro forma exercise frankly. Both the Ethnic German Program and the Displaced Persons Program involved a great deal of background analysis and checking by legions of people. We had access to the Berlin Document Center and when files came to us there was some kind of reasonably final conclusion required by us in a personal interview that we gave each person -- reasonable conclusion that these people were not security risks. I think by and large that was a pro forma exercise.

I never had any reason to think that those to whom I gave visas were any kind of security risk or had any background of that kind. It wasn't a perfect program by any means. By and large, I believe myself, that this country is a lot richer because of an enormous influx of people that were caught up in that tragedy and we are stronger because of it.

I felt very fortunate in my first assignment to have had a tour of that kind in Germany. It was unusual because it wasn't repeated thereafter in the same way. It was still sort of war time Europe, rebuilding Europe. A consular assignment, which I have said ever since, is one of the

best training assignments you can conceivably have for a Foreign Service career. The Foreign Service is fundamentally a service of dealing with people and you certainly get a lot of experience in dealing with people in their strengths and weaknesses when you are a consular officer.

Watching Europe cleaning up after a war was a tremendous history lesson, if nothing else, for everyone who went through this experience. Just to watch and see Europe begin to rebuild. I had had exposure to Europe, and to Germany specifically, three years before as a student in Sweden during a program in Minnesota. At the end of the program I traveled through Western Germany, Belgium, Holland and England and saw -- that was only two years after the war -- the enormous destruction and tremendous task that those countries faced in rebuilding. By 1953 when I left Germany it was remarkable how much progress had been made. To have been a part of that, to have watched it, was a fascinating experience. I was very fortunate, I think, in my first assignment in the Foreign Service.

PAUL K. STAHNKE
Political Officer
Hamburg and Kiel (1951-1953)

Paul K. Stahnke was born in Illinois in 1953. He served in the U.S. Air Force and then returned to University of Chicago where he received both a bachelor's degree and a master's in international relations. Mr. Stahnke's Foreign Service career included positions in Italy, Japan, Tokyo, Somalia, Denmark, France, and Thailand. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on June 1, 1994.

STAHNKE: While I was preparing my Master's thesis, I missed the Foreign Service exam but joined the Foreign Service anyway as a staff officer. My first post was Hamburg in the then British-occupied zone of Northern Germany as a visa security screening officer. This position was distinguished from that of a visa officer as being responsible for interpreting the Internal Security Act (McCarran Act) which had just recently been amended to make it workable. The law required us to determine whether any visa applicant had been a "voluntary" member of the Nazi Party or one of its affiliates. Neither Congressional intent or Department instructions gave us much guidance on interpreting "voluntary" versus "involuntary" membership. We were, thus, faced with an interesting challenge which made this position much more interesting than that of a visa officer. Collectively, with officers in similar positions as mine in other Consular posts in Germany, we, in effect, wrote the law's interpretation via submissions of "requests for advisory opinion" to the Department. With the law now "clarified", we could begin issuing immigrant visas to those Germans who were "involuntary members of the Nazi Party and its affiliates."

Shortly before arriving in Germany, I had heard Gian Carlo Menotti's opera "The Consul" in which the Consul was visible only as a shadow at his closed door to the desperate visa applicants in the waiting room. I was determined to be more humane but the experience was often very painful such as that with a very normal middle-aged lady who wanted to join her married daughter in the US. I was forced to declare her ineligible because she had, admittedly, been a

voluntary member of the Frauenschaft (the Nazi Party's women's auxiliary). Because no political motivation seemed to have been involved, I advised she have her daughter seek a private bill which would waive the law in her case.

My most challenging case was that of a distinguished lady professor of theology who had recently escaped from the Soviet Zone. She had also been a member of the Frauenschaft and, after the war, became a member of the Communist Party. She was able to prove, to both my and the Department's satisfaction that she had been an "involuntary" member of both.

Handling a variety of politically-charged visa cases for a year gave me an excellent insight into the German psyche and prepared me for my next assignment as political officer in residence in Kiel. The official title of the position was "Deputy US Land Observer, Land Schleswig-Holstein". The Consul General in Hamburg was officially the "Land Observer" with two deputies, one in Kiel and the other in Hannover. The initial intent was for the deputies to be attached to the British Land Commissioner's offices in Kiel and Lower Saxony, respectively. However, by 1952, the role of these positions in the "German Occupation" had become a mere formality. Our responsibilities were mainly to report on political developments in our respective areas.

Suddenly, after just a year in the Foreign Service, I was, in effect, in charge of my own Vice-Consulate, with a staff, car, driver and representational residence. Although I maintained close and very friendly contact with Brigadier Hume, the British Land Commissioner for Schleswig-Holstein, I was mainly on my own in dealing with the three principal problems in the Land of interest to Washington: (1) developments on the political extremes - both left and right, (2) political and social aspects of the large group of refugees from East Germany and (3) the Danish minority issue.

The elections of 1930 in Schleswig-Holstein had provided the Nazis with their first significant political victory; hence our sensitivity to any post-war Nazi revival in that Land. While a few hot head neo-Nazis spent considerable time trying to whip up sentiment for the "good old days", they proved to be an insignificant political element. The Communists, of which there were a few, were equally insignificant. Therefore, aside from periodically attending some of their meetings and talking with their leaders, I had little to report in this area.

The refugee issue was much more interesting. The population of Schleswig-Holstein had been approximately doubled by the post-war influx of refugees, mainly from East Prussia and Pomerania, areas that had been taken over by Poland. Most were housed in primitive barracks at the outskirts of several cities, including Kiel. Our concern was that their natural longing to return to the homeland could become the spark for revisionist sentiment and, more generally, incentive for political extremism. They had a political party, the Bund der Heimantsvertriebenen und Entrechteten (BHE) which literally translates into "association of persons driven from their homes and deprived of their rights", clearly an organization that needed close watching.

The Chairman of the BHE and member of the lower house of parliament, Waldemar Kraft, lived two blocks from my residence and I made it a point to establish a personal relationship with him. After I obtained his confidence, we spent many hours together discussing BHE objectives. He

eventually convinced me that his public statements were matched by his personal thoughts. He said that he and most members of his party recognized that the Polish annexation was permanent and that they must learn to deal with the new reality. He said it was his ambition to develop an atmosphere of trust with the Poles so that the two nationalities could live together in peace. While this was not possible so long as East-West tensions existed, he wanted to be optimistic for the future - a future he never saw. Although not taking his words at face value, I was impressed by his sincerity and lack of subversive intent. My relationship with Kraft proved to be professionally useful. He refused to talk with our High Commission (later Embassy) officers in Frankfurt (later Bonn) so that, to find out his position on issues, they had to phone me to request I ask him.

By 1952, the Danish minority was becoming a receding issue, however with an interesting historical background. Schleswig, together with much of Jutland, had been taken from the Danes in the late 19th century through one of Bismarck's little wars. Denmark regained a part after World War I but was disappointed in receiving no border adjustment after World War II. So, they started a cultural campaign by offering anyone who could prove that at least one of his ancestors was Danish periodic food packages, a most attractive offer to the hungry Germans. The many who qualified registered their Danish ancestry and became known derisively to other Germans as "Speck Daener" (Bacon Danes). As economic conditions in Germany improved (particularly after the currency reform of 1950), the food packages became less attractive. Therefore, during my three years in Kiel, the small Danish minority political party and related social organization were fighting rearguard actions. In my frequent contacts with officials in these organizations I learned one principle of such groups in decline which was to serve me also subsequently when I dealt with the German minority in the Italian north (Alto Adige/Sued Tyrol) - i.e., officials of such organizations work with increasing energy to keep the issue alive regardless of the hopelessness of their cause.

For reasons I found incomprehensible, I had instructions to stay clear of the Social Democrats (SPD). I believe this was because of personal prejudice that our High Commissioner (John McCloy) had against the leader of the Social Democrats, the bombastic Kurt Schumacher. Since the Social Democrats were a significant force in the Land and the Kiel mayor was a Social Democrat, I asked for, and received, permission to see these people. The Kiel mayor, Andreus Gayk, was an old-line Socialist, a street fighter with Schumacher during the Weimar Republic and early Nazi periods. Winning his confidence was a much harder task than with Kraft. I did so, I think, by telling him (truthfully) that my father had been a Social Democrat before leaving Germany in late 1922. Still, it took me a year before I could get him to come to my residence. Gayk proved to be a very useful entree into SPD circles and I got to know them well. This ultimately gave me the material to write a major "think piece" on the "Party of the Permanent 30%", a percentage that remained true for the SPD throughout the Federal Republic until it shifted to a more mainstream position long after I left Germany.

Gayk had his hands full in trying to rebuild Kiel which had been severely damaged by wartime bombing, mainly because of the submarine pens in its harbor. Until Kaiser Wilhelm had made it into a naval base in the late 19th century, it had been a small fishing village with typical small winding streets. As its population rapidly expanded, the city became a maze. Gayk, with a master plan, was trying to rebuild the city in a more logical fashion (wider streets, etc.) but was

frustrated in his attempts to exert eminent domain. He once told me that he wished the Allies had been more thorough in their bombings. It would have been easier to build the city from scratch. I had taken the Foreign Service written and oral exams in 1952 but my appointment was held up by the notorious McCarthy investigations of 1952-53 which stopped all appointments and promotions until we all had gotten another security clearance. I was caught in a difficult position. The occupation of Germany was to come to a close in 1954 and my office in Kiel was abolished early that year. I was given the option of applying for another Foreign Service Staff (FSS) position or returning to the US to wait out my appointment. After reviewing the possibilities, I decided to take an offer to go to Palermo as a staff officer to work in a new program - the Refugee Relief Program (RRP). After one year in Hamburg and three years in Kiel, my wife and I had formed many friendships and our young son had learned to speak German like a native. It was difficult to leave this first post and became no easier in subsequent transfers.

Q: Paul, I want to go back to Hamburg/Kiel, which sounds to me like a fascinating tour. Presumably in Kiel you didn't issue any visas, you merely were there to report on what was going on in Schleswig-Holstein.

STAHNKE: As said, my official responsibility was to liaise with the British Land Commissioner and his staff on occupation matters. But, of course, by that time there was very little being done by the occupying powers, so really my major assignment was to be political officer in residence.

Q: Did you feel during your time in both Hamburg and Kiel that you got sufficient supervision from your superior officers? You were a new officer then. Did they give you any rotation?

STAHNKE: The only rotation I got was from visa to political, a good combination from my point of view. Yes, I was very raw, of course, coming into the consulate and knew nothing about visas or, in fact, about any of the State Department procedures. I had received no training in the Department before departure, except three days of general orientation. Upon arrival in Hamburg, the Visa Section Chief and several other officers in the Section gave me only the most basic of information; the rest was up to me. In any case, no one knew how to interpret the new visa legislation. I was pleased with the freedom and trust given me in developing my own procedures and interpretation of the new law (McCarran Act). Regarding the Kiel position, the Political Section Chief gave me general orientation and the man I was replacing was with me for a week in Kiel to introduce me to his principal contacts and to give me all he knew about the job. By the time he left, I was well prepared for my duties.

Q: I think it speaks well of you, a new officer, to be on your own in Kiel. That indicates to me that they looked at you and decided you could handle that sort of job.

STAHNKE: Well, they did and I was pleased that they did.

HENRY DUNLAP
Director, Amerika House, USIS
Bonn (1951-1954)

Henry Dunlap was born in New York in 1917. He graduated from Canisius College in 1939 and from the University of Buffalo in 1941. Mr. Dunlap served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1946. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany and Ghana. He was interviewed on January 25, 1988 by Hans Tuch.

Q: Before we get into the America House occupation, when you were with the military government and first transferred into the high commissioner's office, you were the archivist of the Allied High Commission?

DUNLAP: Yes, that's right.

Q: And you were located first in Berlin and then in Bonn.

DUNLAP: Well, first Berlin then my library was in Frankfurt. And then for a year I was both chief librarian and U.S. Archivist in Bonn and in Frankfurt. Then I moved to Bonn with the family and ended up as just U. S. Archivist.

Q: Now, the U. S. Archivist job, were these the Occupation and the High Commission archives or the Allied archives?

DUNLAP: No, this was the High Commission, the Allied General Secretariat which was on the Petersburg, in Bonn by Bad Godesberg.

Q: But it was the U. S. archives that you controlled or supervised located with the Allied High Commission?

DUNLAP: No, it's a little complicated. There were three archivists with the Allied High Commission. The senior one was a Frenchman, a Colonel Decaix. The British one was a lady, Doris Dumble. And Henry Dunlap was the American archivist. And actually though we kept all the records, Colonel Decaix kept the important originals. Our main job really was the issuance every month of the Allied High Commission Gazette which came out in English, French and German.

Q: German also?

DUNLAP: Yes.

1Q: Then in 1951 you took over the direction of the America House program. Could you just briefly say what that involved at that time?

DUNLAP: Well, the America House program at that time included 48 America Houses -- which means, as you know, 48 big establishments -- and 110 small establishments called German American libraries, Deutsch-Amerikanische Bibliotheken. And they were all over West Germany, including Berlin. I believe we had a total of 700 German employees and something like 50

Americans.

Q: Tell me what at that time was the purpose of these America Houses.

DUNLAP: Well, in the very beginning the purpose was -- I'm glad you asked that. In the very beginning the purpose was to bring to the German users of the facilities information really only about the United States, that we knew that they'd been denied since about 1933. And we thought our job was to provide, to fill in the gap.

After a few years of the program -- and this was really, I think, before I took it over -- instead of becoming a window to America it became a window to the West. We felt that the Germans had been denied knowledge of the whole free world. So it was broadened out to include the West. [It included] I think our most important thing in a way were our libraries with our books and magazines and newspapers. But we had lectures, concerts, exhibits. We even were laughed at for teaching finger painting for children.

Q: In many of the cities of Germany the America House really became known as the community center because of a lack of any other facility to have cultural and community activities taking place before they were rebuilt.

DUNLAP: That's correct. For example, it was sort of funny. One of the many advantages was that in the very early days we had light and heat and other people didn't.

Q: Right.

DUNLAP: And we also had space and we had through the cooperation of the Army in particular our buildings were repaired, well maintained and looked after.

Q: Was this all part of the U.S. Government's reorientation and re-education program that was carried out by the U. S. Government and Germany, in the western -- its occupation zone of Germany?

DUNLAP: Yes, also Austria. Although Austria was apparently different, it actually wasn't. But it looked different.

Q: Now, what did the direction of these American Houses from your point of view, from Bonn, what did that really entail?

DUNLAP: First of all, it entailed the acquisition and distribution of materials for the whole network, all the books, exhibits, anything that was used in the whole program we acquired and distributed. Policy direction as well, efforts to get all the American Houses to publish monthly programs. Among the things we provided were lecturers and musical performers. Mainly the central organization provided considerable direction, but mainly backup services.

Q: Backup services and policy direction.

DUNLAP: Right.

Q: These 48 American Houses and over 100 reading rooms, did that continue? Was there a curtailment of budget? How long did that sort of thing last?

DUNLAP: Well, there was a curtailment budget-wise. We had to cut the number of America Houses until I think long after I had left there were only six big ones. The German American libraries, the 110 or so, as far as I know most of them were either included in the local library of German origin or just disappeared.

Q: This was quite a bit after you.

DUNLAP: Oh, yes.

Q: Who was your predecessor in running the America House?

DUNLAP: Mrs. Patricia Van Delden.

Q: And she I think, when you took over, was transferred to Washington.

DUNLAP: I think so, yes.

Q: And your successor?

DUNLAP: B. Franklin Steiner.

Q: B. Franklin Steiner, right. Now, there are of course I think a lot of anecdotes connected --

DUNLAP: No, what about Joe Hodge?

Q: Oh, yes.

DUNLAP: He was first.

Q: Yes, that's right.

DUNLAP: Then Steiner.

Q: And Steiner was his deputy.

DUNLAP: Yes.

Q: Yes, that's right. And your deputy was Roger Ross, wasn't he?

DUNLAP: Right. I should only comment that, it's a negative one on my successor but it must be put on the record, that he proceeded to do with alacrity some of the things that we had resisted in

order to preserve the program. And that's an upset.

Q: Now, when you were head of the America House program was there a good deal of support for you and your activities from, say, the High Commissioner's office and from the High Commissioner and from Washington?

DUNLAP: Oh, yes. I would say there was. We were able to spend money efficiently so that every year at the end of the budget year we'd be notified that we could have \$100,000 to \$200,000 for books because other people had not been able to spend it properly. And we usually did spend -- we always spent it and we always spent it properly. Because we had maintained lists of books and equipment and things that we would need if we ever got the money. And we were ready to go.

Q: Who were the people who were the America House directors during that period?

DUNLAP: You mean specifically who they were?

Q: Well, were they foreign service officers? Or were they specialists in running programs in Germany?

DUNLAP: Well, this leads to a good point that I wanted to be sure to include. The America House network included a lot of former Kreis Resident Officers. And I think that you, Tom, could explain as well as I what they were. We looked on them in our day as the sort of eyes and ears of the occupation. They were stationed all over Germany in little towns, big cities, practically everywhere.

Q: You mean "kreis" which was the equivalent of county.

DUNLAP: Yes.

Q: In the American occupied area.

DUNLAP: Yes. And when those positions were eliminated, many of the KROs came into the America House program and we found jobs for them. I think it was by and large a favorable development.

Q: Yes.

DUNLAP: Then there were others. There were foreign service types, some people that were hired in Germany itself, Americans as I think you yourself were. It was a complete mix of people of all kinds.

Q: Many of us learned really our job while doing the job.

DUNLAP: Right.

Q: I remember distinctly our America House director in Munich, a nice woman, who had her lecture program. And she wanted to emphasize the role of women in U. S. society. She had a woman lecturer and she plastered the whole city of Munich on these kiosks which were called Litwassaenlen and which had all kinds of announcements and advertisements for cultural activities throughout the city. She had a huge poster in which she advertised the lecture at the America House. And the title of the lecture was "The Position of Woman in Marriage." That became sort of a byword.

DUNLAP: She had some other ones. She had an anthropological lecture the title of which was "Adam wo bist Du?"

Q: "Adam where art thou?"

DUNLAP: Also she had very attractive monthly programs as you may remember. But in some of the programs we had some real problems. One of them wanted to celebrate Huckleberry Finn. So they showed a picture on the cover of Joe, the black man, eating a watermelon and slopping it all over everything. Certainly, this was well before there were any questions of civil rights. But we really raised hell about that particular illustration which was a famous classic drawing.

Q: Did the America House program in Germany suffer at all under the McCarthy aberration?

DUNLAP: I'm sorry you asked that. Of course, we did. You and I as you may remember personally suffered. It was for us, of course, a very sad experience. But I don't think that I should say -- I don't think the program suffered. But we certainly took a mauling. It was a nasty experience.

Q: Did we have any problems with putting books in the library? Were they censored from Washington? Were they in anyway criticized by Washington what we had in our collections?

DUNLAP: They were criticized by McCarthy's people. But I think of all the nonsense that McCarthy's committee published, we maybe had four books which were totally harmless in content by people who McCarthy said were communists.

Q: Who were they as an example?

DUNLAP: Oh, gosh. One was a woman who wrote a book called Four Cornerstones of Peace, Utley, Frieda Utley.

Q: Frieda Utley, yes.

DUNLAP: And while she could have been a socialist, she certainly wasn't, I don't think, a communist.

Q: I remember they also criticized Dashiell Hammett's Thin Man and the Maltese Falcon that being a good example of having communist literature.

DUNLAP: Yes, because the claim was that Mr. Hammett was a communist. I incidentally have never known whether he was or wasn't.

Q: The whole America House operation being the size that it was must have been managerially also a very complicated, huge operation, just the number of books that were ordered for the America House and distributed. How was this managed by you?

DUNLAP: Well, it was a big job. As I said, we had probably 700 employees. That alone is a problem. But we were very fortunate. Because by and large they were all first class people. We actually organized what we called a central distribution center which was in Frankfurt run by a librarian, Garnetta Kramer, who was a very good organizer. We ordered all our books, posters and things of that type. They came to the center. The books were catalogued and labeled and distributed to all the houses. Actually, it was a very efficient, centrally run operation. And what a terrible amount of work. We had a big photo lab in Frankfurt. You can laugh. I'm not going to tell that story. And our exhibit central operation was in Bonn. And it too was just as efficient. And our speakers and artists office was headquartered in Bonn.

Q: I remember the number of books were not really counted in numbers but in tons of books.

DUNLAP: That's right.

Q: Were handled by the distribution center?

DUNLAP: I think it was hard to do. Because as our budget was prepared, our own, the 700 American salaries, the American and other salaries were sort of separate. But I think it was about \$3.5 million a year for everything which really was a very small expenditure when you think of what was being spent on other things and also much of this was ultimately paid for by the Germans themselves. They were cost-of-occupation.

Q: Right. Just briefly could you tell me something about the -- you had a central distribution center for your libraries, for your handling books, posters, photo lab, but you also had, you mentioned a speakers and artists bureau. What did they do?

DUNLAP: They located singers, performers, speakers, lecturers.

Q: In Germany?

DUNLAP: No, no. Anywhere. And we often made up teams or pairs. One time we had a religious seminar. We had a rabbi, a Protestant minister and a Catholic priest.

Q: I remember Father White.

DUNLAP: Father White who when one person asked him a question about what university he went to, said, "I am a university". But it was a very humorous point. I remember in that case the Protestant minister had to go back to the States. And one of our American House directors who was a minister took his place.

Q: Flint?

DUNLAP: James Flint, yes. We had some rather famous singers as you well know. And we had some interesting piano players for concert, for operettas and things.

Q: I remember Leon Fleischer sort of made his first appearance in public.

DUNLAP: Mrs. Dunlap and I were discussing recently it may have been after my day, but I think the famous pianist who just had his 25th concert. He was born in Nuremberg.

Q: He was born in Nuremberg.

DUNLAP: Didn't he play for us?

Q: No, he was too young. He was hardly born.

DUNLAP: We had Leontyne Price sing for us.

Q: Right.

DUNLAP: Someone who has sung in Porgy and Bess, I remember, a woman. We had a lot of people, a lot of opera singers. And all they got from us were scrapbooks.

Q: Henry, while you were head of the American House program in the early '50s in Germany were there any interesting developments, any interesting stories which would add to our recitation here today?

DUNLAP: At one stage Mickey Boerner who as you know was our boss. He was PAO for Germany.

Q: Public Affairs Officer.

DUNLAP: He called me in and said that due to budget restrictions I had to eliminate two big America Houses. And I said, "Well, that's going to be hard. But I'll see what I can do." So I went back and got the staff together and we studied and considered whether we could turn them over to the Germans or what we could do. Then I went back to Mickey and said, "You know, Mickey we've decided that we'll eliminate," I think it was, "Nuremberg and one other major large establishment." And Mickey said, "My God, Henry, you can't do that. Nuremberg is the first America House I ever gave a speech in." Nevertheless, we had to shut them down. This was probably the most unhappy part of my job which normally was a very joyful one. The unhappy part of having to eliminate established functioning efficient operations.

One other comment I would like to make which has nothing to do with the particular question. Although it's not measurable there's no question in my mind but what the American House program in Germany had a considerable influence on a considerable number of Germans. And I

mean by influence a good influence to acquaint them with democracy and the like. But I think one of the great effects of the program which is largely ignored is the fact that the people who worked for us, the Germans had a profound effect on the society when they left us and returned.

I remember, I think it was in the late '50s, the managing editors of three or four of Germany's leading newspapers, West Germany, were people who had worked for our press division which I think is very significant. And not only were they important positions, they behaved in a wonderfully efficient manner.

Q: Let me just add to this to this day the editor and chief of the Frankfurter Rundschau which is one of the four or five major newspapers in the Federal Republic was one of our German colleagues in our press division. And he talks about it all the time. Just for the record, Mickey Boerner was the public affairs officer.

DUNLAP: And his name is really Alfred V. Boerner. He died last year.

Q: Yes. The first director of public affairs of USIS in Germany under the State Department's administration after OMGUS was replaced by the High Commissioner's office, I think was briefly a man by the name of Ralph Nicholson who was the editor of the Louisville Courier Journal.

DUNLAP: That's totally unknown to me.

Q: And his deputy was Shepard Stone.

DUNLAP: Yes, I know Shep.

Q: And then Shepard Stone --

DUNLAP: Succeeded him.

Q: -- succeeded him after a very few months.

DUNLAP: Oh.

Q: And Shep Stone was the public affairs director until Mickey Boerner became the public affairs officer.

DUNLAP: Shep Stone was PAO when I took over the America House program and I was brought to his attention by his general manager, Dick Brown.

Q: Dick Brown was his general manager. And I think Jim Hoffnagle succeeded Dick Brown as the general manager.

DUNLAP: Yes. Which is like the comptroller position in a financial company.

Q: Right, right. Mickey Boerner was sort of a colorful person. He had been in Germany even under OMGUS days. And he had a three times a week, I believe, radio commentary.

DUNLAP: "Guten Abend".

Q: Which he always introduced with "Guten Abend" -- Good evening. So he became "Mr. Guten Abend."

DUNLAP: Yes.

Q: And he was a relatively small man, short person, as I am. And there is this wonderful story about Mickey Boerner which I'm just going to recite for the record. John Slocum was the press attaché, I believe, in Bonn. And one day Mickey Boerner called his staff together and asked them to do something. I don't remember what it was. And whatever the thing was that he asked them to do did not get done. So about four days later the deputy public affairs officer called the staff together and said, "You know, this is terrible. You didn't follow Mickey's orders. What do you think Mickey would do if he knew that this had not been done?" Where upon John Slocum came up and said, "Well, the same thing that Mickey Boerner does everyday anyway". "What's that?" "Walk back and forth underneath his desk."

Well, let's leave Germany for a minute. I know that you came back to Washington after your tour of duty in Bonn and took over the Bibliographic Division of what at that time was called the Information Center Service (ICS), which was the division that selected the books that were going to be used by the America House or their equivalents in other parts of the world for them to choose to stock their libraries, right?

DUNLAP: Right.

CECIL B. LYON
Special Assistant to the Commissioner, High Commissioner's Office
Berlin (1951-1954)

Cecil B. Lyon was born in New York in 1903. He graduated from Harvard University in 1927. He joined the Foreign Service in 1930, serving in Cuba, Hong Kong, Japan, China, Chile, Egypt, Poland, Germany, France, and Ceylon. Mr. Lyon was interviewed in 1988 by John Bovey.

Q: Then Berlin, 1950 to 1954. Right?

LYON: Needless to say, a most interesting time to be there. At the War College, when I was told that I was going to Berlin, Elbridge Durbrow telephoned me and said, "We don't usually ask people whether they're prepared to go to such and such a post. But as you have just come from an Iron Curtain country and we want to send you back behind the Curtain, I thought I ought to talk to you." I said, "Oh, Lord. Its awfully hard on Elsie, and awfully hard on the children," and I

started making all sorts of excuses why we shouldn't go. He said, "It's Berlin." I said, "Oh, that's different, I'd love to go to Berlin, and Elsie will be delighted because when we went there on a holiday she said, 'I'd love to be assigned there.'" So off we went.

Before we left Mr. McCloy, who was High Commissioner, came to the States on consultation and naturally he wanted to look me over to see whether he wanted me because I was to run his office in Berlin. The High Commissioner then lived in Bonn--he had moved from Berlin. We talked for a while and I didn't know how it was going until at the end he said, "You'll like Berlin, Lyon; its a windy corner." He had a wonderful way of phrasing things. We had terrible unemployment during my term in Berlin. We were always trying to reduce the unemployment, and get the factories going. One day we were having a consultation and McCloy said, "You know, there's one fellow who could settle this thing with one arm tied behind his back. As a matter of fact he's got both arms tied behind his back. It's Speer in Spandau."

Spandau is interesting. Each month it would be under the charge of one of the four powers, and when the Russians were in charge the prisoners lost weight. When we were in charge they gained weight. During the month we were in charge the Commandant was supposed to go out and make a tour; he did it once or twice but then he got me to do it, most of the time. It was fascinating because in those days in Spandau were Admiral Doenitz; Walter Funk, the Nazi Economic Minister; Admiral Raeder, Commander-in-Chief of the German Navy; von Neurath, who had been Foreign Minister; von Shirach, Hitler's Youth leader; Albert Speer, and Rudolph Hess, last but not least. They were, of course, completely cut off from the world; they weren't allowed any newspapers; they weren't allowed any books to speak of; and nobody was supposed to speak to them; they weren't supposed to hear anything. Each one lived in a little cell about 4 feet by 8 feet, but it was extraordinary how each of the inmates had impressed on that cell his character. The cell of Hess, for example, was all higgledy-piggledy. The bed was never made, and clothes were thrown on the floor; it was a mess. Admiral Doenitz's cell was all military precision, brushes lined up carefully just so, his blanket folded very correctly, very precisely. The only cell that had a human touch was that of Speer. In Speer's he had a picture of his family. He also had a drawing of a house and I asked him what that was. He said, "That's my dream house." He was an architect, you will recall. He said, "I'm going to build that when I get out of here." And I thought to myself, "Poor devil, you're never going to get out of here," but he did. He lived not only to get out but long enough to build his dream house, and to write two books.

Q: That's right, a very interesting book. It's a revelation to see what chaos there was in the Reich and how inefficient the efficient Germans really were.

LYON: I thought in normal life I would have liked Speer. Anyway, it was really ridiculous, as you say, having that huge prison for just these seven inmates but we never could get the Russians to put them in a smaller place. We had to have a platoon out there each month we were in charge. They had any number of guards and cooks and it was really, I thought, a terrible waste. The Russians were very difficult, if somebody got ill we had a terrible time trying to get permission to take them out and put them in a hospital. Eventually they yielded but they were very difficult.

As you know, one by one the prisoners either died or were let out having served their long terms, except Hess who was living there alone up until about a year ago when he died.

Q: Who sat on the Kommandatura after the Russians walked out and started administering their own zone?

LYON: By the time I got there it was just the French, the British, and ourselves, the Russians having walked out.

Q: It was a total boycott?

LYON: Oh yes, they never came over. Very often the Commandants themselves wouldn't participate in the weekly meeting and their deputies--I being the American deputy--would. My first British colleague was a fellow called Tenant, and the Frenchman was de Noblet. De Noblet was followed by Francois de Margerie and Tenant by Michael Rose who became a very close friend, who we've seen over the years. The French were always trying to put the Germans in their place, put them down, and the British and the U.S. were always trying to loosen things up a little bit.

Q: For the French, it was the Francois-Poncet-tradition.

LYON: When I first got there, Ernst Reuter was the mayor. He was the most wonderful man. He had been arrested by the Nazis, he'd been put in prison. The British Labor Party and the French parties persuaded Hitler to let him out of prison but Hitler exiled him to Italy and he spent the war in Turkey. Then he came back to Berlin and he was a most marvelous man. I once told him that he gave too much of himself in addition to all the work he did, by going to all the parties that the Allies gave. He said, "But I have to, for Berlin." And he said, "Nobody ever died of overwork." But he did. He also had a Senator for Reconstruction called Paul Hertz who had been in the Reichstag. The Nazis came in to arrest him one day but he got out the back door, and went to the States. He was absolutely selfless and devoted to the rebuilding of Berlin, and he gave his whole life to that and did a wonderful job.

Q: Reuter was really gung-ho on reunification, wasn't he?

LYON: Oh, absolutely. He said to me, "Lyon, this division is against nature, its against history, its un-Christian and if you Allies don't help us overcome it, we one day will take matters in our own hands and obtain unification without your help." I think, had he lived, he undoubtedly would have been Chancellor one day and he might have worked something out, I don't know.

Q: That would really have put the fat in the fire.

LYON: It might have.

Q: Was this zeal shared by other Berliners, or couldn't they care less?

LYON: Oh, yes, but they were terribly courageous, as you know. They wouldn't give in to...

Q: No, I mean the zeal for reunification.

LYON: Oh, absolutely, yes, because so many of their families were over on the other side. This was before the wall so they could get back and forth, but the West Berliners didn't dare go there very much because they were scared they'd be arrested or put in jail. But a lot of East Berliners used to come over on the U-Bahn and do some shopping and then go back. In those days you would say, "Oh, just look at the contrast between East and West Berlin," because East Berlin was still very much in rubble except the Stalinallee, the main street; they'd done the facades on that. But Elsie and I went back to Berlin last June (1988); we went over to East Berlin and it's extraordinary what they've done. You still can say, "Look at the contrast," and it isn't the thriving busy place that West Berlin is, but it's still pretty well coming back to life.

Q: Well, the Germans, you know, they're very efficient people.

LYON: I said that Ernst Reuter died of overwork. He used to make a point of driving on the Autobahn, getting out to West Germany to Bonn and Hamburg and what not. He'd say he had to do this to prove that they still could do it, to keep the appearances, and keep the route open. And one day he started off. He had started out for Hamburg. He had a cold and I think he got as far as Hamburg and then he was turned back because he didn't have his permit. So he had two hours going and two hours back to get his permit. Then he went off again and he caught a worse cold, and he got pneumonia and died.

We happened to be out of Germany at the time but we came rushing back for his funeral. His funeral was a most impressive thing. I went back to Berlin a few years later and there's just a simple grave with his name and the dates of his birth and death. Even then--that was oh, ten or fifteen years after his death--while I was there a couple came and put flowers on the grave, and you could see that other people had been continually putting flowers there. He was a wonderful man. I thought the world of him.

But, as I say, the French were always trying to discipline him and particularly, when we were in the chair. (The chair of the Kommandatura rotated.) On one occasion the French were particularly adamant about something he did, and they asked us to talk to him, speak to him. I was delegated to go over and talk to him, and I said, "Mr. Mayor, when you want to you have such charm you can charm birds off trees. Be a little nicer to your French colleagues." And he sort of smiled and mumbled something. A few months or weeks later, he was going to the States on a visit. Just before that the refugees started coming over in hordes from East Berlin. He telephoned me--he called me, I don't know why, I guess it was easy for him to talk to me--he said, "Berlin, the free island in this Red sea is sinking under the weight of these refugees. You've got to help me get some planes to get them out to West Germany." So we got him some planes. Then, with true German efficiency, they were making great lists of everybody, and carefully documenting them. And the planes didn't get used for two or three days. From Wiesbaden (our air base), they were calling up and saying, "For goodness sake, send those planes back." So I went to see the Mayor and I said, "You've got to get things moving." I said, "When you get to the States, you're not going to have a very good reception." He said, "When I get to the States I'll charm, I'll charm--I'll charm apples off trees."

Q: Let's clear up something else. You were Deputy to General Mathewson and to Commissioner

McCloy.

LYON: Right.

Q: What were the respective responsibilities of the Commissioner and the Commandant?

LYON: The Commandant, needless to say, was in command of the troops, but he also was actually the head of...

Q: Troops in Berlin?

LYON: In Berlin, the commander of the American troops in Berlin.

Q: But not anywhere else.

LYON: Not anywhere else, no, not in West Germany. And, of course, McCloy was High Commissioner for the whole country. And in spite of the Russians trying to ease us out of Berlin over and over again, we insisted that Berlin was part of Western Germany, and the day eventually came when the Reichstag met in the old Reichstag building much to the annoyance of the Soviets.

I was head of the civilian office of McCloy in Berlin and they called me Deputy Commandant because I was also the Political Adviser to General Mathewson, the Commandant. I don't know whether that's very clear but that's the way it was.

Q: In that connection, what was the effect of the Marshall Plan on people in Berlin, on the Berliners? It was just getting going when you were there.

LYON: Well, I guess we got aid to get things working in Berlin as far as I recall, but we didn't have a Marshall Plan man in Berlin. There was an AID representative in Bonn with the High Commissioner. As I say, this unemployment was a terrible thing.

Q: Was the Marshall Plan a factor in the Russians leaving the Kommandatura in Berlin, or why did they walk out?

LYON: They left the Allied Control Council in March 1948, while Congress was considering the Marshall Plan and just after the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia. Then right after the occupying powers and Benelux reached agreement in June about the European Recovery Program and political and monetary institutions for West Germany, the Soviet representative walked out of the Four Power Kommandatura in Berlin, and at the end of June, they started the Berlin blockade.

Q: So they had already walked out by the time you came to Berlin.

LYON: Oh, yes,

Q: Then it must have been related to the Marshall Plan, the set-up in West Germany, and the Czech disaster.

LYON: The Soviets were very difficult to deal with in Berlin, as you know. As I recall it was also connected with the rate of exchange.

Q: And there was no Soviet participation, even at the deputy level?

LYON: Very little. The little participation we had came with the case of the Steinstuecken Enclave. That was one of the very few times I ever came in touch with the Russians. It was a part of the U.S. Sector, a little enclave about 200 yards from West Berlin, in the Soviet Zone. I think there were about 20 or 30 families who lived there. They used to walk across the grass to West Berlin to the places where they were employed. One day the Russians moved their troops in and stopped people going back and forth. We did everything we could to try and get the Russians to pull their troops back but they wouldn't hear of it. We were sending messages and talking at lower levels with them. We could have sent our own troops and driven them out, but like so many things in those days, we were terrified that if we did the balloon would go up, we'd get into a real row. Finally it came to the point where we had to do something. My Commandant, General Mathewson, invited the Russian Commandant, General Nordiko I think was his name--to come and talk about this matter. The General came. We had a green baize table, and the Russian General sat opposite my General. I was next to General Mathewson, with an interpreter on his other side. Opposite the Russian Commandant his Deputy and an interpreter--all very formal. General Mathewson said, "I won't talk about this at all until you tell me you've given orders for the troops to be withdrawn." The Russian turned to his Deputy and went mumble-mumble and looked at us and didn't say anything. Mathewson pulled out his watch and he said, "It's now quarter to six. Unless you can tell me that by six o'clock you have given orders for your troops to be pulled back, I won't talk." More mumble-mumble. And finally Mathewson said, "Have you given the orders?" And the Russian Commandant said, "Da." And the Deputy Commandant said, "Nyet." So Mathewson looked at me: "What do we do now?" I made a gesture of tossing a coin. We went on, and we talked and we talked, and finally they withdrew their troops. But I think it's a perfect example of how the Russians handle things. One says "Da" and the other says "Nyet"--take your choice.

Q: What happened to that little enclave when they put up the wall, do you know?

LYON: That was quite a bit after I had left Berlin so I'm not absolutely sure but I believe the wall didn't go around that part, it just went through Berlin. But it was rather funny that if we played golf in our sector and we sliced, we'd be in the Russian zone, and we couldn't recover our sliced balls.

We also had an incident about a memorial the Russians had erected, before the walkout (from the Kommandatura) in our Sector. It was a Russian tank on a stone base. The West Berliners kept nicking and chipping at it. We asked the Russians to remove it to prevent further damage. They refused. So General Mathewson had a wire cage built over it. This infuriated the Russians and they demanded that the cage be removed. We refused and in due course the Russians dismantled the monument and carted it away.

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Q: I might just ask you if there was a change in tone after Acheson left and Dulles took over? I mean with respect to Berlin. You were there until '54, weren't you?

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Q: The election was '52, Dulles took over in '53 then.

LYON: The only time I remember Dulles coming to Berlin was for the Four Power Conference which was held there with Eden, Bidault, and Gromyko.

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LYON: Well, I was taken out just before that happened but I remember, when we were arranging with the Russians for the meeting, Michael Rose, my British colleague, said, "Excuse me," and he left the room. When he came back he whispered to me, "I just threw up." He was so nervous talking to the Russians.

Q: I don't think I have anything more on Berlin.

LYON: I did mention to you that Acheson came there to dedicate one of the new buildings of the Free University in Berlin, and he stayed with us as a matter of fact. And just two days before he got there they discovered an unexploded bomb from the war where they were going to put the cornerstone that he was to dedicate. It hadn't gone off and it might not have gone off, but still it was rather worrying.

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While we were in Berlin, Adlai Stevenson came on a visit. He wanted to go over into East Berlin, which was just after the uprising there, and I was taking him. He'd been given a lunch by the foreign press in Berlin and they all accompanied us to Checkpoint Charlie, and then they all said, "Well, we'll see you in Siberia," as we went scuttling off into the Soviet Sector. Stevenson wanted to see Hitler's bunker and we drew up to it in two black limousines, such as diplomats always move around in. There were a lot of young men, almost boys, Russian soldiers there. These poor young kids didn't know what it was all about, these young Russians soldiers. As we got out of the car, Stevenson had with him an editor of Newsweek--I've forgotten his name--and he whipped out a camera and started taking pictures. And I said, "Please don't do that. These young kids are bewildered by our coming anyway, we'll only get in trouble. They'll probably do something silly." They walked on ahead, Stevenson and this Newsweek man, and I explained the situation to the wife of the Newsweek man. I said, "These young boys are so surprised to see these big black limousines draw up." And I was sure Stevenson and the Newsweek man would say, "Those damn stuffy State Department people." The others went on a little bit ahead of us and I suddenly came upon them. They'd already been surrounded by the soldiers, and we were carted off to the police post. I spent about an hour on the telephone trying to get us released, and we were finally released, and all the press were waiting when we got to Checkpoint Charlie. Stevenson, of course, was delighted, because when it all got out in the American papers, it gave him a lot of publicity. I knew that the boys in the State Department were all saying, "That damn fool Lyon, why did he let Stevenson do this?" But it all ended quite all right. So with that I think I'm prepared to leave Berlin and go back to the State Department.

Q: Which you did in 1954. McCarthyism was at flood tide when you came back. I remember the Department was totally immobilized during the television thing. You couldn't find anybody at their desks. Everybody was down in Lincoln White's office. You didn't have television everywhere in those days. They all went down to the press room to watch these hearings. Anyway, go ahead.

LYON: It was a terribly sad period in our country's history. This was also the period when

George Kennan came out of Russia to go on leave, and he made the statement comparing life in Moscow to that of being in Germany in the time of the Nazis. He stayed with us, and his wife Annelise, who'd been in Western Germany having a baby, met him there. They both stayed in our house. Earlier I had gone out to meet his plane. And that's where he made that statement, the one that got him declared persona non grata by Moscow.

Q: In Berlin?

LYON: Yes, he made it to the press in Berlin. Of course the Soviets were looking for an excuse to get rid of him. You didn't remember that?

Q: Oh, I remember it very well. I never understood how he allowed himself such an outburst.

LYON: I don't know either. He was a trained diplomat and we all knew he was a superb diplomat.

Q: Apparently he didn't give much of a damn about public relations back in the U.S.

LYON: I asked his wife Annelise about this, and she said, "You know, if I'd been there, George would never have said that." She said, "Unfortunately, when he went to Moscow, there was such high hope for his going--that he'd be able to straighten things out, he knew them so well--and when he got there I had to leave and, strangely enough, it was so much worse than he realized. I would have thought he would have realized, but he apparently didn't. And he was left alone there. He was alone in that big residence and he was nervous and tense--he got terribly nervous and tense." She said, "If I'd been there and kept him sort of calm he never would have said this." And I think that's true. I think somehow though the Russians would have probably found some way to get rid of him because he was so astute. He knew them so well that they couldn't get away with much.

CECIL B. LYON
Special Assistant to the Commissioner
Berlin (1951-1954)

Cecil B. Lyon was born in New York in 1903. He graduated from Harvard University in 1927. He joined the Foreign Service in 1930, serving in Cuba, Hong Kong, Japan, China, Chile, Egypt, Poland, Germany, France, and Ceylon. Mr. Lyon was interviewed in 1988 by John Bovey.

Q: Then Berlin, 1950 to 1954. Right?

LYON: Needless to say, a most interesting time to be there. At the War College, when I was told that I was going to Berlin, Elbridge Durbrow telephoned me and said, "We don't usually ask people whether they're prepared to go to such and such a post. But as you have just come from

an Iron Curtain country and we want to send you back behind the Curtain, I thought I ought to talk to you." I said, "Oh, Lord. Its awfully hard on Elsie, and awfully hard on the children," and I started making all sorts of excuses why we shouldn't go. He said, "It's Berlin." I said, "Oh, that's different, I'd love to go to Berlin, and Elsie will be delighted because when we went there on a holiday she said, 'I'd love to be assigned there.'" So off we went.

Before we left Mr. McCloy, who was High Commissioner, came to the States on consultation and naturally he wanted to look me over to see whether he wanted me because I was to run his office in Berlin. The High Commissioner then lived in Bonn -- he had moved from Berlin. We talked for a while and I didn't know how it was going until at the end he said, "You'll like Berlin, Lyon; its a windy corner." He had a wonderful way of phrasing things. We had terrible unemployment during my term in Berlin. We were always trying to reduce the unemployment, and get the factories going. One day we were having a consultation and McCloy said, "You know, there's one fellow who could settle this thing with one arm tied behind his back. As a matter of fact he's got both arms tied behind his back. It's Speer in Spandau."

Spandau is interesting. Each month it would be under the charge of one of the four powers, and when the Russians were in charge the prisoners lost weight. When we were in charge they gained weight. During the month we were in charge the Commandant was supposed to go out and make a tour; he did it once or twice but then he got me to do it, most of the time. It was fascinating because in those days in Spandau were Admiral Doenitz; Walter Funk, the Nazi Economic Minister; Admiral Raeder, Commander-in-Chief of the German Navy; von Neurath, who had been Foreign Minister; von Shirach, Hitler's Youth leader; Albert Speer, and Rudolf Hess, last but not least. They were, of course, completely cut off from the world; they weren't allowed any newspapers; they weren't allowed any books to speak of; and nobody was supposed to speak to them; they weren't supposed to hear anything. Each one lived in a little cell about 4 feet by 8 feet, but it was extraordinary how each of the inmates had impressed on that cell his character. The cell of Hess, for example, was all higgledy-piggledy. The bed was never made, and clothes were thrown on the floor; it was a mess. Admiral Doenitz's cell was all military precision, brushes lined up carefully just so, his blanket folded very correctly, very precisely. The only cell that had a human touch was that of Speer. In Speer's he had a picture of his family. He also had a drawing of a house and I asked him what that was. He said, "That's my dream house." He was an architect, you will recall. He said, "I'm going to build that when I get out of here." And I thought to myself, "Poor devil, you're never going to get out of here," but he did. He lived not only to get out but long enough to build his dream house, and to write two books.

Q: That's right, a very interesting book. It's a revelation to see what chaos there was in the Reich and how inefficient the efficient Germans really were.

LYON: I thought in normal life I would have liked Speer. Anyway, it was really ridiculous, as you say, having that huge prison for just these seven inmates but we never could get the Russians to put them in a smaller place. We had to have a platoon out there each month we were in charge. They had any number of guards and cooks and it was really, I thought, a terrible waste. The Russians were very difficult, if somebody got ill we had a terrible time trying to get permission to take them out and put them in a hospital. Eventually they yielded but they were very difficult.

As you know, one by one the prisoners either died or were let out having served their long terms, except Hess who was living there alone up until about a year ago when he died.

Q: Who sat on the Kommandatura after the Russians walked out and started administering their own zone?

LYON: By the time I got there it was just the French, the British, and ourselves, the Russians having walked out.

Q: It was a total boycott?

LYON: Oh yes, they never came over. Very often the Commandants themselves wouldn't participate in the weekly meeting and their deputies -- I being the American deputy -- would. My first British colleague was a fellow called Tenant, and the Frenchman was de Noblet. De Noblet was followed by Francois de Margerie and Tenant by Michael Rose who became a very close friend, who we've seen over the years. The French were always trying to put the Germans in their place, put them down, and the British and the U.S. were always trying to loosen things up a little bit.

Q: For the French, it was the Francois-Poncet-tradition.

LYON: When I first got there, Ernst Reuter was the mayor. He was the most wonderful man. He had been arrested by the Nazis, he'd been put in prison. The British Labor Party and the French parties persuaded Hitler to let him out of prison but Hitler exiled him to Italy and he spent the war in Turkey. Then he came back to Berlin and he was a most marvelous man. I once told him that he gave too much of himself in addition to all the work he did, by going to all the parties that the Allies gave. He said, "But I have to, for Berlin." And he said, "Nobody ever died of overwork." But he did. He also had a Senator for Reconstruction called Paul Hertz who had been in the Reichstag. The Nazis came in to arrest him one day but he got out the back door, and went to the States. He was absolutely selfless and devoted to the rebuilding of Berlin, and he gave his whole life to that and did a wonderful job.

Q: Reuter was really gung-ho on reunification, wasn't he?

LYON: Oh, absolutely. He said to me, "Lyon, this division is against nature, its against history, its un-Christian and if you Allies don't help us overcome it, we one day will take matters in our own hands and obtain unification without your help." I think, had he lived, he undoubtedly would have been Chancellor one day and he might have worked something out, I don't know.

Q: That would really have put the fat in the fire.

LYON: It might have.

Q: Was this zeal shared by other Berliners, or couldn't they care less?

LYON: Oh, yes, but they were terribly courageous, as you know. They wouldn't give in to...

Q: No, I mean the zeal for reunification.

LYON: Oh, absolutely, yes, because so many of their families were over on the other side. This was before the wall so they could get back and forth, but the West Berliners didn't dare go there very much because they were scared they'd be arrested or put in jail. But a lot of East Berliners used to come over on the U-Bahn and do some shopping and then go back. In those days you would say, "Oh, just look at the contrast between East and West Berlin," because East Berlin was still very much in rubble except the Stalinallee, the main street; they'd done the facades on that. But Elsie and I went back to Berlin last June (1988); we went over to East Berlin and it's extraordinary what they've done. You still can say, "Look at the contrast," and it isn't the thriving busy place that West Berlin is, but it's still pretty well coming back to life.

Q: Well, the Germans, you know, they're very efficient people.

LYON: I said that Ernst Reuter died of overwork. He used to make a point of driving on the Autobahn, getting out to West Germany to Bonn and Hamburg and what not. He'd say he had to do this to prove that they still could do it, to keep the appearances, and keep the route open. And one day he started off. He had started out for Hamburg. He had a cold and I think he got as far as Hamburg and then he was turned back because he didn't have his permit. So he had two hours going and two hours back to get his permit. Then he went off again and he caught a worse cold, and he got pneumonia and died.

We happened to be out of Germany at the time but we came rushing back for his funeral. His funeral was a most impressive thing. I went back to Berlin a few years later and there's just a simple grave with his name and the dates of his birth and death. Even then -- that was oh, ten or fifteen years after his death -- while I was there a couple came and put flowers on the grave, and you could see that other people had been continually putting flowers there. He was a wonderful man. I thought the world of him.

But, as I say, the French were always trying to discipline him and particularly, when we were in the chair. (The chair of the Kommandatura rotated.) On one occasion the French were particularly adamant about something he did, and they asked us to talk to him, speak to him. I was delegated to go over and talk to him, and I said, "Mr. Mayor, when you want to you have such charm you can charm birds off trees. Be a little nicer to your French colleagues." And he sort of smiled and mumbled something. A few months or weeks later, he was going to the States on a visit. Just before that the refugees started coming over in hordes from East Berlin. He telephoned me -- he called me, I don't know why, I guess it was easy for him to talk to me -- he said, "Berlin, the free island in this Red sea is sinking under the weight of these refugees. You've got to help me get some planes to get them out to West Germany." So we got him some planes. Then, with true German efficiency, they were making great lists of everybody, and carefully documenting them. And the planes didn't get used for two or three days. From Wiesbaden (our air base), they were calling up and saying, "For goodness sake, send those planes back." So I went to see the Mayor and I said, "You've got to get things moving." I said, "When you get to the States, you're not going to have a very good reception." He said, "When I get to the States I'll charm, I'll charm -- I'll charm apples off trees."

Q: Let's clear up something else. You were Deputy to General Mathewson and to Commissioner McCloy.

LYON: Right.

Q: What were the respective responsibilities of the Commissioner and the Commandant?

LYON: The Commandant, needless to say, was in command of the troops, but he also was actually the head of...

Q: Troops in Berlin?

LYON: In Berlin, the commander of the American troops in Berlin.

Q: But not anywhere else.

LYON: Not anywhere else, no, not in West Germany. And, of course, McCloy was High Commissioner for the whole country. And in spite of the Russians trying to ease us out of Berlin over and over again, we insisted that Berlin was part of Western Germany, and the day eventually came when the Reichstag met in the old Reichstag building much to the annoyance of the Soviets.

I was head of the civilian office of McCloy in Berlin and they called me Deputy Commandant because I was also the Political Adviser to General Mathewson, the Commandant. I don't know whether that's very clear but that's the way it was.

Q: In that connection, what was the effect of the Marshall Plan on people in Berlin, on the Berliners? It was just getting going when you were there.

LYON: Well, I guess we got aid to get things working in Berlin as far as I recall, but we didn't have a Marshall Plan man in Berlin. There was an A.I.D. representative in Bonn with the High Commissioner. As I say, this unemployment was a terrible thing.

Q: Was the Marshall Plan a factor in the Russians leaving the Kommandatura in Berlin, or why did they walk out?

LYON: They left the Allied Control Council in March 1948, while Congress was considering the Marshall Plan and just after the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia. Then right after the occupying powers and Benelux reached agreement in June about the European Recovery Program and political and monetary institutions for West Germany, the Soviet representative walked out of the Four Power Kommandatura in Berlin, and at the end of June, they started the Berlin blockade.

Q: So they had already walked out by the time you came to Berlin.

LYON: Oh, yes,

Q: Then it must have been related to the Marshall Plan, the set-up in West Germany, and the Czech disaster.

LYON: The Soviets were very difficult to deal with in Berlin, as you know. As I recall it was also connected with the rate of exchange.

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LYON: Very little. The little participation we had came with the case of the Steinstuecken Enclave. That was one of the very few times I ever came in touch with the Russians. It was a part of the U.S. Sector, a little enclave about 200 yards from West Berlin, in the Soviet Zone. I think there were about 20 or 30 families who lived there. They used to walk across the grass to West Berlin to the places where they were employed. One day the Russians moved their troops in and stopped people going back and forth. We did everything we could to try and get the Russians to pull their troops back but they wouldn't hear of it. We were sending messages and talking at lower levels with them. We could have sent our own troops and driven them out, but like so many things in those days, we were terrified that if we did the balloon would go up, we'd get into a real row. Finally it came to the point where we had to do something. My Commandant, General Mathewson, invited the Russian Commandant, General Nordiko I think was his name -- to come and talk about this matter. The General came. We had a green baize table, and the Russian General sat opposite my General. I was next to General Mathewson, with an interpreter on his other side. Opposite the Russian Commandant his Deputy and an interpreter -- all very formal. General Mathewson said, "I won't talk about this at all until you tell me you've given orders for the troops to be withdrawn." The Russian turned to his Deputy and went mumble-mumble and looked at us and didn't say anything. Mathewson pulled out his watch and he said, "It's now quarter to six. Unless you can tell me that by six o'clock you have given orders for your troops to be pulled back, I won't talk." More mumble-mumble. And finally Mathewson said, "Have you given the orders?" And the Russian Commandant said, "Da." And the Deputy Commandant said, "Nyet." So Mathewson looked at me: "What do we do now?" I made a gesture of tossing a coin. We went on, and we talked and we talked, and finally they withdrew their troops. But I think it's a perfect example of how the Russians handle things. One says "Da" and the other says "Nyet" -- take your choice.

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Q: In Berlin?

LYON: Yes, he made it to the press in Berlin. Of course the Soviets were looking for an excuse to get rid of him. You didn't remember that?

Q: Oh, I remember it very well. I never understood how he allowed himself such an outburst.

LYON: I don't know either. He was a trained diplomat and we all knew he was a superb diplomat.

Q: Apparently he didn't give much of a damn about public relations back in the U.S.

LYON: I asked his wife Annelise about this, and she said, "You know, if I'd been there, George would never have said that." She said, "Unfortunately, when he went to Moscow, there was such high hope for his going -- that he'd be able to straighten things out, he knew them so well -- and when he got there I had to leave and, strangely enough, it was so much worse than he realized. I would have thought he would have realized, but he apparently didn't. And he was left alone there. He was alone in that big residence and he was nervous and tense -- he got terribly nervous and tense." She said, "If I'd been there and kept him sort of calm he never would have said this." And I think that's true. I think somehow though the Russians would have probably found some way to get rid of him because he was so astute. He knew them so well that they couldn't get away with much.

Q: You spoke in your book, when you came back to German Affairs, about the feeling in Dulles's office and other places that the Service was overstaffed.

LYON: I'm not sure he felt the whole Service was overstaffed but GER had been a rather special division under Jimmy Riddleberger. It was equivalent, more or less, to one of the geographical divisions. And they were cutting it down to size, just as we were cutting down the occupation forces in Germany. I had the unpleasant job of trying to reduce this office from a rather overgrown bureaucracy to a more normal thing. Because, you see, we were then taken in under Western Europe. We were a part of the Division of Western Europe, of which Livingston Merchant was the head. I remember, shortly after I got there, I had to go to some staff meeting with Dulles and I didn't know Dulles very well then. In fact I hardly knew him at all. And I said, "Livy, he scares the living daylights out of me." And Livy Merchant said, "He does all of us too." Which is rather funny because Dulles had always treated Livy more or less as a son. Livy was very close to him and traveled with him everywhere he went, but -- "He scares us all too."

I wasn't very long in German affairs, and as I say, most of my work was trying to cut it down to size.

JOHN G. KORMANN
Resident Officer
Neumarkt (1951-1952)

Public Affairs Officer
Coburg (1952-1953)

Chief Editor, U.S. Press Service for Germany
Bonn (1953-1955)

John G. Kormann was born in New York in 1930. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II. His career in the Foreign Service included positions in Germany, the Philippines, and Libya. Mr. Kormann was interviewed by Moncrieff J. Spear on February 7, 1996.

KORMANN: When the State Department was looking for personnel to become Resident Officers to replace the Military Governors in Germany, my name was suggested to State Department personnel. I joined the Department as a limited appointee on a five year contract in September 1950. After a few weeks of basic training with a group of FSOs (it's interesting to note that my wife comments on this training in Jewell Fenzi's book *Married to the Foreign Service*) we were sent to Germany. Once there, while the rest of the group received language and area training, I was assigned immediately. First in Frankfurt at the Amerika Haus, helping Hans Tuck who was the Amerika Haus Director, and then later in Munich filling in for Paul Deibel, who was the Operations Officer, the number three for the Field Operations Division for all of Bavaria. When Deibel returned, I was given Neumarkt as a county. Neumarkt is just southeast of Nuremberg. I had two other counties in the area as well. It was interesting governing this area, consisting of 600 square miles with 100,000 people. As I reflect back on my duty there, the greatest problem I had during my tenure was when the United States Army decided to requisition the Hohenfels region in my county of Neumarkt as a troop training area. This was a vast, rough section suitable for tank training. However, it meant moving thousands of Germans from their ancestral homes; many families had lived there for 800 to 1000 years. It's interesting to note now that when Hohenfels is mentioned to any American soldier having served in Germany, he rolls his eyes and thinks of the training he received there, which more than likely was not too pleasant.

Q: This must have caused some problems in your relations with the Germans, what happened there?

KORMANN: I recall very well a session of our Kreistag. Kreistag was the county legislature. I remember the legislators were visibly upset by the thought that the U.S. Army was going to move in and take over this sizeable piece of property and throw Germans off of the land. I recall giving an impassioned speech in German to them saying, "Well fine, so you don't want the

American Army there, remember the Russians are just a short march away. We'll pull out and we'll let the Russians come in. If that's what you want, be my guest." Obviously the Germans were very unhappy hearing things like that and the Kreistag voted approval to turn the land over to the U.S. Army.

Q: What about some other aspects of the job?

KORMANN: Well, we had all sorts of functions. We were quasi-magistrates, we were the Public Affairs Officers, we did all kinds of things in that job and it was one of the most interesting positions I ever had in the Foreign Service. If you can imagine a junior officer coming into a post where he's going to have the finest house in town, an ambassadorial-size office, a Mercedes limousine with a driver and be given all sorts of responsibilities, without any real supervision (my bosses were many miles away), one could not have asked for a better job. However, this strangely enough did not suit a number of the new incoming Foreign Service Officers. Some of them actually "revolted." I remember there was a young Foreign Service Officer by the name of Ken Martindale, who led a protest and 18 Foreign Service Officers signed a letter to High Commissioner McCloy saying they didn't come into the Foreign Service to do that; they wanted traditional Foreign Service jobs. Years later, I often wondered how they must have been enjoying their service in some of the Third World backwaters, stamping visas. For me, the job in Neumarkt, I've often quipped, was the best job I ever had and I went backwards from then on. I might say a word about the Resident Officers, if anyone is really interested in what the Resident Officers did, the February 1952 issue of *Collier's* magazine put out a wonderful article on "Democracy's Best Salesman in Germany". It was a lengthy piece, with pictures, on the U.S. Resident Officer program. I might say immodestly, I feature largely in that article.

Q: I gather that all of this made quite an impact on German-American relations?

KORMANN: I remember when I left, I was the last American Military Governor/Resident Officer to preside in the area and the Germans had several farewell parties for me. It almost looked as if the "father figure" was leaving them; they felt left all alone. Part of this of course, was engendered by the attitude of the Resident Officers, which was akin to being a Congressman. One of my responsibilities, I felt, was to go to Frankfurt and to Bonn to obtain as much money as I possibly could for my counties out of the counterpart funds that were being made available to build schools and to carry out other "pork barrel" activities. Consequently the Germans were really very, very happy to have us there and felt at a loss when we left.

Q: Have you ever been back to the area since then?

KORMANN: Yes I have. I went back about 15 or 20 years later and the old Burgermeister was still there. He welcomed me with open arms.

Q: That sounds like a great start to your career. What was your next assignment?

KORMANN: From there I was assigned to close the Resident Office in Coburg, on the Russian border. I was there for a short time and then was sent to Hannover in the British zone, where I served as a Public Affairs Officer. The occupation was phasing out and we were moving over to

Embassy status. Public affairs activities were more "in tune" with Germany as a country obtaining sovereignty. My responsibility there was to supervise the U.S. Press Service, a wire service supplying German media, all of the newspapers and the radio stations in Lower Saxony. It was a very interesting position and brought me into the press world. I remember when I reported there, I visited my British counterpart, who wondered what we were doing opening an office in Hannover, when things were phasing out. He didn't say this to me directly, but he was full of insight at the time, because the office didn't last very long. We built a huge plant, requisitioned a building, put in parking lots, purchased vehicles and did all kinds of things. Before a year was out, the place was closed down and all of that money went to waste.

Q: Then I take it, you were off on home leave?

KORMANN: Yes, I went on home leave near the conclusion of that assignment. I returned to the U.S. on the S.S. America. Ambassador George Kennan was on board. He had just been PNGed as Ambassador to Moscow.

Q: As I recall, that was because he tried to make a comparison between Stalin and Hitler.

KORMANN: He was asked by the press whether he enjoyed Moscow and what it was like to serve in the U.S.S.R. Of course, your movement there was limited, and he compared it to his internment in Germany during WW II. He did this in an off-handed way. I believe he may have thought he was off-the-record. The German press picked up his remarks. They were noted by the Russian leadership, who took severe umbrage. My own view is that the Soviets really wanted him out of the country. He was just too well informed on Communist affairs and exerted a great deal of influence on the rest of the diplomatic community in Moscow. When we neared New York harbor, the pilot boat came abreast and disgorged a score of reporters. Our relations with Russia were always front page news. Ambassador Kennan did not want to meet with them and went into seclusion. Another FSO aboard, Herbert Fales, came to me saying, "You're a press officer. You had better take care of these fellows." I had quite a time dealing with the reporters. Once we landed and I was departing the ship, I did see the Ambassador giving them a brief statement, in any event.

In March of 1953, I was transferred to Bonn to replace Joseph Frankenstein, who was being removed as the Chief Editor of the Amerika Dienst, the U.S. Press Service for Germany. Frankenstein and his wife, the writer Kay Boyle, were targets of Senator McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee. I was totally unaware of these circumstances when I was told to take over the job. I simply thought of it as an opportunity to move into a very responsible position rated several grades above the one I held at the time. I might add I loathed McCarthy and would have welcomed an opportunity to confront his two traveling investigators, Roy Cohn and G. David Schine. They did come to Hannover at one point, going through the Amerika Haus library there, causing quite a stir. However, they never came out to my press service establishment. I felt that I had a really strong anti-Communist background from my battles with the Russians in Berlin 1945-47 and oddly was a bit disappointed when they did not appear. When I reported in to my new office, I found Frankenstein still at the desk. I naively wished him well in his new position in Washington. He responded, "I'm not going anywhere, I'm staying right here." That dumbfounded me and I went to see the senior officers in the Embassy

saying, "What is going on?" Then they told me that Frankenstein was being removed because of McCarthy and that I should go back and tell him to leave. Stunned, I replied, "I am not going anywhere. You can have the security boys straighten this out. When he is gone, I will go in and take over the job." Frankenstein hung on for about a week and it was all very unpleasant. It was made more difficult by the fact that everyone thought I must have been a McCarthy hireling to have been moved up so rapidly into the position. I made matters worse by going up to Rotterdam over the following weekend to pick up my mother-in-law who was arriving by ship. The Embassy, by then fully aware of Frankenstein's situation, gave him a farewell party, which was attended by Ambassador James Conant. My absence, I was told later, was duly noted and confirmed everyone's suspicions of me. For a time other employees kept their distance, but the situation eventually straightened itself out.

I enjoyed Bonn and the job was a real challenge. I supervised a wire service, as well as a series of feature publications in German; a political weekly, an economic weekly, a women's monthly, a cultural monthly, and a youth publication. In addition, for extended periods, I was the Embassy's press briefer. The latter was a real exercise in discipline. I would arrive at the Embassy at 5-6 o'clock in the morning and read a dozen or so German newspapers and periodicals and then brief Embassy officers. There were quite a few very able officers in that group, including John Patton Davies, Bill Buffum, Jock Dean, Ray Lisle and several others who went on to have noteworthy careers.

Q: I understand that you had to do a little speech writing too?

KORMANN: Yes, I did. I remember one speech in particular. Ernest Wiener, a member of the policy staff at the Embassy (bear in mind the Bonn Embassy was huge in those days) came to me saying, "Kormann, Ambassador Conant is going to give a speech to the (US) Reserve Officers' Association, and he wants to use it to provide guidance to the Germans, who are about to establish a Bundeswehr. He would like to set the tone for a future German army. You are a reserve officer and know something about military affairs, why don't you take a crack at a draft?" I wrote a speech entitled, "The Citizen Soldier," which Ambassador Conant, who was a former President of Harvard and a legendary figure, used *in toto*. The speech received widespread coverage in the German press. I have always felt that I had a hand in shaping the German military as a consequence and look back on that speech with pride.

Q: Where did you go after that assignment?

KORMANN: At the conclusion of my tour in the spring of 1955, I returned to Washington. Before leaving, however, I was given instructions upon my return to explain an unhappy gaffe involving the Embassy to Ambassador Riddleberger, who was then in charge of German affairs in the Department. HICOG, and later the Embassy, had a program of supporting the German publishing industry with counterpart funds. One of the many projects financed was a "Synchroptic History of the World" (Synchroptische Weltgeschichte). The publication was a large, colorful, fold-out chart book which depicted history in all facets of life (political, cultural, scientific, etc.) from the beginning of recorded time. The two German professors authoring the work, Arno and Liselotte Peters, a husband and wife team, were labeled as being Communists. The publication somehow had come to the attention of the U.S. Congress and the

Peters were accused, for example, of making much of the birth and death of Lenin and other Communist figures, while neglecting Jesus Christ (which was not exactly true). The book, I remember it well, was pulled back and every copy destroyed. The Embassy was criticized for ever having allowed it to be published. I explained the situation to Ambassador Riddleberger, pointing out the difficulty in overseeing a work with such dictionary/encyclopedia proportions and in effect said the entire matter was a "red herring." After a while Congress seemed satisfied and the situation quieted down.

MELVILLE BLAKE
Displaced Persons Program
Schweinfurt Displaced Persons Camp (1951-1952)

Principal Officer
Bremerhaven (1952-1953)

Refugee Relief Program
Bonn (1954-1957)

Special Assistant to the Minister for Economic Affairs
Bonn (1957-1958)

Deputy Principal Officer
Frankfurt (1975-1979)

Melville Blake was born in Lexington, Mississippi in 1924. He attended Mississippi State College. He joined the army and served for four years and then attended Georgetown University where he studied in the school of Foreign Service. Following his graduation he worked as an editor in the CIA for a year and then went to Germany.

Q: Excuse me, Mel. What is a Kreis?

BLAKE: A *Kreis* is a county in Germany. A *Land* is a state. We had a Foreign Service officer in each *Kreis* in the American military zone of occupation. These officers served under the High Commissioner, who reported to the State Department. I was recruited as a *Kreis* Resident Officer, but just before I was to leave Washington, I was called in by Alan James, a newly minted Foreign Service officer working in Personnel. Alan said rather accusingly, "Mel, you are not married. We want married *Kreis* resident officers. We want the wives to work at the PTA and with women's groups as part of the overall democratization of German society." I replied, "If you look at my application, you will see that I checked 'S' under marital status." He said, "Well, yes, that's true. We somehow overlooked that. Would you mind very much if we sent you to the Consulate General at Frankfurt for the Displaced Persons Program?"

That seemed, in a sense, more mainstream Foreign Service work than being a *Kreis* resident

officer, so I readily agreed. I arrived in Germany on January 15, 1951, and was assigned by the Consul General to the Schweinfurt Displaced Persons Camp. The Consul General in Frankfurt was Albert Doyle. He wore three hats, as he was Consul General for the Frankfurt consular district, supervising Consul General for Germany, and State Department Coordinator of the Displaced Persons Program for Europe (Germany, Austria, and Italy).

Q: Excuse me, could you explain who these displaced persons were?

BLAKE: In Germany after the war, there were millions of displaced persons who, for one reason or another, would not go back to the country from whence they came. Some of them were Jews who had been in the concentration camps. There were Eastern European forced laborers of all religions who had worked in German factories or had been indentured labor in a variety of jobs, for example, as housemaids or cleaning staff in offices, etc. Then, there were non-Germans who had seen the Russian armies coming and had fled ahead of them because they believed they would have a better life under western control than under Soviet control. Finally, the Displaced Persons Act authorized Americans to adopt orphans who were the progeny of displaced persons; this was the first such provision in U.S. immigration legislation.

The Displaced Persons Camp at Schweinfurt handled all applicants except orphans who received visas only at the Frankfurt Consulate General. To the best of my recollection, we did not have any people from Asia or Asiatic parts of the Soviet Union at Schweinfurt.

Q: What did you do with them there?

BLAKE: The Schweinfurt Camp was similar to other displaced persons camps in that officials from three U.S. Government agencies were involved. First, there were Displaced Persons Commission representatives who processed people for visas. They were responsible for obtaining medical examinations, vetting the applicants, obtaining the security records, and housing and feeding applicants in the camp. Second, we consular personnel received the applications for visas and considered applicants on the basis of admissibility under both applicable visa law and the special provisions of the Displaced Persons Act. The third entity at a displaced persons camp was a representative of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) who took the visas and supporting documents from the consular officer and reviewed them to be sure the applicant would be admitted to the United States. He functioned as though he were an INS officer at a port of entry, although the INS officers at the actual ports of entry in the United States had general oversight authority, and the right to refuse somebody even though the applicant had been passed by an INS officer abroad. That happened very rarely, however.

In addition to the U.S. Government agencies at Schweinfurt and other displaced persons camps, there also were representatives of voluntary agencies, such as, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Catholic Relief Services, etc. These agencies were responsible for finding sponsors and jobs in the United States for visa applicants, helping them depart from the displaced persons camps, meeting them when they arrived in the United States, and helping them get settled in their new homes.

Q: Let me ask, obviously among these thousands of displaced persons, there must have been

some Nazi sympathizers. How were they able to be weeded out?

BLAKE: Perhaps the most important tool in the security process was the Berlin Document Center. The Nazis were incredible record keepers. After the war, we gathered up all the documents we could find throughout Germany and put them all in the Berlin Document Center, a very important cache of documents. It was remarkable the sort of details the center held. It had, for example, all the details of where a displaced person came from in Poland or Lithuania, when he was picked up, when he was sent to Germany, where he had worked in Germany, what vetting had been done to him, looking at him as a security problem from the Nazi point of view. On several occasions, it initially appeared that a displaced person had no political leanings whatsoever. Then, subsequent records indicated that he appeared to have been a Nazi, and then appeared to have been something else. I recall once, I was interviewing a fellow, and I said, "You have a dubious background." I ran through his records. He was astonished, as most of them were, that we had such detailed data. This fellow finally said, "Look, I was picked up in my village. I was sent off, and it was a matter of survival, so I would find out what the people who were holding me wanted to hear, and I would tell them that. That was the way I kept myself alive."

Q: Now, you mentioned the visas and coming to the U.S. Were any of these people or many of them sent to other countries? Would other countries accept them or not?

BLAKE: At the Schweinfurt Camp, there were also an Australian and a Canadian immigration officer. Each of these officers had absolute authority to accept or reject applicants, and there was no appeal from their decisions.

Q: Well, how long did you stay there?

BLAKE: I stayed there for about three months, and, when that camp was closed, I was assigned to head up the visa operations at the Hanau displaced persons camp. The operations at Hanau were the same as at Schweinfurt. I stayed there until January 15, 1952, when Albert Doyle asked me to return to Frankfurt to become his Deputy Coordinator for the displaced persons program.

Q: Quite a promotion.

BLAKE: Well, it surprised me. I think a factor that had something to do with me getting this "August" position was that I was single and the job involved a lot of travel. I spent a good deal of time going to the Salzburg, Austria, displaced persons camp, I toured the camps within Germany, and I'd also spend a week out of every month in Berlin. The United States had no camp there; we would hold the visa applications at the Berlin Consulate, and I would go up and take care of them each month. An additional responsibility was the issuance of visas to orphans adopted by U.S. citizens, including my Cousin, Bob Wilson.

Q: But, you were based in Frankfurt.

BLAKE: I was based in Frankfurt. The program ended on June 30, 1952. I stayed around for about a month after that writing a report on the program. Then, the personnel people in Bonn at

HICOG had the job of deciding what to do with me. They were more impressed with the title of Deputy European Coordinator than was warranted. They said you can't just go back and be a visa officer after this and, so, assigned me as Principal Officer of the Consulate at Bremerhaven. Bremerhaven had been a consulate from, I think, about the 1870s until 1928, when it was closed for budgetary reasons. However, as Bremerhaven was the only U.S. military port for Germany, the Consulate was reopened in 1946.

Q: What staff did you have in Bremerhaven?

BLAKE: The State Department opened Bremerhaven primarily to deal with seamen. Bremerhaven was the sole U.S. military port of entry and received, on an annualized basis, 95 ships a month. They were a mix of Defense Department ships in the Military Sea Transport Service (MSTS) and U.S. maritime ships, including both luxury liners and freight ships. Shipping and seamen's affairs were our principal activities. Bremerhaven performed most consular services for American citizens, although it could only take passport applications, which were then forwarded to Bremen for the issuance of the passport.

We could, however, issue Loss of Citizenship certificates when an American wanted to renounce citizenship. I had several disgruntled seamen insist on renouncing their citizenship, and I would take the application and put it in the safe. Invariably, they would come back in a week or so for some service, primarily a loan, and I would remind them of the renunciation of citizenship. After a time, they always asked whether they could renounce the renunciation, and I would reply that I had found the application in the safe and would tear it up.

Because destitute Americans could work their way back to the United States, there was considerable activity in assisting these persons, mainly college-age Americans who were touring Europe and ran out of money. Moreover, the Consulate was responsible for all fisheries reporting out of Germany.

Foreign Service families on assignment to Germany occasionally arrived by a U.S. Lines passenger ship, and I would meet them and get them on their way to their post. Once, however, I was asked to see off a departing Foreign Service officer. Ambassador George Kennan and his wife left Europe from Bremerhaven after he had been declared *persona non grata* by the Soviet Union. He was the author of an article in *Foreign Affairs* under the *nom de plume* "X" while he was head of the Department's Policy Planning Staff during the late 1940s. In this article he spelled out a containment policy to govern relations for the United States and Western Europe *viz-a-viz* the Soviet bloc. This policy was followed for some four decades, until the fall of the Soviet Union and the demise of its bloc.

Ambassador Kennan was appointed to Moscow by President Truman shortly before he left office. By then X had been identified as Kennan. The Soviets reluctantly accepted him as ambassador and began looking for ways to get rid of him. As it happened, incoming Secretary of State John Foster Dulles did not care for Kennan. I don't recall why, but suspect that he disliked the intellectual competition. Any way, in February or March 1953, the Soviets declared Kennan *persona non grata* and he left Moscow.

One evening I received a telephone call from Byron Snyder, the Deputy Principal officer at Frankfurt, that Kennan would be leaving on the SS "United States" from Bremerhaven the next morning. Snyder had been called by a senior Foreign Service officer at Bonn that Kennan's friends there considered it a shame that he would be leaving Europe without a send-off. No one, it seemed, actually wanted to contact him for fear that word would get back to Washington and tarnish relations with the new Secretary. As I was at Bremerhaven, it would be appropriate for me to see Ambassador and Mrs. Kennan off.

I went to the Kennans' stateroom the next morning. The Ambassador and Mrs. Kennan expressed pleasure that I had come. I explained that their friends in Germany had wanted to be there but were unable to make it. The Ambassador expressed understanding of the work pressure they were under, given a new Administration. After 15-20 minutes, I bade them *bon voyage* and wished the Ambassador good luck on his next appointment. He thanked me again for coming to the ship, then added, somewhat quietly and sadly, "But, I won't be having another appointment." And he didn't.

Arising out of the military occupation, the Principal Officer had the somewhat unusual job of serving as committing magistrate under the occupation judicial code. Civilian employees of the U.S. Defense Department who were arrested by Army Military Police or the Navy's Shore Patrol were brought to a magistrate's court, which would consider whether they should be held for trial by a military court. If they were held, they were confined to the stockade. Court was held whenever a person was arrested, and I would go from the Consulate to the military courthouse, don a black magistrate's robe, and hold court. It was a routine chore but did have its lighter moments. Once, a seaman who had deserted a MSTS vessel was brought before me. He was indignant that the military would arrest him even though he was a Defense Department employee, and demanded the seaman's right to see a consular Officer. I granted his wish, left the bench, removed my black robe, and returned to the Consulate. A few minutes later, the Military Police brought him into my office. The seaman recognized me at once and turned on his heel, muttering, "You can't beat city hall."

To discharge my duties, I had a staff of two local employees and a Coast Guard contingent assigned to the Consulate. That contingent consisted of a Lieutenant Commander, a Chief Petty Officer, and a German secretary. The Coast Guard personnel covered all of Northern Europe.

Q: What were your relations with the Consul General in Bremen?

BLAKE: The Principal Officer at Bremerhaven reported to the Consul General at Bremen. Ed MacLaughlin liked to regard himself as having a branch office in Bremerhaven. In fact, he was a little touchy that I had a very close relation with the supervising Consul General in Frankfurt. Quite apart from that, Albert Doyle, as the supervising Consul General, had a very active and aggressive micro manager for his Deputy Principal Officer, Byron Snyder. Byron was a very competent officer, but he wanted to get into everything, so he liked the idea that there was an officer in Bremerhaven with whom he already had a working relationship. Byron would call me several times a week, mainly for assistance in repatriating destitute Americans to the United States. The Consul General at Bremen found this troubling.

Q: What were your relations with the military in Bremerhaven?

BLAKE: Oh, they were superb. My predecessor, a fellow named Jack Smith, said, "After you leave this post, it will be years before you can get it out of your system." I was 28 at the time, and, as the Principal Officer at a consulate, I outranked all the colonels at Bremerhaven. As it happened, there were only Colonels or Captains, which is the Navy equivalent of a Colonel, at Bremerhaven, so I was the ranking American. It was heady stuff, you know, having these Colonels who are old enough to be my father pay their courtesy calls on me after I reported to the post. I must say that they were quite gracious about it.

Bremerhaven was also a special post for another reason. Rozanne and I married on December 31, 1952. Rozanne was a nurse at the army dispensary, which examined military dependents returning to the United States. She was a civilian employee there, but she had been an Army nurse during World War II in the South Pacific.

Q: Yes, I did. Now, how long did you remain in Bremerhaven?

BLAKE: When I joined the Foreign Service in 1951, I was a staff corps officer, which meant I held my commission at the pleasure of the Secretary. I had taken exams and been accepted as a career Staff Corps Officer. In 1953, Secretary of State Dulles decided to put the Department through a massive reduction in force. They did that geographically. I was RIFed from Germany in June 1953 since the Department thought that it had a surplus of consular officers in Europe. I got back to the United States on June 29, 1953, my birthday. I took the oral exam later that summer, but was failed. Later, I heard that all oral examinees failed. Under pressure from Senator Joe McCarthy, the Department was putting in place a security screening procedure. Until that system was in place, new hires were being held to an absolute minimum, but the Department did not want to cancel oral examinations as this action might have sent the message that it was giving in to McCarthyism.

Q: That was the year, 1953, that the Department canceled the written exams. I think that you are right.

BLAKE: I left the Foreign Service and took a position with the *Loudon Times Mirror* in Leesburg, Virginia. My appetite for the Foreign Service, however, had been whetted by Frankfurt and Bremerhaven, and I was all the more interested in a Foreign Service career. After about six months, I was asked to return to the Foreign Service, again in a staff capacity, to work on the Refugee Relief Program (RRP). This program was intended to take care of a category of persons who were forcibly expelled from Eastern Europe and had not met the criteria of the Displaced Persons Act. Primarily, they were people of German extraction who had been expelled from their countries after the War or had fled from their countries because they feared Soviet retaliation. These so-called *Volksdeutsche* had been a factor in German politics since the 1600s. They and German groups in the United States who supported them felt an injustice had been done, because these people, in many instances, had no control over their fate.

They also presented a more difficult political problem, because many of them had been members of the German army. In fact, the German army recruited minority groups from Eastern Europe

into special units, for example, the Latvian *Waffen SS*. I can't precisely recall the names now, but they would have had a special contingent of Polish Germans in the army or Russian Germans or Ukrainians who were really quite anti-Soviet. These were not people who were necessarily Nazis; they were Germans who felt that they had been treated badly in their countries, and the German military had come, and they were delighted to work with them.

I returned to the Foreign Service on June 29, 1954. Like the Displaced Persons Program, this Program was active in Germany, Austria, and Italy. I arrived at Bonn in early July. Rozanne stayed behind, as she was too pregnant to travel. I studied assiduously for the Foreign Service written exam and passed once again. This was the last three and one-half day written exam given by the Department.

When I reached Germany, the RRP had just been started. There was really nothing for me to do. The office of the supervising Consul General had been transferred from Frankfurt, following Albert Doyle's retirement, to Bonn. Herve L'Heureux had come in as Executive Director - that was actually the chief administrative officer. He also was named the supervising Consul General as he had a strong consular background and had been Chief of the Visa Office in the Department before coming to Bonn. The RRP also was under him. He asked me to take on a rather interesting job as Executive Secretary of the U.S.-German War Crimes Clemency and Parole Board.

Q: Explain about that. There aren't many Foreign Service officers who have done this sort of work.

BLAKE: True. The war crimes trials, which most Americans know, were the Nuremberg quadripartite trials of the major war criminals, such as Goering and Hess. They were conducted under international auspices and established a new body of international law. After these Nuremberg trials ended, each of the four occupying powers (the United States, France, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom) asserted the authority, the right, to try lesser war crimes suspects who were picked up in their military zones of occupation. So, there were four separate war crimes trials, U.S., French, British, and Soviet. The United States also conducted these trials at Nuremberg.

Q: And, as I recall, most of the real scoundrels had fled out of the Soviet zone and into the West.

BLAKE: They really wanted to get out of the Soviet zone of occupation, and those who were unable to make it were treated harshly by the Soviets. In fact, most of them thought that if they could get to the American zone of occupation, they would receive the fairest treatment. Now, lesser war criminals were those whose acts were less heinous than those of Goering, Hess, or the other major war criminals. Some of the U.S. war crimes trials that I recall included the doctors' trial, trials of industrialists who had used captive labor, and persons, either German military or civilians, who had killed downed U.S. airmen or American prisoners of war. We also tried a number of concentration and labor camp officials and guards. Then, there were some notorious characters, for example, Major General Sepp Dietrich, who was Commanding General of the SS division that was involved in the Malmedy Massacre.

Q: Out of which Marlene Dietrich made that great movie, Judgment at Nuremberg.

BLAKE: Right. These trials were also held at Nuremberg. Many defendants were given the death sentence, but, for one reason or another, not all were executed. Of course, many had sentences of life imprisonment or lesser sentences. When these trials ended in 1949, there was an entirely different international situation. The Berlin blockade had been imposed, the Cold War was on, and NATO had been established. The United States recognized that it had to change its relationship toward its occupation zone. The military government, under the Department of Defense's control, was ended and replaced by the High Commission for Germany, which was under the Department of State. The British and the French made a similar change. Responsibility for these prisoners was transferred from the military to the High Commission. John J. McCloy was the first High Commissioner.

Q: He was. General Clay was the last military governor, and then McCloy came in as high commissioner.

BLAKE: That's correct. John McCloy was married to Conrad Adenauer's sister-in-law. In fact, there were three sisters. One married McCloy, one married West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, and the third married a prominent French diplomat, either the French Foreign Minister or the French High Commissioner for Germany. McCloy recognized that we had to remove the lesser war criminals from the list of issues that could become contentious as we normalized relations with Germany.

Under German law at that time, there was no death penalty. One of the first things McCloy did was to commute the death sentences to life. We then had a situation where we would be holding Germans for life, many of them quite young fellows while, at the same time, also trying to normalize relations with Germany.

Q: Were they held in American prisons?

BLAKE: Yes, the prisoners who had been tried by U.S. courts were held in American prisons maintained by the Army. So, we established - with the French and British - bilateral clemency and parole boards to review these cases. Each bilateral board had five members, three U.S. (or British or French) and two Germans. The first Chairman of the U.S.-German War Crimes Clemency and Parole Board was Henry Lee Shattuck, a prominent Boston lawyer and friend of Secretary of State Dulles. The other U.S. members were Minister Edwin Plitt, a Foreign Service officer whose previous position was as the principal U.S. representative in Tangier, and Army Lt. General Walter Mueller. As for the German members, one was a member of the state supreme court for Baden-Wurttemberg, and the other was a high state Justice Department official from Bavaria.

The Americans always had the voting majority, 3-2. There were a number of 3-2 decisions, but the Americans recognized the correctness of what Mr. McCloy wanted to do and, while maintaining objectivity, redressed a number of injustices and paroled prisoners who had been harshly sentenced or where there might have been flaws in the trial. I recall, for example, one case where the defendant had been sentenced to death on one witness' hearsay and another case

where the defense attorney had been absent for lengthy periods during the trial and had commented to the judge that the prosecuting attorney could fill him in on what he had missed that evening. Toward the end, however, policy became even more liberal, and the objective was to remove all prisoners from the U.S. prison.

Petitioners for clemency and parole submitted applications to the Board through HICOG. As Executive Secretary, I reviewed each application, prepared a summary of each petitioner's offences and conviction, and presented the application and related documents to the Board. The Board would then consider the case, decide whether or not the person deserved clemency or parole, and send it back to me. I then would make arrangements for the Board's decision to be communicated to the petitioner. We worked with the legal division of the HICOG. The Prisons Officer, Richard Hagen, received applications from petitioners and communicated the Board's decisions back to them.

When Mr. Shattuck left in mid-1955, he was replaced as Chairman by Mr. Plitt, who asked me to become a Board member. But, I declined for the reason, which Mr. Plitt accepted, that the German members might think that the United States was downplaying the importance of the Board by putting the Executive Secretary, a junior official, on it. Instead, Mr. Hagen was placed on the Board.

Q: Did you get much pressure from the German government?

BLAKE: In the United States and Germany, a number of groups considered it a political (and perhaps business) mistake for the United States to be holding German prisoners for, what could be, some decades; but, I am not aware that the German Government ever attempted to apply pressure on the Board. There was one interesting case, however, which resulted in an outcry. That was the Sepp Dietrich case.

General Dietrich was sentenced to death because he was commander of the division that committed the Malmedy massacre. General Dietrich was convicted for several reasons. First, he was a *Waffen* SS officer. I should say that the SS could, and did, include the people who had run the concentration camps as well as the *Waffen* SS, which was somewhat like the green berets in the American army or the commandos. They were shock troops, very aggressive soldiers. Sepp Dietrich had done two things that caused the wrath of the occupiers; yet, they were things that were perfectly natural under the German military procedure. The first was he had given his troops a general order to fight aggressively, so aggressively that a wave of terror would precede them. The second was his pep talk to his troops immediately before they launched the Battle of the Bulge in which he pretty much repeated that exhortation.

If you consider what a football coach tells his team before a game, you will see that what Sepp Dietrich said to his troops was certainly within the realm of gearing up your men. But, if you look at it in terms of the political situation and what happened at Malmedy, it is an entirely different matter. Certainly, it was amenable to misinterpretation. I should say that the German government never put pressure on the American Board members or on anyone else concerning the Dietrich case. Also, I never heard of the German members of the Board, in their individual capacity, urging that the Sepp Dietrich case be taken up. But, inevitably, his application for

parole came up, and the Board had to deal with it. After considering the application for a couple of days, the Board decided that Dietrich's crime did not warrant further detention, and he should be considered for parole. The German Government, as best I recall, was restrained in its reaction. The German press treated the decision as a routine news item, but the American press picked it up and gave it some prominence.

This, of course, got back to Washington, and the Office of German Affairs professed to be very embarrassed, saying they would have to review the situation etc. Actually, there was no legal or other basis for overturning the Board's decision. In fact, the Office of German Affairs should not have been so taken aback, because HICOG had reported that the decision had been reached and the bases for reaching it, so that the Department could alert its press office and be prepared to handle the consequences. There was a flurry of indignation in Congress, and Ed Plitt received a back channel message from the Department saying he was really on his own on this. The State Department would not help him in his explanations; rather, as Chairman of the Board, he would have to handle that on his own. He had a couple of interviews, and the affair passed on. I think that the Board made the right decision.

There was a more interesting case related to Malmedy, and that involved the last war criminal in custody. I do not remember his first name, but his last name was Christ. He was a German Captain who was the officer in charge of the tank company that actually committed the Malmedy massacre. Captain Christ had been sentenced to death, and then under this general commutation, his sentence was commuted to life in prison. The Malmedy massacre occurred in mid-December of 1944. Captain Christ had been called to battalion headquarters for a meeting of the officers to get their attack orders for the next phase of the campaign. He left his tank company at dusk, went to headquarters, and then came back a couple of hours later, by which time it was dark. The Lieutenant, his executive officer, had the troops ready to roll, so the tank company proceeded down the road. Christ claimed that he only learned of the massacre at Malmedy several days later. He was sentenced to death, because his troops had committed this outrageous crime. His defense was: "I knew nothing about it. I was not there. I only heard of it several days later. I was as outraged as anyone, but I was immediately captured, so there was never any opportunity for me to do anything about the massacre."

Nevertheless, he was sentenced to death, his sentence then was commuted to life, and he was in prison, where he learned that he could apply for clemency and parole. In the applications, he would have to admit guilt and profess remorse. Christ said, "I did not know of the crime; I had no part in the crime. Of course, I have remorse that it happened, but I can't accept guilt for a crime I did not commit." Thus, he never applied for clemency or parole. It came down to a point where he was the only war criminal in prison. They were holding him in Bavaria in a small castle, and Dick Hagen, as Prisons Officer, would go down from time to time and say, "Captain Christ, won't you please apply for clemency and parole." Christ would reply, "No I didn't do anything. I am being held in a perversion of justice." I have no idea how it turned out, but when the War Crimes Clemency and Parole Board was dissolved, there was still one prisoner: Captain Christ.

When the Board finished its work in early 1956, I returned to the Refugee Relief Program (RRP). By then, the Department had assigned Don Smith, an officer with extensive commercial but no

consular experience, as supervising Consul General and Director of the RRP for Germany and Austria - the program had finished work in Italy by 1956. Don named me his Special Assistant for Consular Affairs and Deputy Coordinator of the RRP.

By then, we had sufficient visa officers in place throughout the consulates in Germany and at the Consulate at Salzburg where RRP visas were issued for applicants in Austria. We didn't establish camps in this case as we had for displaced persons at Schweinfurt; applicants for these visas lived on the economy. We used the consular personnel, but we had them all prepared to issue refugee relief visas in addition to visas under the standing visa laws. That was easy to do because there were basically no applicants. As I remarked earlier, these were *Volksdeutsche*, people of German background. They could assimilate into Germany, whose economy was growing by leaps and bounds.

Q: It was an economic miracle.

BLAKE: These folks were thinking, "Why should I go off and start a new life in the United States when, here in Germany, I have friends, relatives etc.?" So, applicants would get Refugee Relief immigration visas, which, as I recall, were valid for either three or six months. When their visas expired, they would come back and get them renewed. Then, they would come back and get them renewed again. They would just have this visa in their hip pocket as an insurance policy in the event something politically dire happened or the German economy turned down, in which case they would then go to the United States.

Q: Or the Soviets marched west.

BLAKE: That's right. But, they were perfectly content where they were. This became something of a scandal as people in Washington could not understand why the *Volksdeutsche* would pass up the opportunity to emigrate from Germany to the United States when the displaced persons had been blithe to go. It came to the attention of Eleanor Lansing Dulles, who was in the Office of German Affairs, in the Department of State. Eleanor announced that she was coming over to look into why the RRP was not getting off the ground. Congressmen were complaining that they had been pressured to pass special visa legislation that no one seemed interested in. There also were certain German groups in the United States wanting to know what was happening. They kept extending job opportunities to *Volksdeutsche*, but these people were not accepting them.

Harry Grossman, the Refugee Reports Officer in Germany, wrote a very detailed and comprehensive report on all of the circumstances that led to the failure of more *Volksdeutsche* to take advantage of this opportunity to immigrate to the United States. Harry's report reached Washington in time for Eleanor to read it before leaving for Bonn. Harry Grossman, Harry Schwartz who was Deputy in the political section but also followed this sort of thing, and I met with Eleanor Dulles. Harry Grossman made a very detailed presentation of the situation in Germany with respect to *Volksdeutsche*. Harry Schwartz made a few noncommittal comments. I listened from the sidelines. Eleanor listened to all of this. Then, she turned to Grossman and said, "I find your report interesting. I forwarded it to my brother (Secretary of State John Foster Dulles), and then I sent it to my other brother (CIA Director Alan Dulles). All three of us have read it, and all three of us reject your findings."

I have never seen anyone as deflated as poor Harry Grossman was at that point. Then, Harry Schwartz attempted to placate Eleanor and explained to her really what was going on here in Germany and asked her to be patient. I assured her that we were doing everything we could and we had all the people in place and so on. All we needed were applicants to be serious about applying for Refugee Relief visas. Eleanor went back to the States not happy but with a better understanding.

The Refugee Relief Program limped along until the October 1956 Hungarian uprising. For several days, Budapest was the scene of demonstrations by Hungarians who wanted to re-establish democracy in their country. The Soviets put that down, and tens of thousands of Hungarians fled to Austria. The State Department very quickly determined that these people met the requirements of the RRP. There was one provision of the Refugee Relief Act where applicants were the precursors to what we now call political refugees. We regarded these people as political refugees, issued them RRP visas in Austria, sent them off to the States, and declared the RRP a success.

Q: Thanks to Khrushchev.

BLAKE: Thanks to Hungary. Otherwise the RRP would have been a failure. It was, nevertheless, one of the forerunners, one of the determiners, one of the activities that led to the United States refining our visa legislation to include political refugees as a category.

Q: Which finally came in '65.

BLAKE: Yes, but I think if you look back, the genesis was 1956.

Q: We were operating under the McCarran-Walters Act then and didn't allow many things like that.

BLAKE: That's right. It started people thinking about what we really ought to do for political refugees.

Q: All right. Well now, when that ended, your time there, what happened?

BLAKE: The RRP ended in the first part of 1957, and I was told they wanted to keep me in Bonn. As it happened, Rozanne was pregnant again, this time with our fourth child, and it was rather late to transfer me. Rebecca Wellington, if you ever knew Becky, wanted me to come into the Political Section to work on Berlin access and other West-East German border problems.

Q: Oh, I worked for her in Berlin. I know Rebecca.

BLAKE: I was interested, but an opportunity came along that I thought was a bit more promising: that was to be Special Assistant to the Minister for Economic Affairs, a man named Henry Tasca. Henry had just come in from Rome where he had been Economics Minister and head of the Economic Assistance Program, and he was given these same jobs in Bonn. He replaced Jack Tuthill, who was very popular; I think that practically anyone who came in after

Jack would have had some problems filling his shoes in the eyes of the staff. Henry was an entirely different sort of person, and he was regarded as somewhat abrasive by members of the staff. I found Tasca quite an agreeable person so I went with him. I was his Special Assistant from January or February of '57 until I left in early October 1958. In addition to serving as Special Assistant, I represented the American Embassy on a joint U.S.-British-French working group on two decartelization cases, the Krupp and Thyssen cases, still pending from the occupation.

I should add here that I passed the 1954 written exam. I was told that if I would pay my way back to the United States, I could take the oral exam. That seemed to me a bit of an imposition, because, in those days, we had the so-called Wriston program. At the Embassy in Bonn, we had a Board, which examined people to bring them in as Foreign Service officers from the Department of State or from their staff capacities. I thought, "Well, gee, why can't this Board hear me here so I won't have this expense?" But, the Department took the position that the Wriston boards could not consider people coming in as FSO-6s - they could only consider them from FSO-5 and higher. They said that the probationary 6 category had to be considered a special category. In fact, my staff position would have qualified me to come into the Foreign Service as an FSO-5. But, I wanted to come in through the front door. You recall that FSOs in the 1950s were really quite exorcized over the Wriston program, which permitted Department and Staff officers to obtain a Presidential commission without going through the examination procedures to which Foreign Service officers had been subjected.

Q: Very much so.

BLAKE: If I was going to play on the team, I wanted to come in through the front door. So, I refused an offer to come in as an FSO-5 under the Wriston program. But, I also didn't want to have to pay my way back; I thought that was wrong. I was working out something with Allen Moreland, who was political advisor at Usaeur in Heidelberg. Alan was arranging a flight for me back to Washington on a military aircraft. At the last moment, the Foreign Service Board of Examiners decided to set up an oral examining board in Frankfurt, Germany. It consisted of three people: John Burns, Consul General at Frankfurt and Chairman of the Examining Board; Ted Hadraba, Consul General at Stuttgart; and Fritz Jandry, who was Deputy Chief of Mission in Copenhagen at that time. Funnily enough, Fritz Jandry had been on the Board that I went before to become a career staff officer in 1952, as well as on the FSO Oral Examining Board before which I had appeared in 1953.

Q: So, he is familiar with the Blake style.

BLAKE: It was kind of funny. John Burns and Ted Hadraba knew me because I had been Special Assistant to the supervising Consul General, their boss. Apparently, Fritz did not recognize my name. As I entered the room, Fritz looked up and said, "I believe we have met before. I don't recall quite where." I explained it to him. We sat down and had a rather nice discussion for about 45 minutes. Then, John Burns asked "Who won the Pulitzer prizes this year?" I said, "Gee, I don't know! Have they been announced?" Then, Ted jumped in, "In the year you were out of the Foreign Service, you were working for a newspaper in Leesburg, Virginia, and you don't know who won the Pulitzer Prize?" I replied, "I do apologize. My wife

and I got up early yesterday in Bonn and drove down to Kronberg to play golf all day, because I thought that would be a nice way to relax. We played at Kronberg castle, had a leisurely dinner, got to bed early, and here I am before you." John said, "Oh really, you played Kronberg? I joined that club last week. On Sunday, I was out walking around the golf course. What can you tell me about it?" So we talked for about 20 minutes about the golf course. Then John said, "Well, you are finished." I left, came back in the afternoon, and Oscar Holder, his Deputy said, "Well, the board passed you. They interviewed 27 people and only passed nine of the 27."

To my mind, this was a bit of an injustice. This board saw only people who were staff Foreign Service officers. They didn't interview private citizens living in Europe who had passed the written exam and wanted to take the oral. In those days, you had to pass the written exam, and you also had to pass the language exam before you could take the oral exam. These were people with Foreign Service experience and language competency, yet the Board rejected two-thirds of the applicants. I thought it was applying standards that were harsh while others without the same Foreign Service experience or language competency were being Wristonized all around them.

Q: Well, when your tour there was up, it was back to Germany?

BLAKE: That's right. They asked me to stay on a second year, and then they asked me to leave the Foreign Service and become Treasury attaché in London for as long as I wanted. I felt one government career was enough, so I came back to State. There were a number of assignments that were near misses, but my choices boiled down to either of the following two. One was to be Deputy Principal Officer in Frankfurt because of the high concentration of German banking interests there, and the other was to be Economic Counselor and Treasury Attaché in Saudi Arabia. Had I not been married, I would have, without any question, without any hesitation, gone to Saudi Arabia. This gets back to something again while I was in Treasury. Simon, as I remarked, had gone to Saudi Arabia. He did manage to establish a relationship with the Saudi Government and agreed with the Saudis to set up about 20 or 30 different advisory committees in various activities, including, for example, the following: a banking committee to assist in the development of domestic Saudi banking, an infrastructure committee on roads and things of that sort, and so on. There would be American personnel there working with the Saudis. These were not AID people, because we didn't have AID activity in Saudi Arabia. Henry Kissinger was very upset when he learned that Treasury would be running committees throughout Saudi Arabia, so he got in touch with Simon and said, "There is nothing I can do without embarrassment to roll this back, but I insist that you stay out of Iran. Iran is mine, and State will make policy toward Iran."

The job as Economic Counselor in Saudi Arabia would have been the conventional economic counselor job. The responsibilities as Treasury Representative would have been the customary ones along with the additional task of running all of these committees. That would have been a very exciting job. I turned it down ultimately because of the very restrictive attitude that the Saudis have toward women. They can't drive, for example, and so on. I thought that would be asking more of Rozanne than I'd ask of myself. Apart from being very difficult for her, I would have had to leave two children behind in boarding school. I wasn't sure I wanted to do that either.

So, I went to Frankfurt as Deputy Principal Officer in the Consulate General where I had begun my career. The Department was pleased to give me this assignment because the German Central Bank (the *Bundes Bank*) and other major banks are in Frankfurt. The Treasury Representative resided in Bonn; State's pleasure at having me there reflected the attitude toward Treasury representatives, to which I have already alluded.

Q: Who was the Principal Officer then?

BLAKE: When I was asked to go, it was Tom Recknagel. Then, Tom's wife, Charlotte, developed a health problem, and, at the last minute, they didn't go. So, Wolf Lehmann was substituted.

Q: I knew them both. How did you and Wolf divide up the duties - because it is a big post, I know - between the Consul General and the Deputy?

BLAKE: My recollection is that Frankfurt was the eighth largest post in the world at the time. We had 17 U.S. Government agencies assigned to the Consulate General, although some of them only had a loose relationship to the Consulate.

Q: And, there still was a huge American military presence in Germany.

BLAKE: A huge American military presence, and the bilateral trade between the consular district and the United States ran five billion dollars a year. That was very important. Wolf and I divided our duties up rather comfortably. Wolf, of course, was Consul General and retained to himself the various representational activities that a consul general would carry out. Wolf retained all of the political-military and the contacts with the political leaders. He gave to me all of the economic and commercial activity as well as all of the consular work. He found that the representational work got to be rather onerous, so we developed the practice of sharing representational activities. He had a great number of Congressional and business delegations. Of course, Wolf would always see the Congressmen and give a reception.

When appropriate, he would involve me, and he asked me to take the lead with commercial delegations, primarily investment promotion groups. As there was a large American business community in Frankfurt, I developed the practice of meeting monthly with representatives of that sector. Then, there was a bicentennial visit headed by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller with a rather distinguished group. Toward the end of my stay, President Jimmy Carter came once. There was always enough of that sort of activity that Wolf could keep quite busy. We really worked independently from one another in tandem, but of course we kept each other informed.

From 1977 on, the matter of American citizens in German prisons became important. Mistreatment of U.S. citizens in prison abroad, primarily in Mexico, had become a U.S. political issue which became of concern to Congress. Most of the prisoners were young adults who had been caught smuggling or selling drugs. In the Frankfurt consular district, some 90-100 U.S. citizens were in prison at any one time. The Department required that each prisoner be visited once a month, a requirement which put considerable strain on our consular staff as we received no increase in personnel. So that I might understand this new responsibility, I made a number of

prison visits. It turned out that most of the prisoners were former servicemen who had had served in Germany and liked the life there. Out of the service and without work permits, a number of them turned to drug trafficking. Life was reasonably comfortable in German prisons; for example, they were permitted monthly conjugal visits, could earn vacation from prison for good behavior, and had good English language libraries.

The head of Morgan Guaranty Bank in Germany mentioned to me the difficulty in spending his funds for local good works in a manner that would not seem puny when compared with the funds similarly available to the large German banks. This gave me an idea. I arranged for the University of Maryland branch in Germany to teach basic courses - English language and literature and American history, as I recall - in the larger German prisons in the Frankfurt consular district. The University's only requirement was that at least five prisoners sign up for each course. Morgan donated funds to this program, as did several other American businesses.

Q: Relations with the Army were good?

BLAKE: Excellent. The fact that Wolf was a politico-military officer and had been our last DCM in Vietnam was important to the military.

Q: What about relations with U.S. intelligence groups? I know we always had a number of them around the Frankfurt area?

BLAKE: We did. I felt that a lot of that intelligence activity was spinning wheels, but that is neither here nor there. I was amused once, though, when a CIA officer told me that, in their list of things to do, they were to report on German banking and gold movements. He said that he had that tasking removed from his list of things to do because there was no way that the Agency could top the reporting from the Consulate General.

Q: That is a nice commendation for you in some ways, isn't it?

BLAKE: Well, I was surprised they would do that, because turf generally is an important issue with the intelligence community.

Q: How about your relations with the Frankfurt city authorities?

BLAKE: Rudi Prebisch was the mayor, otherwise known as Red Rudy. We had on, a personal level, good relations; but, he didn't mind sticking his finger in the American eye to the extent he could. He did it once and infuriated Wolf. There was a photographic display at one of the museums, and one of the photographs was of some absolutely horrendous activity in Vietnam. I forget what. It wasn't the little girl running down the street screaming, but it was something like that. It really didn't fit with the theme of that photographic exhibition, and Wolf was furious. He stormed over to the mayor's office and said, "That comes out this afternoon or there will be hell to pay." By God, he got it out.

Q: Good for Wolf. He can work a man over, I know. Did you get up to the embassy in Bonn often?

BLAKE: I don't know how it is around the world, but in several of the countries I was assigned to, the Deputy was in charge of the E&E planning, which is the emergency and evacuation plan. While I was in Frankfurt, I revised the Consulate General's emergency and evacuation plan to include information on hospitals, hotels, airfields, etc. In the consular district, Rhein-Main Airport, just outside Frankfurt, is the most active airport on the continent of Europe. It seemed to me that Frankfurt would be a logical safe haven for Americans evacuated from danger in other countries. I was subsequently told that the Frankfurt E&E plan was most useful during the evacuation of Americans from Iran in the late '70s.

There were E&E meetings in Bonn every six months or so. Also, I would get up to Bonn from time to time to talk to the Economic Minister, Ed Crowley, as I had known him. So every six months or perhaps more frequently, I did visit Bonn. Moreover, Embassy officers came to Frankfurt from time to time.

Q: Were there any leftovers in Frankfurt from your days dealing with the DPs [displaced persons] and refugees, or were those problems all behind?

BLAKE: Those were all behind in the sense of resident displaced persons. Nevertheless, Germany had a very liberal policy on the admission of persons seeking political asylum. Our visa law had been amended since I was on the displaced persons program to permit the issuance of visas to political refugees. It was very easy for a person to become a political refugee in Germany, and then come to the Consulate General to apply for a visa as a political refugee. During the 1970s, as the Soviet Union relaxed its restrictions on the emigration of Jews to Israel, a number of Soviet Jews obtained emigration permits, then left Israel for Germany where they applied for visas to enter the United States as political refugees; some even left the train in Vienna and came to Germany without going through the formality of entering Israel. The Consulate General in Frankfurt was the only office in Europe (there were none in the Middle East) to issue visas to political refugees seeking asylum in the United States. You knew that the people, when they left the Soviet Union and diverted in Austria, had never had any intention of going to Israel, so they were really playing fast and loose with our law. But, an interpretation by the U.S. Government found them eligible for political refugee status in the United States.

While Wolf and I were in Frankfurt, we had one extremely interesting case of political asylum seekers. After the military coup in Ethiopia had deposed the Emperor, American missionaries of the Lutheran faith smuggled 17 children from the extended royal family out of Ethiopia to Kenya. Our Embassy in Addis Ababa was furious and demanded that they be brought back to ease tension that had developed in our relations with the military government. The Embassy said the military rulers of Ethiopia assured them that nothing would happen to these children. The missionaries insisted they could not return the children because the government had already executed various relatives of these children and were prepared to exterminate all members of the royal family. The missionaries became concerned about the proximity of Kenya to Ethiopia, and they and the children suddenly popped up in Stockholm, Sweden. This was about 1977.

Some days later, Wolf got a call from the Chargé in Stockholm and asked me to sit in. The Charge said, "I have got a real peculiar problem here. I was just visited by some missionaries

who have these Ethiopian princesses and princes here, and they are becoming increasingly concerned because these children stand out in Stockholm. They believe that the Ethiopian Government will send squads to murder or kidnap the kids. They have been looking at their options and would like to go to Germany where they think that the kids would blend in better because of the black military presence.

For some reason, probably because Frankfurt was such a large post, we had been receiving all of this traffic. We knew of the outrage in Addis Ababa because the missionaries were now in Stockholm. We knew the Department was very skittish about all of this, so, over the phone, we said, "It is really very difficult for us to put anything in writing. On the other hand, if the missionaries should pop up here with children, what could we do?" The Charge said, "I read you." He hung up. Two days later, a Marine security guard called up to the front office and said, "I have got some folks down here with all these children. They say they are missionaries, and the children are princesses and princes. What do I do?"

Q: I have got a headache!

BLAKE: We had expected them to pop up. We told the guard to have the visitors brought to the conference room. I think the oldest was about 17 or 18; the youngest was about four. The missionaries were quite concerned, and we talked with them and said, "We will tell you what you have to do." We walked them through the procedure for applying for political refugee status and so on. They said, "Fine," they would get in touch with the Lutherans back in the United States. We asked the missionaries where they were going to stay while in Frankfurt. They said, "Don't worry about it. We have got a place," and they gave us the location. It was in the American area near a military compound. There were a lot of blacks and whites in that community, and they could blend in better than in Stockholm.

After they left, we sent a message to the Department saying unaccountably we find that we have got these missionaries and children in Frankfurt. The missionaries want to apply for political refugee status for these children. I think about two to three months later, the party left for the United States. Before they left, we called them in again. We advised them that political refugees in the United States must eschew political activity. We thought this really didn't mean a lot because they were kids. They said they understood and they would be very careful in what they said and what they did; and, the missionaries stressed this to the children. They went off, and about nine months later, we were astounded to read in the *Stars And Stripes* that the 18-year old prince had joined a rock music group to give a performance to protest the government in Ethiopia. So, we got in touch with the Lutheran office in Germany and urged them to pass the word back to him that he was putting his political refugee status in jeopardy. We presume that he received the message, as we heard no more of his participation in the concert.

Q: Some of the problems you faced.... Did the Germans you met in your days in Frankfurt believe in reunification or that the Berlin Wall would ever come down, or did they just accept things as they were?

BLAKE: I don't remember any serious discussion of this. Wolf and I divided the chore of attending political rallies and party conventions, and I don't recall the plight of refugees from

East Germany or unification ever getting more than lip service. Unification seemed a long ways off in the 1970s. My contacts were primarily with bankers and businessmen who were rather affluent and rather comfortable. They really didn't think about those things. They recognized that, if the Wall came down, there would be terrific economic consequences that might be adverse to their interests. I don't think they particularly worried about it. They even liked the Social Democratic Government under Helmut Schmidt. As I was leaving in 1978, the first campaign between Helmut Schmidt (SPD) and Helmut Kohl (CDU) began. My contacts were fond of saying, "We hope that Schmidt wins, but by such a narrow margin that he has to be very careful what he does," which is the way the election went.

ALEXANDER FRENKLEY
Set up direct Russian Broadcasts from Munich to USSR
Munich (1952)

Alexander Frenkley was born in Russia and raised primarily in Bessarabia, which in 1918 became Romanian. He moved to Paris, where he obtained a degree in law. After a brief career in law and private business, it became impossible for him to continue his career in either Romania or France, owing to his Jewish religion. In 1939 Mr. Frenkley and his wife emigrated to the United States, and in 1946 he joined the State Department and Voice of America as Radio Script Writer and Programmer for its Russian language programs. He subsequently became Assistant Chief of the VOA Russian Service and Chief of its Romanian Service. Mr. Frenkley was interviewed by "Cliff" Groce in 1988.

FRENKLEY: In 1952, when Foy Kohler was director of the Voice, he asked me to go to Munich and help set up direct Russian broadcasts from the Munich Radio Center, addressed not only to the Soviet Union proper, but through medium wave to the Soviet army of occupation in East Germany and Eastern Europe. So I went in April and spent three months in Munich. When I arrived at the Frankfurt airport I was met by Perry Harten representing VOA in general, not Munich at that point, and on the way by car from Frankfurt to Munich I asked him whether he had anyone cleared for employment. He said yes, there was one young girl of about 18 or 19. "I gave her texts to translate," he said, "and apparently she did a brilliant job because I showed it to some people who know Russian and she had done a beautiful job in news and press reviews." I asked whether she was available and he said she was. I asked what her name was, and he said Natalie von Meyer. And today, 35 years later, she is the head of the Russian Service. And that gives me satisfaction, because when I saw her and checked her translations myself I came to that conclusion.

My first stop was in Frankfurt, for consultation with the NTS, the "National Labor Union," which was an anti-Soviet emigre organization, which exists to this day. They were putting out a newspaper, financed by the Americans, and a monthly magazine. I had a meeting with the directors and asked whom they could recommend from among their contributors, and they gave me one name, that of Alexander Kazantseff. They were reluctant to part with him, but since they

had an American master behind their back they couldn't say no. He proved to be a brilliant political writer, although his knowledge of English was extremely limited. Nelson Chipchin was sent as a future deputy to the future chief, who was Charlie Malamuth. They both arrived toward the end of May after I had set up the whole service, practically speaking, in the building of the American Consulate General, the Consul General being -- Charlie Thayer. Which helped, of course. Whenever we needed anything, I just went to Charlie at the other end of the hall and he gave whatever was necessary. But by then of course it was Cold War outright, and that lasted for a long time.

WILLIAM E. SCHAUFELE, JR.
Labor Officer
Dusseldorf (1952-1953)

William E. Schaufele, Jr. was born in Ohio in 1923. He received a bachelor's degree from Yale University in 1948 and a master's degree from Columbia University in 1950. He served overseas in the U.S. army from 1942 until 1946. Mr. Schaufele held positions in Germany, Morocco, Zaire, Burkina Faso, and Poland. He was interviewed by Lillian Mullin on November 19, 1994.

SCHAUFELE: I wanted to stay in Germany, as I mentioned earlier. Germany was my field. If I may digress a moment, I asked to be considered a German specialist. The Department's answer was that I could apply for German specialization. If I was accepted, I would have to spend a year, either at Middlebury College in Vermont or Columbia University in New York City, learning this specialty. I replied, "I already know my specialty. I did my Master's thesis on Germany, I speak the language fluently, and part of this study is language training." I said, "It's a waste of my time to go to a university." I was told, "Well, you can't be a German specialist any other way."

So I didn't become a German specialist, although I wanted to stay in Germany, at least as long as I could. I didn't want to go to Bonn, a big Embassy. I didn't want to go to Berlin, which was still an occupied area in fact. So I got into my car and drove around, visiting all of the Consulates General in Germany, looking for a job. I finally came up with one -- completely unexpectedly and a job which I didn't know even existed. That was as Labor Officer in the American Consulate General in Dusseldorf. There was a Labor Officer there. He was an outsider who had come from the United Steel Workers' union. He was going back to the steelworkers' union. I think that the only career Labor Attaché that we had at that time was named Sam Berger, though I'm not sure about that. Anyway, the headquarters of the German Trade Union Federation was in Dusseldorf. So we moved to Dusseldorf.

I immediately learned a little bit about some other considerations having to do with the position of Labor Affairs Officer in Dusseldorf and how things were going to work out. I was responsible to the Consul General, obviously. He had recommended me for the job after he had interviewed and accepted me. However, the Labor Office in the American Embassy in Bonn, had three officers in it, one of whom was designated as the Labor Attaché. Only one of them -- not the

Labor Attaché -- spoke German. They tended to deal mostly with the Ministry of Labor. I don't think that they really realized what they were doing. They should have placed the position of Labor Affairs Officer in Dusseldorf, because that would have provided convenient access to the leadership of a 6.0 million member labor confederation. And I had that access -- they didn't have any.

Q: Besides, you were a junior officer.

SCHAUFLE: That's right. I was a very junior officer. This is getting ahead of the story to some extent, but if the people from the Labor Attaché Office in the Embassy wanted to see a trade union official in Dusseldorf, they had to go through me. However, at the same time, the career people, such as the Consul General in Dusseldorf and the Counselor for Political Affairs in the Embassy in Bonn, wanted a career person to take the job of Labor Affairs Officer in Dusseldorf. This gave them a stake in having him succeed. There is always a tendency in any career program of trying to keep "outsiders" very much "out," except in extremis. So they were quite happy to have me. I don't think that they were always happy with my reporting, but that's because they hoped that labor developments in Germany would take a turn which they preferred and not the turn that they did take. I reported what I thought was the real situation. So once they had a career officer in my job, the other career people had a stake in having him succeed. From time to time we had some arguments over substantive issues, but that's not unusual in my experience in the Foreign Service.

However, the German trade unionists were still feeling their way. They felt that they were very lucky after World War II that they had as their leader a pre-war, minor official named Hans Bockler. He had the necessary experience and knowledge of the world to decide that there should be a single trade union confederation, with no political party ties. He thought that the confederation should be organized on an industrial basis, that is, by industry, rather than by craft -- not carpenters, for example, but construction workers. And he was able to bring it off.

There was no question that the leadership of the confederation was mostly composed of members of the Social Democratic Party. However, they made very sure that the First Vice President was a Catholic and a Christian Democrat. The head of the International Division of the confederation, who became the President about eight years later, came from the Liberal Party wing of the confederation. There was a small, pre-war union attached to the Liberal Democrats, as they were called then. The union was called the "Hirsch Dunkers." Then there had to be another vice president who was also a Socialist. That is, he was a member of the Social Democratic Party. I've often wondered about that appointment because he was not an effective man, and he had some slimy things in his past. I think that they held him in check that way. They threatened him with exposure. But they did make the gesture. They put a Social Democrat in there as the other vice president.

So I arrived in Dusseldorf. I overlapped with my predecessor maybe for two or three weeks. We lived in two places in Dusseldorf. We lived in an apartment and then moved into a house. Setting up the household again always takes a certain amount of time. However, I could walk into the headquarters of the DGB, the Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund, and, unlike my predecessor, I could speak to them immediately. We set up quite workable relationships. The trade union leaders used

to come to my house. They didn't go to the homes of anybody in our Embassy in Bonn. They were uncomfortable with them. The trade union leaders hadn't yet become good bureaucrats.

Q: But you were a junior officer.

SCHAUFLE: Yes, a very junior officer.

Q: You had no background for that position.

SCHAUFLE: No, except that I reported, and the people in Bonn didn't come up to Dusseldorf that often, even at the beginning. I don't know why they did that. I think it was because a couple of them were really labor lawyers. They tended to see the organization of labor in terms of legislation. There was the big question, which I can talk about later, called "co-determination." This had very great legal implications. The Labor Attaché, who was not a lawyer -- I can't remember his name -- came out of a very conservative union in the United States, an AFL [American Federation of Labor] union. Even after the AFL and the CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations] merged, he was still associated with a very conservative, AFL union. I don't think that he was really comfortable, working with all of these German unionists who called themselves "Socialists." So that may have been part of the problem.

In any case I don't recall that the Consul General, Laverne Baldwin, ever said anything to me like, "You're running too fast for the ball. Let somebody else in." I'm sure that he would have said that if he thought so because he was a great teacher. In my first, truly diplomatic job I couldn't have asked for somebody who treated you with more respect, who expected you to do your job and who was not competing with you. He had no great aspirations in the service. He never became an Ambassador, but he certainly trained a lot of people well.

Q: That was Baldwin?

SCHAUFLE: Yes, Laverne Baldwin. We used to subscribe to seven daily papers in Dusseldorf. He used to read them all at breakfast time. I would get to the office, and there would be one or two clippings on my desk -- something he had read in the papers. I think that he and I were the only ones who read all seven papers. [Laughter]

Anyway, my relations with his deputy were not so good. My wife finally figured out that he thought that I was competition for him, although he was three ranks higher than I was. Anyway, I still see him, occasionally. He finally became Consul General or DCM, Deputy Chief of Mission, in Dublin, Ireland and retired there. He was a good, Alabama boy with a British accent. [Laughter]

That was the first really substantive job that I had in the service. It dealt with reporting and negotiating. It was a great job. I held it for a little more than a year. It kind of culminated when Bockler, who had founded the DGB, died. He was replaced by the head of the printing trades union. However, the head of the metal workers union, which was the largest union, had aspirations to be the DGB leader. That produced the biggest argument I had with the Labor Attaché's Office in the Embassy in Bonn. They preferred to see the head of the smaller union

continue to be the head of the whole confederation.

Q: This was Christian Fette?

SCHAUFLE: Yes. He didn't have that much union membership strength to "force himself" on people, as the leader of the big unions -- particularly the metal workers or the coal workers -- did. The head of the coal workers was too old to be President of the DGB, but he was a very important man in the whole setup. So it became increasingly evident that Walter Frertzg, the head of the metal workers union, was going to challenge Fette in the election.

I should also go back to the question of "co-determination," because it became an issue between American and German labor. "Co-determination" was a concept under which German labor unions participated in management in industry. Most industries and most companies in effect had three leaders. I can't remember what they called them any more. One of these leaders handled administration and staff. Under "co-determination" the trade union would get that job, so that they would have one of the three top positions. Then they would get membership on the Board of Directors.

Q: As well?

SCHAUFLE: As well. Not control, but membership. One of the complaints was that one of the DGB vice-presidents, from the coal miners union, was a member of seven Boards of Directors, eventually. That was something that the American unions didn't like. They were afraid that union members would be "co-opted" by business, and there was a certain amount of truth to that.

However, the history of German unions was that German labor distrusted both government and industry. This was the only way -- especially in the situation after World War II -- that they could, perhaps, overcome the innate advantage of the individual companies and the employers.

Q: The trade unions had been totally "out" for the best part of 20 years during the Nazi period. Hitler closed down the unions.

SCHAUFLE: Of course, Hitler dissolved all of the unions and set up the German Labor Front, membership in which was compulsory for the workers. Everybody had to join.

Q: That was the same thing.

SCHAUFLE: Yes. That was why American labor was against "co-determination." That meant that the Labor Attaché's office was also against "co-determination." Associated with this issue of "co-determination" was the candidacy of Walter Frertzg. He had two million members in his union, which covered all of the metal workers in Germany. That was a pretty big bludgeon for "co-determination."

The next congress or convention of the DGB was held in Berlin. The Embassy had predicted the reelection of Fette, and I predicted the election of Frertzg. We were all there at the congress. Frertzg won rather handily, because he had all of the votes of the metal workers. He probably

had the support of the coal miners, too.

But there was something in the background here which I only learned shortly before that election. I used to see Frertzg regularly -- about every week. He told me that he wanted to "get" the people who had denounced him and had him sent to a concentration camp during the Nazi period. We talked about this a little, although he didn't like to discuss the details. You could tell that he had been hurt physically during the time he was in the concentration camp by the way he walked. The supposition is that somebody from the labor movement had denounced him to the Nazis. That disturbed me a little bit. I could see a better reason for opposing him than an internal dispute within the labor movement. But it was interesting. He never did anything about that. He never said anything. If he did anything, it was very private and never became a factor during the time he was president of the DGB. However, he surely was determined about this matter when he talked about it with me. I think that when he was finally elected president of the DGB and realized what his responsibilities were...

Q: He changed his mind?

SCHAUFLE: Yes.

Q: It was interesting how "co-determination" evolved. Did they have to change the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany? Or was it done by legislation?

SCHAUFLE: By legislation. Its history partially evolved out of the pre-war history of Germany. During the Weimar period [1920's] there had been some thought given to this sort of thing. As you know, the largest single pre-war union was the Social Democratic union, the Allgemeine Gewerkschaft. The second largest was the Catholic union, associated with the Center Party. They had all of their combined experience, even though the CDU, the Christian Democratic Union, along with the Free Democrats, the successor to the old Liberal Party, controlled the legislature. And they had even greater control of the "Bundesrat," the upper house, because representation in it was on a state basis, rather than individual constituencies. Once the Catholic unionists joined the Social Democrats in favor of "co-determination," the CDU had to accept it. They watered it down, but the legislation was passed by an "anti-union" coalition government. [Laughter]

Q: That meant that every company had a union member -- and, I guess, still does -- as one of the three top people on their Boards of Directors.

SCHAUFLE: No, one of the three top executives.

Q: One of the three top administrators.

SCHAUFLE: They also had union members on the Board of Directors, though never a majority. In the case of a coal mine, for example, you would find that the director of administration and staff affairs would be from the coal miners union. There might be three officials of the coal miners union on the Board of Directors, always including one union official who worked in that company's coal mine. The other union officials would come from the central

office of the coal miners union. So that was all it was.

Q: So you were in Dusseldorf for 15 months.

SCHAUFLE: That's right, and it was a very interesting and rewarding 15 months. During that period we had obviously been reading and hearing about the efforts of people like Senator Joseph McCarthy [Republican, Wisconsin] back in the United States. The Foreign Service had always been a kind of target for him, partially because it is a separate service and people live overseas. He seemed to feel that there must be something the matter with them.

This situation all came home to me when a man named John Paton Davies became the Political Counselor of the Embassy in Bonn. He came up to Dusseldorf shortly after his arrival in Bonn. Like a good Foreign Service boss, Laverne Baldwin made arrangements for everybody in the Consulate General to have some contact with John Paton Davies during his two-day stay -- breakfast, dinner, or whatever. Those of us who were involved in political affairs spent more time with him. I had heard about Davies. He was an "old China hand." He was born in China. I had never seen him before. He was kind of Lincoln-esque in appearance. He was tall and lanky. In his office he always sat back on the base of his spine, with his feet up on his desk. He was really, probably, one of the most brilliant people that I ever met in the Foreign Service.

Davies had already been attacked as one of the "China gang," the people who "lost" China after the Communists took over that country in 1949. But here he was, Political Counselor, kind of a normal assignment for a man of his rank and experience. The next move for him would be either Deputy Chief of Mission or an Ambassadorship. But he was, I thought, transferred rather suddenly to Lima, Peru. The word was out -- I don't know whether it was true or not -- that the Department hoped to "hide" him, so that he wouldn't be in the public or Congressional eye so much in Peru as in Germany, where everybody visited. However, after the Republicans won the presidential election in 1952, John Foster Dulles became Secretary of State. Congress was also under Republican control, which gave Senator McCarthy and others more scope and more power than they might have had under a Democratic administration.

McCarthy and others went after the "China gang" again. John Davies was called back to Washington. He had been "cleared." It had been determined that he was completely loyal in eight separate investigations already. Secretary Dulles really couldn't do anything about that. If he set up another board to determine whether Davies was "disloyal," the result would probably be the same. So, under a little-used provision of the Foreign Service Act of 1946 Secretary Dulles dismissed John Paton Davies for having exercised "bad judgment." The "bad judgment" was that Davies and several others predicted that the Chinese Communists would take over from Chiang Kai-shek. They didn't support this...

Q: Because they saw the imminence of it.

SCHAUFLE: That's right. They predicted it. So he left the Foreign Service. John Stewart Service, who was another member of the so-called "China gang," was also pursued in this matter. I don't know why he hadn't been attacked already. Maybe he wasn't so visible. He wasn't pursued in the same way. He was finally given a "limited" security clearance and sent off to the

Consulate General in Liverpool, England, as a kind of administrative officer. John Paton Davies went back to Peru to set up a furniture factory.

I would say that, in a personal sense, I felt so strongly about this that I wrote John Paton Davies a note, commiserating with him. When some of my colleagues found out about this, they were sure that my career -- and maybe theirs, because they were associated with me -- was at an end. I said, "Well, I had to do it." Davies replied to my note. It was a nice, hand-written reply, which I still can remember. He said that he would devote what time he had available to helping the Foreign Service. He wrote a book, called, "A Dragon by the Tail." It was obviously about China. He now lives in Spain. He got his security clearance back, I think, in 1969.

Q: But he didn't come back into the service.

SCHAUFELLE: He didn't come back in. I don't blame him.

Q: Perhaps he was making more money.

SCHAUFELLE: Probably. He was married. He had a lovely wife, and that helps. His father had been a missionary in China. That's what most of them were -- most of those "old China hands." They were born in China and spent the early part of their lives there. They were the children of missionaries. I guess that made them suspect, too.

MICHAEL H. NEWLIN
Vice Consul & Rotation Officer
Frankfurt (1952-1954)

Ambassador Michael Newlin was born in North Carolina in 1929. He received both his bachelor's degree and master's degree from Harvard University in 1949 and 1951, respectively. His career has included positions in Frankfurt, Oslo, Paris, Brussels, Leopoldville/Kinshasa, Jerusalem, Vienna, and an ambassadorship to Algeria. Ambassador Newlin was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on October 10, 1997.

Q: I'm sure. You were assigned to your first post overseas, I gather, in Frankfurt, following your training here?

NEWLIN: Yes. I was initially assigned to Munich, which I thought would be very nice, and Cecil Lyon asked if I would come to Berlin. I said yes, I'd be happy to come to Berlin. When I got to Germany, they said Foreign Service assignments in Germany were made by the High Commission and I was going to Frankfurt. I enjoyed working in Frankfurt; it was where I met Milena, my future wife.

Q: But you missed two other desirable posts. Who was the consul general at the time of your arrival?

NEWLIN: Chetwynd deRinzy, Montagu Pigott.

Q: Heavens!

NEWLIN: From California, no less. A most delightful, elegant, cultured person. He came from the Commerce Department.

Q: Had you had language training before you went to Germany?

NEWLIN: Yes, I guess we did have a little bit of language training, but most of the language training took place at post.

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

NEWLIN: The usual thing in those days, you rotated throughout. My first job was Economic Officer and I basically did commercial work, writing reports on German firms. Then I went into the Administrative Section, where I negotiated leases and that kind of thing. Then, finally, I went into the Consular Section doing non-immigrant visas. I found all of it interesting. While I was there, the Justice Department decided that the Nazi Party did not advocate the overthrow of the USG by force whereas the Communist Party did.

Q: Frankfurt in those days was not the Frankfurt of today.

NEWLIN: The center of Frankfurt, except the cathedral, was an open space. Stones of buildings were stacked up in neat piles. I'd go out at noontime and walk around what had been a beautiful neighborhood and it just had neat stacks of stones. But it was beginning to get started.

Q: What were your relations with the U.S. Military, which of course was omni-present in those days?

NEWLIN: Well, this was just at the tail end of the occupation and the High Commission had just, as I arrived, moved from Frankfurt--the former IG Farben HQ [headquarters] to the new quarters in Bonn. But the Consul General was still the Deputy Land Commissioner for the province of Hesse. So technically he was the local representative of the occupying power. But that was beginning to fade. In Consular work, we would issue visas to the Germans and, of course, to the fiancées of American servicemen.

Q: What were your relations with the High Commission in Bonn? Did they cause you any problems?

NEWLIN: They didn't really. I had to go up there and be interviewed by the security people, but we were pretty autonomous. We had no working relationship with them because I was only a Vice Consul.

Q: By the way, how large was the Consulate General then?

NEWLIN: Fairly large. It was one of the largest. Maybe not the largest, but it was fairly large because we had such a large military presence. They were engaged to German women. We had quite an active immigrant visa program as well as non-immigrant. Commercial relations were going well and there was a great deal of political reporting.

Q: You got a dose of consular work there.

NEWLIN: Yes. Administrative, consular, and a little bit of economics. Consular work in those days was a good initiation. I once interviewed a Santa Claus-type for a visa who swore he was never a Nazi. I had his oath of allegiance to Hitler as a member of the Deathhead SS.

Ambassador Newlin was also interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2006.

Q: You were in Frankfurt from when to when?

NEWLIN: I was there for two years. I guess it was '53 to '55. I was a rotation officer so I rotated through various things. I did economic work for awhile. I did administrative work. Then I did non immigrant visas and Immigrant visas. While I was there I met my future wife. So that turned out to be a very fortuitous assignment.

Q: How did you find work in Frankfurt? By the way were you in the new building?

NEWLIN: Oh no, we were in Bockenheimer Anlage. It was an old high rise apartment building that had been reconstructed. We looked out on the old city walls. I would go out at lunch time and walk around. The entire center of Frankfurt you could just see for blocks and blocks, all the way down to the cathedral. Just about everything had been completely bombed. The Germans had cleaned the stones and stacked them up neatly where the former buildings were. The old medieval center where Goethe's house used to be was completely destroyed.

Q: They did a very good job of rebuilding that. I got there, I was in the Air Force at Darmstadt about the time you were there. I took the foreign service exam. Ended up at ICOG at EG Farben.

NEWLIN: E.K. Hochhaus (skyscraper).

Q: I remember the man who monitored the 3 ½ days was Kennedy Schmertz. Was he, I think he was there while you were there. What sort of visas, who were the people, these were non immigrant visas.

NEWLIN: I remember one applicant from the Rhineland. He looked somewhat like you. He had more of a white beard. Looked a little bit like Santa Claus, and he had filled out all the forms and sworn to their truth. We had access fortunately to something called the Berlin document center which contained the names of Nazi members. Not only his name came up but they had a picture of him. There he was in uniform of the Waffen SS with the scull and cross bones cap. He turned

out to be the leader of a band. Even the Waffen SS had bands. I said, "You were never a Nazi." "Nein." "You had nothing to do with the military." "Nein." I said, "Well how do you explain this?" handing him the picture. He said, "Where on earth did you get that?"

Then one day there was a great commotion. Each applicant had to wait their turn in the outer office. Then one day the receptionist who was a young and very efficient German came in and said, "Baroness Von Bothmer is outside and waiting to talk to you." I said, "Well tell her to wait her turn. I will see her." He said, "Okay." Then this lady came in dressed in a sable coat, and she had as much jewelry as I have ever seen on anyone. She had been born in Ozark, Arkansas in the 30's, and had gone to New York and gotten a job as a secretary in the German consulate general in New York where she met Baron Von Bothmer. He proposed to her, and they got married. So in those days if an American woman married a foreigner, she lost her American citizenship and took her husband's. In the late 1930's he was called back to Berlin, and they took the Trans Siberian Railroad. They were both horrified at communism and what they saw in Russia. During WWII, she made some broadcasts in English telling about the horrors of communism. So when she applied earlier for a visa to go back to the States to visit her relatives, her wartime broadcasts came up. The Department's guidance was sought. So I got her file and it said that the Department determined that she had been a foreign national doing this, and therefore there was no reason to deny her a visa. She said, "Oh you must come down to the Bodensee." I never went.

Q: Did you get any feel for this while you were in Germany about the Germans and the attitudes of the Germans at that point?

NEWLIN: I did not except once when I was having to have my car repaired. The owner of the shop when I went to pick the car up, lectured me on how he wished that the United States was dropping the atomic bomb on Russia.

Q: Well of course, you probably ran across the phenomenon that not a single German you met ever fought on the west front. They all fought on the eastern front.

NEWLIN: That's right. Nobody ever would admit shooting at or killing an American.

Q: Did you ever get up to Berlin?

NEWLIN: Yes, I got up to Berlin a couple of times. You had to get special permission from HICOG. When you got to the Russian checkpoint when you were driving the documents were stamped by the Russians. I did get to Berlin a couple of times. In spite of everything it certainly had the feel of a big capital even in its truncated form.

Q: Was there the feeling at the time that the war could start at any moment?

NEWLIN: Yes, there was a fear of that. U.S. forces held well publicized maneuvers. There were tensions all the time. You just never knew what kind of a crisis would come up. In the Eisenhower administration we had several trips to the brink.

Q: When did you get there to Germany?

NEWLIN: I got there in '53 I think it was. The end of '52.

Q: Because I was wondering were you there when there were riots in East Berlin? This was quite a serious...

NEWLIN: That was I think later.

Q: Well let's see, it was before, it was in '53 or '54. I remember because I was at Darmstadt, and all of a sudden we were confined to barracks. I was in the Air Force at the time as an enlisted man. It looked quite serious....

Q: While you were in Frankfurt did you get any emanations from the McCarthy period.

NEWLIN: Of course, Cohn and Schine.

Q: Cohn and Schine, could you talk about who they were and whatever else you can.

NEWLIN: Of course Roy Cohn, I guess had worked with, didn't he also work with...

Q: Robert Kennedy also worked on the McCarthy staff.

NEWLIN: Bobby Kennedy, that's right. He worked there.

Q: They were two nasty characters.

NEWLIN: Cohn apparently brilliant but as nasty as they come. Then he hooked up with Schine whose father owned a hotel chain. They came to Bonn and they were trying to root out alleged communists in the foreign service posts. One of the people I think it was at the embassy in Bonn called them junketeering gumshoes. A nasty bunch indeed.

It was just the most terrible time in our modern history. It was a shame that Eisenhower and Dulles and Senator Taft too tolerated McCarthy and his staff. Somebody said to Taft, "Well this is just ruining our reputation abroad. You shouldn't allow this." He said, "Well, they are hurting the Democrats."

Q: They were running through the USIA (United States Information Agency) libraries abroad taking out books. I don't think these two knew what they were doing. They looked at the titles. But I mean they were sort of saying USIA was passing out communist propaganda. You shouldn't have this book. Of course in a place like Germany where books had been burned. These were two American Jews who were out censoring.

NEWLIN: Unbelievable, disgraceful.

Q: It didn't sit well. Did you pick up anything else. I am just trying to get some of the atmospherics, both when you were earlier in Washington taking the course, and while you were

in Frankfurt about the McCarthy period and you know, sort of the feeling of a purge that was going on, or were you too low down. Did you run across anybody?

NEWLIN: No. We heard about the people who were fired or forced to resign. It made you feel that the State Department and the foreign service particularly were going through a very difficult time. Then there was the whole thing about who lost China. And the old China hands being fired. But at that time we were all just so new and everything.

Q: I recall I was in Frankfurt, duty officer sitting in the front lobby of the new consulate on a Saturday. McCarthy had just died. An American Army officer came in and said, "Why isn't your flag at half mast?" I looked at him and said, "We hadn't been ordered," and muttered under my breath, "If we had another ten feet more I would hoist it higher." This is by the time of course he had been thoroughly discredited. But it was a very difficult time that I think for many people today is just ancient history.

NEWLIN: Ancient history. They don't talk about the McCarthy period.

GERARD M. GERT
Public Relations Officer, USIS
Berlin (1952-1954)

Gerard M. Gert was born in 1920 in Danzig, Germany and spent his childhood in Berlin, Germany. In 1937, he moved from Berlin to the U.S. Mr. Gert received a bachelor's degree from New York University and then served in the U.S. Army from 1942-1946. Prior to joining USIS, he worked for the Office of the Military Government U.S. (OMGUS), then transferred to RIAS. He has served in Vietnam, Laos, and Psychological Operations. Mr. Gert was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1988.

GERT: I would like to jump right away and talk about my most fascinating day in RIAS which was the seventeenth of June, 1953 -- the famous uprising in East Berlin -- which really changed the Cold War, if you will. It started with the death of Stalin in March of 1953 -- I believe it was the 25th of March. I remember I was sitting in my little cubbyhole. My staff consisted of about 15 people in the listeners' mail section. I walked our German program manager, Gerhard Loewenthal, who later on became one of the outstanding TV personalities in Germany. I don't know what he is doing today; he may still be on the second German television channel, for all I know. Gerhard walked into the office and said, "Mark my words! The whole world is going to change as of today." He had just heard on the radio that Stalin had died. He was right, of course.

This was in March. We soon noticed changes in East Germany. There was unrest, people were speaking up for the first time. On the sixteenth of June, the day before the famous uprising, Gordon Ewing called me and said, "Gerry, you are always a nosy guy. You are a bachelor and you like to see things. How would you like to run over to East Berlin and find out what is going on?"

Mind you, at this time there was no telephone connection between East and West. The communists had cut the telephone lines. While there was free access for us with our American license plates and so on, still, it was a bit of an adventure to go over there, particularly if you were on the staff of RIAS. RIAS was hated as the anti-Communist Cold War radio station and East German propaganda was always making nasty remarks about us, publishing cartoons, etc. We were always under attack by the East.

On the afternoon of the sixteenth, I drove down to the main drag in West Berlin, through the Brandenburg Gate, which was a primary crossing point into East Berlin. I found there were people gathering. When I got out of the car, I asked questions of what was going on. It seemed that the people who worked on the main drag in East Berlin, the famous Stalin Allee which was supposed to be the parade street, were unhappy with labor conditions, and they said, "Why shouldn't we strike? We have a right to strike." Unbeknownst to me at the time some of these guys had marched to RIAS that afternoon. I didn't know this, because I was over in East Berlin. By the time I came back, I heard the story. What had happened, was that a delegation of workers from East Berlin had marched into RIAS and said, "You are our radio station. You have always spoken for us. You have been our voice, and we now want to get on the air. We are calling for a general strike."

We were an American radio station in Berlin. A delegation from the other side comes in and says, "We want to call for a strike." What do you do as director of the radio station? Poor Gordon Ewing. He had to make the decision. Gordon made the right decision, together with his top German, a guy named Eberhard Schuetz, program manager, our top German. These two guys, Gordon and Eberhard sat down and said, "What are we going to do?" And they came up with a brilliant idea. They said, "We cannot give these guys our microphone. This would be a challenge to the East German regime. They could say we are 'warmongers' interfering in German affairs. So we can't do that. But we can report. We are reporters, after all. So we will write a news item, and we will say, in the third-person, that this afternoon, a delegation of workers from the East walked in, and this is what they said. They are calling for a general strike."

If you realize that the East German media, of course, did not carry any of this stuff, RIAS was the only one that put the word out of what had happened. The next day, the whole uprising was on. About 5:00 in the morning, the morning of the seventeenth, Gordon called and said, "Gerry, I think things are happening. Do you want to look?" I said, "Sure!" I rushed over to East Berlin. Crossing the Brandenburg Gate, I noticed trucks with Soviet soldiers wearing helmets, blankets, rifles and bayonets. I had never seen the Soviets dressed like that. These guys were serious. So I ran back into West Berlin, used the telephone, called RIAS and said, "The Soviets are serious. These guys are sitting there in full battle dress." I kept on going back between East and West Berlin making phone calls to tell RIAS newsroom what I was seeing.

A funny thing happened driving around in Berlin. I was observed. I will come to that later. It was a nice, clear day that morning. I drove all over East Berlin. I watched the gathering of people, the momentum, the marches, the complaints, the pushing and shoving. I wound up with most of the demonstrators in front of the ministries on Leipziger Strasse, where the main government offices were. There were lots of people around, throwing rocks, knocking out windows. I was in that

crowd.

Then something happened. A rainstorm came up, and I was completely drenched down to my underwear and my shoes. I decided, "Well, in the middle of all this excitement, I am going to quickly go home, change, and come back." This saved me, because as I left, going to my house in West Berlin, I listened to the radio and heard -- well, I am not sure where I got the information; I am not sure if it was on the radio -- that the Soviets had closed the border between East and West, and people who were inside East Berlin, as I might have been, were caught. It would have been most embarrassing to be there as a government official, as a RIAS person. So I didn't have a chance to get back in, but by the time I got back in my dry clothes, the border was closed.

Let me come back to the first part. While I drove around Straussburger Platz, I did follow the marching columns, and it is true, I was in the only noticeable American car. I was driving a green Pontiac with an American plate, U.S. Army number -- I think it was 3H2315. The East Germans noticed that car. In later days, they called that particular day, the seventeenth day of June, "Day X" which had all been plotted and planned for by the capitalist warmongers, the Americans and the Germans. East German newspapers reported that one of the instigators was driving around in a green Pontiac with plate number so and so. I was worried when I saw this publication which came out a couple of days later, for two reasons. (1) if they had identified me, I would have trouble driving through the zone again, if I ever wanted to drive to West Germany. Somehow somebody was going to sabotage me. And (2) I wasn't that sure that my own government would have been proud of me, because we were always leaning over backwards not to give any appearance that we were involved in anything. I thought I was going to be disavowed by my own bosses.

So I decided right there and then. I drove into the Grunwald which is a big forest in West Berlin, ripped off one of my license plates. Then, I went to the MPs and said, "I lost a plate," and got a new set of plates with different numbers. Also at my own expense, I took my car into a garage and had it painted gray. So the car looked different in color and it had new plates. The East Germans made one mistake. They had one figure wrong on my license plate identification, so I was never called by the MPs, or anybody else following the publication in East Berlin.

In retrospect, what we can say about the seventeenth of June is that while we did not incite the uprising, without us it would have been of a different magnitude, because we were the only medium that reported on what was going on. That way the people of East Berlin and other cities in the East Zone could find out about the events and organize their own uprisings. There were protest marches all over East Germany on that day. So while we didn't plan it, there was no "Day X", we didn't organize it, we had nothing to do with that; we were the reporters. Reporting the facts was enough to make other people join in with the protest movement on the seventeenth of June. As you may remember, this was the first of the protests in the Eastern European countries in June 1953. Others followed in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, etc. So that was my big day in RIAS.

MAURICE E. LEE
Press Officer, High Commissioner in Germany
Frankfurt (1952 - 1954)

Maurice E. Lee was born in Erie, Pennsylvania in 1925. He served with the European Theater during World War II. He received a master's degree from George Washington University and went to Paris, France to learn French. Mr. Lee's career with USIS included positions in Germany, Japan, Vietnam, South Asia, Washington, DC, the Philippines, Korea, and Israel. He was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt on February 9, 1989.

LEE: I was recruited as a Press Officer for the U.S. High Commission of Germany (HICOG) in Frankfurt. Following that experience in 1952 I was assigned as Assistant Information Officer in Bremen and later Information Officer. In 1954 I was sent to Yokohama, Japan where I was a Regional Public Affairs Officer and directed the American Cultural Center there.

I was a Public Relations Officer and a writer on the staff of the HICOG magazine. I think we had an impact on our German audience. First of all, the High Commission was a huge organization. It would be unheard of today to have an information staff the size of the one at the Consulate in Bremen as we did in those days. So we were able to contact all elements of the media and the public in our programs which were both cultural and press oriented. In those days the Germans were, of course, just rallying from the war, rebuilding their country and had intense interest in anything American and in ways that we could help them re-develop their country and its institutions. So I felt we left an impact that is still so obvious today.

Frankly, I had expected to encounter hostility from the Germans, but I didn't feel it. Bremen was a fairly small community. And it has a lot of wealth and sophistication. In that sense there was a certain aloofness. But I never felt that it was anger. They were very interested in our cultural center which was a fairly large one. It was always full, mainly with students who were very anxious to catch up after the war. We brought speakers, experts in different fields, from the States. The Germans were so hungry for information because they had been cut off from the outside world for so long. So there was no problem getting a crowd together. I personally went out and visited every newspaper in the consular district at least once every three months, and it was hard to get away from each one. They would sit you down and give you a glass of brandy and want to talk all day. It really was a very interesting time to be there.

HICOG did start a nationally circulated newspaper in Munich. But the ones in my area of concern were basically provincial papers. They were permitted to start up again after the war and a lot of them did. Some were started to put out American information.

NORMAN L. PRATT
Consular Officer
Berlin (1952-1955)

Norman L. Pratt was born in New York in 1916. He graduated from Dartmouth College with an A.B. degree in 1937. He served in the U.S. Army from 1941 to 1946 and then joined the Foreign Service at the end of 1946. His overseas career included posts in Egypt, Libya, Germany, Morocco, Syria, Lebanon, and South Africa. Mr. Pratt was interviewed by Dayton Mak in 1991.

Q: This isn't about me so I will drop that suggestion. You went on to Berlin, didn't you?

PRATT: I went from there to Berlin, yes. There again this was a straight consular operation with really nothing to do but to make sure the visa and passport sections worked smoothly. But at the same time we had the Soviets on the other side of the city. I would get involved from time to time in bringing back an American who had strayed across the line and gotten arrested. The Soviets used to turn them loose quite easily after two or three days. We had a liaison arrangement there. Each of the four occupying powers had a liaison/protocol officer who used to talk to each other and settle these things. Our officer was Jules Bernard who was absolutely fluent in Russian and we used to go over and pick up these strays and bring them back.

Q: What were the years you were in Berlin?

PRATT: I was in Berlin from 1952-55.

And of course even at that time we had a number of Americans who had succeeded in getting into trouble with the Soviet Union, had served their terms and were being released from concentration camps such as Vorkuta, and sent back to the Soviets in Berlin and turned over to us.

Q: Did you find it interesting in Berlin?

PRATT: It was interesting. I had really no political responsibility or anything of that sort.

Q: Would you like to say anything more about Berlin before moving on?

PRATT: I don't think there is really much more to say about Berlin.

Q: You might tell us who your family was at that point?

PRATT: By the time we left Berlin, there was Georgia and three children, John, Elizabeth and Margaret. Margaret was only a few weeks old when we left and returned to the United States. That was the summer of 1955.

WILLIAM G. BRADFORD
Public Safety Officer
Berlin (1952-1955)

Ambassador William G. Bradford was born in Illinois in 1925. He joined the U.S. Army in World War II and then attended the University of Indiana for two years. He joined the Foreign Service in 1952. Ambassador Bradford's Foreign Service career included positions in Italy, Vietnam, Zaire, Sierra Leone, Washington, DC, and an ambassadorship to Chad. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.

BRADFORD: The Public Safety Division in Berlin was formed to work with the German police, which were completely controlled by the old kommandatura. By that time the Russians had walked out. So it was a tripartite arrangement between the British, the French, and ourselves, which ran the German police force in Berlin. The German police force was more than a police force; it was actually a paramilitary force. It had several large battalions -- armed, and this was all part of the public safety responsibility.

They had some medium-sized weapons and so forth and would be considered reinforcements for the military forces that were in Berlin in those days. There were approximately 3,000, I think.

The nature of our work was that most of the people who were in it were former police officers. The head of it was the former head of the Michigan State Police. There were several ex-detectives. In those days, as you know, all the communications with the Department were basically written communications. They found that none of these policemen could write, so they assigned one Foreign Service officer to the operations, whose basic responsibility was to write all the reports and keep the Department informed of what was going on. This was later expanded into what I considered a fascinating job, where I was responsible for the border of Berlin. Each time a new barricade was put up, it was my responsibility to take pictures of it and explain it. I had a map of where all the barricades were in the city. This was before the wall.

It was a lot of fun. I enjoyed it immensely. I was there during the East German riots. Because I was responsible for the border, I was on the border during the riots. As a young man interested in this kind of thing, it was a fascinating place.

I don't honestly remember even having considered war to be a possibility. Possibly I wasn't thinking far enough down the line. My responsibilities were there on the border, reporting what was going on. But that we would react in a situation of war just never occurred to me.

ROBERT C. BREWSTER
Political / Administrative Officer
Stuttgart (1952-1955)

Ambassador Robert C. Brewster was born in 1921 and raised in Nebraska. A graduate of the University of Washington, he served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. In 1949, he joined the Service. In addition to serving in Stuttgart, Ambassador Brewster served in Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.

BREWSTER: During the first two years I did political reporting, and in the third year I became the administrative officer. It was a fascinating time to do political reporting because Germany was developing a new political life. It was the end of the occupation, the direct control of the German government, of course.

The first thing I had to do was learn German. I was assigned there without any training in German whatsoever. I managed to do so. There were two of us as political officers. We had, I think, two German political assistants -- or perhaps one -- and an interpreter/secretary, in addition to an American secretary -- it reflected the American establishment in Germany at that time, namely well staffed. So my inability to deal effectively in German was tolerated until I was able to do it.

The issues that I recall most were the ones associated with the European Defense Community and related issues, and they were the ones that were particularly intriguing because the state that Stuttgart's in, Baden-Wuerttemberg, had a key position in this in the Bundesrat. So it was an interesting time, but the frustrations that are typically felt by political reporting officers in consulates were quite evident then because Bonn, as indeed I found out later during my inspection career, did not place a great deal of weight on what it was being told by people like me serving in consulates. Nevertheless, I found it a rewarding time.

I honestly can't tell why the Embassy neglected our reporting, but I have seen the phenomenon several times. In one case, in an important NATO ally, the embassy had predicted the reelection of the prime minister. The consulate general had been predicting on the basis of tours throughout the area that had always supported him that he was going to be defeated. He was. I happened to be there inspecting the post. The ConGen's reports came in. They were not read by the political reporting officers who went on reporting the conventional wisdom that the prime minister would be reelected. There was hell to pay. The Department was not amused. I went back and got all the reports out of the file, and they showed they had not been read by the DCM or the ambassador *and* only occasionally by the political officer.

There was the practice at that time of having political officer conferences, and the money was no problem at that point, largely, I assume, because of occupation costs. In any event, we would go frequently to Bonn and confer with our embassy counterparts; so it was a useful time from that standpoint.

We had instant access to our sources. It was something I found a little bit off-putting, because by and large, as you know, the Germans don't -- did not; I can't speak for them now -- did not necessarily deal on an equal basis with someone that much younger than they. The German politicians at that time had 20 or 30 years on me. I was in my thirties. But I found this did not seem to bother them, and I had no trouble talking with them. I did not ascribe this to my own personal charm. It was pretty clear to me why they were talking to me -- they wanted to talk to the Americans and get their message through. But, yes, I had fantastic access. As we were trying to use politicians, they would try to use us to get through to our government to let them know their view. I thought that was particularly true of the SPD -- the Socialist opposition at that time to Adenauer.

FRANK SNOWDEN HOPKINS
Public Affairs Officer
Stuttgart (1952-1955)

The following is an excerpt from Mr. Hopkins' memoir.

HOPKINS: By the time I arrived in Germany in 1952 it was already seven years after World War II. The economy was thriving once more, helped by currency reform and Marshall Plan aid. The rebuilding of bombed areas was in full swing and much war damage had already been restored. German export industries were finding markets abroad; money was pouring in, and there were increasing signs of new wealth. The new automobile age had arrived in Europe and by the time I left in 1955 there were German cars everywhere. I often traveled by comfortable German railway trains on my visits to Bonn for staff meetings at headquarters and found them patronized by prosperous business leaders who not only looked well-dressed but overweight from good food and drink.

Living intimately among the Germans for three years I studied family and social patterns with keen interest. The superior status and authority of man over women, parents over children, and older people over younger ones was everywhere in evidence. Those Germans who told us their reactions after visits to the United States were unfailingly impressed with how much more amiable, relaxed, and egalitarian they found the American way of life. But the great status-consciousness of Germans, demonstrated in the compliance and deference which those of lesser status showed to their superiors, seemed to us not deeply rooted. Behavior was largely situational; when situations were different, personal attitudes and social behavior were different. Young people were strictly disciplined as children, but this discipline often had the effect of teaching them as they grew up to dissemble in the presence of superior authority and to escape social constriction when they could. American children seemed to German parents noisy and unruly, but the Germans were astonished to note how these children when older behaved so acceptably.

Girls in German families appeared to me to be treated very differently from boys. Daughters received more indulgent affection and grew up more psychologically secure; less was expected of them than of sons, who were equally loved but expected to toe the line and win success. The most important role for women, as wives and mothers, was to be the comforter of male egos bruised in a social system which permitted a good deal of ruthless bullying. I strongly admired the German women I knew, and thought I had never known of a society in which females were so important and so emotionally indispensable. German males, in contrast, were both more authoritarian and emotionally far less secure. So I watched and wondered. What lay behind the deference with which American officials were treated at that period? I could not be sure how valid my diagnoses were, but I stayed on guard. The Germans I knew were dynamic and ambitious, but rarely contented. It appeared that in large measure frustration was doomed to be their fate.

This was particularly true because of the bitterness with which many Germans regarded their postwar situation. Driven westward from their homes in the east, millions of refugees had lost their homes. On top of that tragedy, Germany had been divided between East and West, and a people who feel strongly about ties of kinship found their normal relationships disrupted. Thus the emotional pot seethed. And an enormously able people, possessing a turbulent history, continued to live and wait for a future in which its dreams could begin to come true.

At the end of three years, I found that I very much wanted to stay in Germany after a period of home leave and reassignment to new duties. What would have pleased me most would have been an assignment to the political section in Bonn, for as a late entrant to the Foreign Service it seemed most advantageous to specialize, building on what I had already learned. This idea had support from my friends in German affairs in the Department, but proved to be impracticable because the embassy staffs were being reduced after the new treaty of peace was signed between the Western allies and the German Federal Republic.

So we went home in 1955 on "loose-pack" orders, final destination to be determined after arrival. Nevertheless, we departed from Stuttgart in fine spirits. My work had won me several commendations and recognitions, one of which was to head a small committee which replanned the American public affairs program in Germany to make it more economical and effective. I was the drafting officer for the plan we devised, producing in three days a 55-page document, and it was in effect before I left Germany. The American staff which I inherited in 1952 had been greatly improved by 1955, and was regarded by my superiors in Bonn as among the best of the regional organizations. My people were a talented and creative group, and they performed their work beautifully. As for myself in day-to-day personal effectiveness, I was proud of the fluency I developed in the German language and of my ability to deliver effective speeches in it. My family made important contributions. My children were an attractive group and made many German friends, while my wife Ruth was active in German-American friendship societies and organized a German-American string quartet in which she became well-acquainted musically. We were constantly to be seen at German chamber music, symphony, opera, and theatrical performances, and our obvious interest in German cultural life was favorably commented on by Stuttgart friends. After years of great effort, we left in 1955 on a high note of satisfaction.

KENNETH P.T. SULLIVAN
Labor Officer
Dusseldorf (1952-1955)

Kenneth P.T. Sullivan was born in Massachusetts in 1918. He served in the U.S. Army. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, the Sudan, Austria, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on October 25, 1994.

Q: Following that year you were assigned to Dusseldorf.

SULLIVAN: That is right, back to Germany. I wasn't assigned to Dusseldorf, I was assigned to

Bonn. I went in on the day I arrived and reported to the political counselor, John Davis, an old China hand who was under some stress at the time, and told him that Bonn had been my eighth out of eight choices, and could he do something and get me out of there. I explained to him that I had had my fill of large organizations, I didn't have enough rank to make much of a dent in the embassy and I would appreciate it if they could send me somewhere like Tubingen where I could get to know somewhat more intimately a part of Germany that I didn't know. He arranged for me to go on a temporary basis to Dusseldorf, pending a probable assignment to Hamburg. The trouble was Hamburg didn't open up before I had found a permanent assignment in Dusseldorf.

Q: What was your job in Dusseldorf?

SULLIVAN: I went down temporarily to substitute for a political officer who was coming back from home leave and going to go to the embassy. While this was transacting slowly because of budget problems for home leave and transfer money, the administrative officer that we had there went on home leave. She had gotten orders before the budget troubles caught up. The consul general asked me if I would stay on since the Hamburg job hadn't opened and administer since I had been doing it in the military and on a civilian basis with the military for about six years. So I did. And while I was doing that, the full time labor specialist they had there who was a professional labor person from the United Steel Workers and had been sent over there mainly to watch the formation of what hoped to be the International Authority Ruhr, which later became what is now the European Common Market. He got a call from his union telling him that if he didn't get back pretty soon, his union would probably forget about him and he would have no job. So he went back and the consul general, who had told me that he was pleased with my substituting as a political and admin officer, wondered if I would like to stay full time as a labor officer because he had heard that I had written a paper at Harvard on German labor. I assured him that I had written a paper, but really it didn't have much to do with German labor, the emphasis was supposed to be German labor under the Nazis and it was practically all banned about the day the Germans took over. But he said, "Well, we won't tell them about that." So I stayed.

This was a wonderful assignment because the headquarters of the 16 union federation were in Dusseldorf. The labor attaché was in Bonn and was a friend of mine from my Berlin days and he didn't speak German and he usually had to do a lot of his work with the headquarters, the Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund. I had four unions that were headquartered in my area for which I was responsible. And I was also responsible for any union activities from unions outside the area that took place in my district, and my district was North Rhine Westphalia which was the largest district in Germany and there was quite a bit of work there. So I got a good broad ranging knowledge of the trade union movement as well, of course, of the management association which parallels in a sense the trade union movement. The big thing on the political side in those days was the introduction, which started in the British Zone, of something that which is known as co-determination, a very interesting concept designed to open up the transmission of information and ideas throughout the coal and steel industries which had been very stratified before. This was a very interesting thing. I had the opportunity to work during my spell there and actually exploit the talents of two very bright young graduate students, one of whom was later Treasury Secretary, Mike Blumenthal, and the other chap, Herbert Spiro, who was a member of Policy Planning some years later, also served as an ambassador in Africa. Each one of them wrote a

book on co-determination and gave me a nice sendoff in their introductions. One from the political side and one from the economic side. Actually they made me look good as an expert on Mitbestimmung.

Q: Well, you were right there from almost the beginning of co-determination.

SULLIVAN: Pretty much.

Q: It has gotten broader, I know, and invaded a number of countries. Well, this explains a lot about your background, how you became a labor officer later on.

SULLIVAN: Yes, that is right. There was quite a gap in that, but not a total gap. When I was finishing my time in Dusseldorf, as was the practice in those days you started to look for a place where you thought you could steer yourself to for your next post. My interest was basically Germany looking to the East. I thought I would like to get some firsthand experience with communists, but I didn't want to become a Sovietologist and didn't want to undertake much in language training, since I already had a geographic specialty. But I saw that the position of chief of the consular branch in Belgrade was coming open and I had worked for Ambassador Riddleberger previously and I wrote and told him of my interest in having some experience in a communist country and that I was more interested in how it affected the people than in the government. I thought that the consular section in Belgrade would be about the only opportunity that I could think of where I would have that chance, if he would have me. Of course, he knew of my consular work before and he said that if I could make it he would welcome me. And I did. I was lucky. He was correct when he said that he didn't think many officers with my background in politics would be asking to take a consulate post in a hardship post that was communist.

PARKE D. MASSEY
German Area and European Economic Studies
Columbia University (1952-1953)

Treasury Attaché
West Berlin (1953-1956)

Parke D. Massey was born in New York in 1920. He graduated from Haverford College with a B.A. and Harvard University with an M.P.A. He also served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1946 overseas. After entering the Foreign Service in 1947, Mr. Massey was posted in Mexico City, Genoa, Abidjan, and Germany. While in USAID, he was posted in Nicaragua, Panama, Bolivia, Chile, Haiti, and Uruguay. Mr. Massey was interviewed by Morris Weisz in 1992.

Q: Then you finished a two year tour and went on to another? Or go back to Washington?

MASSEY: After the two year tour, I did six months in Rome and then came back to the United States but not to Washington, to Columbia University where I spent a year in German area studies--actually primarily European economic studies.

Q: This would have been 1952

MASSEY: The academic year of 1952-53 I spent at Graduate School at Columbia University.

Q: Language also?

MASSEY: Language also. However, I was already moderately fluent in German as a result of World War II service.

Q: So you spent a couple semesters at Columbia studying the economics of the area and then?

MASSEY: Went to Germany for three years from 1953 to 1956.

Q: Did you know Paul Porter then? He was there before. He was Economic Minister.

MASSEY: No. While I was there oddly enough there was a labor connection, but I made nothing of it. The head of the Economic Division of the Embassy, who was also head of the assistance program, was a man named Mike Harris, who came out of the labor movement and had previously served in one of the Scandinavian countries. And during all of the time I was in Germany, the rule was that the head of the Economic Section would be either a State Department officer or a Marshall Plan officer and his deputy would be the reverse and the number three man all during this time was the Treasury Attaché. I was assigned for those three years to the Treasury Attaché, which of course was to shape my career in the direction of finance and economics.

Q: Did you get to know Mike?

MASSEY: Oh, very well.

Q: A wonderful guy.

MASSEY: After a while he left and Mr. John Tuthill, later Ambassador to Brazil, replaced him as head of the section. Tuthill himself was replaced by a man whose name I can't remember, but as I recall, it was a Greek name.

**WILLIAM ROOT
Office of the High Commissioner
Bonn (1952-1955)**

Economic Counselor

West Berlin (1971-1974)

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

Q: So you were in Bonn from...

ROOT: '52 to '55. During this period my principal task was to tell people it was time to go home. We were winding up; the occupational functions were being transferred gradually to the Germans. The State Department had taken over occupational functions from the Army just a few years before that. At the time I went, there were more State Department American personnel in Germany than in the rest of the world combined. This couldn't last, of course, especially since the Germans were, not so slowly, taking over these functions. The way it worked we identified roughly half of these numerous Americans who should be sent home. Most of them figured well, not quite yet. We have not quite finished what we set out to do. And they would appeal this directive. Half of the appeals were successful, and the other half were not. That meant that instead of cutting by half, we only cut by a quarter. Six months later you did it all over again. I was there for three years. I was on my sixth round of this sort of thing when I identified my own job as surplus and went home.

Q: Was the problem that the bureaucracy had become so entrenched or was it the individuals? In those days somebody working for the American government in Germany was living fairly well.

ROOT: We lived very well. After all we were an occupying force. We had occupation funds as well as appropriated funds to support us. We were living in what was known as the golden ghetto, which has its downside as well. You don't get to know the local people very well if you are just hobnobbing with Americans. But many of the Americans in Germany at that time had been there since the end of the war, some even before that. Yes, it had become a way of life, and they knew that when they went back home the lifestyle would be less high off the hog.

Q: During the time you were there, an embassy took over from the High Commission, didn't it?

ROOT: There was no embassy when I arrived. There was a U.S. High Commission for Germany. Of course there were British and French counterparts. It was called U.S. HICOG. The top dog was not an ambassador, he was a high commissioner. Now, by the time I left, that was phased into an embassy. It wasn't that the embassy took over. HICOG simply became the embassy.

Q: Who was the high commissioner when you arrived?

ROOT: McCloy.

Q: And Conant who had been a Harvard Professor, Harvard president of great distinction. Did that make a difference with Conant taking over from a military man? Did that sort of set a

different tone?

ROOT: Yes, although at my level, we didn't have that much to do with high commissioners, so it didn't make too much difference. But I think there was a different tone. I remember one particular. In going through the roster of positions trying to decide which ones we didn't need any longer, there was an office of scientific affairs, a science advisor. One of the appeals from that office went as far as Conant. He said, he didn't think he needed a science advisor, so in that sense it made a difference.

Q: Did you keep any impression during the time you were there of the development of the German government, or was it a pretty benign handover to German authority?

ROOT: Well Adenauer's star was rising rapidly. He had a very high reputation. The friction in the handover was caused more by American officials, understandably, wanting to finish what they had started and make sure that things didn't get dropped between the cracks. Were the Germans really going to proceed with decartelization and deconcentration, things like that, that we thought were so important.

Q: Did you sense though, a change in everything because the beginning of the Korean War in 1950 and all. All of a sudden Germany and Japan became sort of our staunch allies. I mean they became far more important objects of changing them over into democratic countries and all. They were on the front line against communism.

ROOT: By the time I got to Germany in '52, of course the Marshall Plan was well underway. It had started about four years before that. The transition from enemy status to object of reconstruction assistance had been accomplished. A few years later Germany became an ally in NATO; but that was after the Korean 1953 armistice. There were occasions when there were mixed feelings. For instance my brother was shot down over Normandy. It was Germans who shot him down. Well it was their job to do it. You can't fault them particularly, but it is hard to put that behind you.

Q: Did you get any feel for why we had this contingent of brand new foreign service officers who went out as kreis resident officers, kreis being about the county level, to take over from the army to act as a transition. Did you get any feel about how effective they were?

ROOT: I am sure there was tremendous variation in effectiveness, just as one would expect wide variations among people. But it really wasn't put to the test particularly after my arrival because the KRO positions were being eliminated.

Q: Were you seeing signs or indicators of Nazism?

ROOT: No. But I think that our living situation was not conducive to seeing signs one way or the other. We were surrounded by our own folk. Especially in administrative jobs such as my own. My wife and I did get out to meet Germans socially, but not through official capacity. We joined a local church, that sort of thing, but there was almost no way we would have become aware of a resurgence of Nazism which is one of the problems of the way we were living.

Q: And you were in West Berlin from when to when?

ROOT: '71 to '74.

Q: What was your job in West Berlin?

ROOT: I was the economic counselor. It was a fascinating experience because it was really three jobs: normal economic counselor, as in any post; interactions with the British and French and occasionally with the Soviets on the occupation responsibilities we still had; and struggling to cope with problems of access between West Germany and West Berlin. There were four modes of transport - air, water, rail, and highway: and the GDR made problems for all four.

Q: How was detente perceived from the perspective of Berlin?

ROOT: We arrived just at the time the four power agreement was signed. This resolved some of the issues we had with the Soviets. We left, of course, long before the wall came down. During the time I was there it was a claustrophobic atmosphere, being hemmed in. The German authorities in Berlin and the German authorities in Bonn sometimes chafed at allied restrictions and oversight. Naturally we had common interests, but not always the same emphases on what was important.

Q: In a way, particularly in economics, including transportation, you were almost the keeper of what I would call the holy bible. That is how far tailgates could be lowered. There was almost a theology about dealing with Berlin. The main thing was, as I understand it, any little relaxation of our insistence on our rights would be used by the Soviets to ask for more, so we had to be very rigorous on this, or we felt we did. Was that the case when you were there?

ROOT: Oh, yes. Not quite as pronounced as you put it. Actually there seemed to me to be opportunities for relaxing the restrictions on us that we weren't taking advantage of. One of the restrictions was the 10,000 foot ceiling on the air corridors. It was much more expensive if you had to fly that low. We had, of course, through various stratagems, made a deal with the GDR without really dealing with them if you know what I mean.

Q: We at that time did not have relations.

ROOT: No relations. But through the Soviets we could influence things occasionally. I thought I saw an opportunity to raise that ceiling, but I never got anywhere with it.

Q: Who was our minister then?

ROOT: David Klein.

Q: What was his background?

ROOT: He was an ambitious chap for wanting to become an ambassador if I could put it that way. He was, that led him to want to provide impeccable service to visitors from Washington. The irony of it was that there were so many of them he couldn't do that for everybody. So, when a governor from an obscure southern state came through with his wife, he let that one go. The most junior man on my staff became control officer for Jimmy Carter and Rosalyn.

Q: You were getting together with the French and British representatives all the time?

ROOT: Oh, yes, we had regular meetings.

Q: Were you pretty much all singing out of the same hymnbook?

ROOT: Pretty much, but there were some minor differences of opinion. The occupation still continued but there were only a few things we were supposed to do, such as munitions control.

Q: Had the situation reached maturity? Was the time of testing of both sides in the past? Had every nuance been played out?

ROOT: Not entirely. As part of the four power agreement, the Soviets obtained authority to open a commercial mission in West Berlin. I was named as the U.S. liaison for that mission, so this was something new. They didn't know quite what to do, and I didn't know quite what to do, so we were feeling our way. It wasn't as if everything had been worked out.

Q: What was it supposed to do?

ROOT: It was supposed to be carrying out the normal function of providing opportunities for Soviet trade.

Q: Was there much of an opportunity?

ROOT: No.

Q: I was going to say, I mean at that time West Berlin had quite thorough access to the rest of western Europe didn't they?

ROOT: Well, yes, although it was heavily dependent on subsidies from Bonn. It was not self-sufficient.

Q: Was Berlin building up reserves so in case there was a shutdown, things could go on at least for awhile?

ROOT: Well there might have been some reserves as a heritage of the blockade, which was long before we were there, but there was no great political push to build them up. Things were relatively quiet I'd say.

Q: Was there much in the way of concern about spying?

ROOT: Well, interestingly enough, Felix Bloch worked for me.

Q: Oh. You had better explain who Felix Bloch is.

ROOT: Felix Bloch was a commercial officer on my staff. Several years later it was alleged that he had passed secrets to the KGB.

Q: This was when he was in Vienna I guess or Paris.

ROOT: It was in Paris. He had served in Vienna. Two members of the fourth estate contacted me, one for newspaper reporter and one television reporter. They had both figured out that I was his boss in West Berlin. So they asked me, "Was he a spy?" I said, "No, not to my knowledge. His particular job as commercial officer had less to do with the east than anything else in the Berlin mission. He later went on, when he wasn't working for me, to the eastern affairs division which did have reason to contact the East Germans. Both of these gentlemen called me a second time six months later. Each had read a book which alleged that hundreds of people, including Bloch, worked for the CIA. The reporters were sophisticated enough not to take that at face value. So they asked me whether it was possible that maybe he was working for the CIA and that the FBI and the CIA weren't talking to each other. I said, "There are three kinds of people who work for the CIA: the ones that make no bones about it and are completely open about it; those whose cover is so thin that everybody knows but pretends they don't; and others whose cover is so deep that nobody knows. He was not in either of the first two categories. If he is in the third category, I would have no way of knowing." So I wasn't very much help to them. But what surprised me is that, although these reporters contacted me, I was never asked this or any other question by any one in the U.S. Government - the diplomatic security people at State or the FBI or anyone else. He was denied his pension even though he was never charged with, let alone convicted of, any criminal act. I have attempted to help him get his pension restored.

Q: It is one of these things that is in limbo and is curious. Allegations were made that are serious and seemed to be somewhat substantiated. He didn't challenge them; he didn't confess, so nothing happened except I guess he was discharged, and pension was taken away, and he could have challenged that.

ROOT: When he resigned in July of '90, he thought he was going to get his pension. Then the Department took it away. He filed countless grievances and then took it to the court. It is still not resolved.

Q: While you were in Berlin was there not considerable spying activity?

ROOT: We, of course, had our own CIA people. And the Eastern Affairs Division in the mission in West Berlin was doing its best to figure out what was happening in the GDR. These were normal activities. As for cloak and dagger stuff, there probably was some of that going on, but not to my knowledge.

Q: How did we gather information about the German Democratic Republic?

ROOT: As an example, there was an international commercial fair in Leipzig every six months. Several of us in the U.S. mission managed to get to Leipzig for the fair by a device where the Soviets issued us a separate piece of paper on which the GDR had put its stamp so we could travel, but it wasn't in our passports. Once we got to Leipzig, we could get a visa extension to go to other places. In this way we managed to see some things going on in East Germany even though we didn't recognize the GDR.

Q: How did we use the Leipzig fair?

ROOT: This was an opportunity to see what eastern countries were producing. With respect to my own job, we tried to determine whether eastern technology was up to the level in the West. Amateurs like myself could only get an impression, but at least we found out what was being exhibited. This is what one normally does at a trade fair. The Leipzig fair was one of the biggest ones in the east. The political side of the U.S. mission in West Berlin used the fair as an excuse to get around the countryside and see what was going on.

Q: Did we not take, as an article of faith, that the east German economy was producing better things than other Warsaw Pact countries?

ROOT: That was indeed the conventional wisdom. When Germany was eventually united, however, it turned out that, compared to West Germany, they were eons behind, so everything is relative.

Q: Well in a way, you know, I was talking about how we approach things. Maybe we were looking for something and we over estimated what the East Germans were doing.

ROOT: We might have been over estimating, but none of us thought they were up to western standards. On the other hand, compared with Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, they were relatively advanced.

Q: Was it easy to get in and out of West Berlin to get to Germany?

ROOT: We could drive on only the one autobahn that went to Helmstedt. Vienna, as you know is south and east of Berlin, but to get there we had to travel west and then much farther east. It was a very long detour; but nonetheless it could be done. Or you could fly, or take a sealed train. You could not leave the train while it was in the GDR. Those were the three methods of access for personnel.

Q: You say you felt a little bit claustrophobic at times.

ROOT: Yes, you couldn't drive more than 15 or 20 minutes in any direction without running into the wall.

Q: What about relations with the economic section in Bonn, the American economic section in

our embassy there. Were you an independent offshoot, or were you part and parcel of the economic section? How did that work?

ROOT: Well, the people in Bonn were working with the German government in Bonn on these access questions. We would provide data that was more accessible in Berlin, but we weren't the negotiating partners. We sometimes worked out local issues with the Berlin authorities. There wasn't a need for extremely close working relationship because it was pretty clearly defined who did what.

Q: By the time you left there in '74, was there any intonation that the whole bloc system and the Soviet Union might you know, be running towards the end of its days?

ROOT: Not the slightest.

Q: Anybody ever raise that?

ROOT: No. We all spent so many years with the cold war mentality that it just didn't come up on the radar screen at all.

JAMES E. HOOFNAGLE
General Manager, US Information Program
Germany (1952-1956)

Public Affairs Officer, USIS
West Berlin, (1961-1964)

James Hoofnagle was born and raised in Virginia. He attended the University of Virginia. He entered the Foreign Service and held his first post in Germany in 1952, he later held a post in Ireland. He was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1989.

HOOFNAGLE: So I dropped it there. A couple of days later I got another call. This was somebody who had heard about me turning down the job in Pakistan, and offered me the job of general manager in Germany for the U.S. Information program.

So, in 1952, I left the Agriculture Department and went to Germany as the general manager of the USIA program in Germany.

I was there for four years and then came home and --

Q: May I ask you, what were some of the highlights of your activities as general manager of the USIA operation in -- I guess that was under HICOG.

I have talked to a couple other people, notably Ed Schechter, who has a great admiration for the job you did there. I would like to get some highlights of what you saw as your problems there and the way you solved them, and generally what were you up against.

HOOFNAGLE: Well, it was the first job I had in which the sheer magnitude of everything was just astounding. When I went there in January of 1953 there were 3,000 Americans in the program. It included a lot more than just a simple information program, but it was basically a public relations information and cultural program.

We had about fifty, sixty, seventy different installations throughout West Germany. What we had to do was to cut this down and cut it down fast, because although it was supported by the Germans there was just no way to continue such a large operation.

This was a very tough task, because you had to tell people they were through, but everybody understood why they were through.

That to me was a big challenge. The most interesting phase of it was that there were hundreds of young Americans who were there as city officials -- in every town in West Germany -- we were able to pull out some of the best and the brightest from such a large pool of talent.

If you look at the list of USIA people you will see that an awful lot of them were those that were rescued from what we called the Land (pronounced Landt) Residents' Officer Program.

Q: That was the time I was in Japan and we had a lot of positions to fill in Japan. I know we got about six or eight of them who came out of the German program. I imagine those are some of the people you're talking about.

HOOFNAGLE: Yes.

Q: One was Pat van Delden and one was Morrie Lee, Paul Bethel and several others.

HOOFNAGLE: Yes. They could never have been recruited under ordinary times, but bear in mind that this was just at the close of the war; they were well educated, interested in going to Germany and I assume to Japan, the same way.

So we built an awfully good staff from that. That was a fascinating time and cutting the program down was really an interesting experiment, particularly in human relations.

Q: You were operating to a large extent under occupation funds, I understand.

HOOFNAGLE: Yes.

Q: Did you have any appropriated dollars or was it all occupation funds?

HOOFNAGLE: The appropriated dollars were primarily for the American salaries. I was always on American funds.

Q: All the operational costs, other than the salaries and support of the Americans were on occupation moneys (so called Garioa Funds)?

HOOFNAGLE: in August of 1961 we had a European PAO conference in Bonn. At that time Joe Phillips was assistant director for Europe. He and Ed Murrow came over to the conference and then Murrow decided to go on to Berlin.

So on the afternoon of August 11 I went to Berlin with Phillips and Ed Murrow. They put us up in the U.S. Military hotel. That night I turned on the radio and all I could get was that something was going on between East and West Berlin line. I didn't know enough about various places in the city, but it sounded disturbing. I got Joe Phillips up and he apparently detected the same thing. So we got Murrow up. Then we loaded up and went down to the U.S. headquarters. It wasn't called the embassy.

Q: It was a special mission.

HOOFNAGLE: Yes. Anyway, we found that there was a wall going up. The East Germans were building a barricade.

So then we started having conversations with the officials in the Berlin office. Allen Lightner was there. Murrow became so enamored of this development that he spent three days in Berlin. He had planned to spend one night. I finally said to him, "Mr. Murrow, you're not a journalist anymore -- you've got a job in Washington." I don't think he liked it very much, but anyway after three days he did go.

He talked with the president while he was there. I didn't hear the conversation. He talked with Pierre Salinger and several other top officials. Most of my time was traveling with him over to the east. Joe Phillips' job was to prepare the reports on the situation for Washington.

Murrow and I went over to East Berlin five times one day, and each time -- you didn't know whether you were going to get shot or not --

Q: He went over to East Berlin?

HOOFNAGLE: Yes, over to East Berlin. A couple of times the East Berlin police and soldiers said, "Halt;" we didn't halt. Murrow didn't seem to be bothered. It bothered me and, most of all, it bothered the German driver.

Anyway, Murrow was just so fascinated. I mean, there was no point in going over to East Berlin.

Q: Was there anyone he was trying to talk to over there, or was he just going over to look?

HOOFNAGLE: He was just going over to look. There was no one there to talk to. In fact, most of the time we didn't get out of the car, but we were flying the flag all the time, you see, so we were relatively safe -- I hoped, anyway.

Q: Did you have a VOA group or correspondent group, in Berlin at that time? From what I understand, VOA actually got broadcasts of the -- probably recorded -- but broadcasts of the hammering and the noise going on in putting up the wall. These recordings were played back from VOA in Washington as soon as they were transmitted back to the studios of the Voice.

HOOFNAGLE: We had some of that. It wasn't from the Voice. We had a radio station, RIAS (Radio in the American Sector), and RIAS was doing that job and they did a marvelous job. Those people worked night and day. They were just shell-shocked, there was so much work to do.

That is the kind of thing that we experienced. Let's see --

Q: Didn't the -- am I mistaken or did the government of Germany change while you were there, in that one party was voted out and another came in? Was that when Willy Brandt became prime minister?

HOOFNAGLE: He became what they call Oberbuergermeister of Berlin, yes.

Q: Yes, but I thought the whole ruling party --

HOOFNAGLE: Well, when we first went there it was Chancellor Adenauer --

Q: Yes.

HOOFNAGLE: -- and he was out before I went back the second time and Erhard was in, and then later Willy Brandt --

Q: Willy Brandt became the premier, and then he was in turn voted out, but that was after your four?

HOOFNAGLE: Yes.

Q: So Willy Brandt was there most of the time you were in Germany --

HOOFNAGLE: Yes.

Q: -- for the second tour?

HOOFNAGLE: Now, I have six stories about the presidents.

Q: I would like to hear them.

HOOFNAGLE: Well, Lyndon Johnson came over right after the wall was up. So, of course, Berlin was where we were going. Johnson was riding with Willy Brandt in the car and showing his boots -- German, big boots -- Lyndon Johnson admired the boots. He said, "Where do you get a pair like that?" He said, "I can get a pair like that for you right here in Berlin." It happened that it was on a Sunday, so the store had to be opened.

Lyndon Johnson's feet were different sizes -- one was a size larger than the other one. So he had to buy two pair of boots, but he refused to pay for the second pair of boots. He only wanted one pair of boots.

Well, the escort officer who was with him suddenly stepped in and said, "That's quite all right. I'll pay for it." So the escort officer paid for the president of the United States' second pair of boots.

When Ted Kennedy came once -- all of these were people coming to see the Berlin Wall -- we were riding along with Kennedy in the back seat. The crowds were saying "Der bruder, der bruder, der bruder".

So he mentioned to whoever was beside him, "Oh, that's marvelous, isn't it?" Well, "der bruder" is brother -- they were calling him the brother of John Kennedy.

Another Lyndon story is that when he was in Berlin he said his wife had told him to get a place setting for 36 of china. Again, it was Sunday and they had to open up the factory.

We went to the factory and he asked the price -- what would 36 cost? When they told him he said, "Oh, I can't afford that." So the manager there said, "Well, we've got seconds that are much cheaper." So he said, "I'll take seconds. Give me a set of 36 seconds."

Well, of course, you don't make seconds. They are accidents, so they didn't have a set of 36 seconds. Well, the search went on to get seconds and suddenly Willy Brandt heard about it and walked up to him and said, "Mr. Vice President" -- "this is a gift from the city of Berlin." He said, "Okay, I'll take the first quality."

Those kind of incidents you remember, when you don't remember important things.

Q: That's right.

HOOFNAGLE: The other story is on John Kennedy. The night before he went to Berlin to make his famous Berlin speech, the speech had been written and we had run off about a hundred or a thousand copies and more were being produced immediately, when they were stopped.

Word came from upstairs in the hotel that the president was changing the speech. Fortunately, we hadn't distributed any. The president wanted to make his own change in the speech.

You may remember -- this was part of the speech -- about "Ich bin ein Berliner". Well, he put that in there -- it is grammatically incorrect and it was put in on his own, a genius of a thought, but incorrect. You don't say "ein Berliner," you say, "Ich bin Berliner".

So that was an accident which was a great stroke -

Q: It certainly was.

HOOFNAGLE: So that takes me through Germany, doesn't it?

ROBERT A. STEVENSON
Political Officer
Dusseldorf (1952-1957)

Ambassador Robert A. Stevenson joined the Foreign Service in 1947. His career included posts in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Germany, Chile, Colombia, and an ambassadorship to Malawi. Ambassador Stevenson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.

Q: Your next assignment was to Dusseldorf in 1952 to 1957.

STEVENSON: Yes. I will never forget that I hadn't been in Dusseldorf very long when Cecil Lyon came through there on a visit.

He was minister then in Bonn, and he came to Dusseldorf. I said, "Oh, yes, Mr. Lyon. You are a well known name to me and I know you have had a lot of experience in Latin America, and I've had two posts there."

And I'll never forget, he said, "Oh, yes! And how does it feel to be out of the minor league?"
(Laughter)

Q: What were you doing in Dusseldorf?

STEVENSON: They sent me out there as Political Officer. I didn't know a word of German. Of course, I had to start learning German, and I had about a week or two here in Washington, and really learned it at Post. It was hard work, but by the end of three and a half years, (because they ran out of money and there wasn't any home leave, I stayed three and a half and took a transfer). I could speak pretty fluent German, and I had no trouble handling the debate in the Landtag. Again this was a Consulate General--in Dusseldorf--in Land North Rhine-Westphalia.

I was Political Officer. Parker Wyman was my deputy and a very good one. Parker spoke German very well. We covered the goings-on in North Rhine-Westphalia. We went to the first post war meeting of the Stahlhelm.

Q: A veterans' group?

STEVENSON: That was a German veterans' group, yes. It made the newspapers that Parker and I had gone to this thing. We were invited and we went and sat up in the balcony, just to see what was going on. We wrote a report on it, and which was very well received in the Department. But the Embassy got very nervous about our going to that thing and said not to go again to something like that without clearing with the Embassy. (Laughter) But on the whole, it worked out all right.

General Von Manteuffel came in for conversations at least twice and one or two other former German Generals as well.

Q: He was a well-known German general.

STEVENSON: Yes. We talked to Von Manteuffel a couple of times. I had a German assistant there who had been an officer in the German Army. He was the Foreign Service national assistant in the Political Section. He was very well connected. He knew Von Manteuffel and got him to step in. I don't remember much from that interview, but one thing I have always remembered. They got to talking about something they called "tapferkeit." "Herr General in den letzten krieg keine tapferkeit hat die soldaten, nicht war?" Or something like that. After it was over, I said, "Egenolf von Berckheim." I said, "What in the devil is tapferkeit? You and the general were talking about tapferkeit, you didn't have it or you did have it."

He said, "We had it in World War I but not in World War II. If the German troops were told to line up and march over a cliff in the time of World War I, they marched right over the cliff. But in World War II, they would not go that far." (Laughter)

Q: As a political officer, what were you looking at? What were your marching orders from the embassy? You were there from '53 to '56.

STEVENSON: Yes.

Q: What were you looking at?

STEVENSON: We were interested in how democracy was settling in, so to speak, in West Germany. North Rhine-Westphalia was a very important state, Land, and we watched the politics there and reported on them, because a number of figures there became active and important on the national scene. [Konrad] Adenauer, of course, was Chancellor then.

One of our very good contacts was with Wolfgang Duering, who later was in the Bundestag and died of a heart attack while defending himself in the famous Spiegel scandal that came up some years after I was there. Also, Walter Scheel was a very good contact, who later became President of Germany. So in a sense, North Rhine-Westphalia was a political nurturing ground for German politicians who later went on to higher things. And actions taken in the state government were of interest. So we found ourselves pretty busy on the political front.

Of course, it was a big economic post. Jack Leary was there doing economic reporting, and Tom Kingsley. Later, my last year, I was in charge of the Consulate General's reporting section, which included both political and economic, and I did some economic reporting on non-ferrous metals and iron and steel and coal.

Q: How did we view the SPD and the CDU? Those were the two major parties. How did we view the SPD at that time?

STEVENSON: We were perfectly open with the SPD and had contacts there, not as good as with the Christian Democrats, and also with the FDP, the Freie Demokratische Partei, (Walter Scheel and Duering and Willy Weir and several others). We had especially good contacts with the FDP, which more approached our secular party system, I'd say. But they were sort of a make-weight party. We knew that then. They could kind of go either way, and have gone either way. They've made coalitions with the SPD and with the Christian Democratic Party.

I would say we were very open in that respect. We were in no way hostile to the SPD, as later we certainly were in Chile. The Socialists in Chile, of course, were much more doctrinaire Marxists.

Q: SPD being the Socialist Party.

STEVENSON: Yes, of Willy Brandt in Germany and of Allende in Chile. We certainly were not friendly in Chile and made no bones about it. But in Germany at that time, we had very open contacts with the SPD. The Communist Party was declared illegal while I was in Dusseldorf. Well, not illegal, but they were non-registered because they didn't make five percent in one of the elections, as I remember, so they were then barred as a party.

Parker Wyman and I went to their last rally and reunion in Solingen. We got on a train from Dusseldorf one Saturday morning and went over to Solingen. We got right out in the crowd and listened to the communist leaders, Max Reiman and--I've forgotten; there was a younger one, Gup Angenfort, I believe. Everything was going along fine until finally we noticed that one of the speakers was talking about, "Watch out for agents provocateurs in the crowd," and we noticed these women were looking at our shoes. You know, American shoes were a dead giveaway. (Laughter) I got nervous. I said, "Parker, let's get out of here. I'm getting awful nervous."

"Nah, that's all right," he said, "there's a lot of kids here." (There were a lot of children in the crowd). "They're not going to make any trouble." So we stayed until the end. But I was kind of relieved when the rally ended about noon and we went off to get some lunch. Just around the corner were about 500 heavily armed German riot police, just out of sight around the corner. So if anything had happened, I think they would have moved in on it.

Dusseldorf was an interesting experience, a completely different area, but I was glad to get back to Latin America.

DENISE ABBEY
Cultural Programmer, Amerika Haus, USIS
Mannheim (1952-1960)

Denise Abbey was born in Oregon in 1910. She served in Intelligence and PSYOPS in Italy; Radio Austria in Salzburg, Austria; the Vienna Information Center in Austria; the Amerika Haus in Germany; and in Paris, France. This interview was conducted by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1988.

ABBEY: After home leave I was sent to Germany as scheduled, going first to Bonn for a week and then down to Stuttgart for further assignment to one of their sub-posts. In this case it was Mannheim. A very important commercial city less recognized today for its cultural interest than it has been for centuries. Because it was the capital of the Palatinate and as such was a great cultural center from at least the 17th century.

It had been badly destroyed in the war because it was a railroad crossing and, of course, the second port in inland Europe. But it was working hard to restore itself. And it built a wonderful theater and opera house and many other cultural centers. It is only twelve kilometers from Heidelberg and of course has always been in the shadow of Heidelberg as a cultural center. I came there following Naomi Huber. And since we did not overlap I had no real knowledge of her actions in the center. So I am afraid I surprised our people a great deal by some of my attitudes.

But I had a very successful five years there. I got to know many German people. I was as I said quite honestly though very peculiarly the only American in Mannheim by which I meant I was the only American who had regular steady contact with the Germans and to whom the Germans could come on a perfectly equal basis. Because everyone else was military. And either you had to go through channels or it was a conquering Army approach. But I was the American there from the cultural level. And I was always being appealed to or visited or questioned or inquired of all kinds of things about the United States. And that was very interesting. My staff was good and I had many activities there.

We had the lower three floors of a partially damaged hotel in a very good location in the center of Mannheim. We had a fairly large auditorium and were able to show films and could have all kinds of programs. We had an excellent music officer. And so we were able to use the programs that came down to us from the Embassy. There was during those years a very large program in which young Americans had come to Europe either to further their education or to secure professional experience. That group was available. And the State Department through the embassies provided them with opportunities to speak or sing or perform in the different Amerika Hauser. This was a tremendous opportunity for them and gave us advanced quantities of excellent artists. Some of the people who are famous today had a very interesting beginning in their professional careers in the Amerika Hauser of Germany and Austria and other posts of Europe, but especially there in Germany where there were so many Hauser and they could go from one to the other presenting their programs.

We had a large library and we had a children's library at that time. But unfortunately we had to get rid of it when the children's program became lacking in interest at headquarters. So the book

as a rule were given to the schools and were used. I personally found that the teachers were woefully lacking in English language material. And so through friends and the fact that the Army post office provided a very cheap postage cost for packages of books, I was able to secure hundreds and hundreds of copies of the National Geographic and of the Readers Digest. Those two particular magazines I arranged chronologically in groups by the month. A teacher would come in and say, "Could I have something in English?" And I would say, "How many do you want?" They would say, "Well, I have forty in my class." I said, "Help yourself. Forty of that issue." And they would go out simply not believing their luck. They could not buy books in English English or American English, generally speaking, at that time. The National Geographics of course were on the market at home. Because you don't want to throw them out but what do you do with them? In those days it was wonderful to be able to send them to us, and, of course, the schools appreciated them and built up their collections.

I personally spoke a good many times, usually in English but after a while in German. My fluent but ungrammatical German was improved by lessons which I got through the State Department. In the end I was able to speak in German adequately and acceptably at any level. I also traveled around. Because I had many years in Alaska I was constantly in demand for schools and even radio educational programs to speak. I contributed that very gladly. Even went over into France and into Italy to speak at their cultural centers.

The time came when Germany secured its state treaty -- its position as an independent nation because the treaty was signed. But my relationships with people did not change. Of course, it changed officially. But because the America Houses had always been unser (our) Amerika Haus, that is our America Houses, the relationship had always been good and it remained good until the time came when Amerika Haus were let fall by the wayside. Instead they developed German American institutes. Mannheim had the honor of being the first German-American institute and as such was the pattern on which most of those were formed.

When the institutes were established, we gained it because now the Germans ran them. They provided the income for it. Before then they had called it our Amerika Haus so it had never been a foreign thing; they felt it was theirs in that sense. But when they became German American institutes, the Germans were supporting them. And so it was very much theirs and it continued to be and is to this day. There are not as many of them as there were in the beginning. But they still exist and they still carry on a very interesting work. The one in Heidelberg has always been considered highly important because of the university there and all of the educational connections.

In the last year that I was in Germany it was decided that in phasing out we would have to let go of the German American institute, still called Amerika Haus, in Mannheim and keep the one in Heidelberg. I was transferred to Heidelberg as the director there. And for the last year I would hop back and forth between the two places because we still had an installation in Mannheim until it was phased out, and I had to supervise both of them.

Finally in 1960, in January of 1960, I was returned to the States. And there I was to have an assignment in Washington.

I am not in the position to discuss the French cultural centers very much. I know they had them. I know they were very active. But it is always very difficult to achieve a personal association with a French institution or a French group. We can remain on a cultural basis. But I don't think they ever would have called them our French houses. It would be the French house.

But the British they had always. For many years they had the British council. And that was what had most of the information center work. And the British always had a very friendly contact. There was a great deal of coming and going. To this day most cities in Germany have an English sister city and they exchange visits annually going back and forth. So there always is a very personal connection. America is much further away.

And so I have always felt that because they called them our America Houses that the Germans felt that they belonged there, that they had a part and that they were entitled to come there. And we always tried to make it so that they were welcome there. Then later when they had their state treaty and they had their independence and then they became German American institutes, it was even more theirs because they contributed so much to the support. I think that always the American approach has been more open, friendly -- well, I will just say more open and easier. The British reserve does not mean that they are not friendly. But it is simpler and easier to walk into an America House perhaps than into a British place. I may be wrong. That is my answer.

The exchange program would effect far fewer people directly though it would effect many and they came back and spread their information. I happened to work in the exchange in France. And I know that had a tremendous effect on any person who went to America because he was totally shattered by the spirit and came back with a completely different frame of mind which was very rapidly overcome by the absolute lack of understanding of the French and how he could behave that way. And so he would calm down and lose that feeling unless and until an American who had helped him came over. At which point all of that would go up again. And there would be nothing he could do to make some recompense for all that he had received in the U.S.A.

Now, in Germany the exchange program I observed much less directly. I did see some of it and I knew something more about the teachers and like that. But that I don't think was, to my knowledge, as an individual.

Now, probably the library program reached the most. Because we had book mobiles in Germany and they reached out way out into the country. And they went back and forth and we tried to keep the widest selection possible on the shelves. And everybody borrowed books.

Our work with the schools was more limited. But by reaching the teachers, as I said, by my magazine collections, by providing films for them, providing showings for them if they came in, and loaning the films, because all of the German schools had film equipment by that time. German schools are very full of equipment.

The lectures were very important. But they would be more specific. If it was a lecture on science, you reached that group. If it was musical it covered more of a general group. It is very hard to say. I think they were cultural centers and as such they were very important in that. And insofar as they operate today they are still very important. I think that the use of the program, and by that

I mean that it was a new program with a war that had never happened before And with the youth of so many of the young Americans who took part in it that that contributed to some of the abundance and the understanding. The Germans liked the young people. They liked them. They liked what they did.

A city near Stuttgart had been badly damaged and had no concert hall. So they managed to build a concert hall. And then they collected a great deal of money and bought a very fine piano. For the opening of that hall and the first use of that piano they asked the Embassy for an outstanding pianist. The Embassy sent down to them a young Negro artist. And the city, of course, in Germany the color line was simply not noticed. He came down. Due to some error of his arriving, he had no chance to try the piano before he went out onto the stage. He was impeccable in tails, just perfect. Because it was for him a great opportunity. They had told him up at the Embassy what the city was trying to do. And he came out and sat down at the piano. They had not unscrewed the pedals. Well, you can imagine the horror on the part of the Germans and the position of the young American. He sat there for a minute. Then he got up and bowed very solemnly and departed from the stage. Now what's going to happen? Now what's going to happen?

He returned with a screwdriver. He removed his coat, laid it over the piano stool, got down on his knees and unscrewed all of the pedals. And he got up, laid down the tool, put on his coat, bowed to them and sat down and played the concert. The city was his. I don't think anything in Germany ever effected a single group as much as that young man's acceptance and behavior that night. What else he could have done I don't know. He might have walked off and said what do I do? But he didn't. He answered it. He certainly had a tremendous effect. It was a wonderful occasion. I have always loved the story. I wish I knew who the young man was. And if he has gone on to the success he earned.

So the cultural programs of all those things, as I say, they were young Americans and they became important. They got their background. They came back. And they had good European critiques of all that. So it was very important all around. And I think the Germans appreciated.

One of the greatest benefits or one of the greatest accomplishments of the Amerika Haus was the fact that the Germans could come in and speak to the Americans on an equal basis and did not feel that they were overwhelmed by an occupying authority. I think that you couldn't help but have such a thing be important to a people who had been a master race if you wish, who had been brought up in that and then so completely done away with. To have some place where there was no differentiation, where they simply were received as themselves.

ROBERT M. BEAUDRY
Military Security Board
Koblenz (1953-1955)

Robert M. Beaudry was born in 1923 in Lewiston, Maine and raised in Auburn, Maine. He graduated from Catholic University and served in the U.S. Army. Mr.

Beaudry entered Foreign Service in June of 1946. His career included positions in Ireland, Morocco, Germany, Switzerland, Suriname, Belgium, and Italy. Mr. Beaudry was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on October 5, 1992.

Q: Yes, the Korean War started in June, 1950 and it changed everything.

BEAUDRY: Yes, that's right. You see it made them speed up. It made them do a lot of easy stuff, where if they had had time, I think, to lay real deep ground work and move more slowly, they would have had better results.

But, anyway, it was an interesting period. And they asked me if I wanted to stay, to go overseas. My reaction to that was, "If you want to be overseas, let's go first class," so I said, "Thank you, no."

I went back to the Department in early 1953 and was sent to Germany. As your readers will know, Germany was so big, that it had its own personnel section. You were assigned to Germany and they parceled you out.

Q: We still had posts all over the place.

BEAUDRY: Right. I ended up in Koblenz in a thing called the Military Security Board and was the Secretary of the US Element. It was one of those Tripartite boards that rotated...the Secretary of the Element in the chair for that month signed all the documents and administered all the papers that went to the Board for consideration. It was the early days of international multilateral diplomacy, if you will.

Q: You were in Koblenz?

BEAUDRY: Yes, I was in Koblenz. I did that from June or July of 1953 until January, 1955. What they did, as Germany was becoming independent, they stopped these High Commission laws that we were administering. We administered all the laws that forbade the Germans to own, possess or operate aircraft, munitions factories, and all of that kind of thing. In fact I ended up signing the first pilot licenses for Lufthansa, because there was no German authority to authorize the use of aircraft. We did that and then somebody said that they would need somebody to issue pilot licenses. So we called around to find out what was in a pilot's license. We made it up.

But it was all coming to an end, so the Department or the powers that were, made a decision...do we take the old timers and fling them out and reshuffle or do we just send people out as their function is abolished? They opted for the latter. So with only a year and a half I came up for transfer. I was transferred first on paper to Bordeaux and something happened and that was canceled. Then I was sent as principal officer to Paramaribo, Suriname, which turned out to really be a pretty good deal after I got over the shock of trying to find out where it was.

ARCHER K. BLOOD

Chief of Official Reception Bonn (1953-1955)

Archer K. Blood was born in Illinois in 1923. He attended law school at the University of Virginia and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. His Foreign Service career included positions in Thessaloniki, Munich, Bonn, Athens, Algiers, Washington, DC, Dacca, Kabul, and New Delhi. Mr. Blood was interviewed by Henry Precht in 1989.

BLOOD: I went to Bonn as chief of official reception; that was my title. I replaced an officer who was a staff officer who had been hired in Germany. He had been there at the end of the war and kept on. In fact, most of staff then were people who were not Foreign Service officers, and they rather resented those of us who were coming into Germany because we were displacing these people. I quickly found out that that job which had been billed to me as a tremendously important job was a job that took maybe one-fourth of my time. I asked for other work, and they made me briefing officer. I briefed groups that really weren't important enough for more senior officers to brief. And then I also took over the consular section in addition.

But it was a strange post at that time because it was so large, and the FSOs were, at least initially when I got there, a minority. I was the only FSO in the administrative section at the time. Most of the others were in the political or economic section. But this changed over the period I was there.

After a stint in consular work, I went to the political section. Herbie LaRue, who was the Executive Director, promised me that if I took over the consular section that he would see that I got a good job. And he lived up to that. I became the civil military officer working in the political section but primarily responsible for liaison with the U.S. Army headquarters in Heidelberg.

Part of the job then was to work with the Germans and our Army in turning over U.S. Army facilities to the Germans who were then building up their own defense forces. We were turning over barracks, training grounds, all sorts of facilities that used to belong to the German Army and which had been taken over by the U.S. Army. The Germans at that time did not yet have a defense ministry. Those I worked with were very, very able, and it was interesting working with the army. Most of it was done by telephone. My contacts were with German civilians who were running this office called *Dienststelle Blanc*, named after a gentleman named Blanc. It was essentially a logistics -- it was sort of the G-4 of the incipient German armed forces. Well, I think a lot of them had been in the military. Of course, most Germans had been in the military. But at the time, the leaders that I dealt with were actually civilians, German civilians.

When I left, the Army set up a liaison section in Bonn composed of several colonels and lieutenant colonels who handled that function. But when I did it, I did it by myself and was doing it as an FSO.

I was in Bonn when Wristonization occurred. At first, I was very disillusioned, disappointed, when I saw people running the motor pool and others coming in at grades senior to mine. But

then over the years as I reflected on it, I realized that this actually turned out to be an advantage to younger Foreign Service officers like myself because the number of jobs in the Foreign Service increased, and we were -- it sounds immodest, but it was certainly true -- the FSOs were many notches ahead in ability of most of these people who were brought in. In the competition, we could easily out-distance them; so it did create more promotional opportunities for us in the long run. But in the short run, it seemed like a very rough blow.

This was also the period for witch-hunting. Cohn and Schine, McCarthy's hatchet men, had visited Bonn just before I got there, and the post was still reverberating from that. I remember the questions that the security people would ask. For instance, anybody who had served in China was automatically suspect and a target of investigation. There was a young officer there who was actually the High Commissioner's special assistant. Very able fellow who had served in China as his first post. And I remember being queried by security about him. Questions such as, "Does he read the New York Times?" The New York Times was considered by the security people as a leftist newspaper. And I was young enough to say, "Yes, I hope to hell he does."

It was fearsome because also there were many allegations of homosexuality. A good friend of mine who I am sure was completely innocent of the account was accused by some clerk in the Embassy. The security approach to this -- the SY approach to this -- was just so obnoxious. Everybody was assumed guilty until proven innocent that he resigned from the Foreign Service.

But a lot of people who were sensitive were, I think, so taken aback by the techniques employed then that, even though innocent, they left the Service. The young aid to the ambassador unfortunately died of a disease within a couple of years. But his promotions I believe were held up, and his career was adversely affected solely because he had been in China.

The senior officers in the embassy did not attempt to control the witch hunt. That was the tragic part. They were afraid. That was an eye-opener to many of us to see that people would not stand up. There were a couple of exceptions, but in most cases, people did not stand up very vigorously for personnel who were under accusation even though they knew full well that the accusations were false. Yet, people were reluctant to risk their own careers because if they stood up, they were likely to become targets of an investigation.

I remember, too, we had -- again, Herbie LaRue, the Exec Director -- had decided to form an American Legion post there. Many people were put under very great pressure, including myself, to join which I refused to do even though he held up my efficiency report for a good while and kept saying, "Well, you know, have you thought about joining the American Legion?"

I said, "No. I thought about it, but I refuse to do it." I said, "It is just too big a club. I don't like most of the positions they take, and I am not going to join."

He didn't actually punish me in the efficiency report, but he made me sweat.

Actually back in Munich I got my first promotion. That was early. Then it slowed up. And it wasn't until many years later in the State Department when I had a chance to review my file that I found that in Bonn I had been given a overall rating of two minus by an inspection team. Two

minus being the lowest I've ever heard of. Six would have been about the top, but two minus was extremely low. They had asked me questions that said, "Don't you think that this would be a good way of doing this?"

And I said, "No, I didn't think it was." The only reason that I could think of was I thought they were putting forth silly ideas to see if I would just agree with them. Instead, I decided -- perhaps in retrospect maybe they thought they were good ideas -- that they weren't, and I disagreed with them. But I think that rating probably held me back for a little while. The regular ratings were okay.

In those days, the inspectors did ratings on everybody, and those ratings were usually lower than the regular ratings.

Later on, inspectors didn't rate everybody - only those who were on probationary status or up for tenure or in certain categories. But normally they didn't rate everybody. And usually what they did, they were sort of bland and favorable. But in the old days, the inspectors' ratings could be quite rough.

DOROTHY A EARDLEY
Clerk-Stenographer
West Berlin (1953-1955)

Mrs. Eardley was born in Wisconsin and raised in Wisconsin and Illinois. She attended Rubican Business School before entering the State Department, where in 1951 she was assigned as Clerk-Stenographer at Djakarta, Indonesia. She subsequently was posted to Berlin, Chengmai, Paris, Libreville, Colombo, Ankara, Ottawa, Jeddah and Kigali. She also had temporary duty assignments in Djibouti, Reunion, and Johannesburg. She retired in 1980. Mrs. Eardley was interviewed by T. Frank Crigler in 2008.

Q: Let's move on to Berlin. After your tour in Djakarta, how did you happen to be selected to go to Berlin?

EARDLEY: You tell me! I haven't the foggiest notion. Well, in Berlin, I worked only on Soviet affairs. It was called the Eastern Affairs Division, headed by Nathan Barnes, a very nice guy. And some of the people you might have known. James Ruchti. He had, I think, three children and a wife at the post.

Q: What was his job?

EARDLEY: He was in the Eastern Affairs Division (EAD). There was also someone whose name begins with an M. McElhiney.

Q: So this section was basically looking over into the Soviet part of Germany.

EARDLEY: And the Soviet curtain hadn't been built yet. We were encouraged to go over and prove that it was open. So I went to the opera all the time in East Berlin. I enjoyed Berlin. I even played the organ at the McNair barracks for their Sunday night service. I had taken my first piano lesson in Indonesia. I was age 30. That's all I'd had. When I got to Berlin, I had a very good piano teacher. She was excellent. She thought I had possibilities. When I first lived there, I lived in a conscripted house with two other women.

Q: What do you mean "conscripted"?

EARDLEY: It means the Army took over the German houses. We lived in them. They were all furnished. Mine had a grand piano in it. So, I was taking piano lessons. But my work was so heavy there. Long hours. I didn't have time to practice, and I didn't think it was fair to the teacher. But she said, "Oh, no, you keep on! You've got talent." I just felt I couldn't do it; I couldn't use the teacher like that. I should have stayed with her, because in the two years I lived there I'd have been playing like a professional. It was a shame I didn't stay with it.

Q: Why was the workload so heavy? What kind of work was it?

EARDLEY: It was dictation, to me. We also had an economic section in the EAD, which was across the hall from us. I was in the political end of it. There was a lot going on at that time.

Q: I don't think I asked you who your boss was.

EARDLEY: Nathan Barnes, B-A-R-N-E-S. And Tom McElhiney. He was the number two, and then Ruchti was number three on the political side. And then across the hall in the economic side was Al Stoffel. Let me think of those other names now. I think one was named Crosby; can't remember the first name. That's all I can remember. Anyway, Eleanor Lansing Dulles, was the sister of the two Dulles, Alan and John Foster Dulles. She was their sister, but she went by Eleanor Lansing Dulles. She was a Soviet economic expert. She came over there a number of times. I was always assigned to her. She would dictate.

Q: So she wasn't actually posted there?

EARDLEY: No, she would come to visit. And she'd go over into the Soviet sector. But she would have a three-martini lunch and then come back. She sat in Tom McElhiney's chair. She would sit with her back to me, her feet upon the window ledge, and dictate 250 words a minute, non-stop. She was good!

Q: So were you.

EARDLEY: I know I was. I think I could have topped the world's record if I had known there was such a thing, because in 1957 I learned that the world's record was held by a man who took 296 words a minute, with one error, and I took 315 words a minute. I could have topped his record!

Q: Now, was she reporting to the State Department?

EARDLEY: No, she was reporting to whoever or whatever she represented in Washington. There again, I don't know who that economic boss was in Washington but it was not the State Department.

Q: Was the final product sent by cable or by pouch?

EARDLEY: I don't remember. I imagine by pouch, because I would type up this stuff and give it to her and she handled it from then on. She was quite a woman. Not very attractive, but she knew her business.

Q: Was she there secretly? I mean, was it general knowledge that she was there?

EARDLEY: Oh, sure! Except for the Soviets. I think she also used to visit the Soviet Union, Russia, but I guess it wasn't very easy at that time. So, she had the Soviet Union right there, as part of the quadripartite city.

Q: Any further ideas or recollections about Berlin that we ought not to overlook? What these people were doing there sounds fascinating.

EARDLEY: That was before Bonn became the capital. I thought it was a fascinating assignment.

Well, finishing up Berlin. Thomas Dodd, who was then Senator Dodd, worked on the Nuremberg trials which were held shortly after World War II. And one of the criminals was sentenced to jail in Spandau Prison in Berlin, the only inhabitant of Spandau, all those years. He came back in about 1954, I would guess. He wanted to see how this was working out, and then he dictated to me. Whiz-bang dictator, 250 words a minute non-stop. I could understand everything he was saying except the last remark. It had to do with Hitler. Something blah-blah-blah. But he said, "If blah-blah-blah" (if I could remember this) "he must have had it with worms." Now whatever that means, I should have remembered it, but I don't.

Q: This was something that referred to Hitler?

EARDLEY: Well, no. Thomas Dodd was quoting something that Hitler had done or had said but, if so, he must have had it with worms.

Q: Strange.

EARDLEY: I'd love to know that was.

Q: Generally, he was reporting about what he found at Spandau. Do you remember who the prisoner was?

EARDLEY: I don't.

Q: Do you remember anything he said about the situation he found when he went back?

EARDLEY: No. He was just interested in seeing how that prisoner was making out. You know, like people check up on what they cause to happen. That's all. And that's the end of Berlin. There were other things in Berlin, but I can't remember them now. It was not my favorite post because as we got moved out of conscripted housing, we were moved into former barracks, and on the way to my office I walked past the PX (Post Exchange), the grocery store, all that military stuff. I did not like this crossing, all these military things, because I was in Foreign Service.

There was one interesting thing there. It happened on Easter Sunday. The colonel, head of the Soviet slice of Berlin's son, 15 or 16 year old son, had defected to the American side.

Q: His son!

EARDLEY: Well, the military does everything wrong. Do you know what they did? Took him to the PX and fed him all that crap, then took him to the movies, showed him American films. It was the wrong thing to do!

Q: Did he turn around and go back?

EARDLEY: No, but they forced him back. We returned him on Easter Sunday and I had to be there, because I worked on nothing but Soviet affairs.

Q: How did they force him back?

EARDLEY: His father, who was the colonel, probably threatened him with life, that's my guess. I don't know. But anyway we were returning him then, on Easter, so I had to skip church. Church was in the afternoon anyway. This was Easter morning.

Q: What year would that have been? Fifty -five?

EARDLEY: Fifty-three, fifty-four, or fifty-five. I can't remember. I left in November of 1955, so it could have been any time around there. Well, we handed him over. He didn't look too happy. That's the end of that story.

Q: Never heard from him again?

EARDLEY: No.

MILTON LEAVITT
Information Officer, USIS
Munich (1953-1955)

Milton Leavitt was born in 1919 and raised in Massachusetts. He joined the U.S.

Air Force in 1940, where he was stationed in the Philippines. After leaving the Air Force, he received a bachelor's degree from Clark University and a master's degree in communications from Boston University. He served in Legaspi, Philippines; Bombay, India; Bogota, Colombia; Bangkok, Thailand; and Munich, Germany. This interview was conducted by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1989.

LEAVITT: Then in late 1953, I was transferred back to Washington prior to my assignment to Munich, Germany. In Munich I was assigned to the America House. Thinking back on the two years in Munich, my PAO was Lowell Lucas and, later, Roger Ross. There are really no highlights that were worth going over at the time except to say that we had a very large and extensive program in the America House. The America House, incidentally, was a huge physical establishment. The library was where the Munich Pact was signed. There was a little place in the corner where we had a posted sign noting this fact and designating its location in the library. We had quite a few speakers come through. We had a large auditorium and large stage. It was a huge establishment physically. But I have to admit it wasn't as exciting as the Philippine experience had been.

The America House was very heavily used by the Germans, both for research, and, because at the time the university was just rebuilding, it was one of the few libraries open in the city. In most libraries in the area at the time, the German libraries, you didn't have free access to the books on the shelves. But we did, and, consequently, we had a heavy clientele.

We had some difficulties with German librarians because of our "open shelf" policy, but, of course, actually we didn't have much choice in the matter. This was the system we had used in the United States, and this was the system we were going to use in Germany, and we did. We always figured that if any book was stolen (a few were stolen), at least they were being read. So it didn't bother us too much that one or two or maybe a few more were pilfered from the shelves of the library. But it was a very, very well-used establishment.

In the beginning most of the books were in English. There was no problem. I mean, most of the Germans that used the library spoke English. And I found most of the Germans, at least all on our staff and those with whom I came in contact with were English speaking. English was the second language at the time. This was in the middle 1950's. A few lecturers would speak in German. Those who were German spoke in German and had large audiences, and those who spoke in English also drew quite large audiences.

Ours was a generalized program which tried to get the information over to the German population. There wasn't anything specific that we went after except to help get the Germans acquainted with Americana. I did mention that there wasn't really any highlight to my tour there except one, and that was the Edward Steichen photo exhibit that came through that was put up.

The "Family of Man" exhibit. After Berlin, it came down to Munich and Steichen accompanied the show. He was well-liked and popular in Munich. We also had one of the first Atoms for Peace exhibit in Munich, which was put up at one of the museums there. This was with the mechanical hands and all. It was quite popular. I remember these two highlights of my time spent in Munich.

JOHN A. McKESSON, III
Political Officer
Bonn (1953-1955)

Ambassador John A. McKesson, III was born in 1922. He was educated in France and received a bachelor's and a master's degree from Columbia University. He entered the U.S. Navy in 1942 and served four years. Ambassador McKesson's Foreign Service career included positions in Reykjavik, Iceland; Berlin and Bonn, Germany; Saigon, Vietnam; Paris, France; Dakar, Senegal; Washington, DC; and an ambassadorship to Gabon. This interview was conducted by Arthur Day on May 7, 1990.

MCKESSION: I went on to Bonn in 1953. I was transferred to the political section where I did the work again mostly on German activities in Europe, with the British and French. That was one of my few regrets in my many years in Germany -- that I never really got to work with Germans; I was mainly working with my British and French colleagues. My wife and I tried to complement that by going to the theater a lot and meeting Germans outside.

This period when there was a transition from occupation to independence. Just at that point the High Commission became the Embassy and things turned gradually back to normal relations. Germany was picking up very fast thanks to all the U. S. help and assistance. But my work at all was not effected very much by the change. I dealt some with German officials, but at a quite low level at that point.

Ambassador Conant was our Ambassador and then I believe we had Bruce. I had very little contact with the Ambassador. Dowling was our Deputy Chief of Mission at the time and Lloyd Steer was my immediate boss as head of the Political Section.

It was always hard to judge any changes in the Germans after the end of the occupation. Nobody admitted to having been a Nazi; after it was all over, everybody was always a democrat. To the extent you can, of course, sense peoples' feelings by getting to know them, having them to your homes and so forth I certainly felt very definitely, as far as Berlin was concerned, that there was a great feeling of comraderie between the West Berliners and the Allies. I had excellent contacts and I don't think I have served in any post, including Western European ones, where the people were more friendly.

MICHAEL H. NEWLIN
Rotation Officer
Frankfurt (1953-1955)

Ambassador Newlin was born in North Carolina and was raised there and in the

Panama Canal Zone. After graduating from Harvard he joined the Foreign Service in 1952 and was posted to Frankfurt, Oslo, Paris, Kinshasa and Jerusalem, where served as Consul General. During his distinguished career, Ambassador Newlin served in several high level positions dealing with the United Nations and its agencies and NATO. He served as Ambassador to Algeria from 1981 to 1985 and as US representative to the United Nations Agencies in Vienna., 1988-1991. Ambassador Newlin was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2006.

Q: You were in Frankfurt from when to when?

NEWLIN: I was there for two years. I guess it was '53 to '55. I was a rotation officer so I rotated through various things. I did economic work for awhile. I did administrative work. Then I did non immigrant visas and Immigrant visas. While I was there I met my future wife. So that turned out to be a very fortuitous assignment.

Q: How did you find work in Frankfurt? By the way were you in the new building?

NEWLIN: Oh no, we were in Bockenheimer Anlage. It was an old high rise apartment building that had been reconstructed. We looked out on the old city walls. I would go out at lunch time and walk around. The entire center of Frankfurt you could just see for blocks and blocks, all the way down to the cathedral. Just about everything had been completely bombed. The Germans had cleaned the stones and stacked them up neatly where the former buildings were. The old medieval center where Goethe's house used to be was completely destroyed.

Q: They did a very good job of rebuilding that. I got there, I was in the Air Force at Darmstadt about the time you were there. I took the foreign service exam. Ended up at ICOG at EG Farben.

NEWLIN: E.K. Hochhaus (skyscraper).

Q: I remember the man who monitored the 3 ½ days was Kennedy Schmertz. Was he, I think he was there while you were there. What sort of visas, who were the people, these were non immigrant visas.

NEWLIN: I remember one applicant from the Rhineland. He looked somewhat like you. He had more of a white beard. Looked a little bit like Santa Claus, and he had filled out all the forms and sworn to their truth. We had access fortunately to something called the Berlin document center which contained the names of Nazi members. Not only his name came up but they had a picture of him. There he was in uniform of the Waffen SS with the scull and cross bones cap. He turned out to be the leader of a band. Even the Waffen SS had bands. I said, "You were never a Nazi." "Nein." "You had nothing to do with the military." "Nein." I said, "Well how do you explain this?" handing him the picture. He said, "Where on earth did you get that?"

Then one day there was a great commotion. Each applicant had to wait their turn in the outer office. Then one day the receptionist who was a young and very efficient German came in and said, "Baroness Von Bothmer is outside and waiting to talk to you." I said, "Well tell her to wait

her turn. I will see her.” He said, “Okay.” Then this lady came in dressed in a sable coat, and she had as much jewelry as I have ever seen on anyone. She had been born in Ozark, Arkansas in the 30’s, and had gone to New York and gotten a job as a secretary in the German consulate general in New York where she met Baron Von Bothmer. He proposed to her, and they got married. So in those days if an American woman married a foreigner, she lost her American citizenship and took her husband’s. In the late 1930’s he was called back to Berlin, and they took the Trans Siberian Railroad. They were both horrified at communism and what they saw in Russia. During WWII, she made some broadcasts in English telling about the horrors of communism. So when she applied earlier for a visa to go back to the States to visit her relatives, her wartime broadcasts came up. The Department’s guidance was sought. So I got her file and it said that the Department determined that she had been a foreign national doing this, and therefore there was no reason to deny her a visa. She said, “Oh you must come down to the Bodensee.” I never went.

Q: Did you get any feel for this while you were in Germany about the Germans and the attitudes of the Germans at that point?

NEWLIN: I did not except once when I was having to have my car repaired. The owner of the shop when I went to pick the car up, lectured me on how he wished that the United States was dropping the atomic bomb on Russia.

Q: Well of course, you probably ran across the phenomenon that not a single German you met ever fought on the west front. They all fought on the eastern front.

NEWLIN: That’s right. Nobody ever would admit shooting at or killing an American.

Q: Did you ever get up to Berlin?

NEWLIN: Yes, I got up to Berlin a couple of times. You had to get special permission from HICOG. When you got to the Russian checkpoint when you were driving the documents were stamped by the Russians. I did get to Berlin a couple of times. In spite of everything it certainly had the feel of a big capital even in its truncated form.

Q: Was there the feeling at the time that the war could start at any moment?

NEWLIN: Yes, there was a fear of that. U.S. forces held well publicized maneuvers. There were tensions all the time. You just never knew what kind of a crisis would come up. In the Eisenhower administration we had several trips to the brink.

Q: When did you get there to Germany?

NEWLIN: I got there in ’53 I think it was. The end of ’52.

Q: Because I was wondering were you there when there were riots in East Berlin? This was quite a serious...

NEWLIN: That was I think later.

Q: Well let's see, it was before, it was in '53 or '54. I remember because I was at Darmstadt, and all of a sudden we were confined to barracks. I was in the Air Force at the time as an enlisted man. It looked quite serious....

Q: While you were in Frankfurt did you get any emanations from the McCarthy period.

NEWLIN: Of course, Cohn and Schine.

Q: Cohn and Schine, could you talk about who they were and whatever else you can.

NEWLIN: Of course Roy Cohn, I guess had worked with, didn't he also work with...

Q: Robert Kennedy also worked on the McCarthy staff.

NEWLIN: Bobby Kennedy, that's right. He worked there.

Q: They were two nasty characters.

NEWLIN: Cohn apparently brilliant but as nasty as they come. Then he hooked up with Schine whose father owned a hotel chain. They came to Bonn and they were trying to root out alleged communists in the foreign service posts. One of the people I think it was at the embassy in Bonn called them junketeering gumshoes. A nasty bunch indeed.

It was just the most terrible time in our modern history. It was a shame that Eisenhower and Dulles and Senator Taft too tolerated McCarthy and his staff. Somebody said to Taft, "Well this is just ruining our reputation abroad. You shouldn't allow this." He said, "Well, they are hurting the Democrats."

Q: They were running through the USIA (United States Information Agency) libraries abroad taking out books. I don't think these two knew what they were doing. They looked at the titles. But I mean they were sort of saying USIA was passing out communist propaganda. You shouldn't have this book. Of course in a place like Germany where books had been burned. These were two American Jews who were out censoring.

NEWLIN: Unbelievable, disgraceful.

Q: It didn't sit well. Did you pick up anything else. I am just trying to get some of the atmospherics, both when you were earlier in Washington taking the course, and while you were in Frankfurt about the McCarthy period and you know, sort of the feeling of a purge that was going on, or were you too low down. Did you run across anybody?

NEWLIN: No. We heard about the people who were fired or forced to resign. It made you feel that the State Department and the foreign service particularly were going through a very difficult time. Then there was the whole thing about who lost China. And the old China hands being fired. But at that time we were all just so new and everything.

Q: I recall I was in Frankfurt, duty officer sitting in the front lobby of the new consulate on a Saturday. McCarthy had just died. An American Army officer came in and said, "Why isn't your flag at half mast?" I looked at him and said, "We hadn't been ordered," and muttered under my breath, "If we had another ten feet more I would hoist it higher." This is by the time of course he had been thoroughly discredited. But it was a very difficult time that I think for many people today is just ancient history.

NEWLIN: Ancient history. They don't talk about the McCarthy period.

WILLIAM E. SCHAUFEELE, JR.
Visa/Economic Officer
Munich (1953-1955)

William E. Schaufele, Jr. was born in Ohio in 1923. He received a bachelor's degree from Yale University in 1948 and a master's degree from Columbia University in 1950. He served overseas in the U.S. army from 1942 until 1946. Mr. Schaufele held positions in Germany, Morocco, Zaire, Burkina Faso, and Poland. He was interviewed by Lillian Mullin on November 19, 1994.

Q: When you came to the conclusion of your Dusseldorf assignment, where did you go next?

SCHAUFEELE: We went on home leave. Normally, in the Foreign Service it's supposed to be worked out that, when you leave a post, you know where your next assignment is. We didn't have a "next assignment." That concerned me a little bit because I was afraid that I would come back to Germany as a Visa Officer. I didn't mind doing visa work, but after having a substantive responsibility I would have preferred to do visa work elsewhere than in Germany.

When we got back to the United States -- this was in 1953, you may recall -- I was asked if I would be willing to go to Korea. This was during the Korean War. I said that I preferred not to go to Korea and be separated from my wife, who was about to have a baby. The personnel people accepted that. It didn't seem to have any ill effect on my career or give me problems with the assignments officer.

So we went out to Bakersfield, CA, where Heather is from. She had a baby boy, born in June, 1953. It was the first time that I had spent any length of time in Bakersfield. We had visited it once before we were married and then after we were married. Although I knew her brothers and her father and mother, obviously, I didn't know many other people in Bakersfield. So I got to know a few of the people in Bakersfield who were important to my wife. Then I got to know a few of her relatives who were farther afield. I got to San Diego, which was the only place at that particular time that I didn't see the sun in California. In retrospect, this is very amusing, considering the "sun-drenched" countries we served in. [Laughter]

Finally, the word came back to me that I was being transferred to the Consulate General in

Munich as a Visa Officer. Just what I didn't want to do. So we went on our way, stopping at my own family home in Lakewood, OH. Then we went on to Dusseldorf, because, without orders transferring us, we hadn't been able to pack up our effects before we left Dusseldorf. We went back there, and Heather started the packing process, while I went to Munich to look for housing.

We knew Munich, because we had lived only 25 miles or so from there when we lived in Pfaffenhofen. Most of the consular and foreign community lived in a kind of suburb of Munich called Harlaching. I was determined that I wasn't going to live up there in that particular place. So I kept looking and finally found a place on the West side of the Isar River, whereas Harlaching is on the East side. The house I found was surrounded by Germans. There were other foreigners in the area, but they weren't cheek by jowl with us. So we rented that house. Heather came down from Dusseldorf with Steven our son, our maid, Maria, and a dog. I had forgotten the dog. We moved into that house, which was quite comfortable and where we stayed during the whole time we were there. It had a fenced-in yard. We had good neighbors who didn't interfere in any way but were forthcoming when we needed them. We were not very far away from Pullach, the headquarters of the Gehlen Organization, which became the German CIA [Central Intelligence Agency]. In fact, there was a fair number of Americans working with the Gehlen Organization, training people and that sort of thing -- and infiltrating them.

So I went off to be a Visa Officer. The Consulate General in Munich was a "visa mill," because it issued visas, not only for the State of Bavaria but immigration visas as well for the State of Baden-Wurttemberg. I think that we had six or eight Visa Officers, but only one non-immigrant Visa Officer, and I was given that job -- maybe because they didn't trust me anywhere else. I did "back up" work on immigrants. I didn't find the job too onerous. There was a fairly young group of officers assigned there. Munich was a big Consulate General. It had a big Visa and Consular Section. "Consular" means dealing with passports and that sort of thing involving services to American citizens. It had a reporting section of five people, including a kind of Soviet expert. The Voice of America had an editorial and transmitting site. There was a big Public Affairs staff with a large USIS Library. There was also, I recall, a person who was in charge of liaison with the American military. So it was a big Consulate General -- bigger than a lot of Embassies.

The Consul General was Allan Lightner, who was a topnotch, substantive officer. He had served in the Soviet Union and in Germany previously, I think. But he wasn't a very good manager. He tended to let things get a little out of hand, which could cause trouble.

For instance, I had a case involving an entertainer in Munich at the time, called Shari Barabash. She was, I guess, of Hungarian extraction. She was on the party circuit, as well as in the entertainment business. She came in to apply for a visa to the United States. She didn't really meet the requirements at that time. In the first place she didn't have a definite engagement in the United States. One of the most important things was an assurance that she would return to Germany after visiting the United States. So I turned her application down. She went up to see the Consul General. He overruled me without talking to me. I didn't mind his overruling me. The fact was that I thought the regulations were too strict, anyway. However, unlike anybody else in the Visa or Consular Section, I went up and complained about Lightner's overruling me. His secretary told me later that he needed that complaint about his decision. He didn't know that we used our discretion down there in the Consular Section. So that's what the problem was.

Consul General Lightner was good on contact work, although he was very soft-spoken. He was not a loudmouth. He hosted good parties. I didn't observe his relations with the leading officials of the city. I presume that they were reasonably good.

Anyway, after a year in the Visa Section I was transferred to the Reports Section and became an Economic and Commercial Officer, which wasn't really my "thing" and still isn't. I'm glad that I had a year's experience doing that, dealing as much as anything of real importance with East-West trade and East-West trade violations. There were several known or strongly suspected illegal East-West traders. I tried to keep track of them, and that sort of thing. The U.S. Government in Germany had such a big staff that they could assign annual, industry reports to the different Consulates, depending on where the industries were centered. The mining report was handled by the Consulate General in Dusseldorf. The metal working report might have been assigned to Dusseldorf, too. On the other hand, the headquarters of the metal workers union was down in Stuttgart. I did the reports on beer and hops, musical instruments, toys, and the electronics industry, because Siemens, the large German electronics firm had moved its headquarters from Berlin to Munich after World War II. They are the biggest electronics manufacturer in Germany. Besides, it turned out that I inherited some close contacts with Siemens which helped me to write the report on the electronics industry. I didn't particularly like writing that particular report, but reports on toys and musical instruments were interesting to me.

So Munich was a useful tour of duty. I did my stint on visas and never had to do them again. I did commercial and economic work. I did a little more of that in Washington, but never again in the field. So, in that sense, I was kind of lucky, I guess. Maybe I should mention that Munich was a more interesting city to live in. Dusseldorf was fine, but Munich had more of what the Germans call "stimmung." It reverberated. Of course, they always had the big beer halls, where, it seemed, thousands of people would sit, raise their steins, and sing. We didn't go to those, or not very often. I think that one of the interesting things that we had been introduced to in Dusseldorf was the "kommödchen ", the political cabaret. We knew that they existed, but we hadn't been in one until we lived in Dusseldorf. It was pretty interesting. So when we got to Munich, we found out that there was one there called "Die Kleine Freiheit." It was similar, except that the humor was much broader and always done in a Bavarian accent. The show changed about once every two months. We'd go when the show changed. That was always worth it, because it also was "political" enough that you would get the last word on the politicians and the political machines. So I didn't have any complaints about the assignment that I didn't want to go to -- no serious complaints, anyway.

After that I was transferred back to the Department. When we got back to Washington, I found out that I was assigned to what was then called the Foreign Reporting Staff. I think that I was assigned there largely because, a couple of years earlier, the Department of State, along with other U. S. Government agencies, developed what they called the "Comprehensive Economic Reporting Program" [CERP], covering the whole world. There was one single program for the whole world, but not every post or Embassy has to do all the things contained in the CERP, because they're not applicable.

Anyway, it was time to update and correct the CERP. So I was thrown in with that staff, partly

because they didn't have any other job for me, and partly because I was the only one on the staff at that time who had actually worked with the CERP in the field. We had about three or four civil servants and three other Foreign Service Officers, as I recall. I didn't bring much expertise to this job, except, if you will, negotiating, because all of the government agencies involved in this program wanted "their" interests taken care of. We could never satisfy all of these interests, and one had to negotiate these various demands. I did a lot of that, because I didn't know anything about economics.

Q: Before you go on with this story, an interesting side of the economic reporting program in Washington, could we go back to Munich once again? I wondered if, in the Consulates at that time, you had any sense of how the German Government was developing or was there not much contact between the Consulates and the Bundestag in Bonn? Or were you concerned about local elections in your consular districts? Was there any interest in that? Were we watching matters like this at the time? How were things going?

SCHAUFELLE: Well, obviously, they were watched very closely. In Bavaria itself there was no big issue. You would see a few officials of the government and of the Christian Social Union [CSU], although after we left, there was a Social Democratic minister from Munich for a couple of years. The Social Democratic Party and the CSU had been in coalition for a time, and he was actually the Minister of the Interior. His name was Wilhelm Högner. He was a very active, pre-war Socialist who had to take refuge in Switzerland during the Nazi period. He has written a book on the subject, which I read with great interest. So that was a very stable, political situation in Bavaria. The problems came up in areas like North Rhine-Westphalia, where the swings between the Socialist and the Christian Democratic parties were constant. To a certain extent, that was also true in Baden-Württemberg. If there is a "liberal" area in southern Germany, it is there.

When I lived in Düsseldorf, North Rhine-Westphalia had a CDU Minister-President who was very "liberal." His name was Karl Arnold. There was a strong, liberal wing in the CDU -- more so than there is today.

The political situation was, I think, fairly stable. The situation changed from time to time, but there wasn't that much "instability" about it. After a national election people would talk about a so-called "grand coalition" involving the Socialists and the Christian Democratic Union. That did happen once, but I think that it only happened once. Chancellor Adenauer stayed in office for many years. Helmut Schmidt (SPD), who became the Prime Minister or Chancellor in 1972, had something to do with Adenauer, who was so much older than Schmidt. Maybe Schmidt hadn't been born when Adenauer first came into politics. [Laughter] Then you had Ludwig Erhard of the CDU, the architect of the "German economic miracle" [Wirtschaftswunder]. Erhard was not a very good Chancellor -- a good Minister of Economic Affairs, but not a very good Chancellor. I didn't have anything to do with Germany after that. I kept up with developments in Germany but not with the personalities.

Q: I think that you mentioned that at one time, when you were in Munich, you knew Charles Thayer, who was previously Consul General in Munich.

SCHAUFLE: Oh, yes. I forgot about him. Charley Thayer was Consul General in Munich before Allan Lightner. As a young officer Charley Thayer wrote "Bears in the Caviar," about the opening of the American Embassy in Moscow in 1933. It was a humorous book, which sold well. He served in Moscow when two of the "greats" in American diplomacy with the Soviet Union were there, at least part of the time -- George Kennan and Charles E. "Chip" Bohlen. Charley Thayer actually married Chip's sister. Charley had also done a lot of work in what you might call Central and Eastern Europe. Charley Thayer was Consul General in Munich, but he also came under fire at home. I can't remember the details. There was a specific question, as I recall, which was asked of him at a "loyalty hearing." I gather that this question so impinged on his sense of privacy that he got up, walked out of the hearing, and resigned from the Foreign Service. But he came back to Munich as a correspondent and enlivened the place a lot. He had a good sense of humor and a lot of experience.

One of my best stories about Charley is when, unbeknownst to each other, we were in Bonn at the same time. We were taking the night train back to Munich. We ran into each other and then ran into Franz-Josef Strauss, who at that time was the federal Minister of Scientific Affairs but was the primary Christian Social Union politician in Bavaria and eventually the Minister-President of Bavaria. Strauss was a man with an enormous appetite -- he weighed about 300 pounds. He was kind of the Helmut Kohl (current German Chancellor) of his time. Charley and I each had a bottle of Scotch. We sat up all night. We finished the Scotch. I don't know where Strauss went, but we got off the train a little shakily. We had certainly learned a lot about the CSU.

Q: Do you remember any of Charley's stories?

SCHAUFLE: No.

Q: While you were in Munich the so-called "Wriston" program was introduced in Washington. I think that had some effect on the Foreign Service at the time and probably still does.

SCHAUFLE: Well, that was a very important development in the history of the Foreign Service. At the time I entered it, the Foreign Service was composed of approximately 1,200 Foreign Service Officers. There were additional Foreign Service Staff and support staff, as they were called -- FSS. There were probably some FSR's, or Foreign Service Reserve, but that category wasn't used much at that time. Back home in the State Department were a lot of civil servants. There was little interchange between the civil servants in the Department and Foreign Service Officers.

I don't know who had the idea first. Secretary of State Dean Acheson may have considered it. Actually, it was Secretary of State John Foster Dulles who implemented it. Anyway, Henry Wriston, who was the President of Brown University, was charged with making a study for the reorganization of the machinery dealing with foreign policy -- really, the State Department. It didn't affect any other agency at that time. Naturally, this always sets off the alarm bells. People get concerned and wonder, "What's this going to mean for me?" But we didn't have a whole lot of information about this study for quite a while. However, pretty soon it became clear that this was going to mean the integration of civil servants into the Foreign Service. If a civil service

person did not agree to join the Foreign Service, he or she would no longer be promoted. So there was a powerful incentive for the integration of civil servants, which would triple the size of the Foreign Service.

I suspect that most Foreign Service Officers felt that they could successfully compete with the civil servants in terms of knowledge or ability, although they may have been wrong. The Foreign Service didn't really know how the State Department worked. Promotion in the Foreign Service was by panels. That is, panels composed of Foreign Service people, with one outsider -- usually a so-called "public" member -- met and reviewed the efficiency records of everybody in a given class. Then they ranked them in numerical order in terms of their relative efficiency. The Department then decided how many people in a given class could be promoted to the next class, in terms of the anticipated budget.

The civil service used the system that if you have a job, and a job two ranks higher becomes open, and you're appointed to it, you get the higher rank that goes with that job. You don't go through a formal promotion process. Promotions were completely tied to the job. That's what the Foreign Service didn't like, primarily, in addition to the idea of anybody at all coming into the Foreign Service. The civil servants very often had been promoted much more rapidly than Foreign Service Officers. They were just promoted from job to job without going through any competition with people in their own rank.

Q: Without having their achievements or performance evaluated.

SCHAUFLE: That's right. It was very cut and dried. Actually, some kind of evaluation went into their records, but it was more of a pro forma matter.

At the same time the Wriston study recommended that the six class Foreign Service Officer system be reorganized into eight classes. This caused some pain. I had just been promoted to FSO-5, the second from the bottom class. In the following year [1956] I went back to FSO-6, because of this eight class system. FSO-4 officers were caught in the middle. The personnel people went over their files. The top of the FSO-4's remained FSO-4's, and the bottom half of the class went back to FSO-5. This involved a hard process of adjustment for everybody, and even for the civil servants. Although they didn't suffer in terms of where they were ranked in the system, a lot of them didn't want to go overseas. And a lot of them had wives who didn't want to go overseas. They were discriminated against by the regular Foreign Service, at least for a while. Some of them either returned to their civil service status or resigned from the Department.

When you look back at it, the integration program worked remarkably well. It just happened once, at least, and then the normal entry into the Foreign Service through the examination system was tripled each year. So with only a few exceptions everyone who came into the Foreign Service after the Wristonization program took effect entered through the examination process. It's always difficult to do things with a sledgehammer, but sometimes that's the only way to get them done. I don't think that the Department was very good at keeping the people informed or communicated very well with the people in the Foreign Service. Whatever the case, that's over. We have taken in some outsiders, but not in any large scale way.

Q: You were just saying that you remembered something about Charles Thayer's resignation from the Foreign Service.

SCHAUFLE: The story went around, and I can't vouch for its veracity, that one of the Congressmen at this hearing said that he had heard that Charley had an illegitimate child. Charley asked where the Congressman got that information. The Congressman refused to reveal the source, if, indeed, he knew it. It's at that point that Charley got up, walked out of the hearing, and resigned.

JOHN C. LEARY
Economic Officer
Dusseldorf (1953-1956)

John Charles Leary was born in Connecticut in 1924. He received a BA in 1947 and an MA in 1959 from Yale University. He served in the U.S. Army overseas as a lieutenant from 1943 to 1945. His postings abroad have included Cherbourg, Dusseldorf, Istanbul, Tokyo, Ottawa, Vienna, Sao Paulo and St. George's. Mr. Leary was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 1998.

Q: Okay. Where did you go after Cherbourg? You were there for two years?

LEARY: We were there for two years. And then we had our home leave and went back to Dusseldorf, Germany. We did fly to Dusseldorf. That was the first time we had flown in one of our transfers.

Q: You'd done a lot of flying when you were a courier. I guess I should back up for just a second. Did you have French when you went to Cherbourg? And what about German for Dusseldorf?

LEARY: No. Well I studied French in Junior High School, but had no language training before going there. I knew a little bit and I was able to read it quite well after some time. I picked it up although I could have benefitted with some formal lessons. In the case of Germany, we had no language training before going to post, but we had a regular language training program in the consulate in Dusseldorf and we were able to have daily language training. We were using the language on a regular basis, so by the time we had completed three years in Dusseldorf we were able to speak the language quite fluently.

Q: What sort of work did you do in Dusseldorf? What kind of post was that at that period?

LEARY: It was a very large post, as all our posts were in Germany at that time. It was the occupation period. By present standards we were over-staffed. I was an economic/commercial officer. We had four American officers in the Economic and Commercial Section. Three or four political officers and a rather large detachment. While I was in Dusseldorf they were in the process of building a consulate general building which was completed while I was there. A rather

large two-story building which was on one of the main streets in Dusseldorf. An impressive building.

Q: Dusseldorf, of course, is not that far from Bonn where the embassy was. I guess it wasn't called an embassy.

LEARY: It was called a High Commission at that time.

Q: Did we have a post also in Cologne?

LEARY: No. We had an information service post there, but not consulate. We were the closest consulate to Bonn.

Q: You say you did Economic Commercial work. Was that largely reporting on economic developments or promoting U.S. exports or a little bit of both?

LEARY: There were two principle facets. One was reporting. Dusseldorf was on the edge of the Ruhr area, sort of the financial capital of the Ruhr, where much of German heavy industry had been located. The consular post had been assigned by the embassy to cover certain industries. We had some of the major ones which were coal and steel and chemicals, so we did a lot of reporting. It was an interesting time because being the occupation period when I arrived, the consular officers had unusual access to top figures in various industries. I recall, as a vice consul going into call on the president of Bayer Lever Kusen, which was in our district talking to him about the situation of the German chemical industry. So we did a lot of reporting of that kind. We also had a number of routine functions of a commercial officer with Customs evaluations, and projects, and things of that sort. We were to a degree promoting American exports, but a lot of our emphasis went the other way. We were trying to help the Europeans, including Germans, with their exports to the U.S. We had a number of programs in that area.

Q: When you say Customs evaluation programs, what does that mean?

LEARY: In some cases U.S. Customs questions the evaluations that are put on products exported to the United States from foreign countries. In order to assess the duties they have to have proper basis for that. If they question the invoice price, they will ask an American official located abroad to do an investigation. There's a certain form for that and questions that have to be asked. In some cases, Customs have their own people abroad that do these things and in other cases they rely on the embassies and consulates to assist them. That involved going out and visiting many German companies and asking questions and asking to see their books and so on. It was quite helpful in terms of our reporting function as well, because it gave us access to lots of people and information in terms of assessing the state of affairs.

Q: This was the period, I believe, when you were serving in Dusseldorf, when the European coal and steel communities were started.

LEARY: Yes, it was being discussed and eventually established.

Q: And did you, as you went around the coal and iron and steel industries, look for views about labor relations?

LEARY: Yes, that was one of the things we reported on.

Q: And did you see much impact on the German industry while you were there or did that come much later?

LEARY: I think that probably came later. What we saw at this time, even though it was only a few years after the War, the German economy was beginning to pick up dramatically, even though it had its ups and downs.

Q: What did you see as the main factors in the period that you were there in the development and expansion of the German industry?

LEARY: Number one was a stable currency. I think it was 1948, after currency reform which got things on the right track. The Germans had always been afraid of inflation and it was based on hyper-inflation, which they had experienced between the wars and so on. But they had a stable currency. They had an industry, which existed before hand, it was being modernized and because much of what had existed previously had been flattened and they had to start from scratch a strong management along with a very hard working labor force, they were able to recover quite quickly.

Q: How important was the defense build-up that was occurring in Western Europe at that time, would you say? Perhaps not so much in Germany, but elsewhere.

LEARY: As I mentioned, during the occupation period we were actually in the British Zone of occupation in Dusseldorf. It's hard for me to judge that. I think the build-up over all was significant, but I think the demonstration of our intentions to maintain the freedom of Western Europe was important as well as the freedom of Berlin, at least the Western Zone of Berlin.

Q: Did you travel to West Berlin?

LEARY: Unfortunately not at that time. I didn't get to Berlin until the 1980s when I had a chance to visit with a group from Portland there.

Q: So your activity in the Federal Republic, in particular West Germany, was pretty much confined to your consular district.

LEARY: Yes. We did travel around to other parts of Germany on leave, for example.

Q: And to what extent were you directly involved with the embassy, or the High Commission initially? The embassy in the Federal Republic was started in 1955?

LEARY: It was '55 when Germany regained its sovereignty and what had been the High Commission became the embassy.

Q: Were you involved with that very much or not particularly, even though you were fairly close to Bonn?

LEARY: We had semi-annual meetings of the economic/commercial officers in Bonn and we had visitors from Bonn for orientations and consultations with us and so on. We had a fairly regular telephone contact with them.

Q: When Germany Federal Republic gained sovereignty and so on, did that make much difference, this must have been your last year, in terms of your work?

LEARY: Very little change. One thing that did change, we had been licensed to drive by the occupation authorities and now Germany was in charge and we all had to get German drivers licenses. I recall a German policeman came around to the consulate general regarding our licenses and said that they were not going to test us but he wanted to give us a little orientation on the German rules of the road and so forth. Then he commented that he had been to the States on one of our exchange programs and was so impressed with the discipline of American drivers that he knew that we would be very good drivers. He said "one thing you have to remember is in America you drive according to the situation you see on the road, but in Germany you drive according to your rights." He said "if you have the right of way and you go, be careful of those people who think they have the right of way," and he handed out our drivers licences. Then we received also our license plates that said "U.S. Mission," which was the term used for the embassy and the various consulates in the post-War period. I had a fellow one day at a gas pump that drove up behind me and saw my license plate and he said, "Sir, what denomination are you with?" He thought I was a missionary.

Q: As you said this was the British occupation zone. To what extent were you involved with the British authorities, the British Army?

LEARY: We were involved administratively with the British. They supplied our housing for example, it was requisitioned housing. Because we were a relatively small American group we had, over the years, acquired some very nice housing which after the occupation ended we had to negotiate the lease. In some cases, the original owners took our property back. They provided such things as a British version of a PX, etcetera, for us. We had a lot of interaction with our counterparts at the British consulate general who were, like ourselves, working for the same things and we exchanged ideas with them.

Q: Where there many other consular establishments?

LEARY: Quite a few. The French and I remember the Brazilians had a consulate there. The Brazilians, Chileans and the Argentineans both had consular representation there. It was a big important commercial and international center.

Q: How about in Cherbourg? Were there others?

LEARY: No. The consul and myself were the only career consular people there. There were a lot

of honorary consulates, mostly people who dealt with shipping and shipping services. We had a Consular Association in Cherbourg whose main activity was a monthly luncheon, which we began at noon and lasted until 3:30 or 4:00 in the afternoon, with multiple courses, a typical French lunch.

Q: Okay. Anything else we should say about Dusseldorf?

LEARY: Two more children were born in Dusseldorf.

Q: With easier births?

LEARY: Easier births. Again there was a private clinic, a quite luxurious one.

JACK A. SULSER
Political Officer
Dusseldorf (1953-1957)

Jack A. Sulser served in the U.S. Army during World War II and was a prisoner of war in Germany. He entered the Foreign Service in 1950 and served assignments in London, Bologna, Dusseldorf, Vienna, Rotterdam and Washington, DC. Mr. Sulser was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1994.

SULSER: When the post closed, I was transferred to Duesseldorf to start what proved to be the major emphasis of my career -- Central Europe. I went to Duesseldorf in October of 1953, spent about six months doing non-immigrant visas, about six months doing passport and citizenship and then became a political officer. I spent three years as the political officer. The consular district consisted of the province of North Rhine Westphalia, which is the largest in population, the most influential politically, the richest province economically and industrially in the Federal Republic. It was a good place to be. It was Adenauer's center; it was the center of the labor wing of the CDU; it was one of the strongholds of the FDP, the Free Democratic Party. It was also a major center of the Social Democratic Party. I had an opportunity to get acquainted with leading politicians of all three of those parties in Germany. People from all three later became very prominent on the national level. Rainer Barzel, who was one of my contacts, later became head of the CDU. Wolfgang Doering was the executive secretary of the FDP; he later became their faction leader in the Bundestag and many others.

The fact that I had been a POW held by Germans never required any adjustment. I never really associated what happened to me in prison camp, the 55 pounds I lost, the couple of hundred people who died, the occasional brutal guard who would come into a barracks and knock the precious cup of soup out of a prisoner's hand, had anything much to do with the Germans I was dealing with, most of whom had been in the German army, navy or air force themselves. A few had been POWs in the United States.

One of the contacts I developed had been in prison camp in Minnesota, and had taken the

opportunity to take correspondence courses from the University of Minnesota and had been there long enough to get a degree! We were not offered any opportunities like that the short time I was a POW, although we had a lecture program, trying to occupy our time. Anybody who had anything they were willing to talk about -- we would post a schedule every day. The most popular lectures were about food. We had a Chinaman who had been a cook in a Chinese restaurant. He educated us on Chinese food. We had a fellow who had worked in the Hershey candy factory, so he told us about how chocolate bars and hand-dipped chocolates were made. Those were popular lectures. Another guy who had raised rabbits commercially for food was very popular. Anyway, no, I never felt that I had any great problem. I met a few Germans who had been in the Nazi Party, or even in the Waffen SS, things of that sort. I was less friendly with them and they were less friendly with me.

The American consular system throughout Germany then was that before you issued anybody a visa, businessmen or anyone else, you had to get clearances from CIC in Stuttgart and from the Berlin Documents Center that had the old Nazi Party records. This often took weeks, sometimes months before you could issue a visa. We rarely got anything from either of those sources that was a problem as far as issuing the visa. I did a study on how many thousands of visas were issued and how few of them were affected by anything we got from the CIC or the Document Center. While we were trying to help the German economy to recover, trying to promote German exports to the United States, to eliminate the dollar gap, we were impeding our own programs by delaying these visas. When we had no reason to believe -- after reviewing the application -- that there would be a problem, we should have been able to issue the visa and not have to wait for the clearances. The Department approved that. That was, I guess, the first initiative I took in the Foreign Service that changed the way things were done. Much to the pleasure of all the other posts in Germany, the Department authorized us to get these clearances on an ex-post-facto basis and if we found something prejudicial in due course we would then revoke the visa, but in the meantime 99.9% of the visas were issued with no difficulty.

The Americans were protected from deportation as long as they were employed abroad by the U.S. government or an American business company, as many were. There would be problems like that in Frankfurt, which was more of an American center in Germany after the war. I was later in Frankfurt and I saw the difference there. There were not so many Americans in Duesseldorf, which was the headquarters of the British occupation zone. We did have some problems of Germans who had had children in the U.S. before returning to Germany. Citizenship laws are a very, very complicated business, and I never really did it long enough to get familiar with all the ins and outs beyond knowing that there were those problems. We, of course, had to refer a lot of cases to the Department for rulings. We had a few American women acquiring German citizenship by marriage, and their use of American passports was restricted. We generally kept their passports in the consulate and we let them use them for purposes of traveling to the States, but if they were going, say, to Dubrovnik with their husband for a holiday, they would go on a German passport.

As I said, three of my four years in Duesseldorf I was the political officer and went to all the annual conventions of those three parties, hung out a lot at the Landtag, the State Legislature. The Minister-President, Karl Arnold, was CDU in a coalition with the FDP, as they were at the national level too. The North Rhine-Westphalia FDP was the strongest in the party at that time,

and although they had no complaint against Arnold, who headed the labor wing of the CDU, they were very unhappy with the way Adenauer was treating them on the national level. They broke the coalition in Duesseldorf in order to warn the CDU nationally and formed a new government with the SPD. I think it was because the Young Turks in the North Rhine Westphalia FDP felt very strongly that the national FDP was tied too firmly to Adenauer's Christian Democrats. He could take them for granted, and therefore paid little attention to their programs or their personalities. He would give them a couple of cabinet positions and then, as far as they were concerned, proceed to ignore them from then on. The North Rhine-Westphalia FDP felt that it was a mistake to be in a position of perpetual junior partner to the CDU, and that they could increase their influence considerably by showing that they were open in both directions, that is, to the SPD as well as the CDU. They couldn't do anything about it in the Bundestag, because the CDU didn't really need them at the national level. But in North Rhine-Westphalia the CDU did need them to have a majority in the Landtag, so they used that power to make a point against the national position of the CDU. Some of the FDP Bundestag deputies, including my old military opponent General Von Manteuffel, just couldn't stomach the thought of a coalition with the Social Democrats, so they resigned from the FDP, formed a new party called the FVP, the Freie Volkspartei, which disappeared in the next election. But the North Rhine-Westphalia FDP did make their point. They got more out of the coalition with the North Rhine-Westphalia SPD than they had from the CDU, and ever since then on a national level too, the FDP has sometimes formed governments with CDU, sometimes with the SPD. As far as they were concerned, they achieved their objective. This was the first time that this new position of being a swing party was manifested in a major province (Land) and it has been a part of German politics ever since. It has happened in other Laender governments in the meantime and on the national level too on occasion.

This was the only time during my years there that Duesseldorf politics got not only national, but international attention. The whole foreign press corps from Bonn came up to Duesseldorf for the critical debates at the Landtag and the final decisions ending that coalition and establishing the new one. Many of the American journalists came to see me as the person who could fill them in on the background: why was the FDP doing this and were these a bunch of neo-Nazis, etc. This was my first exposure to foreign correspondents, and I was disappointed. Of all the American journalists I dealt with in 25 years in Europe, there were very few who seemed to me to be as well informed as the Foreign Service reporting officers.

I never got any guidance from the Embassy one way or the other as to how to view these parties, but it was certainly the view of the American newspapermen who came up to Duesseldorf that this was a very nasty thing the FDP was doing. My friends in the FDP insisted they were not taking the country in any great radical direction, and I couldn't see that they were. The SPD formed the new coalition with North Rhine-Westphalia and was a very moderate party. The FDP people kept me very well informed; not only were they very accessible to me but whenever anything very special was going on they would come to me to make sure that I understood what they were doing. To some extent I guess I was their man in the U.S. government to try and keep the Embassy and Washington informed of at least what they thought they were doing, what their intentions were.

I had good contacts with SPD too -- Fritz Steinhof, who became the Minister-President in this

first-ever coalition of that kind in North Rhine-Westphalia, and many others. All three of the parties would invite me to their meetings and even to their homes, and I became friendly with their families. It was an unusual opportunity for me, because this was really the area of interest that got me in the Foreign Service in the first place. I had a curiosity about Europeans in general and Germans in particular, and here was an opportunity to see what these people were made of, so to speak, who they were, what they were like, and I enjoyed every bit of it.

We had a local assistant in the political section, a man named Egenolf von Bergheim, who had been a captain in the German army. At one stage he had been aide to Hasso Von Manteuffel when Von Manteuffel was the commandant of the armored school. It was Von Manteuffel who commanded the 5th Panzer Army that beat up the division I was in in the Battle of the Bulge. Von Manteuffel was then an FDP Bundestag deputy living in our consular district -- in fact across the river, in Neuss. Our local assistant arranged for Von Manteuffel to come to the Consulate one day to spend the day with me going over very detailed maps of the Bulge area, describing where he was at every moment and where I was at every moment. I never had an opportunity to discuss the Battle with a lower ranking American general, but here I was talking to one of the top German generals because of my Foreign Service position. Of the three armies on the German side in the Battle of the Bulge, his was the most successful, making the deepest penetration to the Meuse River.

As far as attitude of the Embassy, they always seemed very interested in the information I gave them, but guidance, reaction was minimal to nonexistent as to what I should be trying to do or what my attitude should be toward these individuals or parties.

We were keen to have the Germans rearm as part of NATO. In fact, one of our principal objectives in establishing NATO and bringing about the Bonn accords and the end of the occupation was to get the Germans to re-establish an army and put some strength in the NATO side. The other member countries of NATO were not doing as much as we thought was necessary. They thought they were doing as much as they could, since their economies were still recovering from the war. From the beginning the U.S. saw German entrance in NATO and German rearmament as the main source of additional conventional strength to offset the Soviets and other Warsaw Pact countries. Of course, when I went to Duesseldorf in 1953 it was still the occupation and there was no German army. But there was the Buero Blank that had been set up with our blessing, a kind of would-be defense ministry to do some of the initial planning. The Embassy had the principle contact with Theo Blank; he was from the trade union sector of the CDU in Duesseldorf; so we had some contact with him as well and some of the other people in his office, including the former German officers who were setting up the screening criteria for the new Bundeswehr, to replace the Wehrmacht.

The British were not as enthusiastic as the United States was, that was for sure, but they were not nearly as reluctant as the French. The French were also more reluctant in rebuilding German industry. We had the Ruhr Authority in Duesseldorf when I went there in 1953, which was sort of a precursor of the coal and steel community, in which the British and French were represented as well as the U.S. They were not nearly as keen as we were to get the German steel industry revived and end the reparations and the looting of the German factories on behalf of the Soviets and the other East Europeans.

The British army was much less apparent in Duesseldorf than was the American Army in the Frankfurt area. We would go down to Frankfurt for shopping and the PX and hospital and things of that sort. You felt much more like you were surrounded by Americans in Frankfurt than you ever felt in the presence of the British in Duesseldorf. Their numbers were a good deal fewer than the Americans. At my level this was not a problem. The political officer in the British consulate did pretty much what I did. We went to the same parties and political gatherings. The French political officer didn't get around to all those German political affairs nearly as much as the British fellow and I did. The British political officer had been in the area since 1945. He knew his way around much better than I did at first. He was kind of a guide to me.

With 1955 came the end of the occupation and the restoration of a larger share of German sovereignty, although it still had some limitations on it. All the houses that the Duesseldorf Consulate staff lived in had originally been requisitioned by the British military and then made available to us when the Consulate was established there in 1951. There were still many of the original people that opened the post when I went there in 1953, but quite a few had left already by that time. When the occupation ended, the Embassy had to negotiate leases with the German owners of these quarters. We built our own office, because the Consulate was in what had been the residence of the chief justice of the state court. The courtroom and offices were across the street. We put up a building of our own just next door and gave the office back to the court. They cut it in two -- put the chief justice in the back half, overlooking the garden and the front half became offices for his staff. We had our own U.S.-designed building, which we still have, although the Duesseldorf Consulate closed about 25 years later. As I was closing Bologna a year after I left Newcastle, that Consulate was closed. My last overseas post in Rotterdam was closed four years after I left there. The only posts I served in that still exist are London, Vienna, and Frankfurt. (NOTE: Since taping this interview, Duesseldorf has reopened as a limited commercial post and is expected to become a full-fledged Consulate again when the Embassy moves from Bonn to Berlin. The office building has been leased to Mannesman Co. for some years but may be recovered when the lease expires.)

I mentioned the lack of specific guidance about what I, as political officer in Duesseldorf, should be trying to do and what my attitude should be toward the various parties and their leaders. In those days there was still a political officer in each of the consulates, and we had consulates in more cities in Germany than we do today. The Embassy would gather the political officers from the consulates, plus Berlin and what we called "land observers" in the provincial capitals where we had no consulate, for quarterly meetings at the Embassy in Bonn. The Embassy people listened and seemed very appreciative of any information or views that we brought in from the field. I can't say that we were given any guidance as to what our objectives should be and rarely if ever heard anything from Washington. Those Embassy political officers who were particularly concerned with internal German political affairs, Bill Buffum, Jonathan Dean and Hugh Appling, were always very friendly. Appling and Buffum came occasionally to meetings of the provincial political organizations, and we had very good contact with them. But I couldn't call it guidance; they certainly didn't tell me what I should be trying to get the parties there to do, although we all had a good grasp of general U.S. policy toward Germany.

PHILIP H. VALDES
Interviewing Communist Defectors
Frankfurt (1954)

Philip H. Valdes was born in New York in 1921. He received both a bachelor's degree in 1942 and a master's degree in 1947, both from Yale University. He was a 2nd lieutenant overseas in the U.S. Army from 1943- 1946. Mr. Valdes entered the Foreign Service in 1947, serving in Chungking, Seoul, Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, Bangkok, Berlin, and Munich. He was interviewed by William Knight on July 11, 1994.

VALDES: After my first tour in Moscow I was assigned to Frankfurt, interviewing Communist Bloc defectors. I didn't get into that very much because I was in Frankfurt for only seven months. I interviewed four defectors, altogether. This was over the whole period. I would really get to the bottom with them. In one case it was kind of hard going. We were given a whole lot of questions to ask, plus anything else that we could think of. The applicants varied. One of them was very "non-key." He had been in the border guards, which I had always thought of as an elite unit. He had graduated from fourth grade, but it had taken him six years to do it. He flunked first grade and had to repeat it. After talking to him I was convinced that he passed fourth grade the second time around only because his fourth grade teacher couldn't cope with the idea of seeing him a third year. He didn't really understand that the Russian language declines its nouns and adjectives. He got very confused when I declined the word "Moscow," for instance. I said, "In Moscow..." The ending was different than in the phrase, "to Moscow." I had to explain this to him. It was almost sad because he escaped from the border guards only because he hated the Army. He got across the border into Iran, I think.

The groups that ran this reception center in Frankfurt couldn't think of anything to do with him except put him in the U.S. Army, which would have been a real tragedy. He didn't flee one army just to get into another. I think that they finally came up with something else for him. Anyway, he was at one extreme of the clientele.

The other extreme was a fascinating fellow who had been manager of one of the industrial plants in Austria that the Soviets had taken over in what was once their zone of occupation. He was quite interesting. He was quite willing to talk. He probably left because he had an Austrian girlfriend. He liked his Austrian girlfriend better than he liked his wife in Moscow. I am sure that he would do very well in the capitalist world, from the way he talked and the reactions he had to things. He was really quite an interesting person.

Although we spent a lot of time on individual cases, I think cumulatively it was worth while. There was one other fellow interviewing Russians, and then there were two or three interviewing Eastern Europeans. Then they had a lot of repatriated German prisoners of war. That was probably more useful, in that all of them wanted to talk. Actually, most of the Eastern Europeans did, also.

The program lasted at least through the 1950's, because I went up there a few times when I was

in the Embassy in Paris. The reports on the interviews are classified. Most of them, I think, were gone through and portions taken out of them, so that they could be declassified. They took out anything that might hurt the person involved or his relatives in the Soviet Union. I think that these reports were used quite a bit by all kinds of people -- not just by CIA analysts but by universities as well. The reports were declassified and published. I don't think that much of what was taken out of them or withheld really would have made that much difference to the person reading it.

PAUL F. DU VIVIER
Economic Officer
Berlin (1954-1955)

Paul F. Du Vivier was born in New York in 1915. He graduated from Princeton University in 1938 with a degree in history and from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service with a master's degree. In addition to serving in Germany, Mr. Du Vivier served in Newfoundland, France, Ghana, Canada, Sweden, and Scotland. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on February 20, 1990.

Q: Well, then, you were transferred to Berlin was it?

DU VIVIER: I was transferred to Berlin, correct, in August 1954. Jack Tuthill, whom you probably know, had been one of my bosses in Sweden, and he offered me the job by phone from Bonn. He said, "There's also a vacancy in Bonn. Which one would you prefer?" And without hesitation I said, "I'd love Berlin." And he said, "Sorry we won't be working so closely together." But he came to Berlin frequently. He loved it too. And in Berlin I was one of three medium-grade economic officers. One who was in charge of the financial reporting, myself for trade promotion, and Bob Brandin who had the equivalent rank of commercial counselor. I had a staff of two American vice-consuls and twenty-two diligent German clerks. They worked on reporting the evolution of the German economy in detail, manufacturing and textile fashions and motion pictures and so forth. It was a big part of HICOG under the supervision of a brigadier general. We worked in the Nazi Air Force headquarters on Clay Allee. The State Department representative called Henry Parker, seconded by Ridgway Knight who really ran the civilian sections other than Intelligence.

Barely two months after my arrival in Berlin I was sent to Geneva as an alternate delegate to ten committees of the Economic Council of Europe -- part of the UN Headquarters there. It was thrilling. One week I represented the US position on Transport, another on Agriculture, a third on standard road signs or migration of labor, etc. I spoke to the Soviet, British or Czech representatives as equals, through simultaneous interpreters. Cabled instructions from the Department told me what not to say. I felt like Adlai Stevenson and was often photographed.

The Secretary General of the ECE was a taciturn Swede called Gunnar Myrdal. Curious about me he invited me alone at 11:30 PM to his luxurious apartment. By 2:30 drinking tea rather than

liquor, we had talked away all the world's problems. But he never invited me into his confidence again. To my knowledge this was never reported to Washington. Today, such freedom of expression would be reprimanded.

The consul general in Geneva asked to have me transferred but I declined and returned to my wife and two children in Berlin just in time for Christmas 1954.

Suddenly I was made the contact man for the peripatetic Eleanor Dulles who today must be 91 years old. I never thought we would become so congenial. Misery likes company and she has had "lumps in her oatmeal" as we say in Scotland.

Q: (Laughter)

DU VIVIER: Eleanor was periodically coming around to check on her particular projects, such as, construction, education, money and Intelligence. I became her messenger boy and we worked closely as a team across the Atlantic.

Q: She was both Assistant Secretary of State and...anything about Berlin was her...

DU VIVIER: Exactly. One brother ran CIA and the other ran the State Department. An unbeatable combination!

Q: Berlin was her baby.

DU VIVIER: When I was first ordered to go to Tempelhof Airport and meet her, I turned to Bob Brandin, and said, "How will I recognize Mrs. Dulles?" And he said, "Don't you know what John Foster looks like?" And I said, "Yes, sir." And he said, "Well, she looks like John Foster with a wig." (Laughter) And immediately we took to each other like French Vermouth and Gordon Gin, as the song goes. She was so friendly that on one of her visits, when my wife and children were away, she took over the master bedroom in our comfortable house. When I see her now -- she's ninety-five years young -- she says, "Paul, when are we going to shack up together?" (Laughter) But she was great.

Q: Were we, again pushing the Germans to send things to the United States? I mean, was that sort of our thrust in the commercial place, or were we...

DU VIVIER: Yes, yes, very much. In fact the Air Force, General Tanner, who was responsible for successfully carrying out the Berlin airlift, was anxious to put on a great show in Berlin to prove the importance of the American Air Force in the Berlin economy. Somehow I was put in charge of the project, and in three months, with Air Force staff work we put on a tremendous trade fair showing twenty-three thousand items which the Berlin business community could produce for the Air Force. For instance there were repair facilities for trucks and jeeps and a great deal of textile and plastics and I can't remember all of the variety, but Dr. Conant came from Bonn -- he was the High Commissioner and later Ambassador, opened the show with a flurry of trumpets. He was very pleased with the result and my part in it.

Q: Well, of course our effort at that point was to make the Berliners feel safe and economically secure, so we were doing everything we could...

DU VIVIER: Yes.

Q: ...because there was considerable concern at that time that the population of West Berlin might just leave...

DU VIVIER: Yes.

Q: ...and the city might fall de facto to the East. We say this casually today, they're ripping down the Berlin Wall. I'm speaking about today, in front of the Brandenburg Gate, February 20, but in those days, of course, it was very, very different.

DU VIVIER: I did a fair amount of reporting on East Germany too, especially Leipzig. I'd go over to East Berlin in my official, or my personal car, about once a week and price shop in the department stores, grocery stores. I even got into some of their apartments on Stalin Allee to see what their furniture and utilities were like. I didn't have to disguise myself, but I never felt I was followed. And I was able to collect a great deal of information. I went to Leipzig two or three times. I even drove to Weimar, where I was very carefully shadowed, by a former Nazi Gauleiter. I never got to Dresden, but I did want to learn all I could about East Germany and funnel that through Berlin to get it to the Department. And we did a lot of interesting snooping. It was before the Wall, and at that time there was a hemorrhage of Germans through Brandenburg Gate and many other points at the rate of about three to four hundred Germans a day. And the West Berlin Senate put them up in refugee camps for an average of maybe six weeks. With plants and agents they could screen out pretty well the "moles" who had come into the camp. If cleared they were released and immediately flown to West Germany. They were all given jobs and presumably prospered. Our maid had come from the East and remained a fast friend to this day, 35 years later.

JOHN M. ANSPACHER
Special Assistant for Policy and Plans, USIS
Bonn (1954-1956)

John M. Anspacher was born in New York in 1918. He majored in political science while in college. After working in psychological operations in WW II, his government career began in the Psychological Strategy Board. His career with USIS included positions in Vietnam, Cambodia, Mali, and Ethiopia. Mr. Anspacher was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt on March 22, 1988.

ANSPACHER: Anyway, I did go abroad with the family to Bonn and served there for two years or so. Mickey left halfway through the tour, and Joseph B. Phillips from the Agency came on as PAO. He had been Assistant Director for Europe. He also had been the number two man at the "old" IIE (predecessor to USIA) in State Department when Ed Barrett was Assistant Secretary of

State for Public Affairs. I had known Joe during the war. He had been a public relations officer with the Eisenhower headquarters in Algiers.

Anyway, I continued on in Bonn until I got the call from Washington asking about going to Southeast Asia. My first offer was Laos. I said I had a family and the children were about to go to school. And they said, "Laos is out, try Cambodia." I agreed. And I looked around and, strangely enough, found one of the Embassy people in Bonn who had served in Cambodia. Heaven only knows when or where. Oh, I guess he'd served in the Saigon Embassy when Cambodia was still consulate.

Q: May I stop at this point and ask you?

ANSPACHER: Sure.

Q: Do you have any particular recollections of the operation's effectiveness in Germany during your period there? Or are there any particular experiences there that you think are significant?

ANSPACHER: Well, let me see. No particular experiences. It's 30 or some years ago now. We had some problems with such things as the confirmation of Mr. Conant as Ambassador to Germany with which we had to deal somehow. The other three high commissioners were all "anointed" as Ambassadors -- the British and the French -- were accepted as Ambassadors together. Mr. Conant had to beg off. He couldn't appear at the same time, because the United States Senate was away for the weekend and had failed to confirm him in time, which caused the Germans to raise their eyebrows somewhat about how we operated in our country. That's difficult enough to explain to Americans, much less to Germans who really didn't know an awful lot about it at that time.

Our effectiveness: I think we were reasonably effective, particularly in the programs which led to the establishment of the German-American "Houses," because they went on for years afterwards. And in our efforts with the newspapers that we published first in Munich and then in Berlin, and with the Radio in the American Sector (RIAS). I think that the efforts we made, and perhaps still are making, to project non-communist ideas across the border into East Berlin and, we would hope, also further into East Germany, did have and are having an effect. I think our effectiveness, *per se*, in a country where they're pretty sophisticated to begin with, was limited. They know a lot about the United States from their own experience and their own reading. So we didn't have to start from scratch and introduce them to the United States and to the American way. But I think over the long haul we've probably been reasonably effective in Germany both as USIS and as an Embassy. You were about to ask another question.

Q: No, I think I just wanted your opinion as to where and to what extent you thought you had been effective at that time. Because that was really a period of the true beginning of USIS operations in Germany. I know we had been there under HICOG and before that under OMGUS, but by that time, we were there as representatives of the U.S. Civilian government. The Army was out of it.

ANSPACHER: Yes.

Q: But at this time we had gone back to a regular ambassadorial status which is rather interesting I think.

ANSPACHER: It was. As I say, I think we were especially effective with the newspaper that we published out of Munich, "Die Neue Zeitung." And with RIAS, the radio in the American sector of Berlin. We had some very good people then who were knowledgeable about Germany and in the language. I'm thinking particularly of Bobby Lochner, for example. And there were others, Gerry Gert, Ernie Weiner, for example. So we had some good people there and we worked very well.

Mickey Boerner, of course, knew Germany quite well and spoke the language. Joe Phillips did not speak the language and relied to a larger extent on me and a couple of others. His deputy didn't speak any German either and didn't know Germany. His deputy was the late Jack McDermott. Jack and I had our personality problems, but that's beside the point. We had in terms of individuals, if you care about individuals in USIA --

Q: Yes.

ANSPACHER: -- one of the two or three best administrative people we've ever had in the Agency, at least with whom I've had the pleasure of working. One is yourself. And the other I'm thinking of is Jim Hoofnagle who managed to keep that octopus-like affair in some kind of reasonable shape. We had several branch posts, and the "America House" concept, which more or less started then, has been terribly valuable because the Germans have congregated in the America Houses and have continued to participate in them albeit they are now operating under German aegis. Granted, they were at the time of their institution about the only libraries that were available to the German people. But the fact that they are still in existence, despite the fact that they've now been overtaken, perhaps, by university libraries which had been re-established in the past quarter century is a tribute to their effectiveness. I still think the America Houses were a major contribution to our success and continue to be.

GERALD MICHAEL BACHE
Consular Officer
Munich (1954-1956)

Gerald Bache was born in September of 1927 in Broxville, NY. He attended Yale University and Harvard Law School and then entered the Foreign Service in 1951. His first post in Pusan, Korea was followed by several posts including Germany, the Ivory Coast, and Sweden. He was interviewed by Theresa Tull in 2004.

Q: It sounds like it was a good experience, despite the hardships that the embassy experienced for a long while. You were all working for a good effort, a good cause. After that, what was your next post?

BACHE: After I left Pusan in September 1953, I had to take nine months' leave without pay, in order to go back and finish my third and final year at Harvard Law School.

My next Foreign Service post, beginning in the summer of 1954, was Munich, Germany, where I was a visa officer. As you may recall, after the Second World War, there were many refugees in West Germany from Eastern Europe, living either in refugee camps or on their own. During my first two years in Munich, my job was to examine applicants for immigrant visas to the United States and decide whether or not to issue visas to them. Many of the applicants were refugees, who were helped by voluntary agencies, which I will mention in a few minutes. Virtually all of the interviews were conducted in German.

By the way, the Consul General, when we arrived in Munich, was Alan Lightner, who you remember had been DCM in Pusan; his successor as Consul General was Edward Page. The deputy principal officer throughout my four years in Munich was Raymond Ylitalo.

After those first two years, I was promoted to chief of the visa section in Munich, which was one of the largest U.S. visa operations in the world. It meant that I had ten Americans and 27 Germans working under me. At the time, I was an FSO-6 and the job was supposed to be filled by an FSO-4. I had to deal with all the refusals and other difficult cases. I decided to have a panel of three visa officers review those cases before we made a decision. When I was reviewing those difficult visa cases, I often had to read the court records in German of criminal cases, where the applicant had been convicted. We had to decide whether or not this was a "crime involving moral turpitude," as defined in U.S. immigration law. Obviously, my experience in law school was very useful for that purpose and was probably one of the reasons I was promoted to chief of section. Another advantage was my fluency in the German language.

When I had to inform an applicant that he had been refused a visa, I prided myself on handling the discussion in a patient way that usually ended with the applicant thanking me for my careful consideration of his case, rather than going away angry. These were some of the same tactics I had used in the Army.

I also spent a lot of time on Congressional correspondence; I remember I once calculated that we wrote an average of 30 letters a month - more than one per working day - responding to Congressional inquiries about visa cases. We also had occasional Congressional visits; one memorable occasion was when Representative Emmanuel Celler, then Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, came to visit. My wife and I went to the opera with the Cellers - at his expense - and then he came to our house and accompanied me on the piano as I sang and played the cello.

As chief of the visa section, I had to deal with the representatives of a large number of voluntary agencies, such as Catholic Relief Services, Church World Services, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, and other religious organizations, as well as ethnic organizations, such as the American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees and the Tolstoy Foundation, which represented Russian refugees. I found it was a nuisance for me to have to keep repeating myself in talking to each of these representatives separately, so I started bringing in all of them once a month. I would report

to them on the news from Washington, the new directives and instructions about procedures for visas and the like. They would bring up their problems and questions and complaints. It was a help to me to do it all at once, instead of separately with each of them. But they said they were very grateful and kept thanking me for initiating the practice of the monthly meetings. I believe that practice, which I started, continued after I left the post.

When I became chief of section, I was also aware that the local employees, over the years, had developed a great number of form letters in German that they would send to applicants to inform them of the status of their cases. I thought it was inefficient to have so many different form letters (there were more than 100 of them) and I felt that there should be an official record in English of all communications with applicants. I also found, sometimes, that applicants who knew English, but not German, would receive these form letters in German from a U.S. government office.

Therefore, I reviewed all of these form letters, removed duplications, simplified the language and reduced the number of different forms to about twenty. I also translated all the texts into English and had the English text printed on the back of the German letter. This was an example of the kind of streamlining that I introduced to the visa operation. Another was rearranging the location of some offices, so that both applicants and paperwork flowed through the office like a production line.

I mentioned earlier that I did music. In Munich, there was an amateur orchestra that had been going for almost a hundred years before I arrived. I was invited to join that orchestra, whose members were German doctors, businessmen, travel agents, retired postmen and all kinds of people who enjoyed music. Again, it was a chance to meet people and to get a better understanding of the culture and society in which we were living.

I also mentioned that I was interested in improving my knowledge of the German language. Munich University was quite near the Consulate General, so I started attending lectures on international law, being given in German, to get used to the terminology. Then the professor invited me to participate in his seminar, which I did, and had another academic year with a small group of students studying law at Munich University.

Q: This is while you were still fully employed heading the visa section?

BACHE: That is correct, but I was able to do this in the evening or in off hours, one way or another, that didn't interfere with my work.

Q: I believe you mentioned earlier in our interview that, when you were in Munich, you looked up family places?

BACHE: Yes, I mentioned that three of my four grandparents were born in the United States, but my mother's father was born in a little village called Unsleben. The family joke was that it really must have been 'Hundsleben,' which means 'a dog's life.' Until my grandfather was six years old, he lived in Unsleben, which is a village in Oberfranken (Upper Franconia) that is now part of Bavaria in Germany. While I was stationed in Munich, we visited there and it probably looked

about the same as it had one hundred years earlier, with ducks waddling in mud puddles in the middle of the main street of the village. On the advice of the Gemeindeschreiber (village clerk) of Unsleben, we visited the Catholic Church in a nearby village, which had the records of all the births and deaths before the unification of Germany in 1870. There I found out more about my mother's family and ancestors than she had ever known, by getting birth certificates and other documents from that church office in Upper Franconia.

When my grandfather was six, his family moved to a bigger town nearby, called Bad Neustadt an der Saale, where he went to school. When he was sixteen, he emigrated to the United States, to avoid being drafted into the Prussian army at the time of the Franco-Prussian War. On the same trip that took us to Unsleben, we also visited Bad Neustadt an der Saale, which was a typical German small city or large town, where much of the architecture dated from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Q: Are there any other particular incidents that stand out with regard to your service in Munich?

BACHE: Yes, shortly after my arrival in Munich, I noted the effect of the German tradition of the Beamte, or government official, from the Nazi time and before then. The Beamter would order people around and tell them what to do in a peremptory manner. I felt strongly that U.S. government officials are public servants, who are paid to serve the public and be helpful to people, not to bark orders at them. Therefore, when I became chief of the visa section, I tried to instill this attitude into our German employees in the Consulate General and I saw a noticeable improvement in their behavior as a result.

Q: The way that they would treat the public, the visa applicants?

BACHE: Yes, and there were hundreds of them coming through the visa section every day.

Speaking of incidents in Munich that stand out and recalling my sailing experience, I also wanted to mention that we had purchased a little sailboat on the Starnberger See, which is a small lake not too far from Munich. On at least one - maybe two - summer weekends while I was chief of section, we invited the whole visa section to a picnic on the Starnberger See; I took several of them on short sailing trips on the lake. This is one example of the way we helped morale and got people to work together.

JOSEPH N. GREENE, JR.
Political Officer
Bonn (1954-1956)

Joseph N. Greene, Jr. was born in New York in 1920. He graduated from Yale University and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He joined the Foreign Service in 1941. His career included positions in Canada, Singapore, Germany, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, India, Egypt, and Washington, DC. Mr. Greene was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1993.

GREENE: In Bonn, I was assigned to the Office of Political Affairs. We had a High Commission until May 5, 1955 when the treaty established the Federal Republic of Germany. The mission of the High Commission had been to tell the government of occupied West Germany how to run their business. The Office of Political Affairs of the High Commission was enormous; it had both an external and an internal branch. But by the time I got there we weren't really telling them what to do. The Germans were more sure of themselves and happy to begin to build a more conventional relationship between two sovereign countries.

I had been assigned to Bonn because my wife and daughter had become very sick in Singapore. Johnny Jones back in Western European Affairs had made arrangements for me to be transferred. Red Dowling was DCM in Bonn and he got wind of this and saw to it that I was assigned to Bonn. We went home, got everyone's health straightened out so we could go on to Bonn.

The Bonn political Section was a tight little group and I felt that they weren't all that keen to have one of the DCM's pals dropped in their midst. My beat was the Foreign Office. But being the temperament I was, I hated being confined in narrow relationships. So I made a lot of friends in the community. It was a government community -- Bonn/Bad Godesberg. The last thing the little town wanted to be was the capital of Germany; it was a quiet university town. The Americans had built a community all our own of housing for everyone, Plittersdorf. One-family houses for senior officers, co-op city-type buildings for everybody else. Mrs. Dowling had arranged for us to have one of the better ground floor flats on the main street which for a Second Secretary coming in late in the game raised some eyebrows among those who thought they were more entitled. While it was awkward, it all worked out.

My primary concern was the Federal Republic of Germany's relationship with us but also the European Defense community. During the Eisenhower years there was a big push to try and get reunification of Germany. Of course, the Soviet Union was not about to agree to that in the mid 1950s and we spent a lot of time cultivating our image as Germany's friends interested in the unification of a democratic Germany and keeping a major military force there. Ray Lisle was the principal officer in the Political Section responsible for negotiating endlessly a Status of Forces Agreement. We had one, but as they became an independent state, we had to renegotiate it. It was rough going; the Germans didn't feel defeated any more. I had little to do with that, except it is part of the backdrop of all the other things that were going on.

They were not a nuclear power, but they were a whole lot interested in nuclear power. They were to stay out of anything that could be converted to military use. So that took a certain amount of watching, covert and overt.

I was also assigned to help with the programs of VOA and Radio Free Europe to assure their consistency with American foreign policy. We had some battles royal over the propriety of some of the scripts that VOA and Radio Free Europe wanted to run. It was hard to control news stories, quite apart from the philosophical issues of censorship. My assignment was to make sure that these two outlets were for the American point of view and did not undercut American policy. The journalists felt news was news; didn't matter if it was bad news. There were discussions from time to time about all that.

The Ambassador, James Conant, was upstairs in the Chancery. The Political Section was on the ground floor of the wing where he and the DCM had offices. I remember being proud that Dowling was there; he was a very steady guy. As I said, I knew him so well and we would see him informally; he probably used that as a way of finding out what was going on in the rest of the Embassy. Red was very diligent to keep right with Jim Conant.

What I learned and took with me when I became a DCM in India is to stay close and hope you can head off things that are not so hot and make things that should be done, happen quickly.

Red Dowling was a very resourceful and intelligent, professional officer. He was wise in the ways without being too clever or too narrow minded in the ways of political movement. Most of what I wrote about was Germany's relationships with their neighbors and the European community and with the rest of the Control Commission. I didn't have much to do with Berlin because we had a mission there. Jack Tuthill was the Economics Minister and a brilliant officer.

Once a week I went to the Economic Sections staff meetings. I could keep Red advised what Tuthill and his people were up to. Not in a derogatory way, but it was better to have a "heads-up" on issues. Bonn was a very large Embassy.

In the German Foreign Ministry, George Lilienfeld was the desk officer and Fritz Gaspari was his colleague. George came to Washington in later years as DCM and then he was Germany's Ambassador in Iran. In 1960, Fritz Gaspari was Germany's Political Officer or Minister in London. They were very professional men and I didn't spend much time worrying about where they had been from 1935-45. (They had to have been in the service of the Third Reich.) George had an American wife. I remember doing a lot of business with Karl Carstens, who later became President of the Republic. But it was all constructive, friendly and businesslike. One theme that would often come up was how to advance the cause of reunification. A footnote for the future: When unification came about in 1990, I thought back to the 1950s. We were so ill prepared; we didn't know what we would have done with a united Germany.

I recall the continuous efforts that our Embassy had made to help prepare for summit meetings to talk about reunification with the Soviets in Geneva and to keep the flame flickering. Our influence with the moderate democratic leadership that we wanted to see succeed in running the country, the Christian Democrats again, depended on a public perception of our being on their side. No German who aspired to leadership could afford to be seen as lacking in enthusiasm for reuniting the fatherland.

I was thinking in terms that it may not been such a great idea. We never gave any thought to: "Were we ready if it happened?" Confronting the Soviet military threat, we had to keep the Federal Republic hospitable to the NATO military establishment. NATO had to be structured to be sure that the Germans were doing their part with their new Bundeswehr, but not so much as to scare the neighbors again. Part of the American Seventh Army's mission was to sit right next to the Germans. I regarded it then and even now that the American physical military presence in Germany was a reassurance to the French, the Belgians, the Dutch and the British -- that we weren't going to let the Germans get out of line, reunited or not. The Soviets didn't want

Germany reunited either; they had suffered enormously in World War II. Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik came later.

We had to tolerate the SPD. The CDU were our people but you couldn't get away from democracy is democracy. To make it possible to keep in touch with all these people in the Bundesamt, Jock Dean ran a lunch mess in Bad Godesberg. We rented a house or most of a house, so that we could invite Germans to lunch, hear them and tell them what we wanted them to think about. I worked hard on my German but it never got good enough to get into big arguments in German. I went to some of the lunches when there were English speakers. We had to balance our attention between the CDU and the SPD. I know there were covert operations but I wasn't privy to them. I assume we were more comfortable with the CDU than the SPD. The Bavarians, Franz Joseph Strauss's party, was too right wing. That was embarrassing.

In 1956, I went back to the State Department as Deputy Director of the Executive Secretariat, arriving in the middle of the Suez crisis. I later became Special Assistant to Secretary Dulles, and stayed with him until he died in May 1959.

MARK C. LISSFELT
US Army, CIC
Germany (1954-1956)

Mark C. Lissfelt was born in Pennsylvania in 1932. He received his BA from Haverford College and his MALD from Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1959. He served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1954 to 1956. His foreign posts included London, Tel Aviv, Bamako, Brussels, Bonn, Berlin and Paris. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 22, 1998

Q: Let's stick to Germany for a while. What were you doing with the CIC in Germany?

LISSFELT: I was an enlisted man under cover. We always worked in civilian clothes, and whenever we went to the field and had to wear uniforms, we wore no rank, nothing except - like war correspondents - we had two U.S.s on our lapels, and we carried our credentials, which when we'd flash in front of any mortal would send them - like FBI agents flashing their credentials would send most mortals--to their knees, trembling with fear, we'd like to think. But what we were doing was background investigations on people who were getting security clearances and periodic snap investigations of caserns and units to test their security, and more likely, security surveys of major caserns in and around Frankfurt for their fencing, their access controls, their handling of classified documents, all that kind of stuff.

Q: Ever work on the Canberry Frips Casern?

LISSFELT: No.

Q: That was in Darmstadt.

LISSFELT: No. We didn't cover Darmstadt. We did Gelnhausen, Hanau, and Bad Nauheim and of course Frankfurt itself. There were a couple of major caserns. At the first of the Fourth Infantry Division, by the way, of which I was very proud to be a member, the so-called IV Division of Normandy invasion fame. And then we stayed on when the third Armored came over to replace the Fourth Infantry.

Q: What was your impression of Germany, I mean, doing these background investigations and all that?

LISSFELT: Well, I was just dazzled because finally I'd gotten to this land I'd heard about all my life, you know, from my father, and the tales and the opera that he knew so well, the stories of his own adventures. I was just high on the experience. It was pretty battered, and Frankfurt was a mess, and Hanau had been 85% destroyed. I did get up to Berlin, which was a mess, a big mess. So it was a pretty mixed experience. The Germans were still - this was 1955, ten years after the war - struggling to come back, but they were doing mightily, and one had to be impressed by what was going on, and the beauty of the place, the beauty of the landscape in that country. We had a lot of these maneuvers in the countryside, you know, and we'd just look at these gorgeous well kept fields and rebuilt barns, and we knew the German love of order, and there it was in front of your eyes. It was very impressive.

Q: Did you run across the Foreign Service at all while you were doing this?

LISSFELT: Only in terms of pursuing entrance in the Foreign Service. The first exam I took I took just as I was graduating from college, which was in 1954, the last year they gave the three and a half day exam, which was an experience I'll never forget. I took that down at the Philadelphia Post Office. I'm not kidding: three and a half days. Oh, you took the same thing.

Q: I took it. Actually, I took it in '53 in Frankfurt. I came up from Darmstadt as an enlisted man.

LISSFELT: I took it first coming out of college, when it was three and a half days long, and I came within a couple of points of passing the difficult thing, which really surprised me, but that was before I went in the Army. And then, while I was in the Army, I pursued taking the test and did take it a couple of times, even had an oral interview at the Frankfurt Consulate General, which was very convenient to where I was assigned. And I took the entrance exam, in fact, several times, because I passed and then I wanted to go to graduate school and I kept postponing that.

Q: Did you take it in Frankfurt?

**R. KEITH SEVERIN
US Army
Germany (1954-1956)**

Mr. Severin was born in Texas and raised in California. He was educated at Chaffee College, the University of California at Davis and Stanford University. Joining the US Department of Agriculture in 1951, Mr. Severin began his career as an Agriculture Instructor in American Samoa, after which he served in Moscow as Assistant Agricultural Attaché. In the Department in Washington, Mr. Severin held senior positions dealing with Foreign Agriculture Relations and Grain Export Subsidies. Mr. Severin was interviewed by Allan Mustard in 2006.

Q: Sure. Well, you spent that time in Germany. How long were you in Germany?

SEVERIN: I've had a grand time thinking about that while lying on this couch this past several weeks. Okay, so we finish up in Oberammergau just before Christmas in 1955. Barbara's sister and her husband, who was also in the 66 CIC unit, Roger Crossman. And Roger grew up in the same neighborhood as Barbara and her sister, Nona, there in Glendale, California. Well, Nona and Roger got married, or Roger was in the same CIC unit as I was in Offenbach, and he stayed there when I went off to Oberammergau.

Nona, Barbara's sister, came over and Roger and Nona got married. Well, he was still there in the same CIC unit and they rented a little house in Doernischheim, just outside of Frankfurt, in the direction of Hanau. And so we went up and they said that I was going to be stationed in Bremerhaven, but it was going to be a couple of weeks yet before I got there.

So we went up there and Roger and Nona had their nice little house, and Barb and Ken and I had a room in the landlord's house, and that was Kenneth's first Christmas. Somewhere around here I've got the Christmas card that we made that I had sent to my grandparents. It was a picture of a Christmas tree and a little youngster, just coming from under the Christmas tree and "Froehliche Weihnachten" and that.

It was a beautiful Christmas tree that we had and we had live candles on it. Of course, the tree had been soaked by the Army people and all that. So we were there and in January we went up to Bremerhaven. All right, well, there again we rented a couple of rooms from a family, from the Pust family, P-U-S-T Pust, Frau Pust, Grandma Pust and her daughter and son-in-law. And they had a great big, nice house, and we had our room, a big room, and then a living room that we pretty much had use of, and then we shared the kitchen.

Frau Pust really thought that Kenneth was grand, again, and she made sure that he spoke German before he spoke English, blond-haired, blue-eyed and that. And what was interesting was they were real big in the Fischereihafen in Bremerhaven and there's one big smokestack out there, Pust on it, and all that. What was interesting was that their house was directly across the street from the headquarters of the KPSS [Russian for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union], but no one ever bothered anybody.

So there we were and there were only five of us in the Bremerhaven field office. Let's see, there was Major Gilmore and I've forgotten the captain's name, and a warrant officer, a second lieutenant. There were six of us, seven of us, and Saul Keith, who was a master sergeant, and I, who was a little sergeant and Milo Zimmerman, who took care of the office. Then we had

Gerhard, Gerhard, who took care of our motor pool things, took care of our cars, and he would go off once a month, at the end of the month, with all of the paperwork. He'd go off to the motor pool with all the paperwork that we'd fill out over the month and this and that, and he said, "Mein Kampf." But he really took care of us.

But what our job was, at that juncture, was interviewing refugees who wanted to emigrate to the United States, *Flüchtlinge fada*, so we would go out and run background checks off people, and we have our field office there in Bremerhaven, but we'd always have to go to Hamburg to pick up our work and go out from Hamburg. And I know I'd be four, five, maybe six weeks at a time out without meeting anybody who spoke any English. I'd be in the British zone, and the Brits kept their folks in the Kaserne pretty well, and so that's basically what I did. And I remember one time we were up against it and they brought a young fellow in with a sergeant higher than I, and we were off and working outside of Braunschweig, right on the Glenza, and Randy, we each had our own cars to go wherever we had to go, wherever our cases took us. And Randy got out with some Brits one Saturday evening and tried to use his car to cut a tree down and it didn't work, and ended up in the hospital in Gifwarm.

Well, I was the only other Army in the area, and since we'd been working in the same general area, and Randy really hurt himself and he was in the hospital, German hospital *Lebensgefährlich war es* [It was life-threatening]. And we had a big storm that went through just at that time and knocked down all the power lines. There was no communication. I couldn't get in touch with back with the home office, and so I had to make the decisions.

It all worked out, Randy got okay, got court martialled for being drunk and driving a car and wrecking the car, but it was really funny because we had this warrant officer, and this second lieutenant. I've forgotten which way it was, but one could speak German and couldn't understand it, and the other one could understand it, but couldn't speak it. So to run a case, you'd have to send them both to get it, one to send and one to receive.

But I'd be out, like I say, for several weeks, several weeks without seeing anybody who could speak any English. Some of the really tragic, tragic stuff, and I remember some of the folks in Yugoslavia, and sometimes you'd have to get somebody who could work as interpreter for you, because the other guy couldn't do it. And some of these big, old Army Kasernes where these families were being put up, and you see the little youngsters, and it was soup time and someone would run off with a bucket, come back with a bucket of soup.

The youngsters, you see them sit down with big plates like that, metal plates and spoons. I know there was one fellow from Yugoslavia, he showed me his stamp collection, just a marvelous stamp collection. He says, "Hey, I'll give this to you. I'll do anything if we could just get to America."

Some of the embarrassing things that you got into, going and doing these personal checks on people. It was a different world then in 1955 and 1956, and you asked these people, I remember asking this one little grandma, "Well, when were you married? Those were your children and so on? When were you married, and what was your husband's name. *Bin nicht verheiratet* [I'm not married].

That was embarrassing, then, and then you'd have to take their fingerprints. *Ich bin kein Verbrecher* [I'm not a criminal]. And to get some of the little old grandmas with real soft fingers, and they'd been cooking, anyway, to try to get them to –

Q: Get a good print, yes.

S. DOUGLAS MARTIN
Consular Officer
Berlin (1954-1956)

Desk Officer, Office of German Affairs
Washington, DC (1961-1964)

S. Douglas Martin was born in New York in 1926. During 1945-1945 he served overseas in the US Army, upon returning he received his bachelor's from St John's University in 1949 and later received his law degree from Columbia University in 1952. His career included positions in Germany, Washington D. C., Yugoslavia, Poland, Laos, Austria, Turkey, Nigeria, and Cameroon. Mr. Martin was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in January 1999.

Q: I know. I remember, I really felt very early on that Alger Hiss, one, was guilty and, two, he let the side down. You went to Bonn in '54.

MARTIN: Right.

Q: And you were a part of what, the Refugee Relief Program?

MARTIN: Yes.

Q: You were in Bonn from when to when?

MARTIN: I was only in Bonn for about a week. At that time, personnel authority within Germany was controlled in Bonn. Later on it was taken to Washington, but at that time, people were assigned to Germany, and then in Bonn they'd be assigned wherever needed. I knew I was going to be an immigrant visa issuing officer, and I knew I was going to be somewhere in one of the posts but not at the embassy. So as soon as I got there, they told me that I'd be going to Berlin. I had been told that I'd be assigned to one of four places, and I was hoping to go to either Hamburg or Munich. I didn't want to go to Frankfurt. And I didn't really want to go to Berlin, either. Well, going there was one of those lucky things, and I've had some other lucky breaks like that. The best place for me to be was Berlin. Somebody once asked me whether I got the posts I wanted in the Foreign Service, and I said, "You know, I always got the post I wanted, but I never realized it until I was there about eight months."

Q: I just like to get at the beginning of each of these sections, you were in Berlin from when to when?

MARTIN: I was in Berlin from '54 to '56.

Q: Okay.

MARTIN: Although I was technically with the Refugee Relief Program, there was another vice-consul, an older guy, a staff officer, Tom Burke. He was very happy to take over that kind of work, and they wanted me to get more general experience. It was really good that they did that. People were really good to me. So they set me up as a visa issuing officer. We issued about a hundred immigrant visas a month, and about 50 soldiers from the Sixth Infantry would get married every month, and then we had about 150 non-immigrant visas. When I first got there, the quota was filled, but it was soon beginning to show signs that not everybody who had signed up to emigrate would go; when you asked them if they still wanted to go, they changed their minds. Things were changing in Germany. But pretty soon the quota opened, and from then on, when a person came to me, if they wanted to immigrate into the US and they qualified, they could go. It was a very easy consular assignment to have.

Q: Could you talk a bit about Berlin in the '54 to '56 period?

MARTIN: This was the height of the Cold War, or almost the height, and you couldn't just go over into East Berlin. People had to be told when you were going over there. The whole post was set up, because of the importance of Berlin. The chief of mission was the ambassador. The deputy chief of mission was the military commander, a two-star general. And the State Department officer in charge was the assistant chief of mission. And we also had a section that just looked at what was going on in East Germany and East Berlin. And of course, there were very close relations with the military, and there were, everybody knew, a large number of intelligence agencies operating in Berlin at that time.

I did general consular work. I had some death cases I dealt with, very interesting, and I had some interesting visa cases. I had one case of a fellow, a soldier, black. He wanted to marry a woman. He had three children from three different tours in Germany by that woman, and her name was on a list. We had very good information there. It showed that this woman had signed up to be a member of the Communist Party in Kassel, Germany. She told me that she didn't realize she was joining the Communist Party, that she needed a house - she had no place to live - and they said, if you want an apartment, you have to sign the paper. She signed up, and her name was forever after on the list.

She was barred, but at that time there were two exceptions. One was an involuntary member of the Communist Party or of some cover organization or a defector. We were looking for defectors of some sort, but I never was able to find one. I sent in a request for an advisory opinion to the Department stating the case, and I really thought this woman was an involuntary member of the Communist Party, and she had three children. The father was an American sergeant there, and he wanted to legitimize his children and marry the woman. They sat on the case for a very long time, but eventually they came back and okayed it. I think that's quite remarkable, and I wonder

if anybody in Germany at that time was ever able to get anybody through as an involuntary member of the Party rather than a cover organization.

Q: Cover organizations, that wasn't too difficult, but no, not the Party.

MARTIN: A large number of the people who came in to us were from the east. They were refugees who had come through West Berlin from East Germany and East Berlin. I knew all about how people came through. They had to give up their papers. We had a congressional visit one time by a Congressman Eagan, from Ohio. He was worried that people were streaming in from the East and coming to the United States, and that the Communists were invading us, which was pretty much nonsense. He took a little convincing. We had to show him exactly how the system operated. When people came in, they had to go to a camp, and give up their East papers. They were debriefed. There was a record of them. Then they got West Berlin papers. If they eventually came to us, we saw them and treated them like every other applicant. The general situation in Berlin then was rather peaceful. One year before, there had been demonstrations right at the East Berlin line, the June 17th [1953] uprising, and that came shortly after uprisings in Poland. And it preceded what happened in Hungary.

Q: It was a serious time. I was a GI in Germany. I remember we were confined to the barracks because they didn't know what would happen, and you know, the troops were kept ready.

MARTIN: Right. One of the big events that occurred when I was there was the tunnel, the famous tunnel in Berlin.

Q: Would you explain what that was?

MARTIN: The CIA came up with the idea of constructing a tunnel. The guy's name was Harvey, Bill Harvey. He had been an FBI man, and he was the head of the CIA station in Berlin. He was pretty much of a daredevil. Later on Kennedy admired greatly what happened. Harvey eventually got involved with the Cubans, and because of his FBI connections and, like the mafia, I think he was the one who tried to get the exploding cigar to Castro, which didn't work. I think a lot of their ideas didn't work, but this one worked in a magnificent way. The tunnel was built. It was obvious when I was there that this one intelligence group, which turned out to be the CIA (they never said that) were very, very secret. They were doing something. It was apparent that it was very important from what people were saying, and it was very, very secret.

After a while, there was something there called the Allied Travel Office and the Interzonal Facilities Bureau. These were remnants of the Cold War, because in 1955, the occupation of Germany ended, and General McCord made a speech about it at that time that they were going to change. But it didn't end in Berlin. Berlin was still an occupied place, and the Allied Travel Office provided the documentation for American officials in Berlin. It just happened that the guy who was doing that work, an employee of the intelligence agency, went home, and they asked me to replace him for a couple of months. I stamped all of the passports of all of the officials - or had them stamped and signed them - the official Americans in Berlin. There were several hundred of them, maybe a thousand. And the Interzonal Facilities Bureau was set up to control the travel of Soviet officials between West Berlin and West Germany - not West Berlin, because

the city was open. When they wanted to go to West Germany, they had to go to the Interzonal Facilities Bureau and get an application. Then I had a procedure to follow. I had to notify USAREU (United States Army Europe) headquarters, and then they arranged for these guys to come. They had to tell us exactly when they were coming, what crossing point they were going to go through, and obviously people would be there to watch them. We had very close relations with all the intelligence agencies there. They would tell us stuff, and we would also provide them with our files if they wanted to look at it. At the Interzonal Facilities Bureau, I used to go there half a day. On almost a daily basis, I would be going over to East Berlin and applying for permits for Americans to go into East Germany, and we would ask for a [Russian permit?]. Well, they didn't like that. They wanted us to go to the East German Government, which we did not recognize. When a Russian wanted to come, he had to come to us. One day, this intelligence guy came to see me and said, "This afternoon, you're going to get five requests for permission to go into West Germany from Russians." And he said, "You're going to get them. It's very important that you get the passports of these three guys." I said okay. It was interesting because just at that time our ambassador in Moscow said, if we wanted to go to East Germany, we had to give our passports. They would give us their ID cards. A practice had developed where we accepted that, and when Toon came in, he said, "No, no more. If we have to give our passports, they have to give us theirs." Reciprocity, basic principle of diplomacy, I guess. Anyway, when I asked them for that, they screamed. They didn't want to do it. They were very reluctant to do it. They would have excuses. This guy said, "You're going to get these five applications, make sure you get these passports". I think the passports were looked at by somebody, I reckon NATO.

Q: Right, sure.

MARTIN: They were running the passports next door and taking pictures and giving them back. I worked in conjunction with my two colleagues, my French and British opposite numbers. When somebody came in, I would hand it to the guy and say, "It's being typed now. I'll be right back," and make some kind of a crazy excuse. One thing we did do, and which was playing on a weakness of the Russians - they are a very sloppy people. They cannot fill out an application correctly. There'll be spelling errors, there'll be dates wrong, there'll be blanks and so forth. So this always was our excuse. We had to examine the application carefully. In the meantime, we were getting pictures of the passports.

Sure enough, a guy came in, and he said, "This is important. We have to get this out by tomorrow." I said, "Okay, let's see the passport." He said, "These three men are traveling in East Germany. I don't have their passports. I only have their military ID's." "Sorry." It was interesting how they were fighting to avoid giving their passports. I later found out that anybody could issue those military ID cards, but the passports were issued in Moscow. The passports had a higher validity or a higher level of authenticity, and that's why the CIA guy wanted them. The guy eventually came through with the passports. I wondered at that time, how did this guy that I dealt with in the intelligence office know that these three guys were not likely to have the passport? Later, when the news of the tunnel came out, I said, "Now I know".

I talked to somebody since then who told me they got so much information that they're still processing some of it. He said, "I doubt if what you say (about the three passports) is true. I

doubt if they were that good.” But I think they were that good. They were listening for certain calls, and they were looking for any calls that came from that source.

I did that for about three months, every day going over to East Berlin and seeing the Soviet officer who was my opposite number and also another Soviet officer who became somewhat famous later on, a guy named Khriboshei. Khriboshei is mentioned in a number of books. Later, he apparently established a contact with somebody in Berlin who was annoyed that he wasn’t promoted and he went in and offered to give information to the Soviets, and he dealt with Khriboshei, who spoke English and was in the habit of showing up in West Berlin. Whenever there was some kind of a function, Soviet nurses - pretty hot army nurses - Khriboshei would turn up with them. He was obviously a very active character. He cultivated his contact, an army sergeant who went to the United States. They followed him, in the sense that they told him, “When you’re coming up for assignment, let us know.” They told him to apply to go to NATO, and he did. He got the combination to the safe, because he worked right there. An officer had the combination, but he was a little careless. One night, the Soviets came into our NATO headquarters and took away a bundle of documents.

That guy was later caught, convicted, and sentenced to jail. His son fought in Vietnam. The son went to see him in jail and stabbed him and killed him. It’s all been told in a book called KGB, I think. He tells how the KGB would recruit people. They never tried to get people on ideological grounds. You see, Americans are not susceptible to that kind of a plea. They get them on blackmail or some disgruntlement or money.

I had some interesting death cases. We had a couple of women officers and they asked me to do them. A guy was dead in a hotel. The hotel owner wanted me to get the body out so they could fill the room. I said, “I’m sorry, we have to call the police.” The police came, and I did the inventory of the guy’s effects. It was rather pathetic because he had a bunch of calling cards in his wallet, all in Hoboken, all on one street, and they were from Charlie’s Bar, Al and Phil’s Bar and Grill, Mike’s Bar and Grill. He was going to send postcards back to his buddies. He had turned 65, just got his first Social Security check, and went straight over here. He said he was interested in genealogy, but he was born in Königsberg, which was then Kaliningrad. You couldn’t go there at all. I don’t know what he was going to do.

When we sent the telegram back, the daughter answered, “He must have had” - I think she said - “\$6,500 on him.” It turned out the ticket had cost \$1,500 and he had a little less than \$5,000. She still said, “Oh, that \$1,500 must be there. What happened? Who stole it?” She picked out the cheapest possible outcome, which was burial locally. We arranged for him to be buried in the Central Cemetery in Berlin, and there was a Lutheran pastor there, a very nice guy, who was head of the German-American Association. We agreed this guy must have been a Lutheran. We made him a Lutheran after he died, because 99 per cent of the people who were born in Königsberg were.

He got a Lutheran funeral with one Catholic present - that was me - and nobody else, and it was very interesting anyway to go through that experience. I really look upon that as a great time. People used to avoid consular work or complain about consular work, but I enjoyed it.

Q: Did you feel under any particular threat during this '54 to '56 period. Here you are in Berlin, surrounded by the Soviets? What was the feeling?

MARTIN: People talked about world events, but there was no “feeling.” Somehow we had a lot of confidence in the US military, that somehow nothing was going to happen. Things were going on, so there might be a confrontation, and nobody wanted to think what would happen in Berlin itself if war broke out. It’s obvious that there couldn’t be resistance there. We just would have been captured, that’s all. But nobody was concerned. In fact, I wanted to stay longer.

I got married while I was there, and had my son while I was there, my first child.

Q: Was your wife German?

MARTIN: My wife was Hungarian. I was there six or seven months before I got married, because at that time, to marry an alien, you had to get permission. I would not have gotten permission to marry a Hungarian, but she was already in the United States when I met her and graduated from an American university, graduated from Manhattanville College, which is where the Kennedy daughters went. We agreed she would become a citizen, and then come over, so I didn’t have to ask anybody’s permission to get married. I just had to notify the government that I had gotten married. Since she was from Hungary and spoke German she was a great advantage to me. She had gone for a year to the University of Munich and had spoken German since she was a kid. Her ethnic background is really more German than Hungarian. Her father was a three star general in the Hungarian army, the highest-ranking general, when he got pushed out in 1936. He told me when he and Admiral Horthy had conversations, they spoke German to each other, even though it was Hungary. It was a carry-over from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He had gone to Austro-Hungarian military schools all the way through.

Q: In West Berlin, did you ever travel into East Berlin?

MARTIN: Oh, yes, I used to go there all the time. When I had this job for three months, I went there every day.

Q: What was your impression of East Germany and the difference between the two zones?

MARTIN: It was like going from life into death. The West was booming. Right down by the East Berlin border it was still all smashed down. You could see evidence of the bombing of Berlin everywhere, but at the same time there was also a tremendous reconstruction. Germany was pretty much back by that time, and East Berlin was not. There was a stream of people coming across every week, and later on, when I worked on the German Desk, just before the Wall went up, there were about 5,000 a week coming across. All the way through the Cold War, there were between 3,000 and 5,000 refugees coming to the West, almost all of them through West Berlin, because you could get on a subway and go to West Berlin from East Berlin. The controls were very limited. Later on, they started to put more and more controls on, and then they put the Wall up that made it impossible.

You would not make an effort to get into conversation with people, because you might get them in trouble, and they would be very nervous about that. But you could go over, and you could go to bookstores, and into the cafés. The East German currency was worth much less than the West German. The exchange rate was very favorable, and you could walk over there any time, just get on the subway and go over. Going to East Germany was a different story. There you had to get permission, but I did make a couple of trips. One time it would open up would be for the Leipzig Fair every year, and I went to the Leipzig Fair three times when I was there. There used to be a spring and a fall fair. I remember a conversation I had with a family. In Leipzig, of course, you would go to a housing office, and they would assign you to a place, a private house. The family would make money during the fair by having guests. You could talk to them. And it was interesting to go to church there; that was mainly a Protestant area, Leipzig.

And I remember one conversation with a young woman. She, and a kid, 16 years old, and her father and mother and I were having a talk. We were talking about how World War II got started, and I explained to them that Germany had declared war on the United States. She couldn't believe it. And then her father told her, yes, the Japanese attacked the United States, and the next day, Hitler declared war on the United States, because they had this agreement with the Japanese. She was shocked by it, and then she said, "Oh, that was a terrible mistake." The truth wasn't getting through all the time to people in the East.

Q: How was the Leipzig Fair used? What was our feeling about the Leipzig Fair as a trade fair?

MARTIN: The Leipzig Fair had its roots back in the middle ages, a crossroads area. This was a place where any company went that wanted to do business with East Germany. They used to claim also that doing business in the whole Soviet Bloc could be done by going to the Leipzig Fair and participating or at least attending it. All the countries would come and have exhibits - all the countries from the East, the Soviets and Hungarians and Poles would have big exhibits - and then American companies would go if they had an interest in doing business there. I don't think it really was all that good because there was something in those days called the Interzonal Trade System. Later it was incorporated into the Treaty of Rome. As far as trade was concerned, East Germany and West Germany were considered one, and there were no customs. The trade would take place, and all West German firms could trade in the East very easily. So the way for an American firm to participate in trade with East Germany was not to go directly, but to find a German company that was doing business. Still, from the political point of view, everybody wanted to go for a chance to get into the East, a chance to get into the Soviet Zone. I was happy to make those trips.

I also got a chance once to go by car from Berlin to Hamburg by the road that was not the regular Autobahn to the West, not the Helmstedt thing. But to go directly, the direct route and to go through East Germany and to see how poor those farmers were - I think that must be a poor area any time, but it was really poor. The war had gone right through there, but I don't think the war had done that much. It just was poor from the start.

Q: The war had pretty well ended by the time that fell. That was just the tail end of the war.

MARTIN: Yes, but that was still very interesting, to go through that area. Anyway, I loved it in Berlin, and actually I went back on a private trip, my wife and I, and we went to all the places I had gone to.

Q: Did you have much contact with the West Berliners while you were there?

MARTIN: Oh, yes. You could have a lot of contact with them, and while I was a bachelor, I went out with quite a few German girls. I also made contact with a couple of people. One guy was studying to be a doctor. He had a friend who was a visa applicant who was a priest, or studying to be a priest. He was going to California. This guy wanted to make contact with an American. His father was a doctor, and I learned something about the German medical system, which of course went back to the time of Bismarck and was socialized medicine. Because he lived down near the East Berlin border, he still had a lot of patients from East Berlin who could come over to him. He had a problem with money, getting money from them, because their money was worth nothing. So he used to collect this East Berlin money.

I used to go out to West Germany at that time. I went skiing. That was a lot of fun. Being a bachelor gives you a lot of freedom that you don't have otherwise, so that was very enjoyable. But after I was married, we had a baby just 10 months later and so that ties you down a little bit.

I was very lucky with one case there. And life happens this way. Maids would come in very often when they had a relationship with an American soldier, and they could only get permission if they could get a visa to go to the States. And so I was the one that decided that. This case had been looked at before by somebody else who had turned it down. Anyway, when she came to me I looked at it and said, "There's no reason to turn this woman down." I said, "We should issue the visa." I wrote up a little summary as I saw the case. But then my boss, Virginia Ellis, a very nice lady, said, "Oh, these people, oh, these . . ." She used to have a funny viewpoint about Germans; she didn't like the Germans getting visas, basically.

Q: This was one of the problems we had often, particularly in those days, I think, with our visa officers. Often they came with really rather limited outlooks.. I had the same thing down in Frankfurt, and so they would allow their personal feelings to be very much a problem.

MARTIN: I was very much influenced by my legal training, because the requirements were there. It was very simple. If you had any legal training you would see because these women were being turned down as prostitutes, and they were not prostitutes. That's ridiculous. No more than say, Monica Lewinsky's a prostitute. Loose living and accepting gifts. That's not prostitution. But some of these people had that attitude. Anyway, there was something else with her too. She didn't want to change a decision that was made.

The first time I met Betty Toon, the wife of the new consul, the first thing she did was hit me with this case that her maid had been treated badly at the consulate and she shouldn't have been turned down. I said, "I don't know anything about it." I couldn't remember the specific case at that point, but when he came in, the first case he looked at, he saw that I had said she should be issued a visa. He told his wife that too. From then on, he was on my side. I got along extremely well with him. And he also liked that I was going down, when I had this job in the Interzonal

Facilities Bureau. There I was responsible for an entire building, all the army property. I was assigned it because the 1954 Foreign Ministers' Conference had taken place in that building. It's where the Air Traffic Control Center was. But I was the one who was signed out for 1,000 cups, 1,000 saucers, 1,000 sets of silverware, and all kinds of stuff that was all there. It was the largest building in Berlin, downtown. Of course, I occupied just a little office with a huge number of files, because it had been the control system for all travel within Germany.

Crazy things would happen. For example, one day we got an emergency call from Tempelhof Airport. There was some German guy at the airport, and they were looking at his papers and they had some kind of a lookout card on him. The lookout, when I looked at the guys file, for some reason it said "This man not to be allowed to travel into Berlin." And here he was in Berlin; should they let him out? I said - well, I mean, you don't have to be a brilliant logician to figure that if he shouldn't be in here, let him out - So I said, "Let him out." They let him go, and they didn't hear any more from it.

Q: Was this part of the Berlin Document Center?

MARTIN: No. That was located somewhere else. The Berlin Document Center was where all the Party records were, and when I was in German affairs, I got involved with some of those cases, too. Some of them were extremely interesting. The Germans saved all their papers, and then we captured them all, which was very good. We almost had more information than we wanted to have. But some of the more interesting stuff in there were these cases of the Nazi court trials, because besides the whole German legal system, the Party had its own system, and the Nazi Party could try people and impose sentences on them, and execute them. And somebody was writing a book later on when I was in German affairs, and we had these various cases. To read them was really kind of pathetic. There was a fellow, a priest who was executed for telling a joke about Hitler - just a simple, ordinary joke. Somebody turned him in, and he confessed that he had told that joke, and said he didn't mean any harm by it. Then they accused him of having a defeatist attitude towards the war (he probably thought they were going to lose the war - a lot of people had as it wore on) and the guy was executed. There were maybe a couple of dozen cases where people were executed that we had records on from the Berlin Document Center.

But I was down there and I visited the Center. We knew all the people, the Americans, there. I think eventually, didn't we turn the Center over to the Germans?

Q: I think we microfilmed everything and turned it back to the Germans at the end, only quite recently, as a matter of fact.

MARTIN: Yes, I know it was not too long ago. A lot of these things are still happening.

Q: Let me see, then in '56 - when did you leave Berlin?

MARTIN: I left Berlin in September, but let me just mention a couple of other cases I had, or one in particular. There was a woman who applied for a visitor's visa, and there was in her record that she was a drug addict and she was on a list that doctors got because people who were drug addicts would tell a story to a doctor in order to get certain drugs. Anyway, she also had a

positive Wassermann - which meant she had syphilis, at least in her body. But it had been stopped because penicillin stopped it dead in its tracks. In her case the medical requirements were that they had to do a spinal tap to determine if the brain had been involved. I remember the doctor came to me, and said, "You know, I really don't want to do this if I don't have to. Would you please reverse the usual procedure, and interview her first? If you're going to turn her down, then I won't do that. She'll just be turned down."

Q: It was not a very comfortable procedure, a spinal tap.

MARTIN: Dangerous and painful, and something could go wrong, too. So I remember that case. And then there was another case where somebody I issued a visa to went to Italy and took the *Andrea Doria* to the United States. She was on the ship when it went down. She was saved, but the headlines in all the Berlin papers were "Berliner Goes Down with the *Andrea Doria* but Rescued."

Q: Did you have any Americans who would get to Berlin and run out of money, and you had to get them out of there.

MARTIN: Yes, and it was a funny case, because one of the guys that was with me, a staff officer who was one of the other vice-consuls, whenever he had a difficult case like that, very often, he'd get them to Bremen. We used to send them to Bremen, and then they would eventually maybe go to Bremerhaven and then to the States.

Q: Get them on a troop ship.

MARTIN: Get them on a ship. In other words, get them to the next consular district, which is an old consular trick, I think.

Q: It is.

MARTIN: Anyway, he was always doing that, and darned if he wasn't transferred to Bremen - because, you know, they could transfer us within the country. Then he was complaining that we were sending cases to him that we should have handled ourselves!

There had been an annual ball in Berlin before the war, and there was a slush fund, not very large but large enough; and the consular officer dealing with passports and citizenship could disburse it.

Q: The money for this was generated by the ball.

MARTIN: The ball, yes. The custodial fund - it's all against the rules now.

Q: Oh, yes.

MARTIN: They don't allow that at all. Even then it was probably against the rules. But it was there, and it was approved, and everybody knew about it. There was no dishonesty involved.

And then we had Lutheran nuns who ran some sort of a guest house, and we used to put people up there for a couple of days until arrangements could be made for them to leave. They would come in to complain about the place as you couldn't read because they said there was only a 25-watt bulb in the middle of the room. The quarters were not particularly comfortable. And we would say, you know, "You don't have any money to stay anywhere; this is all we can afford. We can't put you up in a hotel. You've got to stay there." It was practically free.

Because of the special status of Berlin, the commanding general had the authority to expel people, Americans, from the American sector. We had a case of a character, an American tourist who came, and he met some guy on the street, an American who conned him into buying some Hitler souvenirs and a camera from East Germany - Zeiss, from East Germany. He was going to get him a Zeiss camera if he would give him 600 marks. He would meet him the next day on the corner there and have the camera and the souvenirs. Well, of course, the next day the guy was not there, so the American tourist went to the police. The police said, "What did he look like?" and they said, "Wait a second, is this the guy?" They had his picture. They knew who it was right away. He was wanted for burglary in several different states. He was a combination burglar and con man, and he had been living with a German woman and he had a child. She had tuberculosis, and was about to be put into the sanitarium, so I was going to break up the relationship. He was pretty much ready to go back to the States anyway, but they tossed him in jail, and I went to see him. I used to bring him cigarettes and chocolate bars to keep him going. He complained it. A German jail can be pretty tough.

Q: German jails were not pleasant. I mean, if you've got to do it, go somewhere else.

MARTIN: Denmark, yes, someplace like that. German jails are cold in the winter, and I don't think the food is all that good. So he wanted some help. While his case was being processed, the general signed the expulsion order. We had a liaison officer with the police, and it would be an American policeman doing that work. One of them came to me and said, "Well, this is a bad guy". I was going to escort him out of the country, to Bremerhaven. We were going to put him on a troop ship. And this fellow said, "Oh, you've got to watch him. . . . dangerous and so forth." I said, "Well, he seemed okay when I talked to him in jail."

We got on the troop train to Bremerhaven and then to Bremen from Bremerhaven. We stopped in the morning in Bremen. You remember the train used to take a couple of hours to get there. I was asleep. Later on, when we all got up and were on our way, he said, "You know, Mister, I could have escaped. I could have escaped, but I didn't want to get you in trouble." He *was* a con man.

When we got to the ship, he wanted to know where he was going to be on the ship. He thought he'd be up maybe in a stateroom or something. Well, on the troop ship, I remember he said, "Well, where is that?" And the military guy who was arranging said, "That's all the way down." I mean, this guy was below decks. He was in the bottom of that ship, but he had some cigarettes and chocolate bars I gave him, and he had meal tickets for meals on the ship.

Before we left Berlin, I was told, if he wants to escape, let him escape. The general's jurisdiction extends only to the American Sector. Once the train pulls out of the station, a half hour later, when we leave West Berlin, whatever he does, don't put up any resistance; just let him go. But

he didn't go, he wanted to go home to the States, and then I never heard from him again. But that was kind of a fun trip.

Well, that pretty much completes my Berlin experience. I did get to know some newspapermen there, a guy who wrote for Tagesspiegel who later became a TV announcer. I don't know what happened to him. But anyway, my friend Erhard Sundermann, whose father was a doctor, he is still around. I looked him up when I was visiting Berlin. I knew I would be able to get in touch with him. I called him. He's still there.

Q: So '61 - where to?

MARTIN: I went over to the Office of German Affairs.

Q: You were there when?

MARTIN: '61 to '64.

Q: Was this in INR or in the European Bureau?

MARTIN: This was in the Bureau of European Affairs, and I worked on the Berlin Desk and East German economic and financial stuff. Even though we did not recognize the East German government, they still wanted somebody to cover that.

Q: This is obviously a very interesting time on Berlin. Before we do that, let's talk a bit about East German finances. How did we see East Germany in those days?

MARTIN: Well, there wasn't much information on East Germany. East Berlin was a mess. They hadn't been able to rebuild. The traditional German industry was concentrated in the Ruhr, but more so in Silesia. It had the optical industry, the publishing industry, the printing, and the chemical industry, which was one of the most important industries there. Those were all concentrated in the East. And they were functioning, but in general, West Germany was pulling way ahead of East Germany, and people always saw the contrast. It was hard to say whether East Germany was getting better, but I think it was. East Germany was estimated to be the 10th largest industrial power in the world at that time. A lot of the advanced equipment that the Russians had, they got from East Germany, so East Germany was a very important place to Russia. As far as the economics of the country were concerned though, it wasn't doing well. Now we know something we didn't realize then: that environmentally it was a disaster, because they were doing nothing at all about protecting the environment. The chemical industry smoke from the stacks generally went to the east. They didn't seem to care. The pollution of the rivers was bad, but somehow they didn't do a thing about it.

Q: Was it complete Soviet control, or were the East Germans able to do more with their industry than others?

MARTIN: East Germany was totally state controlled by the East German leaders, Ulbricht mainly, who were old hard-line Communists from way back and very tight with the Soviet Union. The East Germans were running East Germany for the Soviet Union, very tightly. They were not inclined to be independent in any way. They followed the Party line very, very faithfully. Still, I didn't spend a lot of my time on the East German economy or economic matters. Whenever there was a speech by an East German leader, we always analyzed it, and very often the significance of it was economic. We would write something up and feed it up to the Assistant secretary, but not very often. Once I wrote something that was sent up to the Secretary's office, about some East German economic thing. But in general, I would say we followed the East German economy mainly in the speeches of the leaders.

A more important part of my job was West Berlin and East Berlin. In West Berlin we had something called the Berlin Stockpile. As a result of the blockade back in '48, there was an Airlift, and a lot of it was coal because the people were freezing. Afterwards there was an analysis of what had been done and how to prevent that in future, or at least to be prepared. So what we stockpiled coal. Coal dealers were authorized to buy huge amounts of coal, borrowing the money from banks and the West German Government would pay the interest. West Berlin was underwritten by the West German Government. They had all kinds of subsidies to encourage people to move to Berlin. People in Berlin having a baby got a bonus. To encourage people to go to Berlin, they would give them a bonus to marry, and for each child they had they would get a certain amount of money. There was public housing. There was all sorts money, including American, but mostly West German money, going to build things in Berlin. We were encouraging that. The Berlin Government had a lot of imagination. They would subsidize people to visit so they could tell the story of Berlin. One thing was to get people over into East Berlin to see this amazing contrast with West Berlin. If there ever was an advertisement against Communism, it was just to visit Berlin and see the two parts of the city, one that was doing well and one that wasn't.

Q: Doug, I wonder if you could talk about when you arrived at the Desk and the Kennedy Administration had just come in. I've talked to people who were serving in Berlin when Kennedy came in, and I can recall one or two of them expressing a certain disquiet because they were concerned that not just Kennedy but the people around him weren't being tough enough. They felt that we might be a little bit soft on the Berlin situation and give away some of our rights. Did you get that feeling at all when you were on the Desk?

MARTIN: Oh, yes. I used to attend all the staff meetings in the office, and Martin Hillenbrand, who later became our ambassador to Germany, was the office director. He would report to us what happened in these various meetings, and the 1961 meeting in Vienna was a disaster for the United States.

Q: Where Kennedy and Khrushchev met.

MARTIN: Kennedy and Khrushchev met, and Khrushchev, apparently, bullied Kennedy, and Kennedy was shaken by it. Khrushchev came away with a very low opinion of Kennedy and a belief, because he was a true believer in Communism, that Communism was on the way. His impression of Kennedy was that he could bulldoze him into any kind of concession he wanted.

That meeting may have led eventually to the Cuban Missile Crisis which was really the last phase, according to Floyd Cola, of the Berlin Crisis. The Soviets were getting tougher and tougher, and we were not making concessions, really, but were ready to make them. And in fact, I heard Ambassador Thompson, who was our ambassador in Moscow at the time -

Q: That's Henry Thompson?

MARTIN: Tommy Thompson, they called him. He said that we should negotiate away East Berlin before they take it, and of course, they did take it, and we let them take it, but what could we have done? I mean, we were not going to start a war. So, it was true that the climate was one where, on their side they thought they were up on us, and on our side, we were wondering whether there was something we could do that could somehow mollify them. I don't say we. I don't say me. But in the White House, they had that feeling.

Q: By the time you arrived, it's almost like a rather esoteric religion as far as Berlin is concerned.

MARTIN: Yes.

Q: I mean everything...

MARTIN: ... was very formalized, yes.

Q: Was like a very formalized Kabuki dance almost because of the fear that if you did this, the other side might ask for more. And so you had to be very careful. Were you indoctrinated into this new religion?

MARTIN: I had served in Berlin as a vice-consul, and I used to attend staff meetings so I was very familiar with the Berlin situation. That was why I got over into the Office of German affairs. Martin Hillenbrand knew me very well, and he liked me, so he even said when I came in that they admired what I did as a consular officer, so they took me in. I did know the legal situation, the factual situation, and I knew the people too.

Q: Were you nervous about the new Kennedy Administration?

MARTIN: I wasn't nervous, but I saw that they were ready to make concessions, and a lot of people thought that maybe it was time to make concessions. Nobody thought that his point of view was necessarily unreasonable or that he was caving in just because he was afraid. But Kennedy was very nervous because right at the beginning of his administration there had been the invasion of Cuba, a disaster. Then he went to the meeting in Vienna with Khrushchev that also was a disaster. So the atmosphere was very bad at that time.

Q: As I recall it, didn't Kennedy come back from Vienna and call up a part of the reserves and talk about putting more troops into Berlin?

MARTIN: No, there were no more troops put in. The 6th Infantry was already in Berlin. But when Kennedy came back, he was very nervous politically. His whole campaign, in 1960, was based on the idea of a missile gap and that we were somehow behind the Russians. The Russians picked up on that and were using it. They tried to give the impression that there was a missile gap. There was none. That was a fake. That was somehow a ploy Kennedy's people had come up with. Maybe they really believed it, but once elected, they saw right away there was no missile gap, because we had extraordinarily good intelligence. Even though later on, the East Germans had agents operating all over West Germany and were doing extremely well against us, I think we were doing well against them too.

Q: A certain amount of transparency on both sides, unplanned, inadvertent transparency.

MARTIN: Right. There was a woman named Eleanor Dulles, who was the sister of John Foster Dulles, and I really took over all of what she had been doing. Of course, I didn't do what she was doing. Because of her connections and her name, she had been able to set up something called the Benjamin Franklin Foundation, which built a congress hall in Berlin, and then she was building a medical center. The foundation was headed by an architect who was the head of the American Institute of Architects at one time, a guy named Leon Chatelain. He didn't want Eleanor Dulles pushing him around.

The first thing that happened was Mrs. Dulles was transferred to something else and resigned very shortly thereafter. But she was still interested. She used to call up, and she could threaten. She would call up and ask a question. If we didn't give her the answer right away, she'd say, well, what if I call my congressman? Then you'd have to write a congressional letter. I mean, she was a little bit indirect, but not very. We would get the point, and anyway, people liked her, taking into account her personality and way of doing things. We liked her, and we liked what she had been doing. But the State Department auditors criticized the foundation. One recommendation which redounded very much to my benefit was they said that whenever the Benjamin Franklin Foundation has a meeting in Germany, somebody from the Desk should go. So that was me and I got four trips to Germany between '61 and '64.

Q: What was the foundation doing?

MARTIN: Encouraging aid to Berlin to build up Berlin as a center, to keep it as the future capital of Germany, which it turned out it is. Somebody told me the Congress Hall has been torn down, and they've built another one that's bigger and better, but still, that was a very advanced architecture, and we were encouraging. The Germans did the same thing. They built a symphony hall which was unbelievably modern. It looked like it was built from the outside in, rather than with the idea of the traditional symphony hall. All kinds of things like that were going on. The Benjamin Franklin Foundation was doing it. But later on, they concentrated on the Berlin Medical Center. They hoped it would be the most advanced medical center in Germany and would take the best of the German tradition in medicine and advance it even further, because the Germans were outstanding in the medical field before the war, up until the time of Hitler, and maybe even after that. It continued to be, I think, the leader in Europe in medicine. We were encouraging that and the Berlin Medical Center was going to be part of that.

On my trips to Berlin to attend those meetings, I would also go to the mission, and see what was going on. I would go over to East Berlin because I had gone over there in my previous job. I would always go to buy books or do something, just to go over and see it. The people from the Foundation always wanted to go over and see East Berlin, and I would go with them. So those trips to Berlin were really great.

I can't remember exactly when, but by the fall of '62, they started to close in on Berlin. They started to limit access; there'd be more and more incidents; and finally, they were threatening to take over East Berlin. They came up with this concept that Berlin was resting on East German soil, that West Berlin, and Berlin in General, was in the Soviet Zone, and that this gave them some kind of rights. It was a very technical thing. It took people like Martin Hillenbrand and the legal people to explain over and over again. There was a whole crowd of people who had served in Berlin over the years who were working in the Office of German Affairs, in the CIA, and others who were, I think, trying to enlighten Kennedy as to our rights. He was very nervous.

I forget exactly what triggered it, but we started something called the Berlin Task Force to deal with the day-to-day threat that Khrushchev would cut Berlin off. We had daily meetings, and Floyd Cola and Martin Hillenbrand would go to the White House, probably two or three times a week and sometimes every day when it really got hot. One thing I got involved in was aviation to Berlin because Pan American Airways got nervous that one of their planes might be shot down. So we started negotiating with them, and part of the plan was to have air force officers fly Pan Am flights into Berlin, because we were determined to keep the access routes open. Then they said, "Well, this causes insurance problems for us." So they began to negotiate, and they wanted us to agree to accept the liability for whatever might happen to Pan Am. We spent a whole weekend once negotiating with Pan Am and negotiating with a man named Gray. He was a famous pilot and later on the president, under the chairman, of Pan Am, and he was an operations man. I saw in the Pan Am building at the JFK airport at that time, which was at that time Idlewild Airport, they had a museum of the history of Pan Am, and Gray was the captain and pilot of various Pan Am flights across the Atlantic in those flying boats that they had in the very early days. He was an impressive guy. He was also very tough, and he could really put on an act during a negotiation, saying that we accused their pilots of being yellow, being afraid to fly, when we told them we'd have air force pilots fly the Pan Am flights if it came down to that.

As a member of the Berlin Task Force, we used to have meetings every day up on the Seventh Floor, and they'd be chaired by Floyd Cola, assistant secretary for European Affairs, who later became our ambassador in Moscow. Martin Hillenbrand remained as director of the Office of German Affairs, and he was assistant director of the Berlin Task Force under Floyd Cola. We would discuss every day, and one thing that impressed me very much about Mr. Cola was that he was very attuned to what we call public diplomacy. He was very interested in how things were playing out in the press, and I remember he was getting very upset with Drew Pearson. He'd become almost apoplectic at some of those columns. We were also following that, because you might say a subset of the Berlin Task Force was something called the Berlin Viability Programs. Kennedy was looking for political cover everywhere. So he would be asking people what they thought, important American people, and in particular he brought in General Clay, who was a hero in Berlin.

Q: Lucius Clay?

MARTIN: General Lucius D. Clay was a relative of Henry Clay and had been a four-star general in World War II and then the head of the whole occupation at the beginning, right after the war. When Eisenhower left, it was General Clay who took over, and the street that the American consulate and the US mission were located on in West Berlin was called Clay-Allee. He was a great hero in West Berlin. They really loved him. He agreed to go to Berlin and stay there during the crisis.

He was totally different from Kennedy, in the sense that he was, if anything, a hawk. People were worried that he was upping our commitment, because people were thinking that if we had a showdown we would have to make some concessions. General Clay was not likely to do that, and so under him we were exercising all our rights, especially our right to travel in East Berlin, which they were restricting at Checkpoint Charlie. There were a number of incidents at Checkpoint Charlie where they tried to prevent us from exercising our right to go into East Berlin. General Clay, with the assistant chief of mission, Alan Leitner, went down and there were tanks right down there at the East Berlin line, and they went into East Berlin just to show that we had a right to go into East Berlin. We were giving up nothing at that time, once General Clay got there.

Q: During this crisis - this is in '62 - that Khrushchev was boosting the pressure, it was also scaring the hell out of the East Germans, wasn't it? I mean, they were beginning to really come into West Berlin, weren't they, at that time?

MARTIN: The number of people going from East Germany into West Berlin or directly into West Germany was between 3,000 and 5,000 a week. When something would happen, that number would go up, closer to 5,000. Then it would come down, closer to 3,000. This had been going on since 1945.

I mentioned public diplomacy and how Ambassador Cola used to follow what was going on in the press all the time. CBS news had by far the best news coverage on radio and television. They had Dan Schorr, and he was doing a great job. NBC was looking bad, and was desperate to be in the game. It started a theme that we were going to win in Berlin politically and militarily, and we're going to lose because everybody would move out of Berlin to West Germany. That was wrong. But there was a flow, and a lot of people in Berlin were from East Germany. But because of these economic incentives, there also were people moving into West Berlin. Under this Berlin Viability Program that I spoke of, General Clay who was in charge of it wrote a letter to 25 leading companies in the United States asking them to consider establishing an office in West Berlin. They all responded very politely, but there wasn't too much interest in doing that. In fact, it was somewhat the opposite. One of the biggest American companies in West Berlin at that time was Gillette. They were making one billion razor blades a year in Berlin and distributing them throughout Germany. When they heard about the Berlin Viability Program, they came in and said, "We're already there. We would like you to give us tax benefits to stay." They were threatening that maybe they would leave, because everybody else was leaving, but everybody else wasn't leaving. It was a veiled threat that they might have to reconsider their operation in Berlin. But if they got a tax break, we could help them, and they would stay. We referred them to

the Treasury Department. Tax questions are Treasury questions, and they went away. It was kind of shocking to me that an American company would take advantage of the situation. Pan Am was the same way in asking us to subsidize the insurance that they had. They wanted us to cover the liability so that there would be no increased insurance costs on Pan Am.

Q: Business is business.

MARTIN: Business is business, and that's what lobbying is all about. But it still was disillusioning to me.

Q: Did you feel with the Berlin Task Force that Khrushchev really was trying to squeeze us out of West Berlin at that time?

MARTIN: Nobody really believed it would happen, somehow, no. We thought if we did the right thing, we'd get through it, just like they got through the Airlift. As time went on, it became clear that we were going to get through. Then, on August 13, 1961, they put up the Berlin Wall. Since I was the Berlin guy at that time, the action copy of all of these telegrams would come to my desk. Somebody told me later that in the National War College they used to use as an example what happened after the Berlin Wall went up, and that the telegrams from the State Department were all marked "No Action Necessary." Well, that was wrong. It was crazy, because lots of action was taking place. I mean Cola and Hillenbrand were in the White House every day. We were doing things.

We were preserving the status of Berlin. I remember the telegrams were piling up, all the yellows, and I remember talking to Henry Cox, who was our public affairs guy, and I said, "What are we going to do with all these telegrams?" He said, "NAN them." Not "No Action" - everybody knew plenty of action was taking place. NAN was "No Action Needed," or something like that. Then they would get into the archive system. But that was told as a story in the National War College as if, really, the State Department was taking no action at that time. Complete nonsense.

Funny things were happening as the Wall went up. I was on duty the weekend after the Wall went up. All of a sudden, they closed off a sector, and were moving in huge amounts of materials. We weren't sure what they were going to do at the beginning, but then they started building a wall, and then they built it and built it. It took them months to get it completely built. They started shooting people who tried to go through, because there was a big rush. The first couple of days, when the East Germans realized there's a wall going up, you had the option of leaving before it was finished. So there were a lot going across. Then they started shooting people, and there were some incidents of people being shot right at the sector line. There was one guy who was shot and we couldn't get to help him, and he just lay there and bled to death. So it was very bad, and it was hairy for a while.

On our side, I never had a feeling that we were going to give up Berlin. Some of the Berliners were nervous, but in general there was no such feeling on the part of us or the British or the French. Our position was clear. We were very legalistic. We knew what our rights were. Everybody associated with that desk and the British, everybody had experience in Berlin. We

were exercising our rights, and we weren't going to let them cut back on them, even though in effect there was reduction. There was less going over to East Berlin.

There was an incident when an American sergeant and one of his friends went over to East Berlin. They had these political comedians doing satires in night clubs. The guy was saying insulting things about the United States, and the sergeant got up and decked him. He got arrested, and that was a big incident. We got the guy out, but then people were arguing that they should be proud of that sergeant for standing up for the US. They did a study at that time because they were afraid to have people going over into East Berlin. They found that the average American soldier in Berlin never went further than one mile from the barracks. In fact, a lot of them would come out of the barracks and go straight across from Andrews Barracks. There was a place called the Golden Sun, a bar, and over it there were rooms. These guys would go over, pick up the girls, go up in the rooms with them. Some of these guys would take 30 days leave and never get more than 100 yards away from the Andrews Barracks. It turned out that we didn't have to worry about the GI's going over into East Berlin much.

Q: I was an enlisted man in occupied Japan at one point, and believe me, the GI's there didn't go very far. They went to the nearest bar and the nearest brothel. That took care of all their needs, and it was very unusual to get out and around.

MARTIN: Yes. The Korean War was still on, or the aftermath of it. We had a lot of draftees in Berlin. And a lot of these guys who were in college or law school, would get drafted. A lot of them would be sent to Berlin to work in intelligence agencies putting the names of people on cards to be filed somewhere. They would say there were 17 - some said there were nine - different intelligence agencies located in Berlin. These guys were college guys. When they got their annual leave, they would go down to Italy, Switzerland, or France. They did try to travel around. It was a chance to have kind of a junior year abroad in a month. So there was some of that, but the typical soldier did not go very far from the barracks.

Another incident took place there that was very interesting. CBS' Dan Schorr was running away from this NBC guy, I think he's still with NBC out in Los Angeles. NBC wanted to do something. After the Wall went up, there were some tunnels that were dug, and some refugees escaped through tunnels from East Berlin into West Berlin. NBC did something I thought was really bad. They financed a group in West Berlin to dig a tunnel into East Berlin so that people could come through. They made a TV program called "The Tunnel," and got an award for it. The guy from NBC stood up on TV and said, "The State Department didn't want us to build this tunnel." He didn't say not to build. "The State Department didn't want us to do this program. They didn't want the truth to come out, about refugees risking their lives." The guy went on and on, and I was thinking, what a contemptible thing for a newspaper man to make news. They were making the news so that they could get a big story out of it, and then, of course, they got some kind of a big award. It shows how bad the media can be at times. That stood out in my mind, and I've been anti-NBC ever since.

Q: During this time, prior to the Wall going up, was there any divergence among the three basic powers - France, Britain, and the United States - on Berlin, or from your perspective, were we pretty much in harness?

MARTIN: From this time, we started very serious planning, and I was working on the Berlin contingency plans. We had a tripartite group and a quadripartite group. The quadripartite group included the West Germans. Everybody was on board; everybody was planning; everybody wanted to do something; but there was a divergence of opinion. The British were very clear that they were a traditional trading power. I don't know how much of their economy is tied up, but a lot of it is. They were very concerned with any kind of counter-measures that would affect trade. They were willing to plan for all kinds of trade counter-measures, but would agree to impose them only at the very brink of war. We called these the "non-military counter-measures."

There also were naval counter-measures that we heard about, not non-military, but non-warlike. The British didn't want to do anything that would affect trade. The Germans were in favor of doing some things with the navy. They didn't want things happening right in Germany. They were willing to go along with all kinds of planning, but they did not want plans that would start bombs dropping in Germany. They wanted to plan things through the navy and other non-military counter-measures. One thing they could do, they could shut off all the lights on a ship, sneak up on, say, a Soviet ship, which probably would see it on the radar, but maybe not. They would sneak right up and all of a sudden they would shine very powerful lights to disturb anybody on that ship and shake them up, and let them know that Uncle Sam or John Bull or somebody was there. That was one of the things the navy was going to do.

If somebody came into this country, we could impose border measures. We had the Immigration and Naturalization people come in to explain that when you enter the United States, they can hold you for 30 minutes, just make you stand there for 30 minutes, and they can hold people for so long, and they can question their documentation. They can do all kinds of things that would make it very inconvenient, say, for the Russians, if the Russians caused any trouble and they were trying to come in. We could do a lot of things that were inconveniencing. The planning went on for years because it was very difficult to get people to agree, but there was no disagreement on the idea of doing something.

Q: What about the French?

MARTIN: The French were always willing to do things, but they didn't much like planning. But they would participate in the plan, and they'd say, okay, we'll do this or we'll do that, and if it comes to it, we'll do this or we'll do that. The planning exercise took a long time, and it was very interesting to see what could be done, if it came down to a showdown, short of war. I thought the naval counter-measures were very interesting, and we could do things at airports. We could do things also with trade, such as export controls. When you start looking at what the United States and the other countries can do, it's a little difficult sometimes to get agreement as to which contingency would trigger which operation - as I say, the British were very reluctant on any kind of trade counter-measures. The French weren't so tough on that. The Germans didn't want things that involved any kind of land action, affecting German territory itself. They wanted things to be done outside and by the other allies.

Q: What happened when in August of '61 the wall went up?

MARTIN: The 13th, yes.

Q: Did this put into effect a lot of the counter-measures, or how did we do this?

MARTIN: No, the counter-measures were all planning. We didn't do anything, but the planning was going on all the time. A lot more people were involved. A White House guy, a prominent lawyer in town, apparently close to Bobby Kennedy came over, and was managing the non-military counter-measures. I remember spending a couple of afternoons changing "will" to "may", going down everywhere he said "will" do this, we said "may" do that. I know it seems kind of silly, but the idea with the planning was, not just planning, because nothing we planned for ever happened. Nobody planned for the Cuban Missile Crisis. We planned for a lot of other things, but it was planning, and also readiness. Going through the plan for what we could do if this happened, we were then ready, because all these other agencies - the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the army, the navy - were all in on the planning; it enabled them to be ready. If something had happened, I would say we were quite ready.

Q: Did we see the Berlin Wall as a defensive measure because too many East Germans were leaving Germany, or was it considered part of a strategy to take over West Berlin?

MARTIN: No, we didn't think of it as a strategy to take over West Berlin. We saw it as a strategy to stop these three to five thousand people a week that they were losing. Right after the end of the war, they had 17 million people in East Germany. By 1961, 15 years later, they still had 17 million people. And they had picked up a lot of refugees along the way. They had a real problem with their economy and with people, and this hemorrhaging of people that was getting worse. No, it was to keep people in. It was not to keep us out, either, because they didn't keep us out. That's why we had these incidents. They would have liked us to give up exercising our rights, but we wouldn't. We kept on exercising our rights to go into East Berlin. I would say this was really a great period in the United States, where we stood up and did something and it worked out well.

Q: In dealing with the Berlin crisis, did we feel that the Soviets were very much both concerned and in charge or was this Ulbricht and his leadership calling the shots?

MARTIN: Oh, this was simply Russia. You hear me say Russians. A lot of people say "the Soviets, the Soviets." It became the thing to say, but Cola used to use the term *the Russians*. And of course most in the Soviet Union are ethnically Russians. I would say it was a Russian thing, and part of the historical Russian expansion and the idea of their being a great power. They still want to be a great power. Our policy is to try to tell them, "Forget about your reputation. Start doing something about your country recovering from the disaster that was the breakup."

Q: When the Wall went up, did that calm things down?

MARTIN: It did, yes. And the Wall stayed up for a long time. The flow out of East Germany dropped precipitously. They didn't have 3,000 or 5,000 coming; they were trickling across. They were escaping, jumping off ships, going in boats across to Denmark from East Germany. There were some escape routes that the intelligence people knew about, that they could recommend

people to go from East Germany directly into West Germany because these 3,000 to 5,000 people I spoke of, half of them were going directly from East Germany into West Germany. The other half were coming through Berlin, from East Berlin into West Berlin. They'd be processed at refugee centers, and most of them would then be transported into West Germany, but some would stay in West Berlin. There were always these contacts between East Berlin and West Berlin.

I mentioned this German friend of mine whose father was a doctor who had a lot of patients who lived in East Berlin. He continued to treat them and would write down in his book or whatever that he had treated them and taken care of them; then he would have East German money. He used to buy cloth from his West German money. Then he would go into East Berlin and use his East German money to have suits made from the cloth that he bought in West Berlin. There were still these contacts. They always had contacts between some of the utility people and the fire departments. There was never a complete separation between East and West Berlin. We didn't want that. But the Russians were running the show. The showdown was between the United States and Russia.

Q: How about the Cuban Missile Crisis? You were still on the Berlin Desk. Were we watching moves in Berlin, expecting something.

MARTIN: Oh, yes. Our intelligence was excellent. I have great respect for the CIA. They knew everything that was going on. The thing is, just because you know somebody is going to take a punch at you, can you stop him? You might not be able to. But we did know a lot. They continued to have very good information coming out of East Germany during that time. I remember at a meeting one time, we had a meeting with the French and British, and Floyd Cola said, "We have information from one of our sources in East Berlin." It wasn't; but he was putting them off. He was very clever, a very smart guy. And Martin Hillenbrand - those two guys, really outstanding. They were regular Foreign Service officers who came up through the ranks, top-level thinkers and doers, influencing President Kennedy every day. He listened to Cola.

Q: What about during the Cuban Missile Crisis? It must have been October of 1962. Were we watching for other moves in Berlin? Was Berlin relatively quiet at that point?

MARTIN: Berlin was quiet then, yes. There was not a lot going on in Berlin. All of a sudden, according to Floyd Cola, the Cuban Missile Crisis was the last gasp of the crisis in Berlin. Khrushchev saw he wasn't getting anywhere, and putting up the Wall, from a propaganda point of view, was a big defeat for them, because it showed that they had to keep their people as prisoners. People were still escaping right and left. There were still these incidents - some people would try to escape, and there'd be a shooting - but in general, it was very quiet at that time in Berlin.

Everybody was focused on the speech that Kennedy made where he said that we know that there are missile sites and missiles there. They agreed to take out the missiles they had there, and we agreed to take out the missiles that were in Turkey, which we apparently planned to take out anyway. That was the concession we made. I just heard an analysis of it. Somebody said that

Khrushchev and Kennedy were two people caught up in a world crisis and neither one of them was really up to doing it right, but they somehow got through it.

Q: What about Kennedy's trip to Berlin? Were you on the Desk at that time?

MARTIN: *Ich bin ein Berliner.*

Q: Yes.

MARTIN: Before that we had another famous trip. We were nervous when all of a sudden Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson said that he was going to go. I'm sure he had the okay from Kennedy. But we went to George C. McGee at that time, who was - and I was his assistant helping him. I was his aide-de-camp helping him get ready to go to Germany. We didn't like the idea of Lyndon B. Johnson going to Berlin.

Q: He was considered pretty much a loose cannon.

MARTIN: We didn't know what he was going to do. So we went to George C. McGee, who was a Texan, and said, "Maybe you can help us get Lyndon B. Johnson not to go." He said, "No, I can't do that. That's something I can't do." He wouldn't do anything. Johnson went, and he saw Adenauer. I didn't go to Berlin on that trip, but Herbie Cox did, and some other people. He said, "We pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor for Berlin." And people were saying he had actually upped our commitment to Berlin, he was so forceful about it. So people were nervous.

Then later, when Kennedy went to Berlin he said, "*Ich bin ein Berliner*," and that was really a triumphant thing for him. But basically, things were calming down at that time, and I think we basically had won, and General Clay was a big influence on it, because Alan Leitner was a very nice person and very capable and all that, but he didn't have the stature. General Clay going over there, and also President Kennedy relied a lot on General Maxwell Taylor, who got an office on the Seventh Floor, just about the same time. Kennedy didn't like just being a leader. He always wanted to have cover, and he was always trying to find it through other people. For example, bringing General Taylor in and General Clay and some other people who came into the government at that time, and of course, his brother, Bobby Kennedy. It was all Kennedy's way of covering himself, and maybe to get advice from a lot of people.

Q: Did you have any feel for the influence of Bobby Kennedy while you were doing this?

MARTIN: No. Once, I remember there was a fellow named Elwood Williams. I don't know if you ever knew Elwood Williams.

Q: Yes, he had multiple sclerosis. He was Mr. Germany for years.

MARTIN: Right, and actually, I used to take him to the bathroom for a while. I was taking care of him. And we used to have lunch every day together. One day, we had a draft speech because I guess it was Bobby Kennedy would be traveling around the world and making speeches in

various places, and he was going to be in Indonesia and make a big speech. We had a draft, I don't know where it came from exactly, but I guess it might have come from PER, but it might have come from the Indonesia Desk. It had to be cleared on the Seventh Floor. So I took Elwood with the speech up to the Seventh Floor, and we got in to see George Ball. There we were, sitting in George Ball's office (he was the undersecretary for political affairs at that time), and he was working on the speech. It was obvious that everybody wanted to get in on the act, and he wanted to get in on things too. He looked at the speech and said, "What's all this crap about Communism?" He didn't like that. He completely rewrote the speech, and we sent it out the way he wanted it. We came down the next day; he redid the speech.

We were there until midnight, and Elwood's wife used to come to pick him up. She had arrived at about 6 o'clock, and it must have been - well, it wasn't midnight, but it was like 10:30 before we got back to the office. She was so mad. They're both dead now.

The Pentagon was also writing a speech. The speeches were coming from different places, and eventually the speech that Bobby Kennedy gave in Indonesia was completely different from the speech that George Ball had drafted, and I'm sure it was different from what the Pentagon had written too. They probably got a lot of Bobby Kennedy and whoever worked with him right at that time, in the speech. But that was the only remote contact I had with Bobby Kennedy, although he went to Europe at some point and he and his wife came for a debriefing and we talked to them.

There were all kinds of people getting into the act then. One big thing we did on the German Desk was handle people coming from Germany to the United States. We set up the program for them, and I learned something there, and Elwood taught me that, the main thing was to get somebody important right away to agree to see whoever it was. I remember the economics minister came over. He saw a lot of important people. And somebody from Berlin, the mayor of Berlin or under-mayor came over, and if we could get somebody important to see him we would use that as kind of an anchor, and we'd call up and say, "Mr. Schmidt is coming over next week, and we're setting up a program for him. He's seeing General Clay on Wednesday at four o'clock. Could you see him on Wednesday morning?"

That always was a good ploy. That always worked - except with George Ball. He had a woman that was his secretary named Mrs. Hanady. I don't know if you ever heard of her. She was a very strong type. You'd call up, you wouldn't get to George Ball right away, and you'd talk to Mrs. Hanady. We would use this on her: he's seeing so-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so, and we thought maybe Mr. Ball would like to see him. She would say, "Oh, he's seeing all those other people, Mr. Ball doesn't have to see him." I thought that was pretty good. She was tough. If Ball wanted to see him, of course, that would be fitted in. She'd probably tell him, but we always left the option open. We had a very strong ambassador to Germany before McGee. He was a Foreign Service officer, a career ambassador, I think. He was very tough and always wanted to be involved in everything. Anyway, he was somebody you couldn't get to see a visitor very easily. People would go to Berlin or to Bonn and never get to see him.

Q: What about George McGee? How did he operate? What was your impression of George McGee?

MARTIN: When I became his staff aide, they sent me up to the Seventh Floor, where he had an office. He had been bumped. If you remember, shortly after Kennedy came in, like a year later, there was a reshuffling of the people at the top. He said, "I had all the best people, but I didn't have them in the best places for them." McGee got pushed out in the shuffle, and Averell Harriman, who was a favorite of Kennedy's, got his job. He had a cubby-hole of an office on the Seventh Floor. They do have one little office up there for somebody extra. McGee was in there, and the administrative officers for that area were trying to get him out, and I was in between. This guy would tell me that all his phone calls and everything are going to have to be billed to GER, and all this kind of stuff that you can go through with an administrative officer sometimes.

Eventually McGee came down to EUR. No, maybe he didn't. I was the staff aide, and I set up the program for him to see people in the US government, and he wanted to see *everybody*. So we went to the CIA. I think it was when McCone was the head of the CIA. I went over to the CIA with him. Most of the time, he didn't want me to come in with him.

He knew a tremendous number of people, and he made phone calls. You know, he was a multimillionaire in the oil business, and he was a figure of importance in Texas, and he owned an estate, I think 5,000 acres out in Northern Virginia. He had gotten to know everybody. When he got into foreign affairs, he had somebody get him a collection of books on foreign affairs. He had 25,000 books on foreign affairs, which now have been given to the Georgetown Foreign Service School. That was his private collection of books when he wanted to have a library of books.

You could see he really enjoyed it. We went to see everybody. We went to the Pentagon, the CIA, the Department of Commerce. Somebody told me he at one time had ambitions to be Secretary of Commerce. We went to see Paul Volcker, too. He saw anybody who had any connection with Germany. He wanted to see that person before he went to Germany.

During this time, the budget was coming up. The whole argument about the budget was underway. Congressman Rooney was looking for ways to save money, and he heard about the train. The ambassador in Germany had his own private train, and there was a master sergeant in the army who was the trainmaster. The ambassador used to go to Berlin every month, very often by train, or he could fly, or he could go by car. He liked to go by train because to was exercising our rights. Rooney criticized the train, and we gave the train up as an economy measure that would save one master sergeant's pay and the train. McGee said, "Well, it would have been nice, you know, to go to Berlin by train every month," as the previous ambassador always did. There was an ambassador's residence in Berlin. He'd stay there weekends, then come back. So the last trip on the train was George C. McGee arriving as ambassador in Germany.

Q: Did the death of Kennedy in November of '63 and the coming to power of Lyndon Johnson make any change in how we dealt with Berlin? You were there till '64.

MARTIN: I would say it did not make a great deal of difference. Actually, at the very beginning, the same people stayed in the White House around Johnson, and he was occupied with a lot of other things. He was concerned with the domestic agenda. Things had calmed down. The Berlin Missile Crisis was over, so things were quiet at that time.

One thing I want to mention concerns Eastern Europe. On the German Desk we had East Germany. All the other Eastern European countries were under the Office of Eastern European Affairs. Inevitably, we used to deal with the Eastern European people a lot, so I got to know them. I knew them from having worked on Yugoslavia as well. Our policy of non-recognition of East Germany came up once because the Soviets were always trying to get around it. They were always trying somehow to trick us into doing something that could be interpreted as recognizing East Germany. Eventually we recognized the government but that was much later. I was on kind of a non-committee. All the countries in the world that we didn't recognize were constantly trying to do things to get international recognition. For example, North Korea, Cuba, North Vietnam - whatever country we didn't recognize - there were a bunch of them.

They would always try to do things. There was an international organization of people interested in light aviation. That's parachute jumping, blimps, gliders. There is an American Glider Association, an American Parachute Association; and an American Balloon Association. These guys were always trying to promote themselves. The East Germans would find them somehow and would offer to fund some kind of big contest or competition, but of course the East Germans would have to be invited. We would get wind of it and shoot it down. We were shooting down their participation in the Olympics, any kind of thing.

Chuck Johnson, who was my boss on the Berlin Desk and I used to go to those meetings and try to shoot down East German efforts. Once they sent a note about a plane that had crashed and they tried to inform us in Prague. They sent a note. The ambassador was Outerbridge Horsey, and he opened and read it, and then handed it back to the East Germans. We didn't want him to do that.

So I had to write a letter, or the Czech desk was going to write. We were going to - not reprimand - but remind Outerbridge Horsey that we didn't recognize East Germany, which of course he knew very well. He thought he had done the right thing by opening the thing and handing it back. He wasn't supposed to open it. He wasn't supposed to accept it at all. I remember writing the letter and taking it around to get cleared. Somebody said, "It's almost like you're praising him." I said, "We have to be very careful. You know, Outerbridge Horsey is a feisty guy. He'll get upset and he'll come back at us, so we have to be careful. On the other hand, we're going to tell him."

Harold Veda, who was the head of Eastern European affairs, liked the letter. I was coming up for reassignment at that time, and he saw me in the hallway with Elwood Williams coming back from lunch. I had gone to see him and told him I wanted to go over to Eastern Europe. He said, "Would you be willing to do economic work?" I said, "Sure, and I'd like to go to Eastern Europe, any of the countries. I've been to Yugoslavia, so I'd rather go to one of the other Eastern European countries. About two weeks later he saw me, and he said, "Doug, I put you in to go as chief of the economic section in Poland."

I later met Outerbridge Horsey, a very impressive guy. Later on he taught at St. Anselm's Abbey. His brother was Benedictine monk in England, I think, and Outerbridge Horsey, when he retired, taught a course in international relations. My son took it, and I used to see what he did. He gave

a very, very good course, at a very high intellectual level, and it was during the time McGovern was running for election. Horsey came to the office one day, and he had a McGovern for President button and the kid was shocked. He couldn't believe that Horsey - just the way he conducted himself, the way he talked - would be for McGovern.

It was because of that letter that I got to go to Warsaw, and I was very happy to do so. I was supposed to study Polish, but there was some kind of an incident where somebody had to be pulled out early, and so they asked me to go early. I went in April, I think, of '64, and I had been scheduled to go in August. Now this was too bad, because I didn't know any Polish at all. I started taking Polish lessons when I got there, and I had studied Serbo-Croatian, so I guess you can be retreaded, but I never really learned Polish very well. I did most everything there in English.

COLE BLASIER
Economic, Commercial, and Political Officer
Bonn, (1954-1957)

Cole Blasier attended the University of Illinois and Columbia University. He Joined the Foreign Service in 1951 and served in a number of posts including Yugoslavia, Germany, and the USSR. Mr. Blasier was interviewed by Peter Moffat in 2002.

Q: Wasn't the U.S. mission in Germany called HICOG when you got there?

BLASIER: Yes, it became an embassy during my assignment.

Q: In 55, I believe.

BLASIER: Maybe, yes, although we were scarcely aware of the change.

Q: For all intents and purposes, you acted as an embassy throughout?

BLASIER: Yes.

Q: Well, it certainly must have been an active post. What particular areas did you feel you had the most role in?

BLASIER: Well, Bonn was probably one of our biggest embassies. My work was demanding and intense, and it involved working relationships with many other economic and political officers. Also I dealt with all the consulates and Berlin.

My central task was to ride herd on the German economic miracle, its relationship with various industrial, labor, trade, agricultural and other sectors. The economy was purring along at a 6% annual growth rate year after year, and everybody wanted to know whether this remarkable

growth would be sustained. We were expected to make some predictions, and usually did so after rounding up forecasts in the press and leading economic journals. At first the German staff read many sources for me. After the first year my German was good enough to read them myself. Although dependent on the German staff initially in writing the survey reports, I was able in less than year to write them largely alone. I also wrote dispatches on a few key current issues, like economic aspects of German reunification and rearmament.

Q: Who were some of the people you worked with?

BLASIER: Although respected and well liked, Ambassador Conant was a remote and little known to most Embassy staffers, including myself. Much of what I knew about Conant was through his special assistant, Allen Siebens. Tainted by his conscientious service in China, Siebens was a victim of the McCarthy period. His promotions had been held up years because of his association with the old China hands. Conant was protecting him. Some time after I left Siebens' promotion was effected and he resigned from the service the same day. He worked later, I believe, first with Carter Burgess and later Frank Pace.

James Conant spent much of his time traveling around the country by train making speeches in German to German groups. My guess is he thought that this could be his best contribution, and he liked the contact.

Speculation was occasionally offered that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was his own Ambassador to Germany. However many good traits he may have had - President Eisenhower admired him, Dulles was a self-centered, ill-mannered, and clumsy secretary. Some of the functions often performed by ambassadors at other posts, like maintaining morale and being an example, were performed in Germany by the Deputy Chief of Mission, Walter Dowling, supported by his conscientious wife, Alice.

Our Embassy in Germany had to deal not only with Foster Dulles but also with Eleanor Lansing Dulles. If you took off their glasses and cut her hair, these siblings could have been twins. From Washington she devoted herself to Berlin - was called the mutti or mother of Berlin. Nothing was too good for Berlin - don't spare the costs. She could get a lot of what she wanted brandishing the names of "John Foster," and at times, her deceased uncle and former secretary of state Robert Lansing.

While devoted to the rebirth of Berlin and of Germany in a United Europe, Tuthill was cost conscious, as demonstrated later in his Topsy campaign against overstaffing embassies. He felt we had done much for Berlin and the revolving fund (built by the repayment of former loans) would continue Berlin's healthy growth. To promote this approach he asked me to write a pamphlet showing how much we had done, and also reassure the Germans about our continuing commitment to Berlin. In what was a partial answer to Eleanor, I wrote an illustrated pamphlet on German American cooperation in Berlin, which was translated, published, and distributed throughout Germany East and West.

The Bonn Embassy was a great opportunity to meet foreign service officers of promise who would later play useful roles in American foreign policy. Many had good careers in other parts of

the world thereafter. Walter Dowling, Jack Tuthill, Bill Buffum, Gene Boster, Arch Blood, Grover Penberthy, Terry Catherman, Jerry Greene, Weir Brown, John Renner, and Peter Seip.

Q: Didn't you take advanced Soviet Studies in Oberammergau after Bonn?

BLASIER: Yes I did, at Detachment R near Garmisch, Germany. This was a Defense Department school which admitted a few civilian students, in that year, John Baker and myself.

The faculty was composed entirely of Russian speakers from the Russian and other Republics like the Ukraine. Many were bitterly anti-Soviet and profoundly prejudiced in their lectures about Soviet reality. It was not that they were always wrong - one can understand why they were so anti-Soviet - but that they spent too much of their time proving their anti-Soviet credentials rather than giving a many sided view of Soviet reality. There was one educated, thoughtful and creative analyst who was able to leave behind his cruel treatment as a former Communist and member of Agitprop during the Great Purges. Kunta was his pseudonym, A. Avtorkhanov, his real Chechen name.

Detachment R was a great place to learn Russian - the language of lectures, of class discussion, and examinations. Oberammergau also was a great place to charge one's batteries.

Q: When you finished in Germany in 1957, you were ready to go back to the delights of serving in Washington?

BLASIER: Yes. That's right. I had been abroad six years on three fine assignments. The department must and should rotate people back to Washington. Even though my dream of an assignment to Moscow had still not been fulfilled, I really understood completely and had no complaint about going back to the Department. My wife and I bought a house in Cleveland Park and loved Washington.

My assignment to the Soviet internal section of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), and my previous assignments in Belgrade, Bonn and Oberammergau qualified me for the queue for a posting to Moscow.

All my assignments came at a time of big moments in world history. In Belgrade Tito's break with Stalin reshaped world communism and the balance in the Cold War. We came to Bonn when Adenauer was rebuilding Germany after the defeat of Hitler, the German economy was a miracle, and German rearmament a major issue. We came to Washington just as Khrushchev was tearing down the Stalin myth, trying to strengthen the Soviet economy and society and open ties with the rest of the world. Washington was an excellent place to gain perspective on these developments, all of which I wrote about.

At the same time my work in INR was confining with little contact with people outside our division - the main job was to review and comment on Soviet newspapers and intelligence materials. I respected and liked my colleagues: Ken Kerst, Sol Polansky, Heyward Isham, Bob Davis, Jack Matlock, and many others.

My experience and that of my friends reinforced the view that I had long held regarding the Foreign Service, that the title literally means "service," that the interests of the service precede those of its individual members. I knew and accepted as fact that if I remained in the Foreign Service, I would never be able to control fully where I worked, what I did, and when I did it.

Q: How did you divide up the duties among the people you mentioned?

BLASIER: As I recall, maybe incorrectly, Polansky and Isham did top leadership, Davis had certain related matters. I did education, science, nationalities, Central Asia, and special assignments. I think Matlock dealt with cultural issues. He may have roamed rather widely over other subjects, too, as many of us did. I, for example, wrote an intellectual history of Khrushchev in preparation for his visit to the United States.

I was a member of the team that received Khrushchev during his visit to Washington in 1959. As mentioned below, I had already been in Russia and knew the Minister of Higher Education. I accompanied the latter on his appointments and was present at major functions.

All Russian subjects were interesting for me. But, analyzing the Soviet press in Central Asia was stultifying, repetitive, and usually unrewarding. We also had reports from U.S. government agencies who interviewed American visitors returning from the USSR. With some exceptions, those visitors knew so little of Soviet life and Soviet science and education that it was hard to squeeze much out of their testimony. We had access to most of the official cables going back and forth, including highly classified ones. That was fascinating!

Q: You had mentioned that you'd been to Moscow. What connection was that?

BLASIER: In 1958 the "thaw" was beginning to melt Soviet relations with the rest of the world. More westerners were coming to visit the USSR and had better access in many places. The secret police still tried to monitor and control their citizens' contacts with the populace, but conversations were possible. Many American delegations were scheduled to visit the USSR that summer. The Embassy had its usual business plus riding herd on these delegations, politically important U.S. officials, and influential Americans. This was an important moment when access for political reporting was better than ever, though still not good. The Embassy asked Washington for help in handling the heavy anticipated traffic. Having had extensive academic training and a tour at the Oberammergau Russian Studies School, I was a logical candidate for temporary duty at the Embassy. I lived in Moscow for about three months in the Metropole Hotel. This was the realization of a dream of my life. Young people today who have long had access to Russia may not be able to understand how much it meant to aspiring Russian specialists to set foot on Soviet soil.

Since the end of the Second World War I had fervently wanted to visit the Soviet Union. During these months I visited Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov. Delegations that I escorted took me to Tiflis, Alma Aty, Tashkent, Bokhara, and elsewhere. In Tashkent I met the Grand High Mufti. My interviews included ordinary people, students, university rectors, faculty, tradesmen, architects.

Many of my contacts took place in parks, on the trains or buses. In a park, for example, a Russian would come up to talk and we would end up having a conversation so intimate that you wouldn't have it with an American until you'd known him for five or ten years. Because they so wanted so badly to speak to somebody from outside, they had so much to get off their chest that and they spoke openly, very openly. You knew that when you had finished that conversation, you would never see that person again. I was almost sure that after such meetings, the police would interview them and order them never to see me again. I doubt that they ordinarily would have been arrested on just one encounter. These talks were extremely rewarding for me and gave me insight into the Soviet Union that I had never had before.

During that summer I served as an escort and occasional interpreter for three delegations: 1) the first delegation of University presidents to visit the USSR, headed by Chancellor Edward H. Litchfield of the University of Pittsburgh, 2) a delegation of American social scientists, including Frank Snowden, Dean of the College at Howard University, and 3) a delegation of U.S. veterinarians. All the rest of the time I was on my own to pursue visits and conversations with Soviet officials and citizens and to write a flurry of reports back to Washington.

RIDGWAY B. KNIGHT
Deputy Assistant High Commissioner
Berlin (1954-1957)

Ambassador Ridgway B. Knight was born in Paris, France to American parents. He joined the Foreign Service in 1946. His career included positions in France, Germany, and Pakistan, and ambassadorships to Syria, Belgium, and Portugal. Ambassador Knight was interviewed by Kirstin Hamblin in 1993.

Q: No, no. This was 1955--Deputy Assistant High Commissioner for Germany.

KNIGHT: Well, responsibility for Berlin. Mr. Dulles had the idea that it would encourage the Berliners to think that we were returning to normalcy should the number one American in Berlin be a civilian, instead of the General commanding the garrison. Well, it took me about three weeks after arriving in Berlin to discover that the only real concern of the Berliners was the Russian threat. They were only interested in the protection of our armed forces, and Mr. Dulles' brilliant idea was a non-starter. Hence I recommended that the position be abolished, that we revert to the preceding situation, i.e. the American General, being the number one American in Berlin. This took about a year. Anyhow, the position was also to disappear with the end of the occupation status. That time coincided with the entrance of Germany into NATO in 1955. General Gruenther, who was Supreme Allied Commander Europe, asked for me as his political advisor, in part because I had worked for him in Italy during the war. So I was lucky enough to be named to that position. I was Political Advisor to General Gruenther for a year and a half, and to his successor, General Norstad, for another year and a half.

DAVID EUGENE BOSTER
Political Officer
Bonn (1954-1958)

Ambassador David Eugene Boster was born in 1920. He served during World War II on Harvard's Communications Training Center Staff. His Foreign Service career included positions in Mexico, Poland, and ambassadorships to Bangladesh and Guatemala. Ambassador Boster was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.

BOSTER: The Foreign Service's "Soviet club", of which I was by then a member to a certain degree, had begun to maintain positions in certain Embassies. There was one in Paris, in London for a while and there was one in Bonn. That was my assignment -- essentially to cover any aspect of Soviet activity in West Germany and Berlin. This also included coverage of the German Communist party.

There was some concern about Germany in the aftermath of two wars we had with it. I am sure that is a given in anyone's approach to German questions. But when I was there, it was a constructive period and people were optimistic. The Germans were extremely cooperative with us. It was a common enterprise -- an optimistic period.

There was another officer in the Embassy, Rebecca Wellington, who covered Berlin. We must have divided East Germany to the extent that East Germany figured in our reporting. For example, the 1953 riots in Berlin would have been reported in the first instance out of the U.S. Mission in Berlin. We had a special unit in that Mission that covered East Germany.

I don't think working with a different group of people -- Sovietologists vs Europeanists -- was important at all. If you had asked me back then to compare the Embassy in Moscow with that in Bonn, I would have undoubtedly have said that man-to-man, Moscow was better. I might have felt that, here and there, there might have been people in Bonn that would not have measured to the Moscow standards. But I think that would have provincialism on my part. There were some excellent people in Bonn; it was a good group, including Bill Buffum, Jock Dean, Ted Lampson, Arch Blood -- all first-rate people.

I was still a very young officer, a second secretary. Because I was responsible for Soviet affairs, my contacts were with office directors who were 20-30 years older than I. Brautigam, who was the Director of Eastern Affairs in the German Foreign Office, was probably in his late 50s and maybe early 60s. The other men were equally senior. Most of the time this might give people problems. It didn't seem to do so in my case. The fact that we had won the war probably had an effect on their attitude toward this sort of thing. I was very well treated; I had easy access to these people; they were very open and frank and helpful. Their views formed a large part of my reporting.

I really never got much information on the German Communist Party and always felt somewhat at a loss what to say about it. On one occasion, someone came from Frankfurt to discuss the Communist Party and I racked my brain trying to think of something to tell him. I consulted with

someone else in the Embassy to see whether anyone had anything on the Communist Party. The political game in West German was between the CDU and the SPD.

OWEN B. LEE
Civilian Employee, U.S. Army
Wurzburg (1955)

Owen B. Lee served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He graduated from Harvard University in 1949 and studied in Paris, France at Institut d'Etudes Politiques. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Bolivia, Romania, and Spain. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on December 4, 1996.

LEE: At the end of the two years I completed the school, taking Spanish along with French, and then managed to obtain employment with the US Army in Germany as Director of an Education Center with the First Infantry Division in Wurzburg, Germany. Again this is relevant because I still had the Foreign Service in mind. By the time I got to Germany, I took an interest in the work, it was fascinating work.

Q: Tell us a little bit about what you did.

LEE: The work involved managing a program for U.S. soldiers beginning with illiterates all the way to college. We had company commanders who would come to me and say, "Mr. Lee, I have soldiers I can't put on guard duty because they can't read the instructions." That was five percent of the U.S. Army overseas in Germany at the time. We had a program for them. I used U.S. soldiers who had degrees as teachers and also Germans. Then we had courses for people who had gotten through the eighth grade and wanted to get a high school education. Then we had the University of Maryland program for college study. A lot of officers commissioned during the war at that time did not have a college degree. It was all very satisfying. But, I still had the Foreign Service in my mind.

Meanwhile, the restriction was still there and I could not take the exam. But this was to change because I had a brother who was a lawyer at the time and was working for a judge in Boston. I wrote him about the immigration law and said, "Look, there is a provision in there that says that if you are in business overseas and you marry a foreign spouse they can be naturalized immediately if you are still in business overseas." So, my brother looked into this and wrote me back saying to have Anne (my wife) come to Boston and she will be naturalized promptly. This was in 1954, I believe. She flew back to Boston, stayed with my brother, had everything arranged with the U.S. Immigration Service, was naturalized in a matter of days and returned to Germany. I then submitted my application for the Foreign Service exam.

So, in the end I took the exam in Frankfurt, Germany. The officer who administered the exam, turned out by pure chance to have been an officer who had been in the same dormitory with me at Harvard University. He became an ambassador later on.

FRANK E. SCHMELZER
Visa Officer, Refugee Relief Program
Frankfurt (1955-1956)

Frank E. Schmelzer received a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania. His Foreign Service career included positions in India, Afghanistan, Washington, DC, Vietnam, and Germany. He was interviewed by Michael Springmann in 1992.

SCHMELZER: The Refugee Relief program was a very interesting one and a lot of hard work -- particularly towards the end of it. The legislation for this particular refugee program expired on December 31, 1956. So we knew that we had to process as many of these people as we could because after that date anybody left hanging there would, indeed, be left hanging there.

There were two groups of people essentially. There were Germans who had been expelled from Eastern Europe and the so-called escapees who were Germans who had escaped from East Germany and other nationalities who had escaped from Eastern Europe. There were Russians, Mongolians, Czechs, Poles, Yugoslavs, Romanians, etc. Now some of these people had been around for a long time because they had been processed initially under the Displaced Persons Program, but for one reason or another had not been granted visas. In many cases they were too close to the Nazi Party or to the SS or they might have been Russians without sufficient documentation, that sort of thing.

The basic qualification was to be an expellee or an escapee. We tried to deal with people who had been in Germany for two years or more so there would be a police record on them. This was not always the case, of course, but we tried to do that. A lot of these people had been there for years already. While I was there, the broad strictures, e.g. against mere membership in the Nazi Party, were lifted so we could treat most of these people on a case-by-case basis. The process was that people would make known their interest in getting a visa. Then we would tell them what documentation we required. Time would go by as they met these requirements. There would be the requirement of having a sponsor in the United States. If all these conditions were met on paper, and if we had no obvious questions at that time, then we would call them forward for an interview. If all went well, we would then give them a visa and then they would be immediately interviewed by an immigration official, right there in Frankfurt.

This of course is unlike the usual procedure where the visa officer gives a person a visa and then he goes to the United States and is admitted or not admitted at the port of entry in New York or wherever it may be. But here the immigration officer was right there because INS was well aware that this Refugee Relief program had many more problems than the regular immigration case. So by having the INS officer there they were able to stop a lot of these people and protect their bureaucratic imperative that way. The result was that we often had a difference of opinion. We would say the person was qualified and the INS officer would say no. Then we would send a memorandum back to Washington and it would be fought out between the State Department and

the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Later, of course, I was the so-called security officer because my German was pretty good. So I got all the nasty cases, the ones that were a little harder to deal with. I had quite a few instances where I thought the person should be given the break, or should get the visa, because I felt we had settled whatever questions there had been and the INS officer would not agree. I won about 90 percent of those cases.

But you can see why there would be a difference in outlook. The Foreign Service officer was usually a younger man, it might have been his first overseas post, and he was often imbued with more feelings of tenderness towards these people, many of whom had had a hard life. Whereas the INS officer tended to be a hard-bitten older man. Maybe he had spent years on the Rio Grande trying to fight the big fight to keep out the wet-backs, etc. He had more experience and had built up some feelings that you shouldn't be too soft on these people because eventually there were going to be trouble makers among them.

Here is an illustration of how much some of these people had gone through. One of the people I gave a visa to was a White Russian. He left the Soviet Union sometime in the 1920s and he ended up in Germany. I don't remember whether he went to Germany immediately or landed in Germany after the war. In any case, for that long period of time, from the 1920s through 1956, he had been a Colonel in the Soviet Army. For all of that 30 year period he had endured very poor living conditions, had been sweeping streets -- he had not been able to find a good job. He was there with his wife and someone or other. I stood up and saluted him saying, "Colonel, Sir, here is your visa." The man cried. It was the first time in thirty years that anyone had shown him any respect. Well this was the sort of thing that you were dealing with.

The trouble people could get into was amazing. I remember a river boat captain who had a boat on the Rhine River. He was charged with incest with his daughter. Well, there was no way that he was going to get a visa. Another guy I had was supposed to be in charge of all the drug operations on the west bank of the Rhine River. I had two US Marines standing in full uniform outside my door when that guy came in because I was going to tell him no. I told him no and he walked out and never caused any trouble.

There was another interesting thing that happened there. I knew there was going to be trouble over this eventually. I don't know who was running these guys, whether it was CIA, military or what, but every now and then you would see these green papers come through. All paperwork normally was white and suddenly here would be an application on green paper. You would look at it and realize what it was. A little while later this young man would come in, his head closely cropped, in his late twenties or early thirties, a muscular looking fellow, alert, active, with one or two Americans with him from this particular Service. These people were operating behind the Iron Curtain. They were running back and forth carrying out dangerous missions. Their reward later on was to get an immigration visa. Everybody in the building would know that this guy was probably involved in some intelligence work for the Americans.

I kept telling these intelligence officials that they shouldn't do it this way because eventually you are going to lose one of these guys. Everybody knows. Why are you using green paperwork?

Sure enough, one day we gave a guy a visa and a day or two later he disappeared. He was never found again. So then we changed the procedure.

So I came up with a new system. These gentlemen would come through with white paper, would come through with only one person, not two, and I would keep the paperwork and not turn it over to the German locals in the building. Instead, after the locals left, I would go down and open up the safe and take out the seal and stamp it and do all the paperwork. In the meantime I had taken a block of visa numbers from the staff without their knowing it and would do all the work myself. We never lost anyone else after that.

I also used to deal with all the Russians. There was so much backbiting in the Russian community. Some files on these guys were a foot thick. It was terrible to work with those people.

Occasionally you got an East German agent. You had to know a certain amount of information about each one of the East European countries. You were not expected to be an expert, but you had to have some sense as to when these people were lying. Because if they lied on something that was material, their visa application would be denied.

Another thing of interest was that these people had really been through the mill. You bring them in for an interview and before you ask the first question some of these people would start laying out on your desk 10 or 15 documents. Even before you said anything. They were so used to this and were so regimented and indoctrinated and covered by paperwork. The average American would have only a driver's license and social security card and a credit card, but that would be it.

Several of us FSOs who were in Frankfurt during 1955 and 1956 have been interviewed by the FBI in recent years concerning the procedures we used during our administration of the Refugee Relief Program. The FBI's Office of Special Investigations (OSI) spoke to me on three occasions concerning visas issued then to persons subsequently believed by OSI to be deportable as war criminals because they were guards or otherwise engaged at concentration camps. I assured the FBI that we considered membership in the SS and service as guards to be "material" (but not grounds per se for automatic denial of a visa) -- i.e., a basic factor to be reviewed carefully during the visa process, and that withholding such information, or lying about such a background, would be grounds for denial of a visa. OSI found these discussions to be useful as they considered whether or not to open or to pursue deportation proceedings.

We didn't rely much on our German staff because most of our cases dealt with non-Germans. I got my training from the Americans who had been there before, one in particular. Occasionally, if you had applicants who didn't speak German very well, and we had a local who spoke the applicant's language, we would bring him or her in.

Toward the end of the year we were working seven days a week, ten hours a day. This was in 1956 and we were trying to get as many visas processed as we could before the deadline came up. And then, of course, the Hungarian Revolt broke out in November and that had an impact on our operation. I got jaundice about that time and was in bed for six weeks, so I was out of it. We had to send people to Vienna to process the Hungarians who were flooding in across the border. So our operation kept working right up to New Year's Eve.

It was a good training. You learned an awful lot about human nature very quickly. You had to. You had to make an assessment of people's character and understand their background.

WILLIAM LLOYD STEARMAN
Political officer
West Berlin (1955-1956)

Dr. William Lloyd Stearman was born in Wichita, Kansas. He attended high school in Burlingame, California and entered the V-12 program of the U.S. Navy Air Corps. He received a bachelor's degree in math from the University of California in 1943 and attended graduate school at Columbia University. His Foreign Service career included positions in Austria and Germany. Dr. Stearman was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on April 15, 1993.

Q: You left Austria just about at the time the Peace Treaty was signed.

STEARMAN: I left just before it was signed and went up to Berlin as a political officer for RIAS, which was a position that was created after the Berlin uprising in 1953. RIAS played a large and important role in spreading the uprising in East Germany in 1953 which had started in East Berlin. RIAS, only by simply describing what was going on, in large measure helped spread it.

Q: RIAS standing for?

STEARMAN: For Radio in American Sector. It was an American station broadcasting to East Germany in German, of course. That was a fascinating job. I went up there in February, 1955, at a time when most of us in the political section in our embassy in Vienna were anticipating that the Soviets would partition Austria. The line that they were taking led us to believe that they were going to partition Austria. Well, that was psychological warfare that they were conducting and then not long after that they made the concessions that made the agreement possible. That all happened afterwards.

Then I went up to become the political program officer at RIAS, which was an incredibly interesting job. At RIAS one got to know an incredible amount about East Germany because we had daily contacts with people from all over East Germany who would come in and tell us what was going on.

Q: What was the staffing of RIAS like? Where was its funding, direction and staffing coming from?

STEARMAN: It was funded entirely by the U.S. at that time, now it is entirely funded by Germany. It is still in existence. There were four U.S. officers in the Foreign Service who were all from USIA at that time. Then you had a very good German staff, a crackerjack German staff.

Of course, we had the political broadcasts of which I was in charge of vetting to make sure they didn't counteract our policy objectives. But you also had things like the school program. We completely duplicated the whole East German curriculum on social studies. On the day they would, for example, be studying a certain period in their secondary schools on, say, the Weimar Republic, RIAS would cover the exact same subject that evening from a non-Marxist-Leninist point of view.

Q: You paralleled the East German?

STEARMAN: We paralleled the East German education all the way from the first grade up to, and including, the university. Of course, for the universities you had to take a different route because they didn't have a standard daily curriculum. But we got the daily school plans for all levels of public school from first grade up to what would be the first two years of university in our system, so we could duplicate what they were doing. We didn't bother with natural science, math or other non-political subjects. We covered only politicized subjects.

We had special programs for farmers warning them how to avoid traps that would lead to their farms being collectivized. We advised what to do when the secret police came around to arrest people and what steps to take if you were about to be arrested. A whole host of things; basically how to cope in general with the system.

We gave the communists a lot of heartburn. They were always seeking ways to get rid of RIAS. It was an exceptionally effective operation. I really think it had much to do with sustaining a frame of mind which ultimately led to the overthrow of the communist regime.

Q: Now, you had these riots in Berlin in 1953. I recall this vividly because I was an airman in the cadre first to serve down in Darmstadt. We were kept within the barracks because we weren't quite sure what was going to happen that time. But there was no move into East Germany at that time. Were you sort of under instructions as you were monitoring not to make promises that we couldn't keep?

STEARMAN: I don't think that RIAS was ever charged with that, but we had to be exceedingly careful about how we covered anything that might become a repetition of the Stalin Allee strike on June 17, 1953, which sparked the whole uprising. We were very careful not to do anything that might incite riots. The charge was levied against RFE, especially, of being responsible for the Hungarian uprising, or to a lesser extent, VOA...

Q: This was in 1956.

STEARMAN: ...which brings me back to how I got involved with the Hungarian revolution. When it started I was asked to come back to the embassy in Vienna because they were short on people who had the expertise, background and knowledge of Eastern Europe. So I came back on TDY to help the mission. When I got there I discovered that the USG didn't know what was going on in Hungary because we had no communication with our legation in Budapest. Tommy Thompson was our Ambassador to Austria at the time and leaned over backwards not to get us involved in any way. He gave orders for all U.S. personnel to stay away from the border,

including CIA, etc. This was generally adhered to by everybody, so they had to go down to the refugee camps to interrogate refugees. Of course, information from these refugees was usually two, three, four days old.

I sized up this situation and "didn't get the word" (about Thompson's order), not being part of the mission. I just checked out an embassy car and went down and poked around to find an area that was still controlled by the Freedom Fighters. I interrogated dozens and dozens of people who had just come out of Budapest and various other places in Hungary. I would phone in reports of what I had learned from them to a friend in the political section in the embassy. Nobody knew that he covered for me, in fact, nobody else knew what I was doing. But I believe I can safely say that for two or three days and nights, I was probably the only source of firsthand information that the U.S. government had of what was going on in Hungary.

I was in and out of Hungary and saw the Soviets put down one of the last pockets of resistance by accompanying Austrian custom officials and border guards into Austrian enclaves, which were in Hungary and which I didn't know existed. So we were actually going into Hungary to observe the Soviet operations. I watched two armored regiments put down a resistance which consisted of young mine workers from the Brennbergbanya coal mines and university students from Sopron University. It was a very disheartening affair which depressed me for a long time afterwards. When the Soviets got complete control of that part of the border, I checked out.

The point I want to make before it slips my mind is that I asked many, many refugees if they had been encouraged to revolt by Western broadcasts, and they nearly all answered the same way; "We never heard any broadcasts that urged us to do what we did, but the very fact that you had been broadcasting to us for a couple of years led us to believe that if we did this you would come to our assistance." The one thing that almost everyone recited was the (1952) campaign promise that Dulles had specifically made to roll back the Iron Curtain, and they literally expected Eisenhower to ride into Budapest on a white horse as Admiral Horthy had done back in the early twenties. Of course, afterwards the Germans made an exhaustive study of RFE broadcasts to Hungary and they couldn't come up with any evidence that we encouraged an uprising. It was an extremely depressing time, mostly due to extreme stress, at the time. I got hepatitis from which I have never fully recovered.

Q: Obviously this was a very difficult time. Again, I was a young vice consul in Frankfurt at the time and I remember we were wondering if we were going to get involved. It was really a very disheartening time, I think, for most of us for the American presence, because of standing by and watching this thing that we had all sort of been expecting and hoping for and then doing nothing.

STEARMAN: One of the problems was that we knew so little about what was going on. Of course, don't forget the Alliance had been ruptured through the British, French and Israelis going into Suez after the revolution started. We were outraged at that, I must say. And then, of course, we were kept at arms length distance by all three of them before and for some time afterwards. Then we had to pull their chestnuts out of the fire when the Russians threatened to rocket London and Paris if they didn't pull their troops out of Egypt. So the Alliance got back on track.

But also, it was hard for the U.S. government to handle two major crises at once; moreover, I

don't think we showed much imagination. I am convinced there were things that we could have done. We couldn't have gone in with forces, obviously. In the first place, we couldn't get there. We would have had to go through either Yugoslavia or Czechoslovakia or violate Austria's new neutrality, just one year after we had agreed to guarantee it. So we couldn't get into Hungary.

We should have encouraged the UN's Secretary General to go in with a large team and scatter all over and try to secure the airport and inhibit the Soviets. It might not have worked, but I think we could have done something. It was an extremely depressing thing to have seen these young kids up against tanks. Tanks as far as you could see came in there, I haven't seen so many tanks in my life, roaring in from Budapest. It was like about 50 B-52s coming in on the deck, a deafening roar. They even dropped leaflets on us to try to get us to surrender. At night they tried to cut us off when we worked our way from the enclaves of Austria. The Austrians were only equipped with World War I carbines so Soviet patrols with their AK-47s had us badly outgunned, but the Austrians were from that area, having grown up there, and knew how to get safely back to Austria from these enclaves. The border wasn't defined because the Hungarians had literally torn down the Iron Curtain in May, 1956. Few realized that they had done that. This sort of emboldened the Hungarians too and enabled the Austrians to render non-military assistance. Austria did everything but go to war with the Soviet Union over its suppression of the revolution. Austria was in the very forefront of helping the Hungarians, while the rest of us just followed along. I was surprised how many Austrians knew Hungarian, especially the aristocrats. Even many young aristocrats seemed to know Hungarian. Austria did everything it could to help, except provide arms. Austria openly sided with the Hungarian revolutionaries to an extent that even we didn't do; although it had only an army of 30,000 recruits which they kept at least 3 kilometers from the border in order to avoid clashes with the Soviets. Some Russians did come across the border, and the Austrians shot them with their World War I carbines. It was a very much dicier situation than most people realized. It was also terribly depressing.

Q: What was the feeling toward Ambassador Thompson at that time by the younger officers?

STEARMAN: I think they probably felt he was being super careful and super conservative; however, I could understand his problem. You get a lot of Americans down there who don't know what they are doing and that could be extremely embarrassing as well as damaging to our interests. I knew the area so well and was bilingual in the language, however, I didn't go anywhere without an Austrian official with me. By that I mean an Austrian gendarme, officer or non-com, or an Austrian customs official. The Austrians organized all the interrogations for me. I never did a thing on my own. It was always with the fullest cooperation of some Austrian official. Others might not have done that and instead would have gone off on their own and caused real problems. So I defied Thompson in a way that...in the old Austro-Hungarian army the highest decoration, the Order of Maria Theresa was only given to an officer who carried out a successful operation in defiance of orders. You had to have been ordered not to do something, but you did it anyway and succeeded to get the highest decoration. Well, Tommy Thompson went to his grave without my ever telling him what I had done. When we were both retired from the Foreign Service, I used to run into him once in a while, but I never had the heart to tell him that I had defied his orders, although by then it wouldn't have made any difference. But I believe what I did was necessary because otherwise we would have known nothing at all. But I also think he was right because he couldn't very easily, just select certain individuals and say, "You

do it" and then keep everybody else away.

THOMPSON R. BUCHANAN
Defector (Soviet) Reception Center
Frankfurt (1955-1957)

Thompson R. Buchanan was born in Beverly Hills, California. He received his elementary education in France, Switzerland, and England. He attended high school in the United States and graduated from Yale University with a degree in international affairs. At the onset of World War II, Mr. Buchanan joined the U.S. Navy. He later received a master's degree from Columbia University. Mr. Buchanan's Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, France, Russia, Burundi, Gabon, and Norway. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on March 15, 1996.

Q: Well, let's go back. In 1955 you were integrated into the Foreign Service under the Wriston Program.

BUCHANAN: Yes.

Q: You went to Frankfurt?

BUCHANAN: George Kennan had set up a small unit in the so-called Defector Reception Center, run by CIA...

Q: You were in Frankfurt from when to when?

BUCHANAN: From 1955-57. We interrogated, debriefed Soviet defectors to see what this strange individual *Homo Sovieticus*, could be. We really didn't know. We didn't know what was his thinking. I am not sure Uncle Sam got his money's worth out of my reports, but for me it was a very interesting experience. It gave me insights into the Russian character and politics that served me well later on. I was there for two years. The most dramatic time was the Hungarian revolution, October, 1956. We took clothing down to the refugees and stood on the border and watched them going back and forth. I was with a Hungarian lady who had fled the Soviets in 1945. In 1956, her husband, Ralph Jones, was the last American Journalist in Budapest. In Frankfurt, my wife worked with East European refugees, and perhaps influenced by our involvement peripherally with the Hungarians, when we were later stationed in Paris, we took responsibility for two young Hungarian refugee boys and brought them to the U.S. They became sort of foster children and we remain close to them and their growing families today.

Q: What were you getting in your debriefing of Soviet defectors?

BUCHANAN: I learned, for example, how some Soviets reacted to what we consider the amenities of Western civilization, like good service in a store. One defector explained that he

found the interest shown in the customer somehow Uriah Heap unctuous and degrading. We were, of course, interested in these differences of value standards, which could affect how we addressed our own propaganda to the Soviets. We were also interested in the attitude of defectors toward their political leaders, toward Malenkov and Khrushchev. The most fascinating person I debriefed was Severyn Bialer, who later became a distinguished professor at Columbia University. A member of the Polish Central Committee, he fled to escape growing anti-Semitism in Poland. From his many contacts with Soviet officials, and access to Party documents, he was a wealth of information. He was the personification of the brilliant professor, pacing up and down the room, articulating points A, B and C, writing my report for me. His great ambition, he said, was to play the stock market on Wall Street.

Among my other interesting defectors, there was a KGB officer from the Caucasus and a Soviet naval officer. We were only given access to these defectors after their *Bona Fides* had been established by very tough interrogators, whom we did not always feel capable of evaluating some of the more intellectual defectors, one Moscow University student in particular. What was particularly revealing about all these defectors is how little anti-Communist ideology often played in their decision to defect. They had usually gotten in some sort of trouble involving a German girl friend, or some professional difficulty, and had fled in disgust or fear. Not that they were not critical of the Soviet system, having seen the higher standard of living in the West, but that did not seem to be the catalyst usually for defection. Opportunism certainly played a major role in the case of many of the Hungarians who fled. I debriefed some of them in German. They proved to be good bourgeois. When asked what they were doing during the fighting they told me that they used to go out in the evening on the street to see what was happening. They played it safe, letting young kids like our foster children, and the workers, fight the Soviet troops.

WALTER E. JENKINS, JR.
Economic Officer
Berlin (1955-1957)

Walter E. Jenkins, Jr. was born in Texas and spent his teens in Boston, Massachusetts. He graduated from Harvard University in 1940 and served in the military in China from 1943 to 1945. His Foreign Service career included positions in Washington, DC, Poznan and Warsaw, Poland; and Taipei, Taiwan. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.

JENKINS: I thought Germany and Central Europe would be a good alternative, and my first taste of it as Resident Officer bore this out. So I decided to stick with that. I had had this basic experience with the High Commission and had learned the language.

So they did send me to Berlin, which was wonderful. I became a member of what was called the Eastern Element of the U.S. Mission in Berlin. The Eastern Element was concerned primarily with East Germany. So fundamentally what we did was to liaison with the Soviets. We also traveled widely throughout East Germany and spent a lot of time in East Berlin getting a feel for the environment and so forth. But this again was the beginning of a pretty turbulent period in

Central Europe, the build-up to the 1956 Hungarian uprising.

After the ratification of the German treaty, the title of the chief of the U.S. Mission in Berlin was that he was sort of the deputy to the U.S. military commander, who was part of the tripartite control of the western allied sectors. He was really, formally, to fit into the legal aspect, a deputy to this commander. But he was also, obviously, the liaison with our Embassy in Bonn -- the political-economic link. He had that function, plus liaison between the U.S. military and the Berlin civilian population and government. The Mission had an economic section, political section, consular section and so forth, but the Eastern Element had a special sort of liaison function and a reporting function regarding developments in East Germany.

We had no problem whatsoever going into East Berlin. We drove, or got on the subway, or walked over from the Kurfuerstendamm. There were a lot of things to do there. I mean, they had one of the best symphony orchestras. They had a fantastic opera and comic opera. They had the wonderful theater, Bert Brecht Theater, on the Schiffbauerdamm. And so we went to those a lot, plus several East Europeans cultural and art shops, where you could buy cheaply recordings, manuscripts, art and so forth. We spent a lot of time there; very easy to go back and forth.

Over time, something was developed between the Eastern Element and Soviet representatives in East Berlin. We met with them socially from time to time and there gradually evolved a deal: "Look, we will give travel permits to each other, tit for tat, so you all can travel any time you want to in western Germany. Just let us know in advance. And then you let us travel in eastern Germany."

And so there was quite a bit of travel. The Leipzig Fair was one of the big attractions, but also we wanted to go to Dresden, to Chemnitz, which was Karl-Marxstadt then. Through such travel we got an intimate feel for the situation in the East.

I think my strongest appreciation of the political and economic climate was obtained on a return auto trip from Austria. It was October, and we purposely stopped in Weimar on the way back to Berlin to have an opportunity to over-night there. We got there thinking we were going to stay in the Premier Hotel Elefant; but it was hosting a conference; so they put us up with a private family. We spent the night in a greenhouse, of all things, and it was right chilly in October. After showing us our "accommodations," the hostess said, "You come up to us after you have had dinner; we are having some friends in." So we went up, and they were all listening to the radio: the uprising in Budapest had started! They were listening entranced, and that was one of the most fascinating social evenings my wife Laura and I have ever spent abroad. One minute our hosts would be joyous, and then they would start crying, because they remembered their own failed June 17, 1953 uprising in East Berlin. And so it was happiness and sadness. They knew the Hungarian uprising wasn't going to succeed. But then they went on talking about their attitudes towards the situation in East Germany; and it was very interesting. There was a dentist there, a druggist, and they were saying, "You know, a lot of good things have happened in East Germany." They praised collective agriculture (none of them were farmers). They thought a lot had been done in education -- more people got a chance to be educated for meaningful jobs. They thought that everybody had a job and at least had basic economic security. But then they would turn bitter and say, "But it is those bastards, Ulbricht and his ilk; we can't stand the

leadership." So, although they would accept things that were going on, they turned their hatred against the leadership, which I found rather interesting.

The 1950s were tense because, although under Khrushchev there had been the Twentieth Party Congress and its criticism of Stalin, the Soviet government under Khrushchev began to come apart. And you didn't have just the Hungarian uprising; you had the Poznan uprising in Poland as well in 1956. That had to be put down, not by the Soviets, but by the Poles themselves. You also had a tremendous exodus of young East Germans to the west, and this was a prelude to the Wall a few years later (1961). And so you had a very unstable situation.

But we not only had a pretty good, confident Mission and military, together with the Brits and the French, but also we had a mayor, a very interesting guy named Willy Brandt.

I remember that on Sunday, right after the Hungarian uprising, I had been "culture-shopping" in eastern Berlin. Driving back, I noticed there was something very, very strange going on. At the Brandenburger Tor and all along the sector border there were armored vehicles with water cannons. The East Berlin Volpos (Volkspolizei), were there with their Tommy guns. And coming down the main road of West Berlin, then called the Seventeenth of June, were hordes of students who intended to march right through the Brandenburger Tor. These were West Berlin University students, of a very different stripe from what they became some twenty years later. They were going to go through the Brandenburger Tor to protest what had been done to the Hungarians. Well, I was looking at this, and then I saw a guy get up on a soapbox and stop them and talk to them. It was Willy Brandt. Youthful West Berlin motorcyclists were going by and putting roses in the gun barrels of the Volpos. And those assembled students were ready to go; there were thousands of them. Mayor Brandt got up on the soapbox and talked them out of it. I gained great respect for Willy Brandt, the future West German Bundeskanzler. Had they proceeded there would have really been a slaughter. It was a Sunday, and I dashed back in to tell my boss, Dave Henry, and he said, "Write it up." I did, and he said, "That's great. Now we don't have any secretaries or anybody on Sunday, so type it up and you can take it to be transmitted."

"But Dave, I can't type."

He said, "You can't type? I don't see how you got as far as you have." So he typed it. It was a pretty good report.

Soviet-Western allies relations in those Berlin days were very, very tentative. We got together merely to bargain about trips and so forth and so on, and talk about things. They would try to get us drunk with vodka. Sometimes we did drink a little bit too much, and when we had them over, we would try them out with bourbon and so forth. The relationships basically were an exchange of permits to travel and drunken parties, quite frankly.

We had good relations with the U.S. military. We all shared "occupation" housing. We lived next door to various military families, and we were all in a community -- very close. We had social life together. On policy matters, we would consult with them. We had no disagreements that I recall.

I did not think nearly as much about the Soviet threat as I did when I was a Resident Officer (1950-52) -- when the Korean War started and we reinforced our troops. In our little town of Schwäbisch Halle, the U.S. troop strength was tripled. I saw it more as a beginning of turbulence in the Soviet bloc. Not something that would necessarily mean an invasion of the West, but things like putting down the Poznan uprising, the Hungarian uprising, stricter discipline in eastern Germany and so forth. I saw it as a problem that Khrushchev was having, to take what had been a 1956 opening of liberalization -- Gomulka replacing Bierut and the reactionaries in Poland, for example. The Soviets were having problems, but I didn't see it as a threat to the West at that time.

We had good relations with the Embassy. I just think the Eastern Element was seeing things on the ground and reporting it, and I thought that the Embassy accepted that first-hand knowledge. I do remember one interesting anomaly. There was some discussion at one of the staff meetings about Yugoslavia as an example of change in the Communist bloc. I remember Bernard Gufler, the head of the U.S. Mission, saying, "Now, listen, I want everyone to understand there is no difference between Communists. And I don't want anybody in this Mission to be giving the impression that they believe there is any difference between Communists." So there were some people who had a pretty standard view of what the problem was out there.

I saw a number of things that did seem to be "fiddling". There was at this time a huge exodus of young East Germans. And of course there were places all over West Berlin for interviewing the departees. Also, whenever there were political events or parades in East Berlin, there were balloons that would float over with messages from our side. We could see the effort, but I did not feel at that time that they were doing anything excessive to exacerbate a situation that was taking place anyway. Of course, Radio Free Europe (RFE) was pretty well tuned into the situation.

CHARLES STUART KENNEDY
Refugee Relief Officer
Frankfurt (1955-1958)

Charles Stuart Kennedy was born in Illinois in 1928. He received a bachelor's degree from Williams College and a master's degree from Boston University. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1950 to 1954 and joined the State Department in 1955. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Saudi Arabia, Yugoslavia, Vietnam, Greece, Korea, and Italy. He specialized in refugee affairs and immigration. He was interviewed by Victor Wolf, Jr. in 1986.

Q: Who was the head of the refugee program in Frankfurt when you were there?

KENNEDY: We had a consul general, John Burns, who later became Director General of the Foreign Service. This program was run, really, quite separately from the consulate general. We were eventually moved to a separate building. The man who was in charge of it was a man named David Kravetz. David Kravetz had been basically a file room clerk, rather poorly educated, but a real hard-charging operator. Initially, the Refugee Relief Program was very small

and really almost unworkable.

Let me explain why it was unworkable. The law specified that before anybody got a visa under the Refugee Relief Act, they had to have a thorough background check. Usually this meant that they were investigated. We worked out of Army's CID or whatever. They did a lot of interviews and all. Then if they passed all these interviews, they were sent to Refugee Relief officers like myself, and evaluated. Mainly we asked for more information. Then they came up to be interviewed, both by a State Department officer, a vice consul, and then if they passed that, they went next door to an office of the Immigration Service, which was quite an innovation that they actually had an office right there, so they were interviewed by the Immigration officer. Often, the Immigration officer would be a little more hard-nosed than the State Department officer, and would turn them down. But it wasn't a very workable situation.

Q: Why would it be that the Immigration and Naturalization Service officer was more hard-nosed than the State Department officer? Would it have something to do with perceptions of foreign policy, or would there be other reasons?

KENNEDY: I think it was really that you've got to look at the type of person who came in. The Immigration officer, for the most part, had been on the beat back in the United States. Immigration officers generally turn people down if they can, because they think of the problem of catching people after the fact. So they looked at the law more literally and thought of the problems that might occur later on. I think the typical young vice consul who was thrown into this program would think in terms of foreign policy it was a good thing to relieve Europe of the burden of refugees while it was recovering from the war, and "isn't it nice to be nice to these people, and they really need it," and not really thinking about maybe the repercussions if you let the wrong person in. The Immigration officer had to chase them around.

Q: You were then talking about the management program, where the head of the program in Frankfurt perhaps compounded it by not being particularly well-trained. You said it was virtually unmanageable. I wonder if you could continue along that line.

KENNEDY: It was really not so much the situation. As a matter of fact, it was the law that was unmanageable. David Kravetz, for all his crudity, was really not the administrative problem. I was somewhat nonplused in being part of the Refugee Relief team. I rather expected I was going to be getting into a rather fancy outfit. I'd heard for years about the Foreign Service, and I thought we'd be sitting around in striped pants, drinking tea. The Refugee Relief Act was quite a change.

No, the problem was that the Refugee Relief Act was administered out of Bonn, and basically bypassing the consul general, which made Consul General Burns mad as hell. We creatures of the Refugee Relief Act, although regular Foreign Service officers, were sort of ignored, and we felt very much outcast. But the problem was that with the investigation system and the two-key system, the vice consul had a pass and then the Immigration officer had a pass, and a rather slow and cumbersome investigation period, very few cases were coming before us. We had several interviews a day, and that was about it.

The program was to end at the end of 1956, on December 31, 1956. Well, about eight or nine months before that, voices began to be raised in Congress, saying, "We authorized so and so many people." I don't remember the figures, but in the Refugee Relief Act you can see a certain number there. And we weren't even approaching that. Many congressmen and senators were saying, "What is this? You people aren't doing this." So the political heat was on, and all of a sudden we geared up. Towards the end, we were working literally 12 hours a day, seven days a week, interviewing, rushing people through. The whole process was cut down.

Q: You mean the time that was involved in processing a case was reduced.

KENNEDY: Absolutely. The investigations became cursory in many cases, and sometimes, depending on the crowd we had at the door, we were interviewing people after the Immigration officer had, and vice versa. I think technically they had to be the second, but we would do it any way. We were going after numbers, rather than making sure the case was done well. It was a very complicated situation, because for us to sort out the problems, really the problems of Europe during the war and post-war decades, it was very difficult.

To give an example, we were dealing with Russians, some were anti-Communist, some had served with General Vlasov against the Soviets, others had left at different times of the Soviet regime and had fled to the West. All of them were denouncing each other. The investigators essentially stopped asking hard questions. We had people who came up before us who had been accused of being Nazis. [Tape recorder turned off]

Q: We were discussing the various strange groups of people who had come out of the Soviet Union, everyone denouncing everyone else, the people who were in the Vlasov Army, and the like.

KENNEDY: Yes. It was not just people from the Soviet Union, but from other places, too. In fact, what you really had was a not very trained group of people, and I include both the young Foreign Service officers, as well as the Immigration officers dealing with the complexities of the post-war problems of Europe.

I would love to give you an example of a place I knew more about, and that was Yugoslavia. You had Chetniks, you had Communists, you had Ustashi, you had Albanian separatists, you had Bulgarian separatists, Macedonian nationalists, you had Hungarians; everybody got into the act. They all hated each other. So the people who were doing the investigations, they would get all sorts of denunciations.

Q: Do you feel you have more you want to talk about of this part of your career, or do you want to move on to some of the other posts and assignments?

KENNEDY: I would like to talk just a little more about this, because it was my first real exposure to how things actually worked in the Government.

Vice consuls, for the most part, were more partisan in favor of our clients, as opposed to the Immigration officers, who had, as I described before, a different attitude. Often, if we had a case

that we felt very strongly about, sometimes we would do a little bargaining, because we were right next door: "I won't fight you on this one if you'll let this one go." Because if there was a protest, you could appeal these cases, at least to the immediate boss. There was a certain amount of horse trading.

Another one was that as the Act began to wind down, I saw something that was an eye-opener to me and remained an eye-opener for me the rest of my career, and that's how things can be done in the Government. Because Washington wanted to pin the blame on somebody it wanted to find out where the bottlenecks were, they had a very statistical sort of matrix, to show where each case was located. Was it with INS, with Public Health, with the investigators? Who was holding things up? So we used to keep these figures. I watched David Kravetz manipulate these figures to make sure that the blame didn't fall on us; it was Public Health's fault or the Immigration Service or the investigators' fault.

Q: Would you say that he did significant manipulating to really shift blame, or would you say that the way it came out in reporting was the way it actually was?

KENNEDY: I would say a bit of both. These things are open to interpretation, and creative interpretation could put the blame somewhere else. Actually, we were moving things rather quickly in our case, and everything got very superficial treatment. I have been asked by investigators from the Department of Justice in the 1980s about our procedures back in the 1950s. They are catching some war criminals who slipped through our very loose investigatory net and who were subsequently identified thirty years later. These young attorneys who were not born or were in swaddling clothes at the time we were pushing refugees into the U.S. obviously don't understand how we operated in those days of political pressure and that we knew that there would be questions later, but under the circumstances it was "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!"

Q: Do you have any sense of the numbers that were processed under the Refugee Relief Act during 1955-58? I realize that these statistics can be found in the appropriate documentation, but would you say that what you did made a significant dent in the number of refugees, displaced persons, and others? In other words, at the end of the Act, were there more than there had been before, less than there had been before? And if there were more, was it because new people were coming, or what exactly was the situation?

KENNEDY: I'm not sure. It was a significant Act when you added it all together, including those from Italy and from Holland, where there in Italy and in Holland, for example, they qualified under the Act if their house was bombed during the war and they had to move across the street. Literally, that made them refugees. Purely a political interpretation, but the idea was to get them in. When you add it all up, we did pretty well clean out most of the camps by this Act. But as far as the figures go, I am afraid I can't tell you.

CHARLES K. JOHNSON
Economic Officer

Berlin (1955-1961)

Charles K. Johnson attended UCLA before transferring to Stanford University. He joined the Foreign Service, officially, in approximately 1954 when he joined the Bureau of German Affairs. He served in Germany and Italy. He was interviewed by Jay P. Moffat in 2000.

Q: Could you specify the dates?

JOHNSON: I think this must have been around 1950. I returned to California, worked for my dad, who was a banker, for a while, and then decided to return to Washington and see what other kind of a job I could find. With the help of the State Department, I found a job in what is now known as INR, I think it was just called R at that time. Instead of the three year wait, as forecast by the Foreign Service, the call to join the ranks and be assigned abroad came just after I settled into the "R" area job. A more significant factor was that I had just met my future wife and was not anxious to go abroad. The result was that I turned down the appointment. There were no hard feelings and I continued to work in the intelligence research area; made a switch in 1954 and entered the realm of what was then called the Bureau of German Affairs. It was a bureau co-equal with the Bureau of European Affairs, a big operation because we had taken over the responsibility for Germany in 1949 from the military and there were extensive reserved powers that we exercised in 1949-1955. Our mission in Bonn was a High Commission, not an embassy. Our reserved powers under the 1949 Occupation Statute meant a lot of backstopping in Washington. A lot of positions from the Army actually were transferred over to this bureau in order to administer all of the many parts of this arrangement. It was particularly complicated in the economic field. But I had a special slot in that office which many people did not envy. When I wanted to make a transfer, the only position open was as assistant to the special assistant to the director. The incumbent was none other than the sister of the Secretary of State, Eleanor Lansing Dulles. I remember my first meeting with her - set up so she could look me over - she was on the phone with her back to me. As she finished her conversation, she wheeled around and I thought "My God, it's John Foster Dulles sitting there." The family resemblance was startling. I was so distracted that I doubt that I came off as very intelligent in the rest of the interview. But she decided I was alive and kicking and took me on.

There began an interesting two years, an introduction to something that was quite different for me. This was an operational office concerned with a lot of current issues. Eleanor Dulles had responsibility for Berlin affairs at that time, but she also took over certain programs which flowered during my time there, that had to do with sending food aid and assistance to students in what was then called the East (or Soviet) Zone of Germany, as well as promoting East-West contacts through travel and meetings. In retrospect, one could fairly say that these programs anticipated on a much smaller scale of course what was to become known as "Ostpolitik" under Willy Brandt. She carved out a fairly formidable niche for herself. This was at a time when we were still giving some economic assistance to West Germany out of foreign aid appropriations [FOA]. With the increasing prosperity of West Germany, it was becoming difficult to get any bureaucratic sympathy for United States dollars going to Berlin, since the feeling was the Federal Republic could certainly take care of this. But there was a political justification for our being there and indicating to the Berliners that the United States, as well as the United Kingdom and

the French, were behind them. So it was a politically economic program of assistance; we gave funds to equity financing programs; we helped finance a stockpile which was to be used in case there were further problems similar to the blockade of 1948- 49. At one point Mrs. Dulles got the idea that Berlin needed a Congress Hall. We managed to squeeze out of FOA two or three million dollars which went to construct a Congress Hall on the banks of the Spree River in Berlin. There were a lot of public relations type projects that she promoted. She went to Berlin at least two or three times a year.

Q: In all of this, the question of her relationships with the Washington bureaucracy and of course the people in the field is interesting. Would you be able to characterize for us how she fitted into the government effort?

JOHNSON: Everyone thought she had the Secretary of State in her pocket and that she was whispering things in his ear when she occasionally rode to work with him from his home in Georgetown. She told me a couple of times, "You know, I don't think he has paid a bit of attention to me. I try to tell him something about Berlin but I don't think he hears any of it." Perhaps she was just trying to play that down but it was widely perceived that she was a very formidable lady. Nobody was anxious to go up against her in a bureaucratic fight, and there were a hell of a lot of them, because we were always fighting with FOA over funds. We were often crossing swords with the embassy in Bonn and mission in Berlin because they didn't ask for enough funds for Berlin. In the German Bureau, we had to base our requests to the aid agency on the basis of recommendations from the field. It was widely thought that Eleanor would time her visits to the two posts so that she could go over there and prompt them on how they should write their cables; she already knew exactly what she wanted to go in for. But in any event, she did have a lot of elbow strength in the bureaucracy. I think people attributed more than was actually there. In any event, people didn't want to tangle with her and so she usually managed to get her way. She was also a very persistent woman, very persuasive, sharp minded, and very intelligent. She also had another formidable relative in the family who was Director of CIA at that time.

A further note regarding the East Zone projects, as they came to be known. The inspiration came from the Germans in Bonn. Specifically, there was in the West German cabinet a ministry for all-German affairs charged with keeping the spirit of German unity alive. There was not much they could do under the circumstances, but they did devise these programs as a means of maintaining all-German contacts and requested our assistance. Eleanor once again decided to tap FOA funds. FOA felt this was something that belonged in the bailiwick of her other brother, Allen Dulles, and not a suitable program for economic assistance. After a brief skirmish, she got her way. Sometime in 1955, the German Bureau was reduced in size and became an office in the European Bureau, reflecting our reduced responsibilities in Germany. The office director was Cecil Lyon who had a nice easy relationship with Eleanor. I thought he handled her very well. His door was always open, and he always kept a moderating hand on Eleanor's bureaucratic battles.

Two or three times a year Mrs. Dulles would make her visits to Bonn and Berlin. During that period, the High Commissioner was Dr. James Conant at Harvard University; he was succeeded by a career man, Walter Dowling. She would typically go first to Bonn, where she usually managed to get in to see "Der Alta," the German chancellor, as well as other German officials

who had some influence on administering these programs which we were funding. Then she would spend maybe a week or ten days in Berlin. She cut quite a swath through the scene in West Berlin at that time. She knew and saw a lot of people and she saw a lot of people. In time her name became so identified with visible projects in Berlin, such as the Congress Hall and a hospital in Berlin-Stieglitz that eventually became known as “Die Mutti von Berlin” (in this connection the German word might conjure up the idea of a mother hen).

Q: Did you routinely accompany her on these trips to Berlin?

JOHNSON: No, I didn't go on these trips. I had to stay home and mop up after her departure and read the long notes she left for me about how I was supposed to handle everything that was going to come up in the next two or three weeks. That was a bit of a problem. Of course, I couldn't hold the fort quite as well as she did for there were issues others hoped to settle when she was out of town. I had good backing from Dan Margolies, who was the economic officer in charge, and Cecil Lyon and Geoff Lewis. We managed to hold things together until she got back.

Q: I notice that in 1956 you became a Foreign Service Officer 05.

JOHNSON: That was in accordance with the Wriston program. The foreign service finally caught up with me at the right time, as I was married and the two of us were ready to go abroad and we did. The assignment to Berlin came up, not surprisingly, as a result of the initiative of Mrs. Dulles. There was an opening in the economic section and she thought this was just the place for me to be, particularly because the economic section had a great deal to do with the economic and financial assistance, the programs that she was interested in. She figured I had a good background from Washington and would have some sense of what would fly well in Washington from the Berlin standpoint. With a major blessing from that direction, I went to Berlin in the summer of '56 on transfer. I had visited there once by myself while I worked for Eleanor, so I knew some of the staff there. But I think the fact that I was assigned there was probably widely read as “Well, I'm Eleanor's man in Berlin.” The last thing I wanted to be. Almost from day one, I began to look toward a lateral transfer into another section of the mission at Berlin so I could get away from the Berlin aid problems which I really felt I'd had enough of anyway. Eventually I succeeded in moving. In fact, I moved around a lot in that mission. A word about the mission. It was a huge mission. It had started out as U.S. military government, then became High Commission/Berlin and then in 1954 in an attempt to civilianize the title to make it appear the Berliners were getting more authority, status and so forth at this period of time, we became the U.S. Mission Berlin. Our resident State Department chief was the senior FSO. He was the assistant chief and the incumbent was Bernard Gufler. The deputy chief of the mission was U.S. Commander Berlin, who was a major general, and the chief of the mission in Berlin was the ambassador in Bonn. That was the hierarchy but the military had precedence on the spot in Berlin because we still wanted to maintain this occupation status because our very position there was based on military agreements that had been reached in 1945 and we wanted to preserve the occupation status of the military government period until some solution to the Berlin problem could be found. It was for that reason we were co-located with a large Army headquarters which was U.S. Command Berlin. There were, I suppose, about four thousand U.S. military in Berlin, I'm not sure exactly what the number was, and the British and French had comparably sized missions. This neither fish nor fowl mission which we worked in had conventional sections, such

as political and economic and public affairs and administration but it also had very special sections. It had an Eastern Affairs section, which was responsible for reporting on East German affairs. Since we had no relations with the German authority in East Germany, it was important to keep ourselves informed on what was going on there because we could only have limited travel there. This was a five man section. We also had a public safety section, because we had direct authority over the Berlin police; we had three officers in that section, one of whom was a career police officer. But in any event, the liaison with the West Berlin police was an important part of that operation. We also had a lot of people who came in from time-to-time from other parts of West Berlin such as the U.S. prison guards at Spandau (where the principal German war criminals were detained). I think we may have had four or five officers who were career, I don't know whether you call them criminologists or what, but they had previously been on duty in the federal prison system. It was a very interesting group of diverse people who served in the U.S. mission.

My assignment in Berlin began in the economic section but fairly soon after I arrived there I began a series of TDYs to other sections because there were people going on home leave and so forth. I spent three or four months in the political section as the Allied Liaison and Protocol Officer, which was interesting from the fact that this was the point in the mission where there was a steady liaison with a Soviet official over in the Soviet embassy on Unter den Linden (East Berlin) and this was the channel through which we passed protest notes to the Russians (and they to us). Our channel was either through the Soviet embassy or else, when it still existed, we passed notes to the Soviet military Kommandatura which was out in Karlshorst (East Berlin). After a certain point the Soviets abolished the position of Berlin Kommandant so that was no longer a channel for us to deal with the many access problems we had with the Soviets. Our notes per force then had to go to this big embassy on Unter den Linden. I was one of three. There was a French Protocol Officer and a British Protocol Officer. Whenever we had a note to deliver, it was always the three of us passing three identical notes simultaneously to the Soviets. There was one phone in West Berlin that we could use to phone over there and let them know we were coming. We three then would go into this formidable concrete fortress (the Soviet embassy), it was an incredible, forbidding sort of a structure. We were ushered into an office which often reeked of vodka, cigarette smoke, and bottles that hadn't been put away. We would sit there and then the Soviet protocol officer would come in. He was very cordial, his English, we dealt with him in English, was quite good, and so we would deliver our notes. We would say "Here it is and it's about what you did on the Autobahn yesterday" or whatever it was, and so forth, and he would accept our notes politely. Similarly, if he had a note to give back to us we would be summoned. We would meet someplace en route that was central and then drive together through the checkpoints, past the Brandenburg Gate. So this was an interesting experience for a while, but it paled after a while since it was less substance and more formalities. That was one of many side trips I made when I was in the mission. I was also "borrowed" by Gufler to fill in as staff assistant for three months while the incumbent went home on home leave. Both times this happened, it was my lot to have a visit to Berlin by the Secretary of State. The first time it happened, it seemed a bit overpowering. I thought, "Oh, my God, how am I going to do this?" I hadn't really had much experience in the foreign service but the formidable Gufler said, "You're the man to do it." Our first Secretary of State visitor was John Foster Dulles, with a huge entourage. They had been in a NATO ministerial meeting in Copenhagen. Since the location was close to Berlin and probably at the behest of none other than sister, he was prevailed upon to

come and make a morale building trip to Berlin. It was probably timed to coincide with some critical period in our relations with the Russians. They were putting a lot of pressure on us to do something or other and it was thought that the presence of the Secretary of State would be a good bucking up to indicate that we're here to stay; and that the security and welfare of Berlin remained essential U.S. security goals. So John Foster Dulles came with all his people. The preparations were interesting. I must say it took care of itself rather easily, much easier than I had imagined. But there was one thing that was nice about running a program like that, and I was the coordinator for the whole damn outfit. The military are experts in running visits and programs and organizing things. They had all the resources in the world. You never had to worry about a car or anything like that. I would convene these meetings every morning and we would sort of plan minute-by-minute. They had all these colonels in there from USCOB. There I was, sitting at the head of the table, it was funny, all these colonels were hanging on my every word. It was nervewracking but it was enjoyable, too. Everything went fine. All the drivers, I had to brief each one of them individually to make sure they didn't turn in the wrong direction, which had happened before. It all went beautifully and there was no problem. The Secretary and party were accompanied by people from the Executive Secretariat [S/S] and I got along with all those folks okay. That is probably the reason why I ended up in S/S when I left Berlin, which would have been three years later. The visit experience repeated itself after Dulles' death. Christian Herter had become Secretary of State and he had never been to Berlin. He was not a figure who was identified with Berlin and they wanted to get him there. So I ran that program again, and again everything went well.

Q: Meanwhile, following Germany's entry into NATO in 1955 it was a founding member of the EEC in 1957 so significant events were going on in the background that affected Germany as a whole. Did this get reflected in your work in Berlin or were you largely removed by your special location?

JOHNSON: In Berlin we were on the sidelines. What came first was the Coal Steel Community, which was of great significance to West Germany as the beginning of the European integration movement - the Monet Plan - and the move toward western unity. These relationships really were not an important factor in Berlin. What was important in Berlin on a larger scale, during the period I was there, fell actually into two periods. The initial period, say '56 to '59, was a period where the Soviets were not putting the emphasis so directly on getting us out of Berlin, but complicating our daily lives in Berlin and attacking the modalities of our access into Berlin. So we had endless problems that had to do with the way our transit orders looked as we were moving from Helmstedt to Babelsberg, the Berlin end of the principal autobahn. The question of checking cargo on military convoys. The question of documenting how many soldiers were in a convoy. How the trains moved because there were nine permitted train paths daily between Berlin and West Germany under the '45 agreements. These trains passed through the Soviet Zone. Again they went through checkpoints and these checkpoints always had the potential of being the scene of all this Soviet chicanery and making life difficult for us and wanting people to get out of their train cars in the middle of the night and be counted - head counts. Life was just a series of problems of that sort and that persisted up until October 1958. With regard to Berlin's economy, this was the beginning of a real take off in Berlin. Berlin was probably seven-eight years behind the Federal Republic in economic recovery for obvious reasons. It had lost its economic hinterland. It had been blockaded in the late '40s. The skilled manpower had left. The

population was over age. Historically it was the site of a major part of the electrical engineering industry of Germany but it was very hard to keep all these big industries, which were needed for employment purposes, in Berlin. To keep them busy, to keep them supplied, everything had to be brought in from the West. But we did see in this period, the beginnings of a recovery and gradually unemployment began to fall and we began to see some returns in joint efforts - the Berliners, the Germans, the Bonn Germans and the foreign aid that we were supplying. So it was a rather encouraging picture that was beginning to unfold as we moved into 1958. A change manifested itself in November 1958 when it became apparent that Khrushchev and the Politburo had made a decision to try a new tack with the allies in Germany. What they wanted to do was make a real effort to force us out of Berlin. They had tried that once with the blockade in '48-'49. They had obviously not succeeded and they had swallowed that. That was the first Berlin crisis. The second Berlin crisis began in 1958 when we all received notes saying the Soviets, within six months, were going to relinquish their occupation responsibilities, vis a vis their zone of Germany, and that with regard to questions of Berlin and access thereto, we would simply have to settle with the German Democratic Republic, as they called it. That initiated a crisis period which sort of dominated, certainly the next six months, because we were given until - I think it was until May - to come to some sort of agreement with the GDR or else the Soviets would just flat out turn over all their responsibilities to the East Germans, i.e., presumably they would disappear from all the checkpoints. They would no longer send someone into the air safety control center. All the modalities of our presence of getting in and out of Berlin would be placed in the hands of the East Germans.

So the period beginning in November 1958 in Berlin for the people who were stationed there, who were living there, was in a way anomalous. Our friends and relatives back in the States felt that we were in the lions mouth, living under this threat. Whereas, in fact, there was a great serenity in West Berlin about this Soviet threat. This is the time when the Berliners show their best colors. They have always thrived on challenges and their finest hours have been under stress, pressure, and threat. This was proved during the first Berlin crisis, '48-'49 and it continued to be so over the years. So life went on. We shook our oratorical fists at the Soviets and said, "We are not backing down." Obviously a great deal of contingency planning began. In fact, it had always been underway, but was now certainly expedited in Washington. We had only a vague idea of what was being planned in Washington. In fact, I only found out about this when I started declassifying the documents after retirement back in Washington for publication. That is the extremely detailed nature of our military contingency planning. Also the diplomatic track was explored and what in effect happened was that the six month deadline passed without incident since we had already begun the process of negotiations with the Soviets. There was great concern after November 1958 about Allied solidarity and willingness to stand strong against this threat from the Soviets. By this time John Foster Dulles was suffering from cancer and was not well. He soldiered on however, and after the last NATO ministerial in '59 he made a trip from capital to capital (Bonn-Paris-London), the purpose of which was to make sure the allies were going to be solid, that our positions were mutually agreed. In a way it was a sort of heroic thing that he did because he was in so much pain at the time. In fact, I guess it was in April 1959 he passed away. Christian Herter, who had been the Under Secretary, took over his position and it was with Herter and the others that this negotiation process was initiated. This led to a series of Foreign Ministers meetings in Geneva in the summer of 1959. No agreement was reached at the time with the Soviets about the issues they had raised but at least it appeared the

Soviets had decided they had pushed so far and they weren't going to push any further for the foreseeable future.

We continued to try to figure out the Soviets' objectives. I think it was obvious that one of the things that Khrushchev wanted was a visit to the United States. The visit did take place and it may be recalled that Khrushchev was invited to Camp David in the Catocin Mountains in Maryland in September 1959 where he spent several days discussing issues with Eisenhower and staff. It was in a press conference at Camp David that Khrushchev first made a clear announcement indicating that he was not going to push us out of Berlin. Berlin was in a holding pattern and there was nothing to be feared. They were not going to make our lives difficult for awhile. His next objective of course, was to achieve a summit meeting. The spirit of Camp David lasted through the winter of '59-'60 and led up to the long expected meeting in Paris of the four at the summit. Then along comes Gary Francis Powers! This was in April or May of 1960. Without going into any great detail about that meeting - it's a well known part of our history. The conference broke up and Khrushchev and his people, when they left Paris to go back to Moscow came through Berlin. By this time I was working in the Eastern Affairs section of the Mission in Berlin and one of the tasks for our section that day was to go over to East Berlin and station ourselves along the path the motorcade was going to take from the airport to the Soviet embassy on Unter den Linden. We all went out in our tackiest clothes and went over to mingle with the civilians and troops to see the sight. We saw him, indeed about ten feet away from us waving and next to him was the dreadful leader of the East German government, Walter Ulbricht (looking like he had just swallowed the cat). In fact, the message that was being given to him by Khrushchev was that he was not going to push anything with the allies for awhile now. Khrushchev could clearly see the end of the Eisenhower administration coming up. There would be a new president and whatever moves he was going to make on Berlin would be reserved for the next administration. In essence he was saying this in East Berlin to the East German Parliament even though not in these terms to us.

By that time, I had moved from the Economic Section and was working in the Eastern Affairs Section where I was reporting on East German developments. We tried to go over to East Berlin as frequently as possible just to size up living conditions and clues to communist policy. East Berlin was a fascinating place and a small microcosm of East Germany. It contained the historic center of Berlin. It also was so large it contained considerable farmland within its city limits. We would visit East Berlin in our private cars bearing U.S. military plates and look into things, poke around in the stores and see what was on the shelves to size up how the economy was doing. It wasn't doing very well. That was always a problem for the East German government.

Q: Were you able to get into East Germany itself?

JOHNSON: When I first went to Berlin it was possible, occasionally, to obtain Soviet visas to travel into East Germany. Very soon after we arrived there, my wife and I went to Leipzig to a Leipzig fair. This was a standard thing for people from the mission to do. It was an opportunity to look at Leipzig and all the heavy machinery displayed there and try to make an assessment of the state of their industry. The only other place we were ever able to get documentation from the Soviets for was Potsdam. This was really very close to the border with West Berlin. I think sometime in the second year I was there, as part of their policy to turn more authority over to the

East Germans, the Soviets told us they would no longer issue visas for any travel whatsoever in East Germany. We would have to get permission from the East Germans, which of course we could not accept. That ended our travel in East Germany. It was unfortunate because we were reporting on a country we couldn't enter. All we could do was go over into East Berlin. Of course we read their press voluminously. That was one of the daily challenges: to wade through 10 pages of "Neues Deutschland" every morning. We began to have a few problems getting across the border toward the end of my stay there - that is, sector-sector border in the center of Berlin. As part of their efforts to turn things over, the Soviets would occasionally authorize East German sector border guards to stop us and ask for our papers. Our instructions were to deal only with Soviet soldiers. There were maybe nine sector-sector crossing points at that time and sometimes my wife and I would go to the opera in East Berlin at night and it would be dark coming back so you had to go slowly as you crossed over so they could read your license. There was not any formal checkpoint like what Checkpoint Charlie was to become a year later. There was simply a group of East German guards standing out in front of Brandenburg Gate and you had to slow down for them. Sometimes they would make you stop and we would point to our license plate. They would play dumb and say, "Well, I need to see your papers." And we would say, "Oh, no, you don't and if you have any problem with this just call the Soviets about it." Which they never did. This was just a curtain raiser of a much bigger problem that came up after I left Berlin.

MCKINNEY RUSSELL
Radio Liberty, USIS
Munich (1955-1962)

McKinney Russell was born in New York, New York in 1929. He graduated from Yale University in 1950 and served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1951 to 1953. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, the Congo, the former Soviet Union, Brazil, Spain, and China. Mr. Russell was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt on May 10, 1997.

RUSSELL: In the spring of 1955, a job as Head of Translation at Radio Liberty opened. I was accepted for it and moved to Munich in my old green Opel car in April 1955. Of course, both stations were funded by the Central Intelligence Agency, although no one told me that for 3 or 4 years. The people ultimately in charge, very few of whom knew any Russian, had no idea of what the broadcasts were actually saying. Thus a number of translations had to be made for their benefit of parts of the program every day. Since the translators were all non-native English speakers, the head of the translation section had to do the editing to make sure that the results actually roughly approximated the English language.

I had that job for about 6 or 7 months and then progressively moved up within the organization until I left it in October 1962. I became Special Events Correspondent, then Chief Correspondent, then Deputy Head of News. It proved to be a very interesting professional life, calling for a good deal of travel in Europe. I was often in Brussels or Paris and made half a dozen reporting trips to Scandinavia. The point was to inform listeners in the Soviet Union through

feature programs which were then translated into Russian and the other languages. We reported on how free trade unions work in Western Europe; what the living conditions were for people in Finland right next to the Soviet Union; how Swedish elections took place in the glare of sharp competition between competing parties, the overall idea being to provide an alternative picture of what life could be in free countries, and not only in the United States. There were broadcasters from New York and Washington, but the radio station broadcast, as did Radio Free Europe, not as an American station like VOA but as voices of their own peoples.

In 1959, I was on home leave from Munich and had the opportunity of covering the two-week trip to the United States by the then leader of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev. I traveled with him from Washington to New York, and to the West Coast, up to San Francisco, to the farm in Iowa, and so on. The principal long-term event in my life during those years was meeting the woman whom I married and to whom I have been married ever since. In February of 1957, after I had been in Munich almost 2 years, I met at a dinner party with colleagues from the Radio Liberty, a young woman of French culture, Italian citizenship, and great charm. She had grown up in Tunisia and was visiting friends in Munich. Her name was Stella Boccara. We decided rather quickly that we went very well together and were married not too long thereafter. Our first son McKinney Junior, was born in 1959, in Munich, and our second child, daughter, Valerie, was born in 1961, also in Munich.

ROBERT F. FRANKLIN
Deputy Director, Radio in the American Sector
Berlin (1956)

Robert F. Franklin, a native of San Francisco, California attended the University of California. After serving in World War II with the National Guard, he joined USIS. He served in Morocco, Vietnam, the Congo, Rwanda, Kenya, Germany, and Tunisia. Mr. Franklin was interviewed by Earl Wilson in 1988.

FRANKLIN: In 1956, I went to Berlin as Deputy Director of RIAS, the Radio in the American Sector. Having spoken no German whatever for eleven years, that was a challenge. That was like jumping into a pool of ice water. But I managed to survive. The house spoke German. You didn't hear English anywhere. We had 514 employees, as I remember the number, at RIAS, and I don't suppose more than a couple dozen of them spoke any English at all. Very few of them spoke fluent English.

The only notable thing at RIAS, I think, was that Gordon Ewing, who was director at that time, went on home leave leaving me in charge, as his deputy, when all of a sudden the Hungarian Revolution broke out. This was in the fall of 1956. We had a very alert local by the name of Peter Schultze, who I think is still there, as head of the news operation. He was just clamoring to go to Budapest, and I said, "I can't write you orders to go to Budapest. It is a foreign country, in the Soviet orbit, etcetera." He persisted, so I finally said, "Well, you go to Vienna and you look up Gerry Gert, (who was radio officer at that time in Vienna), and see what he tells you to do. I don't know the situation there."

Peter went to Vienna, and he did look up Gerry Gert but not until after he had hitch-hiked into Budapest and scooped Europe, I must say, with the story of the Hungarian Revolution -- on-the-street interviews and that sort of thing. Then he came back to Vienna and put it on the air from RIAS, over a line, as the premiere. Then, of course, we gave it to the rest of Europe. That was quite a little coup in that sense, but it was not a very significant thing.

JAMES H. BAHTI
Personnel Officer
Bonn (1956-1957)

James H. Bahti grew up in Michigan and received a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Michigan Tech. His career with the Foreign Service included positions in Cairo, Washington, DC, Bombay, Dhahran, and Alexandria. Mr. Bahti was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

BAHTI: My assignment was to Bonn. It was supposed to be Berlin, but at the last minute it was changed to Bonn. I was assigned to the personnel section. I don't know whether it was chance or by design. I had part of my university training in public administration, including personnel administration. And so I was made a personnel officer with the exotic title of position classification and wage administration, about which I knew very little, especially in the German context. But I spent a good part of a year fumbling my way through that work, working with some very good German local staff -- Foreign Service nationals I guess we would call them now. It was a first rate staff. After almost a year of this, I was on a short leave in Switzerland, and I got a long distance phone call saying, "Come right back, you have appointed a staff aide to Ambassador James Conant." Well, I had no particular qualifications for that job, except that I was the most junior officer in the Embassy, or so it seemed. My German was far from fluent at that time and that proved to be a handicap. It was an unusual experience working for such a distinguished person at that time, James Conant, who had been High Commissioner of Germany, and then subsequently was named Ambassador. A most unusual person.

I was not privy to all his operations. There used to be people who came in to brief him, and all I knew about them was their names, from the political section or whatever. [Less of the economic briefings.] One of my jobs was to screen the mountains of paper that were directed to him. After about a week or so of my screening, to judge what he should see and what he needn't see, he said I was giving him too much to read. So I became even more ruthless, weeding out most of the reports from the consulates and neighboring posts. We were there during the Hungarian uprising -- that would have been in October 1956. That was a pretty exciting time. There was an awful lot of stuff going on that I did not even know about. I would get calls from people who wanted to help, or wanted to do something. More often than not these would be in the German language, and I would have to turn it over to someone who could tell me what they wanted. So as I said earlier, my lack of German in that situation proved to be in my view a handicap. My contacts with the German Foreign Office and with my counterparts in the several embassies with which we dealt frequently were almost always in English. So that was no problem.

I did have some interesting experiences traveling with Conant. He traveled a great deal through Germany. He had his own private train. It used to belong the Hermann Goering. The Ambassador would regularly, about once a month, take a trip to Berlin to ensure continued access by land to Berlin. He traveled to universities and gave speeches. A USIS official named Bill Sailer would help him with his speeches. Ambassador Conant was quite fluent in German, but Bill Sailer was bilingual, and Bill would work over the speeches with him and sort of polish them up. Conant would attend a number of university graduation ceremonies where he would generally give a speech.

He had spirited conversations with students and faculty, but because of my lack of German I didn't follow or understand what they were talking about -- beyond the weather. He was a teacher himself. He did very little sightseeing. These were business trips. And in Berlin there was a staff aide as well. More often than not, shortly after we arrived, Conant would tell me I was free to go; so I spent a lot of time roaming about Berlin, getting to know the city. It was always kind of a fun trip. He would allow other people to go on the train with him. It had a dining car, a butler, a cook, cleaning staff. We had these magnificent breakfasts, including freshly baked rolls. Sitting there on a siding, the East Germans watched the capitalists having their breakfast. A military attaché almost always traveled with us to observe what was going on in the East Zone. And there was a train sergeant, who had been with that train for a decade or more who would make all the technical arrangements with the Bundesbahn or the German rail authorities. I generally handled the details, making the schedules and notifying the people. The nitty-gritty stuff was done by people like the train sergeant because he knew what he was doing and I would have mucked things up.

JAMES A. KLEMSTINE
Refugee Relief Program
Hamburg (1956-1958)

James A. Klemstine was born in Pennsylvania in 1930. He received degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and Yale University. After serving in the U.S. Army, Mr. Klemstine entered the Foreign Service in 1956. In addition to serving in Germany, he held positions in the Soviet Union, Taiwan, South Korea, and Washington, DC. Mr. Klemstine was interviewed by Jeff Broadwater in 1992.

KLEMSTINE: My first assignment was with the consular service in Germany -- the Refugee Relief Program. I was there from 1956 to December of 1958. I was stationed in Hamburg.

It was pretty routine work. I mean you processed visas for those refugees who had come over from the eastern bloc during the 1950s, and who had applied for visas. There was this legislation, I forget exactly by now, but there was some law that a certain amount of refugees from Eastern Europe could enter into the United States. You just processed them and issued the visas, or found them not eligible. It was strictly consular visa work. That was fairly typical assignment for young officer -- at that time. Actually from the new classes of FSO's -- I was in the second or third class

that came in the 1950s -- almost all the people that were in my class, about 10 or 12, were sent to Western Europe, either Germany or France to do this refugee relief program. It was sort of an introduction to the Foreign Service at that time.

I started doing it in the summer of 1956, and the program ended, I think, at the end of 1957, because most of 1958 I remember spending strictly on regular consular work. I mean that was passport, citizenship, and death problems, regular consular work. I am pretty sure it was somewhere by the beginning of 1958 that the refugee relief program had been phased out.

I remember reading about the Berlin crisis, but it didn't affect us at all. The thing that affected us was something in the beginning of my tour, and that was in the fall of 1956. Hamburg was located at that time in what was called the British Zone. That was the Suez Crisis time. And there the British had their nose out of joint in the fall of 1956; so there was a little coolness at that time. That is about the most I remember regarding the conditions there. I mean Berlin of 1958 didn't affect us.

The British had their clubs in Hamburg, and you could buy things at the British PX. Also, there were a lot of people that you had social contacts with and things like that. There was an American PX in Bremenhaven that we went to but that was always an hour drive away. That was sort of an American enclave in Bremenhaven. But there was a lot of social contacts with the British at that time in Hamburg.

DOROTHY JESTER
Assistant Commercial Attaché
Bonn (1956-1958)

Dorothy Jester was born in 1914 in Mesa, Arizona and majored in Spanish at Stanford University. She was posted in Lima, Mexico City, Munich, Mexicali, Bonn, Santiago, and Santo Domingo. Ms. Jester was interviewed in 1998 by Laurin Askew.

Q: How long were you there?

JESTER: Just a year and half, and then I was transferred back to Germany, this time to Bonn.

Q: And when would that have been?

JESTER: In 1956. I stayed in Bonn, as assistant commercial attaché, until 1958, when I was transferred to the Department of State for a four-year tour. In 1962, I went to Santiago, Chile, to do economic reporting. On the way to Santiago, by ship, I learned I had been promoted to FSO-2, which was the reason I was only there for a year and a half. The inspectors recommended that I be transferred to a smaller post where I would be head of an economic section. This meant the embassy in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Q: And how did it work out?

JESTER: It was fine for about a year and a half. Then, you may recall, there was a rebellion on the island, resulting in American troops being sent in by President Johnson in 1965. All economic work stopped, and the ambassador put me in charge of evacuating American civilians. I remember being on duty at the embassy for 36 hours straight to get the evacuation underway. As things were brought under control, the decision was made to expand the contingent of the Agency for Economic Development, whose local director would also head the embassy's economic section. Ergo, I was surplus. But I was delighted to learn that I was transferred back to Mexico City.

Q: Well, Bonn is next.

JESTER: Bonn, of course, was much more formal. I was surprised to hear our German employees, who had known each other for years, still address each other as Herr and Fraulein. Our informality as Americans must have been hard for them to understand.

Q: What was the embassy like, or was it an embassy? Wasn't it a mission?

JESTER: No, it was an embassy by then. The ambassador was James Conant from Harvard, a very able person, who was succeeded by David Bruce, another wonderful man. Both were political appointees.

JAMES M. WILSON, Jr.
Director, Office of Military Rights and International Security Affairs, DOD
Washington, DC (1956-1958)

James M. Wilson, Jr. was born in China to American parents in 1918. He received a BA from Swarthmore College in 1939, graduated from the Geneva School of International Studies in 1939, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1940, and Harvard Law School in 1948. He also served as a lieutenant colonel overseas in the US Army from 1941-44. Mr. Wilson has served abroad in Paris, Madrid, Bangkok and Manila. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: Were you in Europe in 1956?

WILSON: No. About the last thing I did from Europe was the West German agreements in late 1954 after the EDF failed (the European Defense Force)...

Q: This was where it was...

WILSON: The EDF was David Bruce's baby, but the French vetoed it. Specifically, Mendes France came in as the new prime minister, as you may remember, and there had to be a major

switch of signals. We ended up with something called the London and Paris Agreements which ended the official state of war with the western powers, which restored West German sovereignty and brought Germany into the Brussels Pact and NATO. I was very much involved in one of these at the working level. Right after that, I came back here, went to ISA, and set up the first worldwide base rights negotiating office there. It is still there [entitled Foreign Military Relations Affairs - FMRA].

Q: At the time that West Germany was being integrated into NATO and you were working on it, what was the attitude of the people who were involved in this? Was there concern about bringing Germany in?

WILSON: The plan had been to bring Germany in as part of the EDF, as you will remember. They came in sort of through the back door this time. Part of it was the framework, which brought Germany into the Brussels Pact and then NATO. I've forgotten the intricacies of the thing, but it was a very high priority operation.

I was introduced to it when suddenly summoned to Dillon's residence near the Trocadero on a Sunday afternoon. A number of people were sitting around the big dining table, with Foster Dulles at one end, Dillon and James Conant at the other, and David Bruce in between. Livy Merchant, who had become Assistant Secretary for Europe by that time, was there along with several other people from Washington, some of whom I recognized and some not.

I was asked what would have to go into a base agreement with Germany. A gray-haired stranger to me, in a gray suit sitting next to Dulles, mentioned several things, some of which I begged to differ with. It turned out the gentleman was Robert Anderson, the new deputy secretary of Defense and my boss' boss. Oh, well!

Notwithstanding this, I found myself assigned to the sovereignty task force covering bases and financial arrangements among other things I knew little about. Fortunately, the State Department working level representative was Jacques Reinstein, who has probably forgotten more about postwar Germany than most experts will ever know. There began a mad shuttle between Paris, Bonn, London, and Washington, finally ending in Lancaster House in London.

One of the major issues in our group that arose very late was whether or not the U.S. would honor a commitment made by Frank Nash (no longer in office) to assist West Germany financially in rearming its forces. This had been very closely held, and few knew about it on the U.S. side. Jacques did, but Struve Hensel, Nash's successor and my new boss, who had just come aboard, did not, it seemed. When I tried to pin him down, he said he was rushing off to another meeting and couldn't wait; how much money was involved? I said, "Something more than \$900 million," to which he replied "You decide" and hastened off. So, in consultation with Merchant, we decided to reaffirm the commitment, but to use that as a bargaining tool for a couple of other things.

The only problem was that the West German Finance Minister decided the commitment had to be made at the highest level and we could not get to Dulles before the opening of the final session. Came the opening gavel from Anthony Eden with Merchant sitting behind Dulles and

Reinstein and I behind Merchant. Eden observed it was grand that everyone had come to an agreement. Mendez-France said much the same thing. But Adenauer said yes, but something still had to be done, looking across the hall at Dulles. Silence followed while Dulles turned around to ask Merchant what was going on. Merchant whispered for about 30 seconds. Then Dulles gave a most gracious five minute talk recommitting the U.S. to Nash's offer.

Q: Had we a pretty good group of military bases in Germany early on?

WILSON: We were occupying forces of course. One of the things which we had to do in returning sovereignty, however, was to work out arrangements on such things as status of forces and what happens to various bits of real estate, etc., not the least of which was our agreement to the establishment of Germany military forces and to supply military aid.

ROBERT THEODORE CURRAN
Public Affairs Officer
Berlin, (1956-1957)

Executive Director: American Institute in Tübingen
Stuttgart (1957 -1959)

Robert Theodore Curran was born in New York in 1931. He received his bachelor's degree from Haverford College and his master's degree from Columbia University. During Mr. Curran's career he had positions in Germany, Jordan, Yemen, Mexico, Afghanistan, and Morocco. Mr. Curran was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in November 1998.

CURRAN: The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) established after the breakdown in 1948-49 of cooperation over the German Question between Russia on the one hand and the U.S./Britain/France on the other, was just getting back on its feet economically and politically in 1956. The U.S. High Commissioner for Germany, James Conant, was now the U.S. ambassador and the other allies followed suit. The capital was in Bonn (our embassy was in Mehlem in a small community called Plittersdorf), Konrad Adenauer was chancellor of a government controlled by Christian Democratic Union (CDU) with a Bavarian partner in the government called the Christian Socialist Union (CSU). The SPD (Socialist Party) was very much in the minority and - with the exception of Berlin - a marginal factor in FRG governance.

Despite independence and the end of occupation, the FRG was still very much a client state and the occupying powers still held considerable influence and privilege in the country. Partly because of the isolation of Berlin, behind the communist lines, as it were, the U.S. especially maintained a very large military presence with major bases in the Frankfurt, Stuttgart, and Munich areas. Americans in Germany were very highly regarded both because of the protective stance vis à vis Russia but also because of the enlightened policies of the occupation period especially after Germany ceased to be regarded as an "enemy" and the rebuilding of the country began with currency reform in 1948.

Official Americans enjoyed fine housing (some of it still held after post-war confiscation), PX and commissary privileges, cheap gasoline and a generally pleasant relationship with all Germans.

U.S. objectives in Germany included defending the country against an armed attack from the east; continuing the progress of western Germany towards democracy and a free enterprise economy; promoting western European friendship and economic union and nurturing German-American relations at all levels. In addition to the embassy in Bonn, the U.S. diplomatic establishment had consulates general in most major cities and 25 Amerika Häuser or German American Institutes each with a library collection and a strong cultural program.

Q: Well, then, moving on, you were in Berlin from 1956 to when?

CURRAN: To the fall of 1957. My new wife and I left. We traveled first class by air via Copenhagen and Bonn in order to be benefitted by the whole German mission. I must say - and this is something I will come back to several times - that government officials were treated better a generation ago. As one hears, what employees now go through in terms of what they're permitted to do in mode of travel and the way they're sent around the world, going coach most of the time now, and usually discount coach (and of course, when you go discount you're treated accordingly by the airline and it produces a different attitude), I must say in the '50s, it seemed to me, you were made to feel special from the beginning of your work, and I believe people responded accordingly. I don't remember my colleagues talking about eight-hour days or earning overtime. There was never any question about that.

In Bonn during my orientation, I had the great privilege of meeting James Conant, who had just changed from being high commissioner to being ambassador, a very kind and very special person - he and his wife were unusually attentive to us. And then we took one of the night flights from Cologne to Berlin. The flight to Berlin and the commercial flights came into Tempelhof, and if you came in from the east, you made a very tight turn over the sector border where the Russians held sway, and the approach into Tempelhof went down between some apartment houses. I remember being quite startled. The roofs were higher than the airplane. We were met by a person named Jay Gildner, who was a USIA officer in Berlin, my first real boss. He took us to Harnack House, which was a mansion that had been confiscated by the American government for use as an officers' club. It was very, very pleasant. And Jay introduced me to my first work as a trainee in Berlin.

I want to say a few words about Gildner, who was one of the really superstars of USIA from the period it existed, from 1953, and I'm assuming it will go out of existence in 1999 (USIA was consolidated into State effective October 1, 1999.). He's retired now. He was in the Service until, I would say, the mid '80s. Very good with people, great vision, understood the relationship between policy and public diplomacy, and an absolute bear for work. There are some other people I also think were stars in that period, Michael Weyl, a fantastic cultural affairs officer, had a great career in USIA, John McGowan, who not only was public affairs officer in Berlin but he was an ex-stunt man. He used to regale us late in the evening, after perhaps a drink or two, showing us how you fall down stairs without sustaining any injury, a great show. I wish my kids

had been able to see it. And finally, a marvelous person at RIAS, the Radio In the American Sector, which was our means of broadcasting into the Russian Zone, a man named George Czucka, who was bilingual. His parents were immigrants from Vienna, but he'd been in the occupation working as an interrogator after the war. He had a wonderful human sense, was a skilled diplomat, and is still a good friend.

Eventually, we were moved from Harnack House into a new block-style apartment on the Argentinische Allee, close to the headquarters, which were on Clay Allee. It seemed to us when we first moved into this new apartment that the subway, or the U-Bahn, went right through our bedroom, but we got used to that pretty quickly. Many of our senior colleagues still lived in requisitioned German houses, but our apartment was really pleasant and much nicer than our dwellings as graduate students.

Berlin was still very badly battered, especially in the eastern or Russian Sector. I'm sure everybody remembers, but I just might mention again, there were four Sectors in Berlin under the High Commission: Russian, French, British, and U.S.; and we all had access to all four sectors, but not outside the city, which was called the Zone. It took a while to get used to that terminology. My starting pay was \$4450 a year - FSS (Foreign Service Staff)-11, which doesn't sound like too much, but almost 45 years ago and with four marks to the dollar, it wasn't too bad. We had, of course, a free apartment, and we had access to the PX and the commissary - so we lived, I would say, comfortably, if not too luxuriously. Berlin was still in such meager shape or bad shape that if you drove from Dahlem, where our apartment was, to go downtown to a film or a play, you could drive in about 15 minutes. There was practically no traffic and very little German traffic, certainly, after dark. For the first part of our stay there, we couldn't afford a car, but we were lucky because, as I mentioned, we lived right on the U-Bahn, so we could get downtown almost as quickly.

My German was pretty good, after being a Quaker missionary, sort of, and studying German in college, and so I was put right to work, and my German got better quickly. I was doing a lot of press work and also was a tour guide for visiting American VIPs - typical junior officer work, but I really loved it because it gave me a chance to really see the whole city, and particularly the eastern part of the city. We would get into our black USBER automobiles, with U.S. Forces in Germany license plates, and we'd go through the Brandenburg *Tor* and then we'd go buzz around the Russian Sector. One of the favorite spots that I would take them after Unter den Linden, which was famous for the big German parades and the opera house and the old Hitler bunker, was the Russian military cemetery at Treptow, which is in the southeastern quadrant of the big city. It was a monument the Russians built to their soldiers who had died capturing Berlin, and at the time it seemed very much a monument to Russian imperialism and military power. Later on in this discussion we're having, if discussion is the word, I'll come back and give you the impressions that I had of Treptow when I went back in the early 1990s. It was quite a change for me, I think, attitudinally. At that time (1956), it looked like the Russian mailed fist - a constant reminder of their power.

Q: On these trips was it sort of almost implied that you were going to show them how much better our Germans were than their Germans.

CURRAN: That's a good question. I would say it was more a question of showing them how bad the Russians were. That's a theme we talked about before, and again, I think prepared for me the Cold War mentality: we're on the side of the angels and we can see that they aren't. There were really acres of bombed out areas in Berlin, and that unbelievable smell, which came back to me from working in Düsseldorf in the '40s, of what a ruined building is like, with the damp basements and so on. We touted this as a failure of communism and the indifference of the Russians. There was an uprising in Berlin in 1954, a couple of years before I got there. It was a spontaneous attack on the authorities in Berlin, and the authorities made some effort after that to pep the place up a little, but it was still pretty drab.

Q: This uprising, I know, I happened to have been an enlisted man in the air force in Darmstadt, and we were confined to barracks when this happened because we weren't quite sure what was going to happen.

CURRAN: That's right. It was very scary, and don't forget that when Eisenhower, and particularly his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, came into office in 1953, Dulles issued lots of rhetoric about rolling back communism. A lot of people were wondering whether the U.S. would use the Berlin riots as an excuse to apply some force - even attack weapons.

West Berlin in the post war period was under the leadership of three particularly brilliant mayors: Ernst Reuter, Otto Suhr, and then Willi Brandt. And West Berlin was really beginning to blossom. By the time we left in the summer of '57, many display lights were on and rebuilding was going full-blast, and there was a lot of economic interest, especially by Eleanor Dulles, the Secretary's sister.

The German staff at the USBER, or the U.S. Mission in Berlin, was very, very energetic and positive about their role. It was symbolic of the team spirit that at the end of the work week on Friday there would be a trooping the colors by the American guard unit. They'd come up a little alleyway through the middle of USBER - and they'd present arms, lower the colors, and then that was the end of the work week. And I can remember standing with my German colleagues, feeling kinship, and it was really quite moving. You felt a unity of purpose and friendship and so on. An ironic note to that is about a year after I left, one of those people who was a regular at the trooping of the colors turned out to be leading Russian spy. He worked in the Labor Section, and it was, of course, a great shock to us to imagine a nice person like that could be a spy for the Russians. The Russian presence was always very, very clear. There were guards at all the key points. They even had a guard in West Berlin at a monument they had at the Brandenburg *Tor*, and I'm not sure whether this had any military practicality or not, but during summer nights anyway, when a lot of windows were open, the Soviets conducted artillery practice near the Wannsee, at the sector border there, so you were always aware they were around. I don't know, I don't think we were particularly scared, but it comes back to the theme that one could tell who the enemy was.

Berlin of the '50s, I think, were glory years for the city. Eleanor Dulles, who was the sister of the Secretary, made regular visits there. It was kind of like having the royal family come and see it. And in addition to Ms. Dulles, who was married but didn't use her married name, we had some real superstars in the Foreign Service. One was Bernard Gufler, who was the chief of mission at

USBER under the overall command of an Army general. Gufler was a very senior and distinguished Foreign Service officer with years of experience. His leadership style was pretty gruff and also very thorough, but he had a kind heart, and his wife was very nice to my young wife. It must have been a pretty tough job because Gufler had the military on the one hand and he had Bonn on the other hand, and, I thought, from my very small vantage point, he did a wonderful job. There were some other great people there, Martin Hillenbrand, who eventually became Assistant Secretary of State, and David Henry ran the East European section, and of course there were a lot of intelligence people. But I'd like to just pause at this point and ask rhetorically - I've been asking myself - why it was it seemed to me there were so many really good Foreign Service people in the Foreign Service in the '50s. I think it must have had something to do with the selection process, and I think it had something to do with the way people were treated. It also had to do with a lot of the senior people knowing each other and trusting each other. Also, the Foreign Service was just beginning the era of excessive oversight visits by people from Congress. I remember we had Cohn and Shine come through from the McCarthy Committee.

Q: Would you talk about that?

CURRAN: Yes.

Q: Because this is a traumatic thing in the-

CURRAN: There were other flaps with the Congress from time to time, but in my experience it was the first "witch hunt." Cohn and Shine swept through Germany, determined to find communism under every chair and in every American library book. For example, Shine went into one of our libraries and found a book by Theodore Dreiser, and he said, "I don't know whether we can have a left-winger like that representing our library." Fortunately we had very senior people who said, "Well, you know, that's none of your business." But these characters were really difficult and imperious and scary.

Q: Also, the way it was reported was that there was sort of a comic aspect to this, too - for the reporters, not for the people who were directly involved - because these were two - to use the present term - gay gentlemen, in other words, homosexuals, who were very overt in their playfulness and all. I mean, they were very young, very arrogant, but they kind of romped when they weren't doing this stuff. And it was well reported, yet it didn't seem to... I mean, McCarthy was able to use this very dubious duo for his own nefarious work.

CURRAN: It's interesting you mention the homosexuality. I never caught on to that aspect of their relationship until actually it must have been years later when somehow I heard that Cohn had HIV.

Q: He died of this, and Shine, I think, was stabbed by a lover or something like that.

CURRAN: Nothing of personal sexual behavior was a factor. We felt fear and distaste for this kind of political behavior. I might say as a footnote that years later I was working for the Secretary of State, William P. Rogers, and I was called on a Saturday morning - I was very

thrilled - by the Secretary's secretary, who said that the Secretary had a favor to ask, and I began to imagine I was going off on a secret mission. Actually, I was ordered to attend Bernard Gufler's funeral, which I thought was fine, and I went. He was a Ruthenian Catholic, which I had never heard of, and I went to their service. And if you've ever been to an Eastern service, they're not short, and I was there I think for three hours.

Q: Holding a candle?

CURRAN: I didn't have to hold a candle, but my zest in representing the Secretary declined pretty rapidly.

Q: You were there - when did you arrive in '56?

CURRAN: May, '56, and I was just going to mention three or four or five highlights of that time.

Q: Obviously, I'll ask about the Hungarians.

CURRAN: Well, the Hungarian uprising in the fall of 1956 is the first thing on my list. Both my wife and I remember the Hungarian Uprising as one of the most impactful moments of our time in Berlin. It is a gloomy time in Central Europe, as you know - it gets dark very early - and the news began to come in of this uprising, and then I think it was around the 2nd or 3rd - early November. There were a few hours of hope and then the Russians sent tanks in and just brutally crushed the uprising. In the background of what had been evident encouragement by Radio Free Europe that the rebels were going to get some kind of assistance and the Dulles rhetoric about rolling back communism, it seemed the West let the Hungarians down. As we now know, Eisenhower was so preoccupied with the Suez Crisis, the British and Israeli and French invasion of Egypt that even the Hungarian revolt became a sideshow. And by the time the Suez thing was calmed down, there wasn't time any more to do anything about Hungary. But to sit in Berlin, close to the whole problem and living next door to the mess in East Berlin, it was a very, very demoralizing time for us, probably the most difficult time I had in the Service.

Q: Were the Soviets making noises?

CURRAN: No, I don't think we were conscious of the fact that they might do any reprisals or take any steps against Berlin, but it was communism at its worst and the U.S. did nothing. In contravention to that, in early '57, there was some kind of an embassy picnic or party or something, and all of a sudden the Russians called and asked if two of the members of their mission could join this picnic. Usually, the Soviets might ask about Four Power events but never came. This time, two Russians came. One of them was a tremendous character named Vladimir Krivoshey, who was bilingual in English, exuded power and authority, and everyone assumed immediately that he had to be KGB, and he probably was. We got to know Vladimir pretty well, my wife and I, and entertained him a couple of times - of course, each time with permission. One time we had Krivoshey and his "shadow" for dinner with a small group of Americans. Vladimir's sidekick, whose name was Ivan and who called himself "Johnny." As you probably know, Russians party seriously, and that one night they finally rolled out about 3:30 in the morning. This must have been getting on into the spring and summer because as we were

cleaning up the last dish the sun came up. Subsequently, we entertained Krivoshey and his pal a lot, and we started complaining about the fact that we were never allowed to drive into the Zone, and why couldn't we do that? The Russians, you know, because they had an embassy in Bonn, could travel in West Germany, why couldn't we travel in East Germany, and so on and so on? All of a sudden, Krivoshey said, "Fine, I'll get you permission." And so, lo and behold, six of us got permission to make a trip into the Russian Zone, Russian-occupied Germany. And we drove through the Russian checkpoint - the letter just got us right through, no questions asked - and we took two cars. One of the fellows in the mission had a black Packard, which looked pretty much like one of the Russian cars, the Zim, but the other person who went with us, a wonderful character named Lamar King, had a Ford convertible, and as it was terrible weather we started out with the top closed. We worked our way up toward Bansin, Heringsdorf, and Ruegen, a former restricted area, and we stopped for lunch in some little town up there - maybe it was Bansin. A big crowd gathered around. They saw these U.S. forces in Germany license plates and these unusual looking cars, and then Lamar pushed the right button and the top came down automatically on his convertible. I thought those people would faint away, they were so taken aback. We journeyed on up the island of Ruegen and stayed at a labor resort. When we came down to dinner, the managers had found an American flag somewhere and it was sitting on our table. And of course, there was a long speech about how wonderful it was to have the American comrades here and so on and so on. And we made a little speech back, which made it clear we weren't American comrades.

Q: Speaking of the American flag, I've talked to people who served in the Soviet Union who said that when they'd go out often they'd put the American flag on the table to tell people to stay away.

CURRAN: Well, this was the opposite. Anyway, it was an extraordinary experience, and I don't know why Krivoshey thought it was a good idea. He was probably just showing his power. It certainly underlined the rural part of East Germany was, if anything, worse than the eastern Sector of Berlin. Limited electric power, no motorized tractors, worn-looking animals, and terrible-looking people, and dismal housing.

Another great event we had in West Berlin was a concert by Louis Armstrong, who came through with his Hot Seven. And he packed the Sport-Palast, and he's a tremendous personality, as everybody knows. But I want to recite one anecdote which we all thought was very funny. Mrs. Gufler - the Guflers had a dinner reception, and Armstrong was sitting next to Mrs. Gufler - turned to Louis and said, "You had great success at the Sport- Palast tonight. How do you manage a crowd like that? I mean, it was 20,000 people. How do you do that?" "Well," he said in his gravelly voice, "Mrs. Gufler, I waits in the wings and wait till the crowd are really cheering their heads off, and then I go out and I wave my hand and wave my handkerchief and lift my horn, and then I hold out my arms and I lift my horn, and they start to quiet down and, Mrs. Gufler, I wait until it's so quiet you can hear a mouse pissing on cotton." And of course there was kind of a stunned silence because Mrs. Gufler was really a very proper Foreign Service wife. But she didn't miss a beat. She said, "Oh, Mr. Armstrong, that's so picturesque."

Q: I'll have to remember that one.

CURRAN: In the fall of 1956, the U.S. also dedicated the Congress Hall in Berlin, a spectacular building, a conference center, fairly near the Charlottenburg *Schloss*, down near the Spree. It was a very unusual building. It had a revolutionary roof design and the Berliners immediately named it "the pregnant oyster." But it was a great festival and included Thornton Wilder, who came and directed one of his plays, *The Long Journey from Trenton to Camden*. And Eileen Heckart was there, Ethel Waters - a tremendous array of stars, and we got a lot out of it and made a big impact.

I also was involved with the first major space show the U.S. government put on. We put it on in exhibition halls near the Olympic stadium in Berlin, and I worked with a person named Paul Child, who was at that time running the exhibit sections out of Bonn. I really enjoyed working with him. He was enormously creative, and we had a great exhibit. But one day he said, "Well, I'm bringing my wife up to see what's going on." And it turned out to be Julia Child, the cook, *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, and she was a natural wonderful person and we still have remained friends, although Paul has passed away. Our exhibit, "Space Unlimited," anticipated an American satellite in space, but as everybody knows, the Russians beat us to it. But eventually the Apollo program won the race to the Moon.

Before leaving Berlin, I want to just say a word about the new *Amerika-Haus*, which was dedicated in my last few weeks in Berlin in 1957. We had been operating at an old place on Nollendorfplatz, which originally had been a warning station during the worst days of the immediate postwar period. And even in the mid-'50s, before we opened the new center, many of the clientele seemed to us pretty much the same crowd that came to get warm, and we weren't really reaching students, officials, opinion-makers, and so on. There was one particularly amusing time when the staff was told that one of the "super" cultural attachés from Bonn was coming to town and had to be sure to impress him.

The U.S. used to hire distinguished academic types for short assignments. This was one. I guess I'd better not mention his name. He was a terrible stuffed shirt, and he insisted on giving a major talk in English in Berlin - he didn't speak German - on some obscure American poet, and we knew that we'd never get an audience. So the staff advertised a cartoon show in the *Amerika Haus*, and the place was packed. The super CAO [cultural affairs attaché] came in and we sat him down. And we knew he didn't speak German, so the head German said there would be a brief introduction to the film show by a distinguished American guest, and he went on and said, "Please, welcome him." Of course, they all gave him a tremendous hand, and he stood up and talked for an hour. Now, the Germans are used to long introductions, but they began to look at their watches and say, "What's going on?" So when Mr. Super CAO finally sat down, we ushered him out, and the film show began. He was very pleased with his reception. We moved to the new *Amerika-Haus* in May-June '57. It was a wonderful facility, and it's still there. It's "Am Zoo," right by the S-Bahn stop. In those days, before the Wall, you could come across the border even if you were East German, even if you lived in the Zone. You could come on the S-Bahn and stop there. And they did. They came by the hundreds. We had a special room for the East visitors with special magazines and newspapers and books. I must say, it was a brilliant success from a propaganda standpoint. I think it was a terrible irritant to the Russians, but we felt good about that at the time.

That was pretty much my Berlin time, in overview.

Q: Yes. At the time, by this time, would you say that we were seeing the Germans solidly in our camp as allies. You know, '48 had changed things, the Airlift and all. But was there concern about, are they going to do it again? Is there going to be a Fourth Reich and that sort of thing?

CURRAN: That's really an interesting question, and if you and I survive long enough in this interview and I get back to Munich in the '80s, we can talk about that some more. But in the '50s it was almost indecent how friendly the Germans were to us and how close they were to us. Chancellor Adenauer was still Prime Minister of Germany, and Willi Brandt was mayor of Berlin - if anything they were a little too close to us. But it was a tremendous era of good feeling, and these warm relations were amplified for us when I went to Tübingen assigned as *Amerika Haus* director and consul in September '57. I was picked for that job, I think, because my German was at that time almost bilingual and my wife and I made a reasonable representation couple for the U.S. She'd learned German from scratch in Berlin and spoke it really very creditably and was doing some research on the German Social Democratic Party and the arms question, which complemented some of our interests in what the Germans were up to.

Q: While you were in Berlin, was USIA looking to target youth with the Amerika Hauser perhaps trying to get a hold of the opinion-makers of tomorrow - thinking about university students and that type of thing.

CURRAN: Definitely. In fact, let me just mention some notes I took at the time. It was of enormous interest for the postwar world and the present world that in that period of 1948 to, I would say, 1969 and the advent of the Nixon administration, the U.S. really made an extraordinary contribution to a peaceful postwar Germany. We helped restart the economy, which was no small thing; we really saved Berlin from the Russians; we began to build up libraries. It's always amazing to me that an open shelf public library is an idea that's uniquely American, and the post-war Germans were stunned by this notion. "What's going to happen? All the books will be stolen, etc." But the idea took hold and it was an important building block of the new, open Germany.

Q: The libraries - we belonged to one - and they were curators, conservers as well as distributors.

CURRAN: There had been a distinct culture of the old German research library basically closed to the public. We, of course, through the *Amerika Hauser* and other facilities, provided endless lectures on civics and history and so on, all of which was unfamiliar for people who grew up in Germany in the '30s and '40s. Also, there were thousands of youth and adult linkages between the U.S. and Germany. It's hard to comprehend now how much we did in terms of Fulbright Grants, Leader Grants, student grants. There were refugee camps in East Berlin and West Berlin, where a lot of my time as a junior officer was spent, and since I spoke German, I organized soccer games and soccer leagues and civics courses and movies and so on. Over 20 years, the cultural exchange effort was a tremendous and very effective effort.

Q: You know, something that occurred to me - I was in Frankfurt at that time, from '55 to '58, as

a consular officer - it didn't occur to me then, but it occurred to me later on, but still I was in the Foreign Service - about what a horrible thing the holocaust was as far as the elimination of the Jew in Germany, not because of just the horrors of the concentration camps, but what it did to German culture. And I think still today, there isn't there the spark, the salt, that gave, you know - and I was wondering whether you, being in the cultural field, were noticing this. Some of the old timers were talking about, you know, "We used to have a real movie industry. We had great authors, and all." Here's this big vibrant country with no really interesting culture, at least for a long time.

CURRAN: I'd have to say that in Berlin there were other issues that were of more concern. I'm a member of the Society of Friends, and I used to go to Meeting for Worship, which is a weekly service the Friends have. We met in East Berlin, actually, and there were a number of Jewish Germans who'd survived the war and come back, and I have an anecdote coming up from my days in Tübingen on this particularly poignant matter. But again, I would have to say that I don't think we were repressing the holocaust, but the whole Cold War confrontation seemed so much more dominating that I don't think we.

That we may not have been sufficiently sensitive to the great loss to German culture that had been the result of the expulsion and holocaust of Jews in Germany... But for myself at least, it didn't seem to be a major issue. I do want to say, for example, that George Czucka, whom I mentioned earlier, a distinguished diplomatic American at RIAS, was Jewish, and certainly the issue of the Holocaust came up in his conversations with Germans, but it never came up really in a confrontative way. When the subject came up in my presence in those days, the Germans were always very apologetic and just retreated; they didn't really discuss it.

Q: During this time, did problems in the United States come up? Still it was just the beginning of the race problem moving into the front page.

CURRAN: Civil rights, I think, really began to emerge certainly after I'd left Berlin, and even after I left Germany in the summer of '59. We certainly didn't hear much about Martin Luther King, for example. I don't remember his name from that period. We certainly had, I am proud to say, interracial American cultural programs. The USIA programs played a leading role in introducing Germany to black music, and we had many distinguished black singers who came through, and many of them joined the German opera companies because there was less prejudice than there was at home. But again, like your previous question, I don't think it was really a troublesome issue for official Americans.

Q: You left Berlin in '57.

CURRAN: Right. I went back to the Department system then, nominally, because my main job in Tübingen was the consular officer, and again, because of the original business of coming in as an FSO. In the '50s one didn't jump back and forth very much. In my own case I was able to do it. In addition, since the American Center was in what the French considered their "occupation area," our center, so it was a German-American Institute, and it had a German board of directors. We had programs in 30 cities and quite a large staff, several automobiles.

Q: Tübingen is where?

CURRAN: Tübingen is on the Neckar River west of Stuttgart, and it's in an area of Germany called Swabia, or "Schwabenland," and when we went to Tübingen it was really a country town, something like going out to, oh, Leesburg in Virginia 20 years ago. I mean really a small town: everyone knew everyone; market square on Saturday; quaint customs; all that business. And our house was on a street which was called Op dem Viehweidle, which is Schwabian which means "On the Cow Path," and that gives an idea of the flavor of the place. Our immediate neighbor was a Catholic priest named Father Arnold, who had survived the war in Germany, and when I get to it there's a little story about that. I was proud of many things that my German colleagues and I were able to achieve in Tübingen, and in the area called Südwürttemberg-Hohenzollern, which translates as South Württemberg in the Hohenzollern area. We worked from Tübingen south to the Lake of Constance, or the Bodensee, the Germans call it.

Q: And you were given a consular title.

CURRAN: That's right. I was called the consul and had my office at the American Center. My French counterpart was a major in the military, and I don't remember his name any more, but he was very pointed in believing - and he said this publicly and loudly - that I was an intelligence officer. And we, of course, made a big thing of our cultural center, which was eventually named The Amerika Haus, and every time the mayor wrote me he would always say, "Well, how's the information collection going?" So officially he was quite difficult, but personally he was very nice to us, and opened the French PX and commissary, so we were able to buy wine for a very reasonable price, like 25 cents a bottle, very nice Beaujolais and Bordeaux. And that turned out to be a big help because modern day officers might be stunned to learn that my representation allowance was \$50 per year, and I had to use that in 30 cities.

Q: You were the consul, but what were you doing?

CURRAN: The main consular work was passport control and it was lucky I had the cloak of the *Amerika-Haus* around me, because Germans were, I think, more friendly to me generally in spite of the things that began to come up in the consular area. What was going on was under the contemporary citizenship law, the people who had fled from Germany, Jews and others, who went to the States, got into the States - Roosevelt and his administration made some effort to let refugees get in, not enough, some people say, but in any event, if you got American citizenship in the 1930s and then after the war you came back to teach, let's say, in Tübingen, you could only stay three years without returning to the States and "reestablishing" or reaffirming citizenship.

Q: I think it was three years if you returned to your native country without showing that you hadn't given up your citizenship, and you could have your citizenship taken away. And I used to do it, too.

CURRAN: That's right. And that's what I had to do in this relatively small-town area. You can imagine what "fun" it was to go down to an elderly Jewish couple who were getting settled in Reutlingen and knock on the door and say, "Give me your passport." Of course, it didn't happen

that way, but it was just about that way.

Q: Were you running across the things that I ran across, that you didn't have to go back if you could get a medical excuse, and doctors were always saying, "Well, they have to go to the Kurort somewhere and take the baths, and they can't leave," and all that?

CURRAN: The real horror story in my work was a man named Professor Hans Rothfels, a German academic who escaped to the States. He had polio, and as a result he got special attention from the Roosevelt people, and he came back to Tübingen and set up the American Studies Department. He lectured and was a huge influence in Germany, radio and television, wrote for *Die Zeit*, and yet, he felt he could not go back to the States because his health wouldn't permit it. He wanted to have his passport extended, and the Department turned him down. And I had the, I could say, speaking ironically, the tremendous privilege of going to him and telling him that and hearing what he had to say about it. He was very, very angry and hurt, and I thought it was awful policy. Again, I was so junior I don't think I had much impact. It certainly got looked at, but it was just too difficult. There were too many people involved to make one exception.

Passport confiscation was one thing, and the other thing I did a lot of work on was property, which Americans alleged they'd owned in Germany and which Hitler was alleged to have confiscated. That was easier in the sense that Germans are great record-keepers, and certainly, if plaintiffs wanted to pay a lawyer, they could usually get some satisfaction. That took a lot of time. And the rest of the time I went around and gave talks on what's going on in America, and I'd go out every night in the car and be out till midnight and get back and work in the office during the day.

Q: Tübingen is a university town, isn't it?

CURRAN: Yes, and that's all it was when we went there, a tiny little village, really.

Q: Could you talk about your impression of the university? I mean, you'd already been through the American system, both the small school at Haverford-

CURRAN: -and Columbia.

Q: -and then Columbia, and here you are looking at a major German university.

CURRAN: The German universities, at least Tübingen was still under the spell of what I would call the "old system." If you got through *Gymnasium* (German secondary school), you pretty much could go wherever you wanted to go to university, and you piled into the classrooms and you listened. For the first couple of years you did pretty much what you wanted, which included a lot of drinking and running around. There wasn't too much running around you could do in Tübingen except with themselves, but they did plenty of that. They clustered around the great professors. Theodor Eschenburg was a leading advisor to Adenauer and then to Erhard. In fact, Ludwig Erhard tells a very funny story about Eschenburg, who was notoriously absent-minded, and he was holding forth at great length to Erhard on what was wrong with what was wrong with

his economic and political policies, and as he left he took a cigar out of his pocket, and Erhard said, "Would you like a light?" And Eschenburg said, puff puff, "No, no, it's already lit," and left. And Erhard said, "I was sitting there taking advice from a guy who has a lit cigar in his pocket?" But Eschenburg was a brilliant man, and my wife studied with him for some of our time in Tübingen. Also, Golo Mann, the son of Thomas Mann, taught there. So the students would cluster around these masters, so to speak, and then eventually settle down and study. Medicine was an important faculty there. So was theology, and that's why our neighbor, Father Arnold, was there as a professor. And *Germanistik*, German literature, was very strong in Tübingen.

Q: Was there any effort to create a chair of American studies? American studies has been notorious and it remains today that if you go to a university and you are at all interested in the United States, you can pretty well do good English, British, French, Japanese, Russian studies, but when you get to Europe, at least in my impression it's been delinquent all along.

CURRAN: We managed to get a chair endowed in American studies, and the first professor was a man named Robert Irwin, who came when I was in Tübingen, and you're right. There was a lot of resistance to it and a lot of concern about how serious American literature was, particularly because of this period of the '20s, 30s, and '40s, when Germans were cut off from America. They'd lost all the great novelists of the 20th century and the poets even. A few of them had heard of Walt Whitman and so on. But I would say even now that you're correct in that Americans have to compete with the feeling that German literature and French literature and Shakespeare and so on are older and better, but I think we've gained some ground on that.

Q: Were you all pushing this?

CURRAN: Oh, absolutely. And as I say, we managed to get an American chair set up in the literature department, and we got a professor there. It was a modest success.

Q: How about at the German-American Institute? Were you getting much in the way of getting picky young people to read American books and things, or was it pretty much technical?

CURRAN: Well, they certainly borrowed a lot of books. I mean the younger people read. First of all, we had a lot of translation, so they didn't have to read it in English, and in the French Zone, English was not the first language, which is good for my German but not good for what you're saying. I ran a couple of English classes for adults, but that's pretty tedious business when you're trying to do about 12 other things during the day, so I didn't keep that up too long. But I think there was a significant exposure to American literature and culture through the *Amerika-Haus* program, and as I mentioned earlier, I think it was a significant contribution.

I do want to mention a couple of other stories which you may appreciate. One was coming back to the business of gathering intelligence. In the fall of '58, the French were marshaling their forces to do something about Algeria, and because they didn't want to have the French population see what was going on, they were training troops in Germany. And because I was driving around so much, I inevitably saw these training centers. I certainly didn't do any political reporting worth the name, but I must have mentioned this to the consul general, who was a

wonderful friend and backer and he was on the Amerika Haus board. One day a fellow showed up in my office, a small office like this, and my secretary stuck her head around the corner and said, "There's a strange American out here who won't tell us his name. He wants to talk to you." Anyway, a gentleman came in, very short haircut, a very much military bearing, striped tie, and he shut the door and he said, "We have to talk." And I said, "Well, okay." And he said, "Here's my ID." He showed me his I.D. card. So I said, "Okay, hop in the car. We'll go to my house." "Oh," he said, "I can't go with you," he said. "I'll come separately. Tell me how to get there." "Op dem Viehweidle," where we lived, wasn't that easy to find, particularly if you didn't speak German, but anyway, I drew what I thought was a pretty good map. I went to the house and sent my wife out to have coffee with a friend, and I waited. This was about four o'clock in the afternoon. At six o'clock he hadn't shown up, and my wife came back, and we said, "Well, the hell with it. We'll have dinner." The phone rang, and it was the chief of police. He said, "There's an odd bird down here in the police station who won't tell us who he is, but he said he came to see you, so what do you want me to do about it?" So I said, "Well, I'd better get down there." I came there, and he had refused to give his ID, and the Germans, you know, if you don't have ID, you're a non-person. So I said to the mayor, "Well, he's a young fellow. He's been in some special training, and he's new in Germany. Please release him into my recognizance." So I got him out of the pokey, and I said, "Please go back to Stuttgart, and the next time someone comes down, will you give me some warning, and we'll talk?" But anyway, the police were really puzzled about that, and I don't know what he thought he was going to get out of me.

Q: This was basically an American, probably CIA or military.

CURRAN: Yes.

Q: They kind of sent people and they kind of stuck out.

CURRAN: Well, you couldn't have stuck out more than this gentleman did. There were some other interesting things that we got into politically. The town of Rottweil in the western part of the sub-state I worked in had an annual event called the *Narrensprung*. It's an old fertility festival that goes back to the Middle Ages. It's held in the spring, just before Lent. Everybody has a nice time sinning, and then they watch the *Narrensprung*, costumed people leaping about, and then they go into Lent to repent all the fun they've had in the pre-Lenten celebrations. It's sort of like Mardi Gras. Anyway, it's very picturesque. But one feature of it is that the "fools," who have these masks on and can't be identified, the *Narren*, can say anything to anybody there, and they pick out leading figures and they abuse them. Some of the masks are a hundred years old or older.

And I had as a guest one year a gentleman named Kurt Georg Kiesinger, who was the minister-president, that is, governor, of the whole province of Württemberg, in which I lived. They were our house guests, and we drove down together. So we were having a delightful time. I was feeling confident about what a great coup it was for me to be entertaining a governor, and all of a sudden we were stopped by one of these "fools," who began to abuse the governor in the most personal and really vulgar way, and Kiesinger, unbeknownst to me, had a very short fuse. And after a little while, turned to me and said, "Deliver me from this mess." So I said, "I know where the car is." And we went back to the car, and we left. It was a bad moment. But I went back to

that festival several times including in my later years. I love it. It's a wonderful spectacle and Kiesinger told me later he didn't blame me.

The other thing that was worth telling was one evening the mayor of Tübingen was an ex- Nazi, and in fact, worse than that, he'd worked with Heydrich in the SA, the *Stutzabteilung*, which was the most radical of the SS divisions, and he was involved in some way in the retribution at Lidice for the assassination of Heydrich.

Q: This is well known, the elimination of a whole town, and all the men and the women and children were taken someplace else, but during World War II this was remembered.

CURRAN: So this man, whose name was Hans Gmehlin, was 18 during the war, so in the mid- '50s he was probably his late 30s, very vibrant man, and I'd gotten to know him well. I mean, as a consul you have to know the local mayor - he was *Oberbürgermeister*. And one night he said to me, "You know, I've got to tell you my story because I know you're going to be asked about it." So he sat down and explained that he was idealistic, he was carried away by the National Socialist dreams and was assigned to the SA staff. He said he wasn't a military side, he was a political advisor. But obviously after his boss was assassinated, he knew about the revenge. He said after the war he turned himself in to the Americans - he was in the American Zone - and he got a four-year term, part of it at hard labor, and then he turned himself in to the French and got another four years, including some hard labor. And the Occupation people said, "He's served his sentence; he can go." So then he came back to Tübingen, and he worked his way up through the civil service - he came from a good family - and he became *Oberbürgermeister*. As a young person who hadn't been through the war, I was probably more sympathetic to a story like this. But in contrast, my neighbor, Father Arnold, who was active in the anti- Nazi resistance, used to sit down with me and tell me what a horrible man this Gmehlin was, not because of anything he'd done but just because of his involvement in Nazi history. So one night we said to him, you know, "Well, if you're a Christian, isn't forgiveness part of the equation?" He gave me this look, and he said, "Never, never. I'll never forgive him." So I said, "Well, if he came to dinner at my house, would you come to dinner?" He said, "Well," and he didn't answer, but finally he said yes, he would. So we had them to dinner with maybe two or three other couples. The Gmehlins were there first, and Father Arnold came into the room with his sister, who cared for him. And Arnold went over to Gmehlin and shook his hand, and it was one of the most moving things I've ever seen. And they spent the whole evening in a corner talking to one another. We did manage to get them to talk, and both of them afterward were very complimentary. It's probably something only a 26-year-old would be dumb enough to try.

Q: A 26-year-old from Haverford, with a Quaker background.

CURRAN: Yes, that's right, gleaming innocence. Well, anyway, it worked. Another funny evening that my wife wanted to be sure I put on this tape was in another one of my "idealistic" moments. There was a group in Tübingen called the *Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde*, which basically means 'Society for Martial Arts,' but they meant military, not jiu jitsu. So they wanted to have a meeting in the *Amerika-Haus*, and after clearing it with everybody, they were permitted to have a meeting there. And the speaker was a general who had served on the Eastern Front who talked about the collapse of the German Army. It was historically quite interesting, as he was

somewhere in a control center in Poland. But in the middle of this, one of the local boys - beer drinkers will recognize the name as Dinkelacker - who had lost at least an arm and probably part of his mind in the war, suddenly jumped up and began attacking the German general for giving up one critical bridge on the Eastern Front. He said, "If that bridge been defended, we could have won the war, turned the whole thing around." Trying to be polite with a fellow obviously disturbed was obviously difficult. There was a very large strawberry-blond German in the audience - I thought it was another one of his soldiers - he helped me get the General out the back door and into his car and so on. And then he turned to me and he said, "God, wasn't that awful? Militarism revisited." And then we fell into conversation and Adolf Ritu turned out to be one of my best friends in Tübingen. He was the head of the conservation corps there, and a spectacular and wonderful, funny figure. But we really got to know him well because I took him back to his house, and the house was locked. His wife was a labor leader, and she was off at a rally or something. We had to climb in through the kitchen window, and he was a very heavy-set man. And the chair broke as he went through the window, and he crashed into the kitchen. It was an ungodly mess, which we were just cleaning up when his wife came home. Somehow we turned into best friends. So an evening that started with the ex-Nazis turned into a wonderful friendship evening.

Also I wanted to mention - this is also an interesting matter - there was a Sudanese family studying in Tübingen, and they had a lot of trouble finding places to live, because the Germans were nervous about black people. So we took the boy in. His sister, who was with him in Germany, had married a Sudanese professor at Tübingen University, and so they had a little less difficulty. We took this Sudanese fellow in, and his name was Zein Suleiman, and I must say, I don't know why we did it, but it was a wonderful human experience. I think it was good for him, too. We kept in touch for many years. He's disappeared now into the Sudanese maelstrom. I haven't heard from him in 10 years.

Q: In this period, were we working on portraying the Soviets as the devil and all that, or was there any particular problem in doing that?

CURRAN: In Tübingen, the issue was more the one you raised about the broader cultural picture. The Germans were willing to be friendly and willing to give us a hearing, but for the most part they were - as one of the high school principals told me - "We're in the middle of an *Existenzkampf*, you know, 'fight for existence,' and we don't have too much time for peripheral things like American culture." The U.S. came late to the French Zone. We didn't get the volume of students out, but we did start a Leader Program when I was there. That was the USIA program where you send leading political figures to the States. We made some impact, but the issue was differently phrased there. The Russian problem was further away, although I do want to say that what was fascinating at the end of my time, the summer of '59, before I left, we began to see some people coming out of the Russian labor camps. The Khrushchev amnesties began to have some impact and we began to get some of those people coming out of the Gulag.

Q: These were prisoners of war from Stalingrad.

CURRAN: Yes, and they were just awful-looking people. Ragged, filthy, hopeless, gaunt lost souls, no idea what to do, and the German government, you know, was doing its best. Some of

them ended up on our doorstep asking for help.

Q: What about the impact of American culture - movies. For example, I remember about this time, one of the hottest shows in town was a movie about Audie Murphy with him in it called To Hell and Back, and it consisted mainly of Audi Murphy killing German soldiers, and yet it was immensely popular. Were you running into this?

CURRAN: In Südwürttemberg-Hohenzollern, French-influenced, local governments had control over films and movies, and there wasn't much television, so there really wasn't much exposure to what you're talking about. You had to go up to Stuttgart, where they had an American base and where it was more liberal maybe than it was in the Schwabian cities. Certainly the influence of American movies was not positive.

Q: Well, you left Tübingen, then, in '59.

CURRAN: Yes, and went into Arabic language training, and I think that's a good place to break.

Q: Okay, we'll pick this up, then, in 1959. I haven't asked a question which I will next time, why Arabic and all that. Great.

Today is the 11th of December, 1998. Ted we're off to where? 1959, and you're off to language training. This was what?

CURRAN: It was the summer of 1959.

I've been thinking quite a lot about the meeting today, and before we actually talk about language school, I've been thinking about post-war Germany. I was fortunate enough to have quite a long incarnation living and working in Germany in two areas from 1948- 1959. There is a lot of discussion today about what people call public diplomacy. And many in government use it as a substitute or as a generic term for what the USIA used to do. Actually, I think it's a term that can be and should be used more in terms of a broader application to all the public, that is, non secret, assets of the American government in particular situations. And above all, I think, in addition to political and security resources and assistance (AID) resources, it's an engagement of educational and cultural intellectual resources. The American government did this public diplomacy to a really brilliant extent in Germany and a couple of other cases I'll mention later on. I think it's really quite extraordinary for those of us now who look back on considerable years in the Foreign Service, to see modern Germany, with its strong economy, its involved citizenry, it's totalitarian past pretty well buried, a vital partner for the West in what I dare to call the Free World. There would be very few people in 1945-46-47 who would have dared predict a unified Germany and I think we and the Germans deserve a lot of credit. But there was also the Japanese case, and the Taiwanese case, where substantial American investment of human and resource capital produced terrific successes. I think it's worthwhile for somebody taking some time to think about why that worked so well. We had good government, we had consensus of the nation, we had a bipartisan Congress, but there's some other piece of chemistry that maybe we

don't quite have. Maybe it's a different, less naïve world or something, but it certainly seems to me now, thinking about various other foreign affairs situations, that somehow we have not been able to bring the same successful accommodation to bear that we have on Germany and Japan and Taiwan and a few other countries.

Q: Well, I think, too, something you left out of there was the fact that this was - with a certain patting ourselves on the back, also as a retired Foreign Service officer - we really brought some very responsible, knowledgeable, and dedicated people into the business of doing this. I'm not restricting myself to just the George Marshalls, Dean Achesons, and all, but I'm talking about the spear-carriers, like ourselves and many of our colleagues. It was, and I think it remains, a fine profession, but it doesn't get the credit for what it was doing.

CURRAN: Yes, and I don't think it gets the support, either. I think there are two pieces to that, and I mentioned it early in some of my remarks, that when one entered the Foreign Service in the mid-'50s and before that, one had the feeling that this was something really special, and you were treated very considerately and generously - not salary-wise, I must say, but the way you traveled and the way you were handled by various embassies. And I think also, somehow, the contact with higher people - I came in as an FS-11, for goodness' sake, and when I came to Germany, Ambassador Conant found time to talk to me about what he was trying to do with Germany. I mean, that made a tremendous impact.

C. GARY BREAM
Economic Officer
Bonn/Bad Godesberg (1956-1959)

Born in Indiana in 1914, C. Gray Bream graduated from Midland College in 1936 and earned an MA and a PhD from the University of Chicago. Bream joined the Foreign Service in 1941 and served overseas in Nova Scotia, Greenland, Sweden, Pakistan, Amsterdam and Germany. He also worked in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research as well as the Arms Control and Development Agency. Bream was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1995.

Q: So when were you in Bad Godesberg?

BREAM: 1956 to 1959, the end of 1959.

Q: What were you doing there?

BREAM: I was again on the economic section, but for a good part of the time I was involved in a rather odd operation. There was a program designed to maintain the spark of German identity in East Germany, and the U.S. government appropriated a sum of money to maintain contacts. To bring people on visits from East Germany to West Germany, to circulate propaganda and so on and so forth. A special projects operation which the embassy carried on through the ministry of German Affairs. I ended up in charge of that operation for a while.

Q: *That's sort of an odd thing.*

BREAM: Extremely odd, yes.

Q: *Can you think of some of the things that you were involved in while doing that?*

BREAM: Mostly what we were doing was simply rubber stamping what the Minister of German Affairs wanted to do and passing along money.

Q: *So it was really more letting them do the work?*

BREAM: There was a well known character at the head of all of this, back in Washington by the name of Eleanor Dulles. This was her baby.

Q: *This is John Foster Dulles' sister who sort of styled herself as the expert on Berlin and on East German affairs.*

BREAM: That's right.

Q: *What was the attitude towards Eleanor Dulles, among the officers like yourself?*

BREAM: A certain bemused respect shall we say. [laughter]

Q: *Did she know her trade as far as Germany went?*

BREAM: She knew her business on both ends, in Germany and in Washington. Which was very important for the operation.

Q: *Who was the ambassador while you were there?*

BREAM: A charming gentleman, David Bruce.

Q: *Did you get any feel for him and his work?*

BREAM: I thought he was excellent. I didn't have very much contact with him, but what little contact I did have, I respected him more than I had most, I'd say.

Q: *Particularly after, now that Germany is united but even before, it was found that West Germany was really permeated with East German intelligence agents and it sounds like your operation would be a natural for the East Germans to use.*

BREAM: I'm sure they did, but we just didn't try to think about it.

Q: *The idea was to try and maintain traffic back and forth and you win some and you lose some but you're keeping the lines open, was that it?*

BREAM: I had some peripheral interest there. At one time I was concerned about the matter of maintaining connection with West Berlin. I did do some economic reporting.

Q: Were you getting a feel for the German miracle, the Verchos Lunder and all that? How did you find Germany during this time?

BREAM: I must admit, although I was no economist, I found it pretty impressive. Not so much from the economic standpoint as from a political standpoint.

Q: You left Bonn in 1959.

WILLIAM C. TRIMBLE
Deputy Chief of Mission
Bonn (1956-1959)

Ambassador William C. Trimble was born in Baltimore, Maryland. He received a bachelor's degree in political science from Princeton University. He entered the Foreign Service in 1931, where his career included positions in Estonia, France, Argentina, England, Brazil, and Germany, and an ambassadorship to Cambodia. Ambassador Trimble was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

Q: You were going to Bonn as deputy chief of mission.

TRIMBLE: Yes.

Q: Could you explain what was the situation at the time? Germany had gone through several stages. What were you doing there?

TRIMBLE: I was assigned there. The Ambassador at that time was Dr. Conant, former President of Harvard. Outstanding person. Many years before he had studied at a German university. He spoke fluent German with a very strong New England accent, since he was from New England. He was excellent for the job because he was a Herr Doktor Professor, and Germans like that, you see. And he also was very sympathetic as Ambassador there. I worked with him, and I liked him very, very much.

It was a tremendous Embassy, carrying over from the High Commission days, and too many people. One of my jobs was to cut down the size of the staff, including, I might say, the CIA, and bring it down to what an embassy should be. And he backed me up 100%.

At that time, Germany had already joined NATO, and we had a military mission there--pretty good people, too. And we were trying to help the German build up. The Russians, of course, were there. And there were lots of spies over from East Germany and we always worried about that. The Germans were working with us in economic matters, and this was the time of the--

Q: Wirtschaftswunder.

TRIMBLE: Wirtschaftswunder, yes.

Q: Started in 1948, currency changes.

TRIMBLE: Yes. And they were coming along very well, and there was really and truly a democratic feeling in Germany in the Bundestag, and the other people I worked with. Von Brentano was the Foreign Minister, a very good man.

Q: Von Brentano, is it?

TRIMBLE: Yes. And Dr. Heuss was President of the Bundesrepublik. The people in the Foreign Office were able, most of them or nearly all. We were trying to change the Embassy from a military government, really, the High Commission thing, to relations between two independent countries. And by and large, it worked very well. We had good relations with the Germans. And I liked them, and they seemed to like me.

We dealt with such matters as support costs for the British were in very bad shape financially. I tried to get the Germans to pay part of the costs, the maintenance costs, of the British troops, which we finally worked out. We paid all our own expenses, but the British couldn't. And I had to give speeches around the place in German--my German was fairly good. And really to run the Embassy for the Ambassador was often away making speeches, and at a much higher level than mine. And so I managed the place. I was very fond of Dr. Conant.

Q: Could you tell me a bit about how he approached and what his thinking was and all and how he worked?

TRIMBLE: He was a great intellectual, a very modest man, very modest man, very quick mind, able. But he did not like Dulles and Mr. Dulles did not like him. Mr. Dulles would send his sister over there once in a while.

Q: Eleanor.

TRIMBLE: Eleanor. I knew the other brother who's--

Q: Alan Dulles.

TRIMBLE: Alan, who's very different, but she would come over there and throw the Dulles name and weight around, which was quite irritating. Indeed, Dr. Conant said to me: "She's the albatross around my neck."

Q: Why was there this antipathy between Dulles and Conant? Was it the difference between the academic and the lawyer?

TRIMBLE: I think so, part of it. And one was a politician, one was not. Well, the Dulles family really felt above all and the gift of God to the nation and world. They were very arrogant people. They're smart. As I said, Eleanor would throw her weight around, which--

Q: Well, this was her bailiwick, particularly Berlin.

TRIMBLE: Berlin, yes.

Q: She was considered--

TRIMBLE: The Berlin Stiftung, yes.

Q: They were the authority on the Berlin problem.

TRIMBLE: She wasn't. She wasn't, but she thought she was. And she raised funds for the, not the opera, but the meeting hall that they call--I've forgotten its name now. They used to call it "Pregnant Oyster." It was built tilted like that. And she would interfere, and she'd come over quite often and try to tell people what to do. And Dr. Conant didn't like it. Neither did I; neither did most of the staff. But she was trying to be the eyes and ears of Mr. Dulles. Then finally Mr. Dulles got rid of Dr. Conant, and he did it rather meanly.

Q: How did this work?

TRIMBLE: I don't know how. He sent a message saying, "Your resignation will be accepted," or something like that. That was after I'd been there about six months, and I was very fond of Dr. Conant, and think he was absolutely the right man for the time--mind and intellectual ability combined with his background, his culture, academic standing and so forth, and he got along very well with the Germans. And he played it low key. He didn't throw his weight around as some American Ambassadors can do.

Then David Bruce took his place up. Well, David was very able, too. He didn't know German, but he was very good, and he had the name, and people liked him, too. So I was fortunate having two very good chiefs of mission there.

Q: I wonder if you could talk a bit about your problem of disassembling this occupation bureaucracy which had built up. I mean, I've seen this in other places, but when we go to places, I mean, a lot of people get very--Americans can get very comfortable villas or suites.

TRIMBLE: Oh, Lord! Don't I know it!

Q: Living very high off the hog.

TRIMBLE: A certain arrogance and attitude dating the military period.

Q: And many of these were former military officers--

TRIMBLE: Many were former military.

Q: And also the professional offices, but people had been officers who had had much better jobs than they could hope for.

TRIMBLE: Absolutely, and better salaries and housing and everything else.

Q: When you're trying to disassemble something like this, and to do it without a major revolution or something that wipes them out. I mean, how did you go about doing that?

TRIMBLE: Well, I'll give you a certain example of what happened. There was what we called the Wristonization Program.

Q: Would you explain what that is?

TRIMBLE: Mr. Wriston, who was former Brown University President--

Q: It must have been Brown, yes.

TRIMBLE: He was appointed head of a commission to examine the Foreign Service, and examinations to enter the Foreign Service, and so forth. He decided that we should take in lateral entries, a lot of people who had worked in military, government and other fields and bring them into the Foreign Service. Well, some were qualified and some were not, particularly some of the military, because they had been in charge and looked down on the Germans rather than treat them as equals. And some of them were not qualified at all.

For instance, we had that great big mission in Bonn, tremendous--I'm going to say several thousand, I think. We had a printing plant, and we had an expert printer, master printer, in charge of it. But he was Wristonized into the Foreign Service, and he wanted to be a political officer. But he was not qualified for that type of thing.

Well, one of my jobs was to cut down on this great proliferation of people which we had, and fortunately I did get instructions from the State Department approved by the President--not for only me for the Bonn Embassy, but other embassies, too--to cut down on those, great big staffs we had in Paris and London and, particularly Bonn, and not only the staff of the Bonn Embassy but also the consulates in Germany. People were falling over their own feet or other peoples' feet, there were so many. And my job there was to try to cut the numbers as best we could. Some were transferred elsewhere. Some were let out, going back into civilian life.

Q: I was a junior officer. My first post abroad was Frankfurt. I was there from '55 to '58. And all these peculiar intelligence operations that were the CIA, the military--

TRIMBLE: Yes, I know.

Q: All these things, could you do anything about them? Because they seemed to grow up out of -

TRIMBLE: I don't know whether we had to cut 10%, 15% or 20%. I don't remember the exact percentage. But I insisted that every branch, administrative--we were over-administered--political section, economic section, CIA, consular section, every one to be cut that percentage. And we did.

Q: Because most of these outfits had their own masters back in Washington--

TRIMBLE: I know, but--

Q: It must have been fighting a tremendous battle to do this.

TRIMBLE: It was certainly that. It certainly was. At that time, we were beginning to feel that the expense of government abroad was too great, and we were trying to cut down the budgets, not strictly military, but in civilian or so many civilian type things, USIA and so forth. There were too many people doing too many things that weren't needed. It was done with the approval of the President, and because of that all the other agencies had to fall into line. And it was my job under Ambassador Conant to see it was done--

Q: And Ambassador Bruce.

TRIMBLE: It was done largely before Mr. Bruce got there. And we did it, some through attrition, of course, and some transferred back to jobs in Washington. Some people wanted to go back to civilian life and in private business. But we did it, and it made a much more efficient mission.

Q: Because so many of these outfits were rather free-wheeling.

TRIMBLE: Absolutely.

Q: And doing things which we're still having repercussions, particularly dealing with Germans who probably shouldn't have been dealt with.

TRIMBLE: Yes.

Q: Or because of their Nazi past or in setting up almost futile spy missions in which people were getting caught or and then, of course, there were black market dealings and everything else you can think of.

TRIMBLE: Oh, there was. The black market at that time was pretty well over, the cigarette type thing, you know. But there was some still. Actually many people were living much better than they would at home. They had servants, a commissary, where the food was cheaper for them, and good housing. We had built a housing settlement in Bonn called a siedlung and an American staff club. "In this country," I said, "we have to see the Germans. We can't all stick together." And I was able to get some of the spaces in the housing open so that the Germans could move in there. We owned the buildings which were built by Germans, of course, for us. And so I tried to

get the Americans and the Germans to co-mingle, if you wish, rather than have a special American colony.

Q: But still, this was really the crux of de-occupying the country.

TRIMBLE: Yes, exactly. And this is the leftover from the military government period and the High Commission. And we were doing all sorts of things which was all right for just after the war, but we didn't have to do now. The Germans should be doing them.

Q: Well, now, you dealt with Comrade Adenauer, who was--I see his picture as Der Alte, as he was known. He was, of course, a towering figure in Germany. What were your impressions of him at the time, and how did both ambassadors, Conant and Bruce, feel about him that you personally observed?

TRIMBLE: I was very fond of him, personally. Ambassador Conant stood a little bit in awe of him. David Bruce got along with him, even though they couldn't speak--he couldn't speak German, but they got along very well together. And I got to know him when I was Chargé--which I was several times--and I have great admiration for Adenauer, a simple man, honest, sincere, true democrat, there's no question about it in that sense, and a great German. And his record, of course, was impeccable in the Nazi period.

I remember one story. I don't know whether it's worthwhile repeating. Adlai Stevenson, Governor Stevenson, came over on a visit, just after he was defeated in one of his elections, and I was Chargé at the time.

Q: That would have been probably in the '56 range?

TRIMBLE: Yes, I think so, yes. And this is probably about 1957 that he came over. The Chancellor gave a big dinner party for him, to which lots of Germans were invited. Adenauer loved German wines. They had about three or four glasses in front of each guest: Rhine, Moselle, etc. Stevenson was on his right, and I was nearby. He'd take a sip, smell it and say, "That's not good enough."

Q: Adenauer, for the transcript, he would smell the--

TRIMBLE: Smell the wine, "That's not good enough."

And all the Germans would say, "That's right! It's not good enough."

After doing that about four or five times, Stevenson said: "Hey, Mr. Chancellor, aren't we going to have any wine? [Laughter]"

The dolmetcher, the German interpreter, was very good. When Governor Stevenson said, he'd just been up to Gettysburg where he'd seen President Eisenhower, Adenauer who liked Eisenhower very much asked, "How was he?"

"He sent his warm greetings to you, Mr. Chancellor."

"And what did you talk about?"

"Well, we threw the bull around." But the dolmetcher didn't know exactly--

Q: The interpreter.

TRIMBLE: Yes. So it came back in German--I was sitting there--"We tossed the heifer."
[Laughter] I told Stevenson about that several years later. I admired Adenauer tremendously, and remember when I left, when I was transferred to Cambodia, and called on him to say goodbye, he said, "Well, I shall see you here again," implying I would come back as ambassador. Of course, I never did. But I got along well with him, and I liked him, and I liked the Germans, most of them.

Q: Well, how did you feel that Adenauer--did he completely dominate the political landscape at that time or were there others? There was Joseph Strauss.

TRIMBLE: Strauss was. I never liked Strauss very much.

Q: And there was Kurt--

TRIMBLE: Schumacher?

Q: Schumacher, head of the Socialist Party.

TRIMBLE: Yes, but he had died.

Q: I guess he had died by that time.

TRIMBLE: Then we had Willy Brandt. I knew Willy Brandt. There's a picture of him here.

Q: He was Mayor of Berlin.

TRIMBLE: He was then Mayor of Berlin. He was a Social Democrat. Of course, Adenauer's party was the Christian Democrats and the CDU in Bavaria which is affiliated. That was Strauss' party, the Christian Democratic Union. But we were able to see both the Social Democrat leaders and those of the party in power as well as the other--

Q: FDP

TRIMBLE: Yes, FDP. And we saw them all, and I'd have them to lunch where they could see one another informally because I was a foreigner. So I'd get both groups together, which was always helpful, and they got along well.

Q: Well, did you have the feeling at that period of time that there was a genuine working alliance between the various German parties and you as part of the Embassy to try to bring Germany into democracy?

TRIMBLE: Oh, yes.

Q: I mean, was this sort of the overriding concern of everybody there?

TRIMBLE: Yes. And, of course, it had started well before I had gotten there. First with Jack McCloy who had been High Commissioner and was very good. But that was in the High Commission period. When Dr. Conant came, as Ambassador, the situation was entirely different. As I said, they admired him greatly, and he was a wonderful person and modest and able, and they really liked him. And they also liked David Bruce. So the relations, I think, were very, very good. Now, I didn't particularly like Strauss. He was able, but I didn't like him very much.

Q: Why didn't you like him?

TRIMBLE: He wasn't arrogant but was a terribly aggressive type. And I didn't necessarily trust him, which I did most of the people. I do not mean communist or anything like that, no. But I think he was too German. He was out mostly for Germany rather than Germany as a NATO partner. I can't explain exactly, but I never particularly liked Strauss. But the others I did. Von Brentano was excellent. The Finance people were good, were helpful and certainly those in the Foreign Office. And I enjoyed dealing with them.

And we worked along well with the military, the German military. Many of them had, of course, fought against us in the war. Their was one admiral--I don't remember which admiral it was--who was very good as were various generals. They had fought in the war for their country as Germans, not necessarily as Nazis. But they were admiring, you know, of the United States, respected what we were doing, and didn't consider us as an occupying power, which they did of the French.

Q: This stigma, however much had been there, had certainly gone by the time you were there.

TRIMBLE: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

Q: I mean, this was a true sort of alliance feeling.

TRIMBLE: It was, yes. And we helped them to get a certain confidence, not self-esteem, for many of them had an inferiority complex. They'd lost and so forth and so on, and they were upset and disheartened. We tried to give them some esteem as a member of NATO, which we, I think, helped do. They're proud people, the Germans. And they have certainly in 18th century and 19th century quite a record of what they've accomplished. And we helped try to build that one up particularly in the cultural grounds, what they've contributed and so forth.

Q: You were talking on the cultural side.

TRIMBLE: Yes. We tried to help them. They admired, as I say, Dr. Conant for his cultural background and his intellectual background, academic background. And the Germans were very proud of their own culture particularly in the academic field and music and art. We tried to help them on that, encourage them to recognize what they had done, which they've done a great deal. We had very good USIS people who helped. And I think in our military mission we made a point of getting people in--not all of them, of course--who had some German background in their family, third generation, maybe, or something, and some that spoke German. And they got along very well with the German military.

And our relations were pretty good with the British. The French Ambassador I had known in Paris during the war and dealt with him in the Ministry of Finance--and he was very good. The British were a little standoffish. We worked well with them, but I think we probably did better with the French than we did with the English.

Q: That's interesting.

TRIMBLE: Because of that feeling of jealousy.

Q: It was a difficult period for the British, too.

TRIMBLE: Yes.

Q: The Germans had been defeated and were doing a lot better than the British.

TRIMBLE: That's right. And the British resentment of the United States existed for a long, long time--envy, but a feeling that this English-speaking country has done better than their own and so forth. It's ingrained in the British. We felt that some times in our relations with the British Embassy there, particularly with one of the ambassadors who was not very nice. But, by and large, we worked well together and with the French, too--especially the French.

Q: How did you view the Soviet "threat" to Germany and all at that time?

TRIMBLE: We felt that very, very strongly, because the German Army was just being built. We had troops, American troops. The French had cut down. The British had some troops and the Canadians had a few, but it was largely the Americans. And we always felt that the Russians might start in again.

Q: You would feel quite vulnerable, wouldn't you?

TRIMBLE: Oh, very much so.

Q: You were there after there had been the East German riots. That was in '53.

TRIMBLE: Yes.

Q: But were you concerned that events in East Germany might cause the West Germans to try and do something and then this would--

TRIMBLE: No. No, I don't think the West Germans could have done anything, but there was always the feeling that the Russians--they had overwhelming forces in East Germany, and we thought they might try to push through. Our Ambassador used to go up to Berlin periodically to hold the flag, after all, we had an American sector. I'd go up there also and always made it a point to go into East Berlin, and I know I was watched the whole time. They would follow us even into the art gallery. You could tell it or feel it.

And we felt that the Russians might try to do something as Germany, the economy was improving--the West German at least--and that their economic conditions were better, that the people were getting more self-confident in themselves, and thus the Russians might move in again.

Q: One talks about a window of opportunity, and in a way this was almost the reverse, or at least it was a very critical period. Because Germany was obviously coming back, and it was going to be at least an economic and also a military power. But it wasn't at that point then, and our troops weren't really enough to stop anything.

TRIMBLE: No, never. In other words, it would be, "Strike now before it gets stronger!" And we felt that. Oh, we felt it all the time!

Q: How did you feel about the various parties in Germany?

TRIMBLE: Well, actually the Free Democrats were relatively insignificant. We kept very good relations with the SPD and the Christian Democratic Union. Some of our officers in the political section would work on the SPD. Others on the CDU, as we used to do in London, some with the Labor Party and some with the Conservative Party and the Liberals. But I could see all of them and so could David Bruce and so could Dr. Conant. And we had good relations with all of them. We had a good labor attaché there working particularly with SPD.

Q: Who was the labor attaché?

TRIMBLE: I've forgotten now who it was. It wasn't Sam Burger.

Q: No. Well, if the name comes back to you--

TRIMBLE: I can't remember who it was. Ernie Wiener? No, Irwin Tobin.

Q: But the labor attaché, particularly in those days, was a very important connection to the socialist side, not only in Germany but in other places, much more than, I'd say, today.

TRIMBLE: Oh, yes, if you had a good man.

Q: If you had a good man.

TRIMBLE: Like Sam Burger was and not just an old trade union type.

Q: What was your impression of David Bruce? David Bruce, of course, although technically a non-career person, was Ambassador to France, to England, to Germany, to China. But you saw him there. How did he operate, and what was your opinion?

TRIMBLE: David Bruce was originally a Foreign Service officer.

Q: That's right, as a very young man.

TRIMBLE: As a very young man, married Mr. Mellon's daughter when Mellon was Ambassador to London, and David Bruce was a lowly vice consul. David spoke very good French. He had no German to speak of. His wife could. She was a very charming woman. He was highly intelligent, politically astute, knowledgeable in foreign affairs and attractive personality but cold. I admired David Bruce and his ability and so forth and think he liked me, but I never had the same affection for him as I did for his predecessor--although he was from Baltimore and we went to the same school and college and that type of thing, and our families knew each other. Very able, there's no question about it. But of the two, I preferred Dr. Conant. But he was very good and he had the ear of the President and the Secretary of State, which is more than Dr. Conant had.

And then he had done very well in Paris, and while he was a Francophile, that didn't hurt him much in Germany. He dealt with a broad brush. He wasn't interested in administration of the Embassy. He left that to me and dealt mostly with political and economic matters and that type of thing, and especially Berlin which was always a problem. I admired him greatly for his ability and liked him, but there was a certain--he was not easily approached--he had a certain reserve in his manner, which wasn't from shyness or anything like that, but he was just that way. His wife wasn't. Both had charm, but David's could be turned on and off.

LEWIS D. JUNIOR
Consular Officer
Hamburg (1956-1959)

Staff Assistant to Ambassador
Bonn (1960)

Lewis D. Junior was born in Kansas in 1925. He graduated from Georgetown University and served in the U.S. Army during World War II. Mr. Junior joined the Foreign Service in 1951 and served in Nigeria, Italy, Germany, Ethiopia, Zaire, the Netherlands, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.

JUNIOR: In Hamburg, I was working on the Refugee Relief Act, but that is also where I first broke out from under that. I had some high school, not college, but some high school German,

and that led me, after a few months there, when I had picked up German to a point where I was fairly conversant with it, to the one job in the consulate which dealt with nasty cases -- nasty security cases, nasty cases involving prostitution, war crimes, war criminals and that kind of thing. So I did that for quite a while. And at one point, the Consul General, Ed Maney (a very old and venerable name in Foreign Service, particularly on the consular side), called me in and said, "What do you know about administration?"

And I said, "Not a thing."

He said, "Congratulations, you are my new administrative officer."

I said, "How is that?"

And he said, "Well, you don't bring any prejudice to the job. If you get those books, you can read them."

So I was the administrative officer there for a while.

Subsequently, I was in the Embassy in Bonn on administrative business and was asked if I would take a letter from the Ambassador, David Bruce, back to the Consul General. I said, "Of course," so they asked me to go pick it up. I found it strange that instead of picking the letter up from the secretary, the secretary asked me to go in and see him. So we chatted for a few minutes, and he gave me the letter and thanked me for taking it back to Mr. Maney. And Mr. Maney opened it when I got back, and he said, "What have you been up to?"

And I said, "I don't understand what you're talking about."

He said, "The Ambassador tells me you are his new staff aide."

So I went down to the Embassy and became a dog robber for a while.

I should mention that while I was in Hamburg and before I took the staff job. I spent, I guess, on the order of three months, roughly, in Vienna during the Hungarian Revolution -- October, 1956. Down there with a group of officers from all over Europe, churning out visas for the refugees. And when we ran out of visas, then we did paroles, shoulder-to-shoulder with INS officers throughout. That was a very interesting experience. I was absolutely bowled over by the qualitative aspects of the Hungarians who were coming out at the time. They were just so smart and so quick, and so determined to get out. I had kids who said that they had stood in the streets and thrown rocks at the Russian tanks, and others who had witnessed it.

So I went to work for Ambassador Bruce. He was in many ways the renaissance man. He was a man with innate courtesy, incisive, quick, smart, fantastic memory, and perhaps above all, an inner calm about him that just gave him an air of great statesmanship. He was a pleasure to work for. I always tried to outstrip myself, because he deserved as good as I could give him.

I can't claim that I saw much of the work of the Embassy. I just saw that selected group of

messages that came in and out for the Ambassador's attention. I didn't get involved in administration or in what little consular work they had. All I saw was the economic reporting coming and going.

This was still a very tense time in American relations with East Germany and with the Soviets -- East Europe generally speaking -- and at any particular point in time you could expect to see some kind of difficulty deliberately engendered by the East Germans or the Soviets. For example, blocking perfectly legitimate travelers who wanted to go into Berlin on the ground, either by train or by automobile. That happened, as a matter of fact, once, when I and a group of friends from Hamburg, consular people, tried to go to Berlin. We were stopped, and it was the beginning of one of these crises that took a number of weeks to work out. Because obviously the Soviets were standing behind the scenes in the little booth at the border, telling the East Germans not to let these people through -- which was a violation of the Accords, of course.

You know, I have forgotten, for the moment, the name of our Minister in Berlin, who was there, a well-known, well-respected guy. And I would say that Bruce's relationship with him and with Berlin was "just right." Enough attention, enough opportunity to hear their voices, but no micro-management. And, of course, he had the military component there, too. He respected the thing in many ways as having the status of an embassy.

So it was a tense political scene. Many a time the crackerjack senior officers that Bruce had working for him would gather in his office and they would work out some very tough questions. They had Bill Tyler as chief of the Political Section, Henry Pleasance was Station Chief, Henry Tasca was head of the Economic Section, and so forth. These were very powerful guys, and they would get together and plot out major strategy, with the Ambassador always in the lead, listening, but he was clearly the man who made the decisions. Occasionally, Washington would try to push him, and he would smile and say, "Send them a holder." He would not be rushed.

Bruce did not overly exercise his relationship with the senior Germans; he went when he had to, and he did what he had to do on the protocol side and entertainment side. But anytime he wanted to see Adenauer, he, of course, could. Any senior Germans.

I think it might be well to point out that as part of the relationship between East and West -- we and the West Germans on the one hand, and the East Germans and the Soviets on the other -- the West German government provided a three-car train for the ambassador. They were actively interested in having the Ambassador and other embassy officials go to Berlin and come back from Berlin not by air but by train, because they felt that the right under the Accords to go back and forth in this rail corridor would atrophy if it was not used. So one of the results of that was that we used that train a lot. But it was not limited to that use; the train was available, paid for by the German government, staffed by the German government, with a U.S. sergeant as the train captain, and it went anywhere in Germany that the Ambassador wanted it to go, with various members of the Embassy staff if there was sufficient room for them. We exercised that quite often.

I think it is fair to say that at no point did the Embassy or the Ambassador ever consider that we were about to be attacked by the Soviets or the East Germans. But consistently the operating

assumption was that the Soviets, with the East Germans and other East Europeans, were going to make life as difficult as they could for us.

I don't want to defame Eleanor Dulles. My memories are dim on that score, at any rate. But I think that "burr under the saddle" would be an appropriate description for the way at least most Embassy senior officers looked at her -- sort of a problem, an inconvenience, an annoyance.

I should relate one humorous story from my days in Bonn. One day, Ambassador Bruce called me in to his office, I think toward the middle of 1960, he said, "I don't want you to tell anyone just yet, but I am going to resign as Ambassador and go back to the United States." Later he told me that he intended to work for Jack Kennedy. One consequence of that was his request that I work with my opposite number in Berlin to set up a big cleanup party so he would have a chance to say farewell to the Berlin communities. This meant some 750 to 1,000 people at a big reception. I had very little to do with the actual organization of it; Pete Smith, who was the staff aide to the Minister in Berlin, organized it and selected the personalities to be invited and so forth. Those who know the site of this reception, Harnack House, may recall that when you came inside, if the reception was in the major room in the right wing, then normally, given the bad weather in Germany, the husband would take the coat from his wife; she would wait in the antechamber there while he took the coats down below to the coatroom, then he would reemerge, pick up his wife, and move off toward the reception line. On this terrible, terrible night, when there was bitter sleet outside and cold and blowing, I was helping Pete move people through the reception line. He knew them by sight; I knew very few of them by sight; so he had the principal responsibility for introducing them to the Ambassador and the Minister and the General. And after the first crush subsided, I saw, hanging back and sort of toward the end of the room, a small lady, all dressed in black, looking very nervous and wan. And since I had nothing to do at the moment, I thought, well, I'll go over and chat with her until her husband comes back from down under and picks her up and takes her through the line. But nobody arrived. And so I went over and chatted with her and said, "Isn't it a terrible night?" My German was quite good, so we chatted in German for a while. She was still rather nervous. I didn't know why she was hanging back there, but I saw it was time for me to go back to the line, so I said, "Excuse me. Don't be concerned, your husband will soon come back from down under." She almost fainted. She turned ashen, and she sort of staggered a little bit, and she said to me, "Aber, ich bin Frau Reuter." She was the widow of the famous mayor of Berlin, who had been dead for less than a month -- and I had just reassured her that her husband would soon be back from down under. What can you say? That was my worst moment in the Foreign Service; I could have died.

HUGH G. APPLING
Political Officer
Bonn (1956-1960)

Hugh G. Appling was born and raised in a farming community California. He received a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of California at Berkeley and then joined the U.S. Army. In 1945, he went to Stanford University for graduate studies in political science. Mr. Appling entered the Foreign Service

in August of 1947. His career included positions in Austria, the United Kingdom (England), Washington, DC, Germany, the Philippines, Syria, Vietnam, and Australia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

APPLING: In Bonn, I had the best assignment in the Embassy -- in a separate office which dealt with German internal politics. It was near the Parliament building. Our work was entirely with the German political machinery in a fascinating time. The new German state and its political structure were still in formation. It was interesting to work with those people and see how the parties were becoming part of the whole structure and how power is created.

Our concern was that the German government be strong and effective. We had no desire to hold it back. We wanted all of the German leadership to work with us in international affairs, especially in the European Community and in relations with the U.S.S.R. Berlin was of course an important part of the political picture. I went to Berlin occasionally. The staff there handled Berlin matters but we communicated.

The consulates did what they were supposed to do and reported competently on regional political and their perspective on national affairs. We would consult with the political officers in the Consulates regularly.

I served two ambassadors: Dr. Conant and Bruce. Dr. Conant was not there for long after I arrived -- less than a year. Both very comfortable men, easy to talk to even for junior officers. Rather different approaches. Conant more scholarly, Bruce more political. Both men of great intelligence. Aristocrats, genteel, sharp and disciplined minds, devoted public servants. Bruce had an unusual ability to anticipate what was going to happen and how people were going to react to it and masterful knowledge and intuition about Washington. Leaders must have a vision and Ambassador Bruce saw clearly what sort of Europe and what sort of world we needed.

WILLIAM LLOYD STEARMAN
Press Attaché
Bonn (1956-1962)

Dr. William Lloyd Stearman was born in Wichita, Kansas. He attended high school in Burlingame, California and entered the V-12 program of the U.S. Navy Air Corps. He received a bachelor's degree in math from the University of California in 1943 and attended graduate school at Columbia University. His Foreign Service career included positions in Austria and Germany. Dr. Stearman was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on April 15, 1993.

Q: Well then you were sent to Bonn where you served for about six years.

STEARMAN: I was the press attaché in Bonn, which if you are a political officer, which I always considered myself to be, is the most interesting job you could have because you could legitimately get involved in everything, and I became involved in a fair amount of substance in

that job.

Q: You were there from 1956-62.

STEARMAN: I was extended because I was the only American-born officer who was bilingual in German. I had many contacts in the Foreign Ministry as well as in the press. I went to all of the meetings: the NATO meetings, the Ministerial meetings, the Geneva Conference in 1959, the 1960 Paris Summit and 1961 Vienna Summit as sort of informal liaison with the German delegation.

It (being press attaché) was the most interesting position that a substantive officer could possibly have, because one has a license to steal. You could get involved in everything, and I did. At one time, we had a "finance officer" from Treasury, and when he would be out of Bonn I would handle everything dealing with vested German assets, which was a very, very sticky problem.

Q: Oh, yes. Well, going back to being a press officer in the earlier period, what was your impression of the German press? What were they after, how did they operate and how did you operate with them?

STEARMAN: In the first place, I got to know many of the key ones fairly well. I always made a point of never lying to them and I always tried to be as informed as possible on the issues I knew they were interested in. The main issues were security issues. Can the United States be relied on to protect German interests and security? There were other extraneous issues, which were quite important to them, like the vested German assets issue, for example. It was a very, very touchy thing and involved a lot of high powered people and interests. Assets of all kinds that we had vested because of the involvement of the Nazi government, etc. It was a long standing, very complicated, very troublesome problem. About the things they were interested in I tried to keep as well informed as possible. This is what got me deep into the substance of many issues. One doesn't have to give away any secrets to inform the press. The secret of dealing with the press successfully is to give them an enormous amount of useful, but unclassified material on a subject. You satisfy media people by both knowing the subject and by giving them a lot of information. Most useful information wasn't classified anyway. The most difficult period in dealing with the press and Foreign Office types was during the Geneva conference where we really were selling them out because we believed in the missile gap.

Q: The Geneva Conference was when?

STEARMAN: May-July, 1959. We believed in the missile gap and that gave the Soviets an enormous leverage over us. We felt that we needed five years to close the gap, which, in the end, turned out to be non-existent, but at the time we really believed in it. That was the first time I understood what strategic weapons were all about. They are diplomatic blue chips. When we felt strategically inferior, we were knuckling under to a disastrous degree. It was just our great fortune that, through a misunderstanding, Khrushchev was invited to Camp David. Eisenhower was really ticked off, but it was too late to do anything about it. That saved us, because if the Soviets had accepted our last proposal on Berlin, which would have seriously undermined all of the existing Four Power arrangements, and which was limited to five years, because we thought

it would take five years to close the missile gap, it would have been the beginning of the end of Berlin. Our proposal amounted to a sellout, a most disgraceful sellout. I was extremely unhappy; although I said nothing. One can keep things quiet only so long before they get out. I believe that even those who knew about our awful last proposal didn't realize how detrimental it was to German interests, so I had to be very careful in handling this. It was a very trying period.

The German media had some extremely good people. Bonn was always a correspondent's paradise because there were so few secrets. The German government simply was not good at keeping secrets; so things were fairly open.

Q: Did you find the German correspondent was a different type than say the French correspondent or some of the others?

STEARMAN: I would say they were less politicized at that time. They later became more politicized. Most of them were pro-American. Remember, we are talking 1956-62, a really trying period in which Germans were subjected to a lot of strain, particularly after the Soviet ultimatum on Berlin of November 27, 1958. That forced us into the summit meeting in Geneva in order to defuse this threat which was putting a lot of pressure on the Germans. They were really dependent on us; they needed us badly and I think that was reflected throughout much of the press.

Q: Wasn't the main question that the Germans were always asking, "Are you with us?" Both Kennedy and Eisenhower got a little tired of Adenauer's looking at them and saying, "Are you going to be there when the chips are down?"

STEARMAN: They had to be reassured constantly and I must say, at times, they had some reason to question our staunch support; however, by and large I believe our record was pretty credible there and stands up well under retrospect.

Q: Did you have a hard time during the U-2 crisis?

STEARMAN: The U-2 was shot down May 1, 1960. That is an interesting event. I would like to dwell a little bit on that because this is another thing I got involved in.

Q: You might explain what it was.

STEARMAN: I will back up a little bit and pick up things at the end of the Geneva Conference which ended with us on the verge of selling out. We had Khrushchev coming over in September, 1959 and meeting with Eisenhower at Camp David. Eisenhower was taking a very soft position on Berlin because he apparently also believed in the missile gap. You remember the old question the French were asking in 1939: "Mourir pour Danzig?" We don't want to die for Danzig. Well, this was "Mourir pour Berlin," we don't want to die for Berliners. At that time we thought the USSR could blow us away with intercontinental ballistic missiles, which, as it turned out, they actually didn't have.

Anyway, Eisenhower took a very weak position on Berlin, best demonstrated at a press

conference held in Washington after the Camp David meeting in which he would make no guarantees at all that the United States would protect Berlin. He also said that the situation in Berlin was "abnormal," which is what Khrushchev had been calling it all along. It was very disheartening.

Well, what happened is this: our U-2 flights, which, starting in 1956, began covering the Soviet Union, couldn't detect any ICBMs. The Soviets, as it turned out, didn't like their first generation ICBM which was the SS6 Sapperwood. Although they had the capability of building a large number of them, they decided instead to built an improved next generation of ICBMs.

I believe we got some human and other intelligence in January, 1960 which finally led us to conclude that we didn't have a serious strategic problem. The Soviets had a few more ICBMs than we, but we had the overall strategic advantage, if anything. At worse it was a standoff. At this point, our public position on Berlin started to change and harden, first in speeches by Vice President Nixon and Chris Herter, who was our Secretary of State, and finally, by Douglas Dillon, then Under Secretary of State who, on March 25, 1960, made a very tough statement on Berlin -- totally different from what Eisenhower had told Khrushchev. On April 27, when Eisenhower was asked about Berlin and he said that Douglas Dillon had completely covered his administration's position.

The summit meeting was due to take place on May 18, 1960 in Paris. Khrushchev knew that he wasn't going to achieve anything there, since our position on Berlin had changed almost 180 degrees. He knew he was going to come out of that meeting empty handed. When the U-2 was shot down on May 1, it was a godsend to Khrushchev. That gave him the perfect excuse to really torpedo the meeting which he did by insisting that all responsible for the U-2 flights be punished. This, of course, would have to include the Commander-in-Chief, Eisenhower, although Khrushchev didn't go that far.

Well, I was with our delegation at that meeting -- going to all of these meetings was the great part of my job. We had one preliminary meeting with Khrushchev in which he blustered all of his demands. That was the only meeting we had. The summit was in effect, then called off. I liked this development -- partly because we had done all these nice briefing papers for Eisenhower, but it was rumored that while flying up from Delhi, he had been reading westerns instead of our papers. You could only give Eisenhower one page on anything, he wouldn't read much more. He would, however, sit through hours of dog and pony show briefings, but he just wouldn't read much. I feared he might not be too well prepared for the summit.

Anyway that whole conference broke up, and Khrushchev gave one of the biggest press conferences in history. Remember the old Palais Chaillot with a kind of temporary huge conference hall? There must have been 3000 correspondents sitting in that hall. Khrushchev was up on the podium with his Defense Minister, Malinovsky wearing a chest full of medals. I was sitting in the hall with the German contingent of about 40, ten or so of whom were from the Foreign Office. Finally some of the German correspondents started to heckle Khrushchev. We were sitting more than a third back from the front of this huge hall. Suddenly Khrushchev stopped and pointed down at us. He said, "We buried you at Stalingrad and we will bury you again." Silence, no more heckling. The Germans were frozen. At any rate, Khrushchev got

himself off the hook at Paris. He was in a very tough position as far as the rest of the Politburo was concerned. I think this was one of several things, including the Cuban mess up, that eventually got him eased out.

Q: Why don't we just finish up the German thing and then end this session. You were there with three different ambassadors, James B. Conant (1955-57), David Bruce (1957-59), and then back to your former Austrian colleague, Walter C. Dowling, (1959-1963). Could you describe from your perspective how they operated and their effectiveness?

STEARMAN: They were totally different people. Conant being the great academic, president of Harvard. First, it was a very large operation, a High Commission when he took over. The whole complex, built to house the operation at that time down in Bad Godesberg, which was right on the Rhine, was so big that it now houses not only our chancery but two German ministries. It was an enormous complex which gradually got smaller and smaller. The nature of the mission was changing from the end of the occupation by the handing over more and more power to the Germans and returning to more of an embassy operation. It was never like any other embassy because of the unique position and role in Germany.

I wasn't there very long under Conant. We had David K. E. Bruce who was the only role model that I ever owned up to having. He was a remarkable man. Extremely effective, with a wonderful command of the English language. The telegrams which he sent back to the Department were priceless. I got along with him particularly well because I used to go shooting and fishing with him. He was great at both. The best wing shot I have ever seen in my life, and a great fly fisherman. That impressed me. But also, he knew everybody you could think of. We would be out having a drink at the tailgate of a station wagon after one of our outings and he would talk casually about everybody you had ever heard of. He was in substance very, very good. As you know he was not really a career professional. He had been a Foreign Service officer, a consular officer, I believe, when he was younger; however, he was one of the most skillful professionals I ever worked for. He certainly held all the jobs. He was Ambassador to France, to England, China, the Marshall Plan, etc. You name it and he has done it.

Q: Did you get any feel how he felt about the Eisenhower administration and how they were dealing with things?

STEARMAN: Sometimes he didn't take things seriously. This brings up a little anecdote. At one point an instruction went out to all the missions that ambassadors were not to get new Cadillacs but, instead, ones used by cabinet officers. Bruce sent back this great telegram which said, "In days of yore ambassador's were made to do with cast off courtesans and I guess now they have to make do with cast off Cadillacs. If that be the case, then I want Engine Charlie's cast-off."

Q: Engine Charlie was the Secretary of Defense who had come from General Motors, hence the nickname.

STEARMAN: This is typical of the kind of telegrams he would send back. Ludwig Erhard, the German Economic Minister, was due to eventually succeed Adenauer, but was kept in his place by Adenauer until then. At one time Bruce sent back a telegram saying, "Adenauer apparently is

not satisfied just to make Erhard eat crow, he wants to make crow his permanent diet." That is typical of the many great telegrams he would send back. Colorful but skilled. He was very sophisticated.

You know, Red Dowling, who was DCM when I was down in Vienna, was a reasonably competent officer, but not in Bruce's league. Bruce was in a class all by himself. He was simply outstanding. I was always flattered that he used to drop in to see me when he was in the Department. I greatly admired him and I don't admire very many people after all these years. I really can not find a major flaw in the man; even though everyone is flawed to some extent. He once gave a talk to the Embassy Women's Club in Bad Godesberg about diplomacy. He said, "They say diplomats are sent abroad to lie for their country, but that is a mistake. A diplomat should never, never be caught in a lie. That ruins your credibility and effectiveness. I am not, however, talking about all the little lies that we have to tell every day; after all you have to lie to live." And he was absolutely right in that sense, and I have never forgotten, "you have to lie to live."

**JOHN A. BAKER Jr.
Russian Language Training
Oberammergau (1957)**

John A. Baker, Jr. was born in Connecticut in 1927. His career in the Foreign Service included positions in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, Moscow, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in September 1992.

Q: When you left the Yugoslav Service of the Voice of America, you did what?

BAKER: I was assigned to the US Consulate General in Munich, but actually posted to Oberammergau where the US Army had established what was called Detachment R, which sounds rather spooky but was really a two year course taught entirely by Soviet defectors. There was nothing classified taught in this course because none of the people giving it had any access to any. They were giving the course in Oberammergau because most of them, because of the McCarran Act, couldn't come to the United States, having been Communists in various parts of the Soviet Union.

In this sort of sanitized environment in a pretty little town in southern Bavaria, I attended one year of this two year course that the Army had established. That course was taught entirely in Russian. We asked our questions in Russian and did our exams in Russian. So it was excellent preparation both linguistically and substantively for an assignment to Moscow which I was aspiring to and to which at the end of that year I got. It was on the way to that assignment in Oberammergau that I did the audience survey in Yugoslavia

VLADIMIR I. TOUMANOFF

Peripheral Reporting Frankfurt (1957-1958)

Vladimir Toumanoff was born in Constantinople in 1923 to Russian parents. He attended Harvard University and joined the Foreign Service in 1950. He served in several posts including Germany, Iceland, Moscow, and Canada. He was interviewed by William D. Morgan in 1999.

TOUMANOFF: Peripheral reporting in Frankfurt is the next subject, Bill. Peripheral reporting, for those who may not be familiar with it, is (or was during the Cold War) a Foreign Service program which operated as follows. Periodically, and sometimes quite frequently, Russian citizens, typically military personnel, and residents of other communist dominated countries would escape to the West. As I recall, there were two collection points for such defectors, one in the Pacific, and I believe it was in Japan; the other one was in Frankfurt, Germany. The defectors would be brought to Frankfurt, where first they were tested to see if they were legitimate defectors or whether they were plants, whether they were Soviet, or other, intelligence agents, deliberately sent abroad in the guise of disaffected citizens.

Q: Could you give us a quick word on what "magic" you had to test them?

TOUMANOFF: Fortunately, the Central Intelligence Agency and the military did all of that. In fact, I'm pretty sure it would have been the Central Intelligence Agency that did the testing through intensive interrogation including, I assume, lie detector tests. It would be, I think, very difficult to fabricate a biography that would escape some false notes if the questioner had a storehouse of detailed information to draw upon about your country.

Q: So they didn't make it to you until they had been screened.

TOUMANOFF: They actually didn't make it to me for quite a while, because first they would go through this screening process and be questioned for whatever urgent intelligence information they might have. Then, if they were found to be legitimate defectors, they would go to the military and CIA for thorough questioning about any other useful knowledge they might have. And when everybody else was finished this small, three-man State Department Foreign Service unit would get its turn to ask about attitudes, public opinion, education, and whatever social, political economic and other topics seemed useful to pursue.

Q: Are these Soviet citizens only?

TOUMANOFF: Mostly, but not entirely. We saw a few people from Eastern European countries, other than East Germans. The Federal Republic took charge of those. I think the zone from which people were sent to Frankfurt ran as far east as Turkey, maybe conceivably Iran, but past that geographic line they would be shipped off to Japan to go through the same process there.

Q: Japan-I don't quite get the connection.

TOUMANOFF: Well, I always assumed there were those two centers for reasons of economy in

transportation, but now that you ask, it may have had something to do with China, or North Korea or other national and language groups. In any case that was the kind of operational information we didn't have. We never knew much about the other center. Politically it was probably less sensitive within NATO than in the Pacific.

Q: But it was geographic because they defected that way.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, because people were jumping out from the communist countries in Asia and the Pacific rim as well.

The process was that appointments would be set up in various safe houses, and the defectors and one of us three would meet in the safe house.

Q: Safe house to us is well known, but there might be some who don't know that term.

TOUMANOFF: Well, these were typically either apartments or actual houses which were under complete control of the United States Government, and whether it was the military or who it was that was in charge of these locations, I never found out. But they were inconspicuous, carefully guarded, and unidentified in any public manner.

Q: They were secure in the sense that people were protected in them.

TOUMANOFF: People in them were both protected and controlled, so that these were perfectly safe places for candid conversations. We would not be overheard and access as well as egress was carefully controlled. The State Department's small unit of three Foreign Service Officers was attached to the Consulate General but offices were in one of the many 7th Army buildings.

As I mentioned, our focus was on the political, social, cultural, economic conditions in the USSR. Public opinion, living standards, how elections were actually managed, etc. One of the most interesting conversations I had was with three professional criminals who described in detail for several days the structure and functions of criminality, from street crime to saturated corruption from the bottom at unskilled labor to the very peaks of state power and governance. What impressed me most was that at all levels crime was an essential survival mechanism in that society, had been for centuries, and as such extremely hard to extirpate.

Q: Rather than intelligence.

TOUMANOFF: Well, rather than what is conventionally thought of as "intelligence" or the work of spies. Although to my mind what we were receiving was more important for the conduct of foreign relations than the more "technical" materials. I think an accurate grasp of the conditions and perceptions of foreign publics and leaders is essential for successful diplomacy, both confidential and public. Others might retort "But so is war, and its instruments!"

Q: You got that from people.

TOUMANOFF: From people, yes. It took a certain amount of skill, and my training and practice

as a clinical psychologist helped. But fluency in Russian with no foreign accent was probably more important. Very quickly the Russians I talked with would wind up speaking to me as a fellow Russian rather than as an American, and it was easier to establish trust, and confidence that they were being properly understood and not judged by alien standards of a different culture.

Q: And they all had defected. They had committed an act of espionage, if you will.

TOUMANOFF: Well, they had all jumped. In this case all three were professional criminals who had been drafted into the Soviet army and all three of them had engaged in criminal activity in East Germany, and been caught. Rather than go back, into the Gulag (Soviet convict labor camp), the three of them decided to run, and being skilled criminals they figured out a way and they got out.

Q: Were they together, a team, if you will, the three?

TOUMANOFF: Recently, yes. But not throughout their careers.

Q: They knew each other.

TOUMANOFF: We went through their criminal histories, which differed in part, and the organization of crime, of corruption, the sources of violence, behavior in the Gulag, the whole range of the criminal world in the Soviet Union, including government campaigns to suppress it, more successful at the bottom rungs than higher. It was a truly fascinating account. For example, I learned the extent to which counterfeiting of any document was available if you knew the right people and paid the right price. Their account was corroborated by an incident in Moscow, later. In a totally accidental encounter, a plain workman whom I had picked up on my bicycle refused to believe I was an American diplomat and rejected my Soviet Foreign Ministry documents as false. He proceeded to tell me where in Moscow to go and how much it would cost to get such counterfeits.

Q: And how the Soviet system could be fiddled with.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, well, and the prevalence of criminal activity and behavior of every conceivable kind, from the most savage forms of violence to corruption in government to the highest levels.

Q: All being crime, but not looked at as crime. Because they were part of the system.

TOUMANOFF: It was not a terribly legally-conscious society, you might say. And so, in a great many ways, what was criminal activity was and still is, in that vexed society, part of the survival mechanism, crucial survival techniques, for everybody from individuals to organizations and institutions. At the same time, the giving of gifts to authorities is an imbedded custom in much of the East, including parts of the former USSR, and looked upon as a gesture of respect rather than bribery. Even more widely customary is the obligatory exchange of favors, regardless of formal "legality".

Q: How did that information then get used? Maybe you never knew. Maybe you never found out where it went into the system.

TOUMANOFF: Do you mean what happened to my reports? Oh, I really don't know. I assume that they were distributed routinely to the intelligence community, to appropriate Embassies, and to various Desk Officers. I don't remember every seeing one later in the Department. But I never looked for them.

Q: I don't either. How invaluable that was, for the very reason that you just said.

TOUMANOFF: You know, it never dawned on me to inquire about distribution.

Q: Did you analyze them in any way or just do them raw?

TOUMANOFF: As I recall, we reported what information the defectors provided, occasionally with commentary. But no systematic analytic work.

Q: And they led you, probably, to the questioning.

TOUMANOFF: Well, you certainly, - it was essential to establish rapport and confidence, to be genuinely interested in them as people. It was easiest to start by asking about their childhood, where they were born, school, where they grew up. Then go on about the rest of their lives, and what they thought and how did they feel, as one would with a new friend, following whatever leads emerged that sounded promising. But these were conversations, not interrogations. Most of them had a surfeit of those and were heartily glad to relax and chat.

Q. How long were you in that assignment?

TOUMANOFF: About a year and a half. Then one of our Officers in Moscow was PNG'd (ordered to leave the country by the Soviet Government) and I was transferred to Moscow in his place. I came to Frankfurt straight out of Harvard area training, so it would have been about June of 1957, and I left for Moscow in September of 1958.

But there was another episode in Frankfurt I should tell you about.

Headquartered in Frankfurt was a Soviet émigré organization called the Natsionalnyy Trudovoi Soyuz, the NTS (the National Labor Union in translation). It was bitterly anti-Soviet, as you can imagine, and it conducted all kinds of hostile activities against the USSR - infiltration of persons, smuggling in anti-Soviet materials, contacting and soliciting defection from Soviet officials and delegations in the West, organizing anti-Soviet demonstrations, publishing hostile literature - all sorts of activities designed to make life difficult for, and undermine the Soviet regime. As a consequence, it was a target, and a high priority target for the Soviet intelligence agencies, and as it turned out, was in fact infiltrated. The NTS, this organization, held an international congress or conference of members and invited delegations of sympathizers from all over the world while I was in Frankfurt. I was assigned by the Department to attend this conference and report on it.

Two things happened at the conference. One was that the NTS leadership announced and initiated the launching of a very ambitious program of international recruitment designed to expand the organization and its activities to a truly global scale. That looked to me serious enough to warrant U.S. Government attention. Whatever their chances of success, the leadership meant business. So I reported the conference, and collected and shipped back to the Department all of the literature that had been distributed to the attending members, delegations and the press. The result, I learned quickly, was quite a firestorm in Washington. One consequence was that support for the organization which was coming, I assume, from the U.S. intelligence community in one fashion or another, was sharply curtailed, and the global ambitions and expansion program was scotched. As I understand it, there were those in Washington who were much in favor of the program, and others who were much opposed to it, so there was a good deal of argument and heat in Washington before the final decisions were made and implemented. I was the fellow who was blamed for having started it all with my report, and some people held it against me later and told me I never should have reported as I did. But there were no adverse effects I could see on my subsequent career.

The NTS surely was getting funding from private sources - from its membership and other solicitations. But it was common talk that a large part of its support came from the United States Government.

Q: So they could shut it off.

TOUMANOFF: So presumably they could shut it off. But I was told later by former NTS people that they didn't shut it down completely, they just refused to support the ambitious expansion program, and reduced funding.

Q: And that sort of stopped it.

TOUMANOFF: So far as I can tell, that was the end of that. I never heard again of a global NTS program.

On the last day of the conference there was a small dinner party given by the president or director of the organization for a group of maybe 15 or 20 high-level members, and myself.

Q: Were you the only State Department representative?

TOUMANOFF: I think so.

Q: And U.S. Government?

TOUMANOFF: None I knew of. It was an evening dinner party in the offices of the this Union. At the end of the dinner party, the president addressed the company. It was a closing speech reiterating the plans and ambitions for global operation, and bidding the guests to forward it in every way. The next day, I went back to that office, which was in a different, separate building, to pick up some more of the literature, and what I found was armed guards blocking admission to the building by anyone. To the best of my recollection, I got past the first armed guards with my

State Department pass, and then I met a steel door, shut, with more armed guards, and was told to turn around and leave. Which I did with some relief.

What had happened, I found out later that day, was that the president, (director) had been poisoned at that dinner, and poisoned to the point where he very, very nearly died. He was rushed to emergency, hospitalized, remained hospitalized for some considerable period of time, had all sorts of strange symptoms, and my recollection is that he was comatose and his life hung in the balance for a week or more, and for some time after lost his capacity for speech. I believe he also lost his hair. There was a good deal of press coverage of the incident.

Q: What nationality was he?

TOUMANOFF: Russian, as were most of the members. It was an émigré organization recruited from Russian émigrés for the most part, as well as others from the USSR and Eastern Europe. And they finally determined, or at least they concluded - concluded because they were so intent on discovering how the poison was administered. They concluded that it was in the after dinner coffee, that in some fashion Soviet agents managed to get this poison into his coffee cup, and no one else's. The rest of us felt that somehow we had escaped with our lives because another way of poisoning would have been simply to poison one of the dishes, which we all ate. Indeed there was some suspicion that one or more at the table were infiltrated Soviet agents and we were spared general poisoning because the Soviet KGB did not wish to sacrifice its own.

Q: By infiltrators that had been part of... or even the staff of the kitchen.

TOUMANOFF: I don't know how they did it, and I decided I really didn't want to know particularly, and I wasn't going to press the issue. Having completed my assignment to report on the conference, I didn't want to have anything more to do with the organization. I assume the Soviet intelligence services had infiltrated the organization, or had bribed somebody on the kitchen staff, or a waiter. Who knows.

Q: But it was in their interest decidedly. They saw a danger.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, yes. And this could not have been a sudden, last minute operation. My guess is that the organization had been infiltrated thoroughly for some time, its leader had been targeted earlier, and that knowing its ambitious expansion program the Soviets decided that at the conclusion of this conference they shake the cage brutally to cut it short. It is not as though the Soviet Government did not have many sworn enemies spread around the world. The NTS expansion program probably had some promise, although perhaps less than the Soviets feared. My hunch is that the NTS continued to receive some support but under a much tighter rein.

Q: Well, I've never heard of the organization. Now what happened to it ultimately? Did it-

TOUMANOFF: Well, I think it ultimately dissolved or disintegrated and lost its function in life. Although for all I know, there still may be some remnant of it somewhere. Some émigrés, I'm sure, depended on it financially, and perhaps it ultimately converted to a benign social welfare unit. That would have been a suitable end.

Q: And then you moved on?

TOUMANOFF: Not quite yet. An issue arose in Frankfurt over language capability in the Foreign Service, which illustrated a problem common at many other posts. Frankfurt was the headquarters of the post-war U.S. High Commissioner for Germany, a huge bureaucracy in its time, as well as of the U.S. 7th Army. The consequence was a veritable American city within the City. Every conceivable urban service and function, including churches, schools, food, clothing, goods of every kind, recreation, cars, fuels, public transportation, fire, police, hospitals, repairs, and above all blocks upon blocks of giant apartment houses; everything American, from cradle to grave, was provided in this huge American ghetto. And that is where we, thousands of civilian and military Americans, but not Germans, lived. Moreover we were deterred, either by administrative prohibitions or by financial costs, from living in and with the surrounding German community. The discrimination as well as the distinction caused Germans to avoid the ghetto and its natives. U.S. administrative efficiency (for which read dollars), and paternalism isolated the two populations from each other. While I was there the Department announced emphatically that all Foreign Service personnel stationed abroad should learn the language of the nation in which they were serving.

Q: Yes, they got caught in Mexico or some place by Secretary Kissinger.

TOUMANOFF: Well, were Frankfurt an exception, unique, it would not have mattered greatly. But equivalent American confines prevailed at many posts. What's worse is that now, under the impress of security needs, we are walling in more of our posts and people, physically and psychologically.

Q: Typical ghettos, as I recall, having stayed in one for several weeks.

TOUMANOFF: In any case, I was moved in Frankfurt to send the Department, in reply to its language announcement, a pungent, Official Use Only, commentary detailing the many ways in which its Administrative arm obstructed its substantive goals. In Frankfurt it took a very special effort, usually at some considerable financial sacrifice, to participate in the daily life of the surrounding German society, or even to study and have live practice of their language. The Foreign Service Journal wanted to publish my reply, but I refused. Publication risked politicization. I had had enough Congressional investigations.

Q: Germans were still the enemy.

TOUMANOFF: No, it was just administratively efficient to piggy back on the huge military establishment, and oh! so comfortable.

Q: That's a better word, paternalism.

TOUMANOFF: For instance, if you wanted to live outside of American housing, you had to pay for it yourself. There was no housing allowance, and due to wartime destruction, housing was scarce and rent for Americans was elevated.

Q: *So the system was made that way.*

TOUMANOFF: The system was made that way. And not in Germany alone. Not then and, I fear, not now.

Anyway, that's enough about Germany, I guess.

HANS N. TUCH
Policy Officer, Voice of America, USIS
Munich (1957-1958)

Hans N. Tuch came to the United States from Germany in 1938 as a 14-year-old. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II, gaining enough active combat points to be discharged early. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas in 1947 and a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Mr. Tuch's career with USIS included positions in Germany, Washington, DC, Russia, Bulgaria, and Brazil. Mr. Tuch was interviewed on August 4, 1989 by G. Lewis Schmidt.

TUCH: I left the exhibit program at that moment in order to go into Russian language training and be trained for my assignment to Moscow. I must interrupt myself because before going to the Soviet Union, I was again sent to Germany for a year, this time to Munich, but with the Voice of America.

At that time the Voice was broadcasting directly to the Soviet Union and to Eastern Europe from its studios in Munich. I was sent to Munich as part of an effort to redirect the tone and content of the Voice of America, which had been an instrument of aggressive anti-communism in the early 1950s. The new USIA director, George Allen, wanted to change the tone and direction of the Voice of America to be in line with our policy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. So I spent a year in Munich with the Voice as policy officer and writer of commentaries.

To some extent I ran into the opposition by the old line German and East Europeans who were in Munich at the time. Some of the people working in Munich were out of touch with Washington. Many of them had never been to Washington. They had been Eastern European refugees who were hired locally; they were, for the most part, professional journalists and broadcasters, but they were not familiar with American policy or with the United States in general so we had a few problems.

I remember one incident particularly where rather than trying to change the commentaries and news analysis of some of the service chiefs -- we were broadcasting in Russian, Ukrainian, Uzbek, the three Baltic languages and Hungarian, Polish, and Romanian -- rather than trying to adjust them to the new tone, I found it easier to write the commentaries and try to suggest to these writers to use mine instead of theirs. In some cases that was successful. In one or two it

was not. I remember one service chief, who shall remain nameless, looking up at me after he had read my commentary to replace his and saying to me, "I am sorry that Senator McCarthy was not able to finish his job of getting rid of all the communists in the Voice of America."

But this was the sort of thing that one had to experience. It was not particularly painful to me. At any rate, I spent a year in Munich, not as part of the regular USIA program but as VOA staffer.

LEWIS W. BOWDEN
Russian Studies
Oberammergau (1957-1958)

Lewis W. Bowden was born in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma and was raised in Kansas. He attended Yale University and then entered the U.S. Navy during World War II. He joined the Foreign Service in 1952 and served in many countries including Yugoslavia, Switzerland, Germany, the former Soviet Union, and Brazil. Mr. Bowden was interviewed by Robert J. Martins in 1991.

Q: Then you went back to Russian studies at Oberammergau.

BOWDEN: Yes. I had applied to go to this kind of Russian high school there for eight or nine months.

Q: An advanced Russian course with all the instruction being in Russian by native language speaking officers.

BOWDEN: From that point of view it was very useful. I got my Russian back after no use for a few years. So I felt perfectly at home when I finally did get to the Soviet Union the following year.

Q: You arrived in the summer of 1958, as I recall since I was about to leave when you arrived.

BOWDEN: Yes, I replaced you. That was an interesting time to arrive. You may remember that when I got there I was taken to the apartment from the airport. I phoned in the next morning to find out when I should report in and was told not to come downtown because the Embassy was surrounded by agitators and people protesting the landing of the Marines in Lebanon.

Q: I recall that I was on the front gate dealing with the crowd. I have some great stories about that. How the crowd wasn't really angry, it was just a put up job. Eventually the assault troops were brought in--they weren't troops they were people dressed in workmen clothes who began throwing rocks through the windows and shooting rifles, etc.

BOWDEN: I should add that later on I found they also threw ink pots filled with ink. They went all over the rugs and walls in the Embassy apartments. This created a big clean up job later on.

Within a couple of days I managed to get into the Embassy and reported for work. I moved into your old job. Incidentally when they did a very thorough search of that building some years later they discovered microphones behind the radiator in your office and mine. They never found out if the microphones worked, but they surely were in the wall and got taken out eventually by security.

Q: No great surprise.

BOWDEN: Hardly a surprise. They were pretty cleverly hidden because the radiator was made of metal and when the detectors went around the room they got thrown off by the metal in the radiators.

I was dealing with internal matters with a guy named Bob Owens. That year from rocking throwing at the Embassy, about a year later we were all at Seconiky Park with Vice President Nixon, who opened the first ever American exhibition in the country...and that is where he and Khrushchev got into the big argument...

Q: The kitchen debate.

BOWDEN: The kitchen debate. That was the high point of that year. Then the following year, the high point came on May 1 or 2 when we learned that the Russians had shot down one way or another the U-2 and had Francis Gary Powers, the pilot, in their custody. I spent from May until the time I left in August, tracking everything I could find in the Soviet press and radio and television about the U-2 and the background of flights over the USSR, etc. I did not attend the trial which started shortly after I left because I was at that time in the political section and the judgment had been made that someone from the consular section should appropriately go under our consular convention to be our Embassy's amigós curiate, friend of the court. As a matter of fact Powers was visited by our consular people and indeed somebody was present at the trial.

FREDERICK W. FLOTT
Mixed Duties
Bonn (1957-1959)

Frederick W. Flott was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1921. He entered the Foreign Service in 1946. His career included assignments in France, Iran, Germany, Switzerland, Vietnam, and Indonesia. Mr. Flott was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

Q: Well, I think we might as well move on to Bonn. Or were there any other incidents that happened?

FLOTT: No, the high point in a way during my Tehran tour was the trip into the Soviet Union. So I came home, home leave, and was assigned to Bonn in January, 1957.

Q: David Bruce was the Ambassador?

FLOTT: Not at the very beginning, but he arrived shortly thereafter.

Q: Before that it was Conant?

FLOTT: Yes, Ambassador James B. Conant, but actually Dr. Conant had left Bonn, I believe, just before I got there. There was a Chargé for a while; then David and Evangeline Bruce arrived. I was there two and a half years.

Q: What was the impression of the political system in Germany at this time. This was twelve years after the War.

FLOTT: We thought they were doing a lot of good things. They were making a lot of progress. In 1957, there was still a lingering suspicion that the leopard had not completely changed its spots, and that you just can't be too sure. There was that caution. There was great respect for Dr. Adenauer, the Chancellor. But there were still some reservations about the evolution of the German body politic.

Q: What was the view of the Soviet threat?

FLOTT: That they might in three hours be in your backyard. In country team staff meetings, the Air Attaché would assure us that if it came to a war with the Russians, we would win it.

Q: About the same time, I was in Frankfurt, my first post, from 1955 to 1958. I was a consul.

FLOTT: The political officer from Consulate General Frankfurt came up to Bonn about once a month, and attended our political section staff meetings.

Q: My job in case of war was to set up a card table in a parking lot and document Americans. At the same time, we were told we had about three hours from the Fulda Gap, by tank, to Frankfurt. They did keep wheeling those big atomic canons about the place which made one wonder about how they would use them.

FLOTT: The Germans were just recreating their army then. My duties in the Embassy in Bonn...again, I had, to a certain extent the Soviet account, which at that point took the form of assisting the Germans in any way we could. The United States was the protective power for Germany in Poland and Czechoslovakia. That was before the Germans had direct diplomatic relations with Poland and Czechoslovakia. I worked with the German Red Cross on family reunification issues; humanitarian issues. I liaised between the German Foreign Office and the American Embassies in Prague and Poland for matters on which we helped them--family unification, etc.. Then, about a year earlier the United States had negotiated a cultural exchange agreement with the Russians. We had negotiated it very sharply to make sure every "t" was crossed and every "i" was dotted. About 1958 the Germans were preparing to negotiate a similar agreement with the Russians, and I had instructions to share with the Federal Republic everything we had learned from our earlier negotiations with the Soviets. So I had the pleasant

duty of coaching the Germans on how to be appropriately suspicious of the Soviets, and get everything nailed down tightly. They were good pupils!

Q: What did we think about East Germany?

FLOTT: We thought it was an unfortunate situation that could not be changed for the time being. We had an underlying faith that it would not last forever. I doubt if anyone in his right mind would have predicted that it would end as quickly, as completely, and as bloodlessly as it did. That was a pleasant surprise, of course.

Q: What about Berlin?

FLOTT: Berlin, of course, was a big issue. One of things I did with Ambassador David Bruce and one of the occasions I had to spend as much time as I did with him was on trips to Berlin. We had an Army railroad train, about six cars, VIP configuration, that was allowed to ride the rails into Berlin. Once a month, to maintain the principle, to keep the right alive and active in practice, Bruce would ride the train up overnight from Bonn to Berlin. He would call on the Soviet Commander, and I would go with him on those calls. Berlin was very important; it was a test of just how far the Soviets were willing to go, and it was a test for us to show our determination. It was a good issue that the Germans were unified about.

Q: Did we see, at that time, any difference between the CDU and the SPD? Obviously Adenauer of the Christian Democratic Union was in.

FLOTT: Yes. We certainly saw the difference between the CDU/CSU, and the SPD. I would not give us credit for having anticipated the enormous Ostpolitik changes that took place in 1970 under Willy Brandt. We regarded the German Socialist Party as essentially a democratic party that was one more European socialist party that we weren't too alarmed about. It was perhaps not quite our choice, our way of doing things, but we would never have accused it of subversion or anything like that. They just had a different approach than the CDU/CSU. We had very collegial relations. I'm sure the American Ambassador would be equally polite to both parties and to their "Fraction", to their party group people in the parliament. There was a very polite relationship. We had considerable respect for a lot of things they were doing.

Q: What about NATO? Did you see Germany melding well with NATO or was this still a trial period?

FLOTT: There were lots of amusing incidents or differences of very small detail along the way, but the broad sweep of the process was encouraging. The Germans were strictly on our side. They were going to resist any Soviet incursions, but they were also at great pains to avoid looking bellicose or warlike.

Q: I know they came up with a uniform that was not very militaristic at the time.

FLOTT: They did everything: they changed the national anthem; they changed the flag. Do you remember a thing called the EWG? the German initials for the European Defense Community? It

was something that almost happened, but didn't quite happen. During the time when that was being budgeted, all the European countries were budgeting what the defense budget would be for a combined European Defense Force. As you might expect, with the product of professionals who were good economists, the costing estimates were very close from all the interested countries, except when it came to the matter of field clothing, of uniforms. The German estimate was about four times what everybody else had put in. When we inquired why was there this unusual wide discrepancy, their answer was that the Germans were equipping them all to fight in Russia with polar, warm, clothing! They weren't going to get caught again like November, 1941. Actually, the European Defense Community at that time did not materialize. The Germans built up their army. They would occasionally argue with us over points of detail--whether our machine guns were any good. Quite late in the game, when the Americans came out with the M-60; it was almost an exact copy of the thing the Germans had been using since 1942; it even looked like it. The Germans would needle us a bit about that, in a friendly, collegial way! In almost every respect, there was a good collegial relation with the Germans, partly because the Germans had no place else to go. There were arguments over what was known as "Stationierung" questions which we at first tried unwisely to describe as "Occupation" costs. They didn't want to regard it as "occupation"; it was "stationing" the troops. There were arguments over how many cartons of cigarettes the PX could sell per American per week. We made reasonable accommodations. What the Americans were left with was certainly a very generous formula, but it did cut into some of the worst, most flagrant black market abuses, which the Germans quite legitimately tried to reduce.

JOHN A. BUCHE
U.S. Army
Germany (1957-1959)

Student
Tubingen (1959-1960)

John Buche was born and raised in Indiana. He attended St. Meinrad Seminary, Purdue University, and the University of Tubingen in Germany. He served in the U.S. Army and entered the Foreign Service in 1959. He served in Canada, Ethiopia, Malawi, Niger, Germany, Switzerland, Zambia, and Austria. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: St. Meinrad Seminary was of Swiss origins with connections to Austria and Germany. While you were there, not too long after World War II, were you getting any sort of reflections about Germany and what happened in Germany during the Hitler time?

BUCHÉ: No, we did not, as far as I can recall. We knew about the camps and the extermination campaigns, but there was no emphasis given to the subject. It was treated as part of history. We did not have any exhibits or any special lectures on the holocaust. There were, however, no efforts as far as I know to turn students away from the subject.

Q: *But this was only one part of a whole.*

BUCHÉ: What was more threatening to the Western world, as far as some of the monks were concerned, was *Communism*. I recall at the time we were told to pray for the Croatian priests and hierarchy who were being “unjustly” jailed or executed by Tito. Also the subject of our prayers were the Catholic priests in Eastern Europe who were persecuted by the Soviets. In later life I was quite chagrined at my naïveté when I realized that many of those priests were pretty nasty people who were guilty of collaborating with the Nazis in persecuting Jews and others.

Q: *Where did you serve in the military?*

BUCHÉ: After basic training at Fort Hood in Texas, I served in a small town in Germany, called Crailsheim. The town was about half way between Stuttgart and Nuremberg and was located on a major east-west highway and along a rail line. It was an ideal location as a staging post for armor.

Q: *You were in an armor unit?*

BUCHÉ: Yes, it was the Fourth Armored Division. The Fourth Armored Division had stationed its tank battalions and mechanized infantry in that region of Germany, so that we could quickly move eastward if the balloon went up. I was trained as a tank commander in Fort Hood, Texas, which is nothing more than being in charge of the tank. Each M-48 tank had a gunner, a loader, a driver, and a commander, but that did not mean that I commanded anything other than the tank itself. I took my orders from the platoon sergeant or lieutenant. After five months of basic and armor training at Fort Hood, we were given leave for Christmas and told to report to Fort Dix, New Jersey for transport to Germany. Several thousand of us were crammed into an aging troopship, the *U.S. Geiger*, for a ten-day January crossing of the Atlantic to Bremerhaven, Germany. From there we went by railroad to Crailsheim. I was ecstatic to be in Europe, even though it was as a draftee. We had our first field training exercise a week after arrival. Training and driving conditions for the tanks were considerably more difficult in Germany than in Texas. At Fort Hood, there were hundreds of miles of open range for the tanks to use. Around Crailsheim, the secondary roads were twisty, narrow, hilly, and at this time of year, icy; there were fruit orchards and cultivated fields; there were buildings; and to add to the difficulties for the tank drivers, the German populace were going about their everyday business. Our battalion caused considerable property damage on the first day as tanks skidded into parked cars, trees, fire hydrants, and even a few buildings. Since my file indicated I could speak German, I was summoned by the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel George Redheffer, from my tank and ordered to report immediately to a Lieutenant Evans, who had been given responsibility for the battalion’s liaison with local civil officials a few days before the exercise.. The lieutenant had come over on the *Geiger* with us and knew nothing about civil affairs. His primary task was platoon leader for the mortar unit, and he spent his first week in Germany making sure the unit’s men, vehicles, and weapons were combat ready. I certainly did not know anything about the U.S. Army’s handling of civil affairs, but I could see what had to be done. Our immediate task was to placate some very angry Germans. Evans and I consulted the instructions and forms from the European Command about how to initiate the claims process. Lieutenant Evans was delighted that I was willing to take the lead, as long as he was seen to be in charge. After the exercise was

ended, there was an enormous amount of work ahead of us with the claims process. I was officially transferred to the mortar platoon and told to assist Lieutenant Evans. He still had the full-time job as platoon leader, so I was given de-facto responsibility for civil affairs and maneuver-damage control and compensation and completed the work by myself. Since I was an enlisted man, I could not sign anything. I had to do the work in the field and then bring it to Lt. Evans to sign. Within a few weeks, we had the first reaction from EUCOM. A colonel in Heidelberg wrote a complimentary report to the Battalion Commander Redheffer on Lt. Evans for his sensitive interaction with local German officials and the expeditious and correct handling of the maneuver-damage claims. Our battalion commander was, of course, greatly pleased, since he was ultimately responsible. With those two officers content, I was left pretty much on my own. Our next field exercise was a two-week NATO maneuver involving several army divisions, including Bundeswehr units. Weather conditions were almost as bad as in January at the beginning. Then a sudden warm spell descended, and the fields and dirt roads were no longer firmly frozen. The tanks chewed up the roads and fields. A new flood of angry officials and farmers and damage claims. I was fully employed for months. I had a great deal of freedom. I had my first taste of interacting with another culture and bureaucracy. I was delighted with the experience.

Q: *Were you in Bavaria?*

BUCHÉ: We were on the Bavarian border, between Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. The first town to the east of us was Ansbach, in Bavaria. The people of the Crailsheim area, even the ones who lived a short distance over the border in Bavaria, tended not to speak the Bavarian dialect, but rather Swabian (*Schwäbisch* as it is called in German). There was also a sub-dialect that was called *Hohenlohisch*, which was spoken by the older generation. The town (and castle) of Hohenlohe was the ancestral home of Prince Phillip of Britain. I was interested in such things as German dialects. Although I could not speak either *Hohenlohisch* or *Schwäbisch*, I eventually learned to understand a little. I made a lot of inquiries about what was the meaning of this and that word or phrase. I was a source of amusement to many of the farmers because I spoke a German that was not at all colloquial. It was a classical German. Of course, they understood it, but they thought it was amusing that I would use some words that had dropped out of modern German or had taken on different meanings, - and some of them were just plain wrong for the context. Some, however, were pretty elegant, but just no longer used in everyday speech.

Q: *And how long were you in the military?*

BUCHÉ: About twenty-one months. I was able to get an early discharge based on “hardship” because I wanted to go to Tuebingen University in Germany. I wrote the Department of Defense that if I were not discharged by a certain date, I could not go to that university and thus my future career in the Department of State might be harmed. There was no emergency situation that demanded my presence with the battalion, so I thought my chances were good. I had worked closely with officers in our battalion headquarters during my assignment in Germany, and my successful results made them look good, so they were willing to endorse my request for an early discharge. My request was approved. I later learned that in peacetime, such requests were quite frequent and were routinely granted on the basis of having to do farm work or seasonal labor or for family problems.

Q: You say that you wanted to go to a German university.

BUCHE: That was my desire. When early in the training cycle at Fort Hood I learned that our entire unit was to be sent to Germany, it was the best news I had since induction day. The news made up for the loss of what I would have much rather been doing, namely training with the State Department instead of the Army, with so many boring hours marching, saluting, firing the rifle, plus KP and endless inspections. But the fact that I was going to Germany was a goal I was about to achieve- not through anything on my part, however. I happened to be assigned to the right unit at the right time.

Q: While you were in the Army in Germany, did you ever get to our Consulate General in Stuttgart?

BUCHE: I went there once to get a passport, but the Vice Consul would not issue me one. There was a regulation stating that U.S. military personnel stationed in Germany could not be issued passports unless they could prove that they were going to visit a country, where the US military ID card would not be recognized. And the only place I could think of was East Germany, and that was off-limits to us. I told the Vice Consul, Barney Stokes, I simply wanted a passport. I had never had a passport. He said to come back within 90 days of being discharged, and I would be eligible for a passport. Although my request was denied, Stokes did accept my application. He said it would be kept for a year in the files. I was already contemplating applying for an early discharge overseas.

Q: Well, about the time when you were there, I was a passport officer in Frankfurt, and we sure as hell didn't want to have the whole US Army getting passports. I mean it's just an awful lot of work for no useful purpose.

BUCHE: I have a theory that the Army did not want the soldiers to have passports because if they were out late at night or drinking too much and the MP's came into the bar to check on them, the G.I. could just flip out his passport and say, "I'm a tourist here, so move on!"

Q: What university were you going to?

BUCHE: Tübingen.

Q: How long were you there?

BUCHE: I was there for a semester and a summer. Because of my work in civil affairs and the fact that I could not take leave, I was able to go to Tübingen University about a month before I was actually discharged. I used my accrued leave and some passes. I worked this out with my commanding officer, who was very supportive. He and his boss were grateful, because my work with the maneuver damage problems and with the German authorities brought them praise on several occasions from the Commanding General of the Fourth Armored Division in Göppingen. The US Military Command in Germany placed high priority on good relations with German officials and civilians, so commendations along that line really helped the careers of the two

men. My commanding officer also cited me for my outstanding work in civil affairs.

Q: So you were at Tübingen in 1959 to about 1960?

BUCHE: I enrolled as a regular student at Tuebingen in January 1959, and hoped to stay for several years. I took all my courses for credit because I thought I would continue for another year at least. I was not going to take the visiting student approach. I chose Tübingen over Munich or Heidelberg because Tübingen did not have a visiting student program. Both Heidelberg and Munich had exchange programs with US universities, and so attracted hundreds of American students for one or two semesters. I also chose Tübingen because it was small and relatively isolated. There were few foreigners there. It was reputed to be one of the most traditional German universities, and several German authors whom I admired had studied in Tübingen or had taught there. I did not start classes until late February of 1959. I stayed in Germany until August of that year. I went through the semester and that summer. I had wanted to stay for the fall semester and the following year, but an officer in the Department's Personnel Office called me around June to tell me that there was an opening in the A-100 class for new officers and that I had to make that opening in September. (Apparently there were extra funds that had to be spent before the end of the fiscal year.) Otherwise I could not be assured of a Foreign Service appointment. I think that if had said I could not make the September class, but I could make the next one, they would have agreed. When I said I was thinking about the fall semester, he said there was no obligation under law to keep my appointment open. I had to make an important decision. After a few moments, I replied I would be there for the September class. I could not resist telling him that when I wanted the Department to take me, after I graduated and before I was inducted, the response was "Go to the Army and get some experience overseas; now that am getting that experience in Germany, the Department urgently wants me." He laughed.

Q: Ah, you're learning, you're learning.

BUCHE: So I said, "Fine, I'll be there."

Q: Could you do a little comparing and contrasting, Purdue with Tübingen, as far as education?

BUCHE: Well, Purdue was a typical American university, where the classes were a mixture of lecture and discussions. There were also workshops and labs. The professors and particularly the graduate assistants were accessible and encouraged us to meet periodically with them. We had tests or quizzes throughout the semester, and in the upper level classes we had term papers to write. The library was open, and we had access to the stacks. There were also staff counselors or advisers for the students, plus a clinic for minor illnesses. Attendance was taken in many of the classes. Attendance and absences were noted; the students were on a short leash. The American universities today are quite different, but this was mid-1950. In Tübingen, there were many differences. Class attendance was optional. There were large lecture halls packed with more students than available chairs, and where the professors spoke without questions from the students. The lectures were fascinating and showed the erudition of the professor. I had the impression they were addressing their colleagues and not the students around them. I was quite surprised at my first lecture. The professor entered exactly fifteen minutes late; the students arose and began stamping their feet; he surveyed the hundreds of assembled students; made a slight

bow which instantly quieted the hall; and began his lecture. At the end, the process was repeated. I made a special effort to meet with my professors several times during the semester, since I thought that was expected. I learned, however, that for the first several years in a German university, one short, formal meeting was the norm. Graduate assistants helped the professors do research; they did not have much to do with the students. The library was not user-friendly. I had to order a book and wait for several hours before it was delivered. There was no browsing. Fortunately, I did not get sick, for there was no student health clinic. I realized I was on my own at Tübingen. No one was going to force me to go to a class or take my attendance. The idea was that the students were capable of making their own decisions. They could finish their work in five, seven, or even ten years if they so chose. There was little pressure to take a minimum number of classes. It was up to each student to set the pace. I had a paper to write in each class. I took four classes, and so worked awfully hard. My results were not bad. The students did not receive a letter or number grade on the paper or for the class. We were given a notation such as good, outstanding, or acceptable. I had not heard of anyone's paper being marked "failure." Sometimes the professors would add other comments on the paper. At the end of the semester, the student would collect a certificate that he or she had successfully participated in the course. These were called *Seminarscheine*. When a student had a sufficient number of *Seminarscheine*, it was time to begin the process of writing the thesis. That meant finding a professor to direct the research and to help with admission to other higher level seminars.

Q: *What was your impression of the German students you were in contact with?*

BUCHHE: My initial contacts were with several students who were not very serious about their studies. They were intelligent and had surmounted the difficult entrance requirements, but they were not yet prepared to devote their time to scholarly pursuits. That would come later. Life as a university student was pleasant for them. They were planning to spend seven or eight years of their lives at Tuebingen, with perhaps one year in between at another university. Rushing through their university phase in five years was not their intention. They liked parties, drinking, travel, and socializing. They were the first students I met who showed any interest in me. We first met not in a classroom, but in an old, traditional student restaurant called, "Tante Emelia," where I ate regularly. They were curious about an American who spoke pretty good German, knew something about their country, was Catholic, and was not a socialist. They were kind enough to invite me to some of their parties at their student fraternity, *Burschenschaft Borussia*. At Purdue, I had experienced students whose idea of college life was fraternities, football games, and beer parties, but my Tuebingen colleagues seemed to be more interesting. I enjoyed their parties, although the heavy drinking and rowdiness did not sit well with me. It became clear to me that I was in with a group whose life style and outlook were quite different from my own. They were from wealthy families, very conservative in their politics, strongly nationalistic, not very critical about the Third Reich, and disdainful of any students who espoused radical or socialist ideas. Too often I heard their lament that if only the West had early on joined with Germany to fight the Soviets, everything would have worked out well. There would be no Soviet Union, no iron curtain, no divided Germany, but rather a successful modern crusade against Bolshevism! I thought their version of recent German history was completely wacko, but found them interesting interlocutors. After we had been together for a few parties, they told me their fraternity still practiced dueling. I was shocked, but fascinated. I knew that dueling fraternities had been forbidden by the Occupation Forces after World War II, but with the return of German

sovereignty, there was a quiet resurgence among some of the more conservative *Burschenschaften*. My hosts probed me about my reactions toward dueling. Completely against it, I responded. They tried to convince me otherwise and praised the virtues of dueling...develops discipline, skill, self-confidence, courage, etc. They explained that the modern version of dueling is different from what their fathers' generation experienced. There are masks and heavily-padded clothing; no one gets hurt. It is even an Olympic sport. I was unconvinced, but I decided to keep an open mind. Gradually it dawned on me they were probing to determine whether to ask me to join *Burschenschaft Borussia*. (Since I was enrolled as a normal student, they assumed I would remain at Tuebingen for a couple of years. I did not disabuse them of that assumption, since I hoped to remain at least until the summer of 1960.) They mentioned that after the War, the fraternities were encouraged by the universities and the government to become more open and democratic. Many fraternities, including *Burschenschaft Borussia*, took in a few, carefully-selected "internationals". It was about this time that I was beginning to meet other students who were more my style. I was eager to expand my social circle. My newer acquaintances were serious students and seemed determined to finish in five or so years in order to begin their careers as lawyers, journalists, doctors, or whatever. I did not break with my friends from *Burschenschaft Borussia*, since we still ate daily lunch and dinner together at "Tante Emelia," and occasionally met for a few beers in the evenings. I believe they came to realize I was not the type of "international" they wanted to tap for their fraternity.

Q: *Had they gotten away from the scars?*

BUCHHE: Before the second World War, a dueling scar had long been a badge of honor in certain levels of German society. After the War, there was practically no way to get such a scar because the duelers wore masks. Some men still wanted a scar, so they would go to a surgeon who used a scalpel under anesthesia to cut the scar in just the right place.

Q: *What about politics?*

BUCHHE: This was the Adenauer era, CDU time. I was fascinated by German national politics, and was staunchly CDU. I thought Adenauer was a great leader. My professor for a German history course for the period between the two World Wars asked me in my first meeting about my views on German politics. I told him I was deeply impressed by Adenauer and the CDU. He asked me whether I had ever studied the Socialist Party of Germany.

Q: *The SPD.*

BUCHHE: I said, "Well, not much at all, were they not close to the Communists in the Weimar era and are they not opposed to NATO and for closer relations with East Germany?" He had a look of disgust on his face and asked which party forced the Communists out of the German labor unions. I had no idea, but from the way he asked the question, it must have been the SPD. I hesitatingly replied, the SPD? Of course, he said and added that I apparently had much to learn about the last forty years of German history. He said he expected me to take the opportunity while in his class to make up for my past deficiencies. End of discussion! I was humiliated, but resolved to make up for my lack of knowledge of this area. I immediately went to the library and ordered several books on the Weimar period to see what the Socialist Party had done. It was

clear that the Socialists were much more committed to democracy and social justice than the Catholic parties and the rightists. It was the Catholics and the rightists who played key roles in sabotaging the Weimar Republic and assisting the rise of Nazism. I recalled a course at St. Meinrad on modern European history, where the professor repeatedly castigated the Socialist Parties of Europe for their opposition to the Catholic Church and the Papacy. I even recalled having to study several encyclicals from the late 19th century strongly condemning socialism. My history courses at Purdue did not cover that era, so I had no counterview.

Q: And they got quite close to Hitler.

BUCHHE: Yes, it was the Catholic parties and others on the right who held their nose and voted for Hitler. Some of the first victims of Hitler were not the Jews, but Communists and Socialists. Although my first meeting with the professor was embarrassing, it turned out to be a positive experience. I spent many hours reading about the Weimar Republic and the role of the SPD. That was the theme of my paper for his class. He marked it *ausgezeichnet*, (outstanding)! I also read about the SPD in contemporary German politics. Later, when Willy Brandt became Chancellor, I felt I knew all about him and his Party, thanks to the professor's challenge to my one-sided educational experience.

Q: Normally one thinks of college students as going through their radical stage as part of their development. Did you find much of that?

BUCHHE: Yes, there were some, but I believe they were the minority. Tübingen was probably the most conservative university in Germany. It was in a conservative area (solidly CDU). There were two highly renowned faculties of theology, Catholic and Protestant. I understood at the time they were both conservative, although that certainly changed. There were many theological students there, mostly on the Protestant side. I was told the best and the brightest of the would-be lawyers were not choosing Tübingen. There were no economics or sociology departments, and the science faculties, other than medicine, were not particularly noteworthy. The history department was more focused on the distant past rather than modern times, and the political science department was only a few years old. There were excellent departments of classical languages and archaeology. Tübingen did not have the faculties or the tradition which would attract many students on the left. It was home to the conservative elements, at least when I was there. There was a small Communist student group and a somewhat larger Socialist student group. They put up a lot of posters, held rallies and debates, and ran candidates for student offices, but they were a minority. Often they attacked each other with more vehemence than was directed against the conservative groups. Prospective students with a leftist philosophy would find the universities in Heidelberg, Berlin, or Munich more in line with their way of thinking. I really liked the institution and the experience. I was not interested in getting into student politics. I just wanted to study and attend the lectures and seminars. I had friends and acquaintances from a broad political spectrum.

Q: Well, you left there at the end of the summer of 1959.

JAMES H. BAHTI
Consular/Economic Officer
Hamburg (1957-1960)

James H. Bahti grew up in Michigan and received a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Michigan Tech. His career with the Foreign Service included positions in Cairo, Washington, DC, Bombay, Dhahran, and Alexandria. Mr. Bahti was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

BAHTI: I was directly transferred to Hamburg because at that time the size of the Embassy was being reduced rather sharply. We were giving up parts of the chancery to some German ministry, I guess the Defense Ministry. We were taking cuts all over. We needed people in the consular section in Hamburg. The Refugee Relief Program was in progress. I was assigned to the consular section in Hamburg under Ed Maney who had been very active in consular affairs in the Department of State, and overseas as well. He was a great boss. He had a firm rule about rotating officers within the Consulate. You just did not go over there and do one job for your whole tour. I had three different jobs when I was there. Consular officer, economic defense officer, which basically had to do with control over strategic materials which were being diverted to the East Bloc, and then finally administrative officer, which was quite an experience and helped me a great deal in later years. So I was there about three years and had about one year in each of these jobs, supported by a superb German staff, people who knew their business. Sometimes you had to explain things to them; e.g. that things they had always done one way did not have to be done that way anymore. Example: getting notarized three copies of a document, each one notarized. Well the cost of notarizing a document was substantial in Germany and I finally said, "Look, just make sure one copy is a notarized copy." It took a long time to convince some of the ladies in our consular section that this was ok. They had become very set in their ways.

ALLEN B. MORELAND
Consul General
Stuttgart (1957-1960)

Allen B. Moreland received a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and a master's degree from Harvard University. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. During his Foreign Service career, Mr. Moreland served in the Counselor's Office, Mutual Security Affairs, the Inspection Corps, the Visa Office in Montreal, and was a political advisor to the U.S. forces in Europe. Mr. Moreland was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy was the interviewer in 1989.

MORELAND: I then became Consul General in Stuttgart where I served from 1957 to 1960. It was the typical work of the consulate general. As Consul General you have a political program, you have an economic program, you have a Consular program, then you have an administrative support system to carry it out, and a public information outfit, and we had a normal operation in the sense that Baden-Wurttemberg, which was the area to which Stuttgart belonged, was one of

the economic power points within West Germany; so we had a lot of economic reporting to do and it was appreciated by the Department. It was also an important political base for the CDU and so we had a political program and the USIA had a very good public affairs program, and the issuing of Visas was not a complicated process there, and so those were three or four very pleasant years I spent there.

I had no problems dealing with the two major parties, the CDU and the SPD. The individual members of the two parties treated each other like human beings; there was no significant problems. The CDU and SPD in that particular area were not mortal enemies, they had to live together. It was a rather pleasant environment.

There was not no Communist Party in Stuttgart, in the Baden-Wurttemberg area. It just wasn't that important a factor at all. The Communist Party never could garner enough votes in Baden-Wurttemberg to get a second listing on the ballots. Unless a political party could draw at least 5% of the votes cast in the previous election it could not place the list of candidates on the next ballots.

ALEXANDER A. KLIEFORTH
Chief of Inspection Team - RIAS
Berlin (1958-1960)

Alexander A. L. Klieforth began in radio while in college in Wisconsin. He served with USIS in Germany, Hungary, and Indonesia. Mr. Klieforth was interviewed by Cliff Groce on August 15, 1988.

Q: Let's come to RIAS now. How did you happen to be picked for RIAS?

This was still '58. RIAS was having problems, and the ambassador in Bonn asked the Agency to have RIAS inspected. I was selected as head of this team, and there was a fellow from management who was very good. The deputy PAO in Bonn, John McGowan, and I had known each other from OSS, so we worked very closely together. I went to Berlin and did the inspection, and then went to Bonn and wrote it, and then had to report to the ambassador, who was David K.E. Bruce, who had also been one of my bosses in OSS. He was chief of the Secret Intelligence Division of OSS Europe, to which I had been attached. I made the report, and he said, "Well, you're going back to Berlin and run RIAS." I said, "Well, it's a lovely job, but presumably the Agency will have something to say about that, and I've got to talk to my family," and so forth and so on. He said, "I know you can persuade your family, and I've already talked to the Agency and they've agreed to it." So then I went to Washington and went and saw Walter Roberts, who was then Area Director for Europe, and said, "Is this true?" And he said, "Yes, it's true." I said, "But nobody asked me!" and he said that has nothing to do with it. You've got to go to Berlin, which you love, and do it. I'd been in Berlin very many times. I started school in Berlin. My father was stationed there '24-'28, and then '30-'33, so that I had a very close affinity with the city. And I loved RIAS; after that inspection I thought, "God, what a job!" So my wife agreed, and we packed up and went to Berlin.

Q: What were the problems that you cited?

KLIEFORTH: The problems had to do with two things, basically. The immediate problem was Khrushchev's '58 ultimatum and threat of a new Berlin blockade and everything. That was the one thing. The other thing was that RIAS had not come out of the Cold War. The Voice had, under Henry Loomis. Going back to the European Division -- the most important thing that I had to do as European Division chief was to get, particularly the Russian Branch and Alex Barmine, turned around, and then eventually to get Alex Barmine out of the Voice, which was done honorably. Alex and I had become friends, and because of that it worked. But to get this whole thing turned around. This was the problem with RIAS.

Now, the official policy of our government was the reunification of Germany, but any realist accepted that it wasn't going to come soon, and probably not in our lifetime. Therefore, you had to think ahead, and some of these realists were in the State Department. No one had talked to me about those lines, really. You know, You've got to turn things around. And that we did. We instituted what was called a Rahmenprogramm, block programming, and it worked. Then the State Department did send somebody over with a huge memorandum. I knew the fellow, and he said, "What have you been doing?" And I told him, and he took this memorandum and tore it up, and said, "We don't have to tell you anything. It's been done."

So that was the other thing. And then, as usual, a personnel problem. This is endemic in the Agency: in the field you hire people as specialists, and they become permanent, and then their specialty is surpassed and you can't crank them over into something else. So you have to solve that some way or other, and the way I solved it at RIAS was that as vacancies occurred I didn't hire people permanently; I hired them under contract, which you could do at RIAS, as it was under quite a different aegis than the Agency. So we were able to get young blood in, and what I was primarily interested in -- having in the back of my mind no reunification for real -- was to get at the young people, and so more and more programs, substantive programs, were developed, and they worked.

Q: How much of the leadership and how much of the financing was U.S. vs. the Bundesrepublik?

KLIEFORTH: When I got there, we paid the whole thing. In the following year, the Agency was in a budgetary bind, and said they had to make a very deep cut in the contribution. So that went back and forth, and I said, "All right, I'll try to go for 40 percent, because we should maintain the controlling interest as long as possible." I had one advantage. I had gotten to know Willy Brandt quite well. And I told him what was what, under pledge of great secrecy. He said, "Fine, you'll have my support." So then it went to the Minister for All-German Affairs, via the Bonn PAO. Willy Brandt had called someone and said Alec Klieforth is coming and please listen. So then it went to the Chancellor, who was Adenauer.

Fortunately, I knew Adenauer quite well, because when my father had been consul general in Cologne before the war, Adenauer's house was opposite ours, and a system existed between friends so that when the Gestapo was after Adenauer, if there was time he would disappear into the mountains, known as Eiffel, and if there wasn't time then he would disappear into our house.

So I had known him as a university-age student. Then during the war, when we went into Germany, I had a special mission: to find Adenauer and bring him to Cologne where we were establishing military government. It's a long story. I missed him. I got too smart. Adenauer knew exactly what was going to happen and put himself where he was going to be found, and so when I did find him he was already in Cologne, sitting on a crate in a corridor in one of the few buildings that was still standing, and he saw me and said, "Well, Alexander, late again." We sat on the crate and talked together, talked and talked and talked.

The question Adenauer had was, is it necessary, and was told Alec Klieforth supports it. He said, Well, if Alexander thinks it needs to be done, then let it be done. Then I was put into negotiation with the permanent under secretary of the Ministry of All-German Affairs, and we worked out this 60-40 deal, 60 percent U.S., 40 percent German. Then the question was how to get the money into the RIAS account without divulging to the public that it was coming from the Germans. The Agency worked it out that the money had to go into the unvouchered funds of the U.S. Treasury, and the Treasury then earmarked it over to the Agency and the Agency earmarked it over to RIAS. Then we got to 49 and 51 percent, and then after I left it got to the present level. It's over 90 percent now.

Q: How long were you in Berlin altogether?

KLIEFORTH: I was in Berlin two years, and they were absolutely great. I keep saying, "It was great, it was great," but everything WAS great.

Q: Do you have any other memories of that period that you'd like to get on the record?

KLIEFORTH: Just a description of what I did, because this is utterly unique. I was in effect running a large -- because they broadcast 24 hours around the clock -- a first-class radio operation with everything that in Europe pertains to it: symphony orchestra, light music orchestra, dance band -- which was Werner Mueller's band, which was terrific -- real drama, full-length opera, everything. I remember reading one time in Time Magazine that Hindemith had not written a large piece in many years. He was in Los Angeles, and we called him. We said, in effect, "How come you haven't written a large piece in many years?" And he said, "Who'll play it?" "We'll play it." So he said, "Fine, with one condition: that I be allowed to conduct it." "How much is this going to cost?" He said, "Well, put your people in touch with my agent and we'll work it out." He said, "Don't worry, don't worry." What the man charged actually was his flight to Berlin and a fee for orchestra rehearsal. That's all it cost. And we put it on. That was the last piece he composed, because he was really unwell, and from Berlin he went to Switzerland where he died. But RIAS could do this kind of thing.

One other thing. In Berlin there's a thing called a Documents Center, which we are turning over to the Germans. That is a repository of the membership archives of the Nazi Party there, which were captured almost intact in a bunker in Berlin. One day one of the people called me up and said, "We've found a box here of wax cylinders. They must be something." We said, "Send it over." So I went to my engineers in RIAS and said, "I'm getting a bunch of wax cylinders; can we get sound out of them?" And they said, "Well, we'll find some way of doing it." They did find something, I think in a museum. What it turned out to be were recordings of Hitler, made during

what you might call intimate staff sessions. Some of them were reproducible, a lot of them were shot, but in one of them that was reproducible Hitler was explaining why it had to be an Austrian to become the leader of Germany: that the Germans are stupid, they follow blindly; the Austrian has the mentality, has the smarts; this, that and the other thing; and this is why God destined me to become the leader of the Germans. So we extrapolated all the sound that we could from that, and made an extraordinary broadcast -- the first time that Hitler's voice was broadcast in Germany since the end of the war. And since we had broadcast it, the others picked it up.

Then we did other things. "Why did so many Germans vote for Hitler?" This came out of group discussions. I'd been in Germany before the war, I'd seen Hitler, actually I'd met him once, at a diplomatic reception when I was a kid, and they said, "Well, you were there as an inside-outsider. Explain to me how my parents, who were good God-loving people, could vote for this monster." And so we got to talking. We could do it; we were American. We put this program together with a lot of interviews, and the fellow who did it later left RIAS and he is now the editor-in-chief of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. He wrote a book about it, which was sensational, and then they made a movie. Anyway, this documentary that we produced was the first exposition of that kind in Germany since the end of the war. And because RIAS had broadcast it, all the other stations could pick it up. As Americans, we could address ourselves to that.

Then you know Guenter Grass. We thought The Tin Drum should be made into a show. So we called Grass, and said, "Herr Grass, we'd like to dramatize your book." He said, "On one condition." We said, "What is it? And he said, "Let me do the dramatization." So we said, "Fine, come to Berlin." It was very hard and hot stuff. And then the film was done very well, in a very good adaptation. So people like Guenter Grass and others considered it a privilege to perform for RIAS. Where else, not just in the Agency, but where else do you have that kind of a job?

Q: How many Americans were on the staff as opposed to the Germans?

KLIEFORTH: We had about three hundred Germans and six Americans -- now there are only two -- myself, a deputy, two program officers, an American supervising engineer, and an American secretary. The engineering position was one of the first to go. The equipment was American. One of the Americans was Ed Alexander, who was not only a jazz buff but very knowledgeable and had a fantastic collection. So he did a jazz program, which went over tremendously. There was this constant creativity.

KEMPTON B. JENKINS
Political Officer
Berlin (1958-1960)

Kempton B. Jenkins was born in Florida in 1946. He attended the Navy Officers Training Program at Bowling Green in Ohio and studied at the graduate schools of George Washington University and Harvard University. Mr. Jenkins' Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Russia, Thailand, and Venezuela.

He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on February 23, 1995.

JENKINS: The Berlin experience quickly became even more exciting as in October of 1959, the East German leader, Walter Ulbricht, in a speech, announced that the legal basis of Western presence in Berlin had expired. The chief of our division, the late Howard Trivers, a superb scholar of German history, quickly picked up on the Ulbricht speech, and we began a series of messages back to Washington, sounding the alarm bell that the Soviets clearly were in the process of launching an attack upon our basic legal right to remain in Berlin. Crisis after crisis cascaded from that time. East Germans began to substitute for Soviet officers at checkpoints in an effort to force us to recognize their sovereignty and the division of Germany. Harassment of our convoys in the Berlin corridor increased regularly. The elevated train system, which ran throughout the city in one of the anachronisms of the otherwise divided Berlin was maintained in East Berlin. The S-Bahn, as they were called, began to appear in West Berlin with flags of the so-called East German Democratic Republic on them. This led to action on our part to stop the trains and remove the East German flags before they could proceed. Guards at the checkpoints in the presence of the Soviet officials would attempt to stamp East German visas into our passports. While these may seem petty, they were all part of clearly calculated policy to "salami-slice" the Western presence in Berlin.

Underlying this decision and the timing of the effort was the fact that the Soviet-sponsored regime in East Germany was a complete failure in governing its section of Germany. Living standards dropped as living standards in the West rose. The refugee flow from East Germany through Berlin to West Germany steadily increased until it reached a flood in 1959. It became increasingly apparent to us that the Soviets had to act to stop the depopulation of East Germany if they were not to lose total control over one of the gems of their empire.

The desperateness of their situation was dramatized by the particularly severe rate of departure by qualified doctors from East Germany. One of the things which I undertook in our political section was to monitor the refugee flow and attempt to compile statistics on the flow of doctors. I was helped in this by the opportunity to interview doctors who were living in West Berlin and by the presence of a fiancée of the New York Times representative David Binder in East Berlin's top hospital. David shared this information with me as I shared with him our views of political significance of this flow. There were states in the Soviet zone of Germany which in fact were virtually without doctors. You can imagine the psychological impact on the population to see all their doctors leave. In a desperate effort the Soviets even began to import Vietnamese and Bulgarian doctors as an emergency measure, which had an even more dramatic negative effect on the East German population.

While we concentrated on alerting Washington to the dramatic changes we saw unfolding in our exposed position in Berlin, we also tried to stay on top of attitudes in West Berlin and in the East German population in every way possible in addition to monitoring the flight of doctors. Together with my British colleague, the late James Bennett, and my French colleague, Xavier De Nazelle, we would attend open air district political communist rallies in the parks in East Berlin where we witnessed the population attacking party spokesmen for the dramatic deterioration of the situation and the contrast between their situation and the steadily rising standard of living in West.

On one occasion, when James and I walked into an outdoor restaurant where the local party was holding such a rally, the security goons who always tailed us as we went into East Berlin stepped to the dais where an East German party leader was speaking, with a note. He read it, stopped and said, "I understand that we are honored by the presence of representatives of the U.S. and British missions tonight. I wonder if they would like to come forth and contribute to our conversation?" It was indeed tempting, but "exercising uncharacteristic restraint," James and I decided it was better to sit tight, drink our beer and wait for the program to go on than to take this unsolicited opportunity to present Western views to an audience, which probably would have led to our being physically thrown out!

The freedom to move in East Berlin after going through a checkpoint, even though we were followed, led to several very interesting experiences. When Khrushchev came to Berlin to speak to reiterate his ultimatum and turn up the heat on our presence in West Berlin, he spoke at an open air gathering of tens of thousands in Alexander Platz. Once again, James and I had driven through the checkpoint and then taken to foot to walk to where the rally was going to occur. There were East German police everywhere, questioning the right of people to participate. We feigned ignorance of German and kept emphasizing that we were there from the United States and England to witness this historic event. We finally had worked our way to within a few hundred yards of the platform from where Khrushchev would speak when a particularly hostile police guard stopped us cold and said "no one may pass beyond this point without special identification." Sort of as a lark, James and I took out our PX cards and held them up to the man who to our astonishment displayed the traditional German respect for documents and without understanding what he was observing, waved us through. The result was that we stood in the second row right in front of Khrushchev and observed the interplay between Ulbricht and other officials on the platform as Khrushchev spoke. Khrushchev was a dramatic and even theatrical speaker. His voice was shrill and threatening as he denounced the Western presence in Berlin as illegal and declared that we had six months to depart or take the consequences. The nervous excitement of his East German minion on the dais with Khrushchev was palpable. Needless to say, this made for interesting reporting telegrams back to Washington.

Perhaps the most dramatic confrontation of this period occurred slightly later when East German guards, in an effort to force our acknowledgment of the so-called German Democratic Republic and its sovereignty over West Berlin, instead of just harassing our army convoys, actually seized one on the autobahn. Since each of these convoys was equipped with a radio, we received word in the mission almost immediately. The convoy leader reported that instead of just being delayed, the East Germans were in the process of taking possession of our six-truck convoy. General Hamlet instructed the officer in charge of the convoy to sit fast in the truck and refuse to leave, which they did. The East Germans stood on the running boards outside the truck, but did not attempt to use force to evict the American soldiers who were driving them. This deadlock continued for several hours. Meanwhile, General Hamlet and Minister Al Lightner were on the phone to Washington and Bonn as were their French and British colleagues.

From where we sat in Berlin, this was clearly one more desperate effort by Moscow to frighten us out of our rightful position in West Berlin. In Washington, the situation quickly created near panic and anxiety that general war could erupt over such an incident. General Hamlet called

together the mission team and we debated for a short time what to do. Meanwhile the call of nature was having a predictable effect on the beleaguered American soldiers in the trucks and it was clear that they could not hold out indefinitely. Abandoning the trucks would constitute the first acceptance by the West of the suggestion that we did not have a full legal right not only to be in West Berlin, but to transverse the autobahn from West Germany to West Berlin to sustain our presence there. It was decided that Findley Burns, who was the number three man in the U.S. mission, a career diplomat, should go to Karlshorst at Soviet headquarters with two military officers and a Russian-American enlisted man, as an interpreter, to present a demarche to the Soviets: If the trucks were not released within two hours, we would use force to retrieve them. And, bless his courage, while Washington continued to debate nervously, General Hamlet instructed our tank units to load up with live ammunition, start their motors, begin to assemble to drive down the autobahn to free the U.S. convoy. This action, arming the tanks with live ammunition and moving them out of their assembly point toward the autobahn was, of course, closely observed and reported on by Moscow spies who monitored all of our military activities in Berlin constantly. Faced with the threat of the use of force, the Soviets backed down, the trucks were released and the convoy continued. Subsequently, we filed a very strong protest with Karlshorst, in Moscow, and with the Soviet embassy in Washington warning them against such irresponsible and dangerous activity in the future. For the time being, our point had been made. The Russians had to allow for the possibility that we might actually risk war in order to maintain our rights. It was this perception which was central to our ability to remain in Berlin over subsequent years until in fact the wall eventually came down.

Throughout the two years we were in Berlin, there was an uneasy relationship between the mission, Bonn and more so Washington and as well between our British and French colleagues and their respective foreign offices at home. We were convinced almost viscerally that the name of the game in Berlin was willpower. If the Soviets we felt were persuaded that we could be threatened and forced out of Berlin or that we would lose our determination for the long pull they could by salami slice tactics wear away our rights and our determination to maintain our position. The net result if they were successful would have been the permanent advance of the border Soviet empire and help persuade our allies that our commitment to Europe would not stand the test of time. We saw several policy debates in Washington particularly when John Foster Dulles was the Secretary which led us to believe that the reliability of the U.S. commitment to Berlin was in question. Dulles, an astute corporate lawyer, seemed to be seeking always a legal means of reducing our engagement and eventually extricating ourselves from "an indefensible position." When the Kennedy Administration arrived, we began to feel this same unease even though the indications we were receiving were clothed in more liberal and internationalist tone the statements by White House officials including those closest to Kennedy persuaded us that the Kennedy Administration was even more dedicated to extricating the United States from our commitment in Berlin than Dulles had been. We felt that somehow our strong consistent political reporting was simply being ignored by the White House and those around him who, as so often is the case in the last 50 years, tended to ignore the State Department experts and rely on the brilliance of White House staff who were frequently under-informed about real conditions. Cleverness seemed to rate a higher priority than reliability. One of the tactics which we evolved almost by happenstance to deal with this was to develop our own channels of communication. In my case, I built a very close friendship with Dr. Otto Frei, a highly respected Berlin reporter for the equally highly respected NZZ, a Swiss newspaper which

is probably the most respected paper in Europe even today. Among other things the NZZ we knew was read first thing every morning by Germany's Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer. Thus while we might have trouble persuading our own government in Washington to stand tough occasionally and our British colleagues were wringing their hands over the waffling nature of the then British government. (This was before Lord Hume became foreign minister.) Then the French were never quite certain where de Gaulle was standing (although it was usually very solid and very helpful), we were able by working with Otto Frei to communicate our views about developments in Berlin directly to the German Chancellor. This may seem a bit irreverent if not worse but in fact we of course did not divulge classified information while we did engage in mutual discussions with Frei about our assessment of Soviet and East German intentions and activities and in return received from Frei very impressive and timely assessments of the attitudes in West Berlin and among Western correspondents. The net result of this was that when a four power discussion would take place on how to deal with the latest salami slice initiative by Moscow, Adenauer would always be up to speed on our view and assessments of those actions and vigorously defend standing fast in the face of the Soviet threat. This was heady stuff. We of course kept our direct superiors informed of the discussions we had with Frei but basically it was in many ways the most effective communications channel that we had.

One of the great luxuries of living in Berlin in addition to the excellent restaurants and the very hospitable and friendly population and first class cultural activities was the existence of two top flight tennis clubs. As a tennis enthusiast, I always tried to actively participate in a tennis club at each of my assignments and throughout my German assignments this was a very successful way both with an unusual slice of German society. In Berlin I joined the Rot -- Weiss Tennis Club and became a member of the club team with whom I journeyed to Western Germany to play matches against other teams. We became close friends, the members of the team and I had the pleasure of regular tennis at one of the premiere tennis clubs in Europe.

Earlier I had done this in Munich, Hannover and Hamburg. In Hannover where (the club rank list had) the top members began with Baron Von Cramm and included three other Davis Cup historic players, I landed at number eight. I always had to explain that there was a tremendous gap in quality between number four and number five and even between seven and eight, but nonetheless I was on the ladder with four famous German players. There, too, we had great fun traveling to matches against other clubs and had the pleasure of playing on first class facilities.

I also knew a lot of people in the British intelligence section because they were all dealing with East Germany and I was a source of information for them, and they for me. Oddly enough, there was a famous British turncoat whom we knew, and whom we once entertained in our house, James Blake.

Blake was caught, arrested, jailed in England, and then spirited out by KGB agents from the jail. He went off to Moscow, and wrote a book. It was a famous case because like Burgess and McLean, he came from this highly structured society where if you were not in, you were out. The story goes that because his mother was Lebanese or something, he was not socially accepted. He suffered from this at university and in society. He had a very nice British wife, who was a friend of my wife's. He was a handsome fellow, wore a military uniform, but he was really working for Sandy Goshen, the head of British intelligence in Berlin. Blake caused the death of dozens of

covert agents in East Germany by identifying or "fingering them" to Soviet authorities. (*No Other Choice by Geo. Blake, Simon & Schuster - 1990)

Our best friend in Berlin, was a British captain in the tank corps who went on to become the Queen's military advisor, Major General, Sir Michael Palmer. Mike and I have remained close friends, we visit back and forth, our children are friends, and his youngest son is my God-son. My God-son was a major in charge of a tank unit in "the desert rats" in the Gulf War. His regiment is the same regiment his father was in, which is the same regiment his great grandfather was in, so it goes way back. So we had a great exposure to regimental life, and liked that a lot.

We also had a lot of friends in Berlin among young Berlin lawyers. The city was so pro-American. When we received orders to go to Moscow, and we went out to the stores we always encountered a warm reception. I took an old Harris tweed overcoat in to see if I could get a fur lining for it, to wear in Moscow. I walked in to this tailor whom I had dealt with but didn't know particularly, told him that I had been posted to Moscow, etc., and I wondered if I could have a rabbit skin lining. He said, "Absolutely." He did a beautiful job and when I went to pay for it...it was going to cost \$100, a lot of money in those days...he refused to accept payment. He said, "You have defended my city. You're going to Moscow to continue to defend my city, it's my contribution." And my wife went in to get some jewelry, and the same thing happened to her. When people learned that we were going to Moscow, and they had known what we were doing in Berlin, they refused to accept payment. They were right, we were all "saving Berlin."

Q: Oh, absolutely. Did you deal with the Soviets at all yourself?

JENKINS: Yes, particularly in Potsdam, which was the headquarters of the Soviet armed forces in Germany. We would go to meetings there and negotiate over people such as soldiers who would wander across the border. Findley Burns, the Mission Counselor, was the lead negotiator.

I was also involved with the Russians in various things such as the air traffic control disputes which reoccurred regularly. The Soviets were always trying to lower the air corridor, harass our planes. We also had social events with them.

However, once Khrushchev delivered his ultimatum, it became deadly serious and there was no more joking, no more socializing. With the exception of the tanks and the convoy, they were all obvious harassment. They tried to use our trips through the check-point to take our passport and stamp an East German visa in it which would be a sort of recognition of East German sovereignty over all Berlin. So we refused to show our passports. Washington, always seeking to defuse or compromise confrontations insisted that we hold our passports up to the window, so we had to do that. We in Berlin never wanted to give them an inch.

Q: How about with our military? Using military to put pressure on is probably the most inexact weapon I can think of, because they're not very good at this.

JENKINS: They don't like to do it.

Q: They don't like to do it, and if they do it, it can end up with a master sergeant making a policy

decision.

JENKINS: In Berlin, uniquely in my experience, the integration of our mission with General Hamlet's military structure was complete. And the CIA people were in the middle of it. There were often arguments between naval intelligence, which had a station there, army intelligence, air force intelligence, they all had people there, competing with CIA. Meanwhile our political operation was above this turf struggle. They all played to us to try and play their little game with each other. But basically other than that kind of turf friction, it was a well-knit unit. Hamlet was an excellent officer. He had two other generals and several colonels -- they were all outstanding. I played tennis with them and we were all very close friends.

Sitting in that city, surrounded by Soviet power, with a six month ultimatum to get out or World War III would begin, brings you together. Our moral was terrific. There was very little friction. And our military in Berlin became very sophisticated in political terms, like my British friend; who became a real student of Soviet affairs. There was not, in Berlin, any serious difference of opinion about Soviet intentions or the necessity for firmness on our part. Now, back in Washington there were major arguments about all this, and even in Bonn. Our embassy in Bonn was very nervous about the Berlin Mission's strong views. Fortunately we had Marty Hillenbrand in Bonn as DCM. Marty, having served in Berlin had an excellent appreciation of Berlin events. But after Marty left, the embassy in Bonn was not very strong on Berlin issues. But Washington drove policy, and Washington was torn in many different directions. Initially the problem was Dulles who was acting like a corporate lawyer, then the Kennedy administration came in and we got all these smart asses in the White House, like John Kenneth Galbraith, and a character who was editor of the New Yorker for a while, Dick Goodwin; and Arthur Schlesinger, the historian. These people were sitting around in the White House trying to figure out a way through sheer intellectual brilliance to disarm this confrontation, this historic confrontation.

Q: And Kennedy, of course, almost came a cropper when he got to Vienna, which led to all sorts of other things.

JENKINS: That's exactly right. It was a terrible thing. I think Khrushchev was persuaded by Kennedy's performance at Vienna that his bluff was going to work. And that's when the decision was made to put the missiles into Cuba.

In '60 I went to Moscow as the Berlin officer in the political section. By this time the Soviets had extended the ultimatum for another six months. While I was in Moscow reporting on the Berlin situation, and engaged in the negotiations, they finally withdrew the ultimatum. We knew it from an editorial in Pravda where the phrase, "on that basis" was omitted. The liturgy had been that the Soviet Union controls East Germany, Berlin is part of East Germany, and on that basis the western powers have no right to be in Berlin. One day the Pravda editorial read, "The Soviet Union controls East Germany. Berlin is located within East Germany, and in our judgment..." instead of "on that basis," the Allies have no legal basis for being there. And we knew that the crisis was over. I wrote the telegram to the Department flagging this. It was really exciting. We still had the big crisis, access to Berlin, but the ultimatum was withdrawn.

ALFRED JOSEPH WHITE
German Language Training, Foreign Service Institute
Washington, DC (1958)

Vice Consul
Bremen (1959-1961)

Alfred Joseph White was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on August 16, 1929. He attended Syracuse and Georgetown Universities and served in the US Army before entering the Foreign Service in 1957. His career has included positions in countries including Germany, Sudan, Italy, Austria, Turkey, and Venezuela. He was interviewed by John J. Harter on September 17, 1997.

Q: You did that for one year?

WHITE: That's right, one year. Then it was time to go overseas. I went to the FSI [Foreign Service Institute] and studied German for four months.

Q: Did you ask for German language training?

WHITE: I did and I wanted to go to Germany.

Q: Had you taken German previously?

WHITE: German was my first foreign language.

Q: That's what you took in the Foreign Service exam?

WHITE: That's right. I had passed the written exam in German before I went to the FSI. Even though I had passed it, I just had a written knowledge of German. I knew scholarly German, actually. So I took the four-month course in German at the FSI. At the end of the course, the students filed into a room and sat down. Somebody from State Department Personnel sat up on a stage and read out our names and assignments.

Q: What was your score in German when you finished the course? Such and such a number in speaking and reading?

WHITE: I got a S-3, R-3 [Useful speaking knowledge and useful reading knowledge of German]. I thought this was a generous mark, but anyway that was my mark.

Q: That was pretty good.

WHITE: It was considered a good mark. That meant that I had qualified in German.

Q: So what happened when they read the names out?

WHITE: My name was read and after it they said, "Bremen." Bremen, Germany, where we had a Consulate General.

Q: Gee whiz, that's good. Were you pleased with that assignment?

WHITE: Yes. Actually, I would have been pleased with any post in Germany. Any German-speaking post, for that matter.

Germany loomed very large in our foreign relations. We had fought two wars against Germany. My brother had fought against the Germans around Mannheim during World War II. I was fascinated by the country. Of course, I read a lot about its history. I was delighted with this assignment.

One of the things that I learned very early on in my career is that the Department doesn't always do things very sensibly. We had people who had studied German for four months and were not sent to German speaking posts, which is rather absurd. In fact, it might be worth mentioning that one of my colleagues was from the Department of Agriculture. He decided to join the Foreign Service and was accepted. He was a very capable fellow. However, he was not a natural speaker of foreign languages. He had to work very hard on German, but he did work very hard to keep up with our class for four, long months. At times, despite my advantage in having studied German previously, I was about to go around the bend. You remember those closed, windowless cells where we studied languages at the FSI?

Q: I was in Hungarian language training for eight months in one of those little rooms.

WHITE: I can't imagine how we retained our sanity. Anyway, this colleague of mine manfully struggled and he got through the course. I don't know what grade he got at the end of the course. However, when they read out his assignment, it wasn't to a German speaking post. I remember his saying to me: "Well, this is crazy! Why did I spend four months, knocking my brains out, and they send me some place else?" You know what he did? He resigned and went back to the Department of Agriculture.

About 10 years later, when I had just returned from somewhere, I was walking through the corridors of the Department. I saw a name on a door, and it said: "Director, Office of International Trade Policy." It was this fellow.

Q: You mean Howard Worthington!

WHITE: You know, I was about to mention his name, and you beat me to it by a second!

Q: I knew Howard quite well. He was a really intense guy. He died of a heart attack around age 50. He was a friend of Frances Wilson. She loved him.

WHITE: You're right, he was very intense, very hardworking. And 10 years later he was the head of the Office of International Trade Policy. I walked in to see him, and we had a nice chat.

Later on, he went to the Treasury Department as an Assistant Secretary. I think that, somewhere along the way, he was an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Commerce as well.

Q: His assignment to the Treasury Department came not too long after he was the Director of the Office of International Trade Policy in the State Department.

WHITE: I think that his last job was as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. That was an interesting case, and there were other people like him.

Howard just wasn't that type of conventional Foreign Service Officer. Again, we go back to the question of temperament. He probably didn't have the temperament to be in the Foreign Service. Probably, the best thing that he did was to resign when he did, at the outset of his career. Look where his career went. He did extremely well.

Q: So you went to the Consulate General in Bremen.

WHITE: I went to Bremen as Vice Consul.

Q: Did you have any special preparation for this assignment, beyond your language training?

WHITE: No, none whatever. In those days the Foreign Service was a rather formalistic service. I wrote my polite letter to the Consul General, saying that I was delighted to be assigned to his staff. I got back an equally polite letter, saying that he was delighted that I was coming to Bremen.

I traveled to Bremen on the SS AMERICA [United States Lines]. That was the period when we could travel by ship, first class!

Q: I never got to do that. I had to fly.

WHITE: I did it on my first assignment overseas. Our first European landfall was in Southampton, England. There I found a letter waiting for me from my predecessor in Bremen, Jack Carle. He said in the letter that he would meet me at Bremerhaven [the port of Bremen] and see me through the formalities of arrival at post.

When I arrived in Bremerhaven, the Consul General was there, too. I drove up to Bremen with the Consul General, he and I in the back seat of his car, with his German chauffeur.

Q: Were you fairly intimidated by this reception?

WHITE: Well, I suppose that I was impressed. I knew that I would rotate from one job to another in the Consulate General. That's what junior officers did in the Foreign Service at that time. I expected to rotate...

Q: Which was sensible.

WHITE: The Consul General told me: "Well, we're going to put you in the Admin Section for a year." Anything less than a year wouldn't have made any sense. I said that that was fine. I didn't know anything about administration and I didn't join the Foreign Service to do administrative work. However, that's what the Consul General assigned me to do, and that's what I did.

Q: Had the previous Administrative Officer already left?

WHITE: No, Jack Carle, who had met me in Bremerhaven, was Admin Officer at the time. He was on the verge of leaving the post, but we still had an overlap of about a week. Remember that we almost always had an overlap, if possible.

Q: At least he could give you some orientation as to what your work was going to be.

WHITE: Oh, yes, we had a week of overlap.

The Consulate General building in Bremen was beautiful, one of these marble and glass structures, very modernistic, built in the 1950s, probably using counterpart funds from the Marshall Plan. It was well located in downtown Bremen. I was ushered into one of the biggest offices that I ever had in my life, at my first overseas post. There was a sofa and easy chairs, with a big desk and a big chart behind me with the post organization pattern set out on it. There was a huge shelf with the Foreign Service Regulations displayed on it.

The Consul General, with a sort of gleam in his eyes, said: "Well, you'll have to read all of those regulations!" Of course, he didn't mean that, literally. So that's how I really started my Foreign Service career.

Q: How did you learn how to be an Administrative Officer? This reminds me of the old "New Yorker" cartoon. Somebody was skiing down a hill, reading a book on "How to Ski."

WHITE: Well, you know, you just "get your feet wet." I got my feet wet the very first day that I was there. One by one the officers at the Consulate General, most of whom were married and had children, came in to see me, not together, but one by one. They had a problem. We had a school bus that took their children out to a British school near Delmenhorst outside of Bremen. The nearest American School was at Bremerhaven, where we had our major Port of Embarkation. But that was a bit too far. In the winter, fog and bad weather were causes for concern. Somebody, I don't know who, maybe some accountant down in the Embassy in Bonn, questioned the use of the bus and said we would have to get rid of it. It allegedly violated the regulations.

I was a bachelor and had no family, so the issue didn't affect me directly. It was a good sort of "first case." What should I do? So I turned to the shelf full of the Foreign Service regulations. The best thing in a volume of the Regulations is the index. I also made some phone calls to the people in the Embassy in Bonn because I was "brand new" and really didn't know anything about what I was doing. I also spoke to the Consul General and learned that in his view it probably was contrary to the regulations to be using this bus.

I said to the Consul General: "Look, if we cancel the bus, we're going to have a morale problem." He was a bit skittish about this because, after all, he was responsible for the administration of the post. I remember thinking to myself one afternoon, as I was poring over the Foreign Service Regulations: "Wait a minute. I have a lot of people on the staff here who can read the regulations. What was my job, after all? Was it to read the Regulations and parrot them? Or was it to interpret the Regulations in a positive way to take care of the needs of the post?" I decided that my job was in the latter category.

I told the Consul General that we should continue to use the bus. He said: "It's risky, and I don't think we should do it." We talked again about morale. Then he said: "Okay, but it's your responsibility." This was fair enough. I really couldn't object to this. So we kept the school bus. I guess that I was quite popular with my colleagues for keeping the school bus.

To run ahead with this story a little bit, at the end of that first hard but very fascinating year, we had a Foreign Service Inspection. I don't know how inspections are viewed today, but then, you know, Foreign Service Inspections were sort of like the "crack of doom." The words, "You're being inspected" sounded menacing. Not only that, but we were told that the administrative inspector was a very tough man.

Q: And as post Administrative Officer, you were right at the center of the inspection.

WHITE: Right. My colleagues would say to me: "For all practical purposes, you're bearing the weight on 95 percent of this Inspection." At that time the preparations for an inspection were "humongous," as my kids would say. An infinite amount of paperwork had to be prepared, covering every conceivable aspect of post operations.

Now Bremen was what I would call a medium size Consulate General. We had six Foreign Service Officers: the Consul General, a Political Officer who served as his Deputy, two Consular Officers, an Economic Officer, and myself as Administrative Officer. That was the Foreign Service staff. We also had a USIS [United States Information Service] office, a Department of the Army office with several people assigned, and a U.S. Coast Guard office, believe it or not. Curiously enough, the Coast Guard had an office in Bremen, made up of one Commander and one Chief Petty Officer to look after all of the American seamen that would come into Bremen or Bremerhaven.

Q: Was there a CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] presence in the Consulate General that you knew about?

WHITE: Not to my knowledge.

The Consulate General was responsible for all Foreign Service shipments in and out of Central and Eastern Europe. This was a big job. I had a separate shipping unit which had an excellent German staff. We had one American woman Foreign Service Staff Officer in the code room. My own staff consisted of about 25 or 26 people, all of whom were German, with the exception of the American woman who handled the code room, files, etc.

Q: You needed a competent staff in a place like Bremen. In some parts of the world the local staff people are very difficult.

WHITE: I had a very competent staff. My attitude was that these people seemed to know what they were doing. I let them do their jobs. I had no problem delegating authority to them, provided that they always kept me fully informed about what they were doing. That arrangement worked very well.

Q: And you had no problems with them?

WHITE: No. To go back to the school bus problem, I think that this was an interesting, Foreign Service matter. Two Foreign Service Inspectors arrived. The Administrative Inspector was John Crawford.

Q: His job was to work full time on you.

WHITE: That's right. As they moved from post to post through Germany, we were getting reports on how they operated. We had a lot of posts in Germany: Bremen, Berlin, Hamburg, Dusseldorf, Stuttgart, Munich, and so forth. I had reports that John Crawford was bad news. [Laughter] He was reportedly strict, by the book, and looked into everything.

He came to see me the first morning they were in Bremen. He was very affable. As he sat in my office with me, I could see that he was going through a kind of routine set of questions. Then he said: "Tell me, Mr. White, are there any particular problems which you want to bring to my attention?" I had made up my mind that the only thing to do with a problem was to bring it to the attention of the Inspectors, because they were going to find out anyway. I thought it was better to take the initiative and lay it on the table.

So I said: "Yes, Mr. Crawford, I have a problem that's been bugging me. It's a nagging problem, but I cannot find any other way to handle it than the way I'm handling it. That is the matter of the school bus." So I went into a description of it. I could see that he was looking rather appalled. I was sure that I was going to get zapped on this one. He went everywhere with me in the Consulate General building. By the way, we had staff housing, we had a Residence for the Consul General, a lot of real estate around Bremen.

I made it a point, and I think that it's a good point, to go where the action is and see what's going on. Whenever you're responsible for anything, go down where that activity is taking place. I used to go down to the Motor Pool about once every month or so. I would go right into the room where the man in charge of the Motor Pool had his office. There was another room where the drivers stayed between trips. I was the chief, the boss. The Germans had this approach to authority. I would chat pleasantly with them and then I would ask to see the Motor Pool records. The man in charge of the Motor Pool was an artist and a very good one. However, wars do funny things, and I guess that he was glad to have a job, running the Motor Pool at the American Consulate General. He would open the drawers of the cabinets and pull out all of his records. I would look at them, although half of the time I didn't know what I was looking at. I would nod sagely. But that was for a purpose. That was to let them know that they had a boss, that he was

interested in them, that he came down to their work place and talked with them, and that he looked at the records. So they knew that they had a boss who: (a) cared something about them and (b) knew what they were doing. They knew that I was watching over their shoulder. I think that that's a very important point in management. I can think of some Secretaries of State who never did this. But that's beside the point in this discussion.

To return to the post, Inspector Crawford even wanted to see the boiler room. We climbed up and down ladders and so forth and looked around the boilers. I didn't know anything about these pipes. However, I had been down there, and I had seen to it that they were painted.

Q: There were no cobwebs around.

WHITE: Right. At the end of it all, I got a wonderful report on the Administrative Section and I was quite proud of it. However, as the inspector was leaving, he came back for what they call the "exit interview." He was getting up to leave, after all of these accolades. I said: "Hey, what about that school bus?" He stopped dead in his tracks, turned around and thought for a moment, and then said: "You know, that is a problem. However, if I were you, I would just go on doing what you're doing."

Q: Did he say: "But it's your responsibility?"

WHITE: No. Anyway, it was an interesting moral to learn. You have to assume responsibility and do what you think is right.

Q: And you have to be a bit lucky.

WHITE: You have to be a bit lucky, too. He could have thrown the book at me. However, I was always sure that I could defend my position to my satisfaction.

Q: It is important for your boss to know. I assume that the Consul General knew what the Inspector had said.

WHITE: Right. He was very pleased because the results were successful. The Consul General was a pre-World War II kind of Foreign Service Officer. He was rather stiff but distinguished looking. He was definitely of the old school, as we say today. Although today I suppose that some people would talk about me as being of the old school.

Now, if you want to, we can get into the commercial aspects of the Consulate General.

Q: What was the transition there? You were told at the outset that you would be doing administrative work for one year.

WHITE: I was assigned to administrative work for one year. Then it appeared, since everything had worked out well, that I would continue doing administrative work for a second year.

Q: Yes, if the Consul General was satisfied with your work and you got a good inspection report

because of it, there would be a tendency not to rock the boat and make changes.

WHITE: Exactly. I was quite prepared to continue doing administrative work. I felt that during the first year I had kind of earned a second year that would be less hectic. I felt that I could relax a bit and rest on my laurels, let's say. That is never a good idea, by the way. To my surprise, the Consul General called me in one day and said: "I want to set up a separate Commercial Section."

Q: There was no Commercial Section before?

WHITE: We had an Economic Section. Of course, the Economic Section also did whatever commercial work needed to be done. However, this function was not identified as a separate section of the Consulate General.

Harrison Lewis, the Consul General, had done commercial work himself in Japan, during a previous assignment. He thought that the commercial function was important. Even then we were beginning to hear some dire reports about our balance of payments and our balance of trade situation. Already at that time the feeling was emerging that the U.S. should be doing more exporting.

Remember, after World War II there was what was called the "Dollar Gap." I recall writing a paper at Georgetown University on this subject. Well, you know what the world was like after 1945. There was virtually only one country that was producing anything, and that was the U.S. The world was eager to buy our goods. They didn't have the U.S. dollars to buy them. That was the Dollar Gap. In fact, the Marshall Plan was created to deal with the Dollar Gap. The world was our "oyster in those years.

However, by 1959 that situation had already begun to change. When I went to Germany in 1959, that was only 14 years after the end of World War II. You remember those pictures of how Cologne looked in 1945? Nothing standing but the two towers of the Cologne Cathedral. By 1959 there was scarcely a trace of World War II in Germany. The country was booming. You had to look long and hard to find a trace of all of that devastation. Occasionally, in Bremen you would come across a lot that was vacant. You understood that there probably had been a building there before the war. The Germans just hadn't gotten around to rebuilding on that particular lot.

I traveled widely in Germany. The Ruhr area was booming. You would think that there never had been a war. Germany was rising, but, of course, Western Europe was rising, too. The game was changing. Consul General Harrison Lewis understood that and wanted, in his own, modest way and with the modest resources he had available to highlight the commercial function.

As it was, on the first floor of the Consulate General there was a huge space where USIS had been storing films. They weren't using it for offices. It was a prime location. The Consul General thought that this was a silly use of space. So we worked it out with USIS. They stored their films somewhere else, probably over in the Amerika Haus, which was a binational cultural center. In Bremen the Amerika Haus was a separate facility. Ironically, I think that our commercial library was the largest I've ever seen in the Foreign Service with the possible exception of the Embassy in Paris.

So we set up the Commercial Section where USIS had previously been storing films. I was given a German secretary and one, local professional employee. The local employee I hired was a young man, fresh out of a university and very dynamic and eager to get busy. I had an office, this young man had an office, and my secretary was out in the commercial library.

Of course, we had a lot of help from the Embassy. I haven't mentioned the role of the Embassy so far. The Embassy, of course, was always available to me.

Q: I meant to ask, was the Administrative Officer in the Embassy in Bonn your "father confessor?"

WHITE: Oh, very much so. He was Arch Jean. I don't know whether you knew him.

Q: Oh, sure. He was a Personnel man also.

WHITE: When I knew him he was Administrative Counselor at the Embassy in Bonn. He was very supportive of what I was doing. He helped me out of some jams I managed to get myself in, as a result of my youthful exuberance. The Commercial and the Agricultural Counselors often visited Bremen for trade shows or exhibitions of one kind or another.

Q: These would have involved economic matters.

WHITE: Yes. We had a lot of help. Anyhow, we set up the Commercial Section in the Consulate General. We had a huge reception when we opened the Commercial Section. We invited all of the local people interested in trade.

Q: Who was the Ambassador then?

WHITE: The Ambassador was Walter J. Dowling. By the way, he traveled in a special train. Those were the days when our Ambassador in Germany, in effect, was a kind of "Viceroy."

Anyhow, all of the elite of Bremen attended the reception. They were largely the descendants of the old, Hanseatic families.

Q: So this would have been early in your first year as Commercial Officer in Bremen?

WHITE: It was in the fall of 1960 that I launched this project of setting up a commercial office in Bremen.

Q: What did your regular work involve in that capacity? This was your first, real assignment as a Commercial Officer.

WHITE: Yes. The Economic Section of the Consulate General had its own officer.

Q: Was the Economic Officer your supervisor?

WHITE: No. There was only one boss, the Consul General. We were all essentially junior officers, except for the Deputy to the Consul General, who was a mid-career officer.

Q: I've always felt that the commercial function should be subordinate to the overall, economic function. That's probably something that we will get into later on.

WHITE: Yes, we can discuss that matter later on in greater detail. The commercial function was handled as a separate unit of the Consulate General. Obviously, we worked closely together, but the Economic Section had an officer, a secretary, and two senior local employees. You know how valuable those senior local employees are.

Q: This is quite a thing to set up a unit like that, when you really hadn't had operational experience in that area.

WHITE: I had none whatever.

Q: You didn't have a wall of Foreign Service Manuals to refer to, with an index. You didn't have any of that.

WHITE: No. We had the Thomas Register of American firms, but that's a little different.

Q: And you had your own imagination.

WHITE: That's right. Of course, we had very good relations with all of the chambers of commerce in the consular district.

We started from scratch and kind of thrashed around.

Q: What did you do?

WHITE: Well, we worked out a deal with the Embassy, whereby we assumed "national" responsibility [that is covering all of the Federal Republic of Germany] for certain industries, in terms of commercial exploitation. One of our areas of responsibility was textiles and clothing.

Q: Were textiles and clothing major concerns in the Bremen area?

WHITE: Historically, they had been mainly imported through Bremen. There was also a textile and clothing industry in the area, giving Bremen responsibility for textiles and clothing was part of the division of labor with the Embassy. The theory was a good one. Rather than have the Consulates in Germany report on their separate districts, the idea was to split the economy up. Like many such divisions of labor, it was probably arbitrary to a large extent. Anyway, we had the textile and clothing industry.

We also had in our vicinity one of the most important trade fairs in Europe, the Hanover Fair.

Q: That went back to the Middle Ages.

WHITE: Exactly, and it's still going strong, as far as I know. Technically, I think that Hanover was in the Hamburg consular district. Remember that we had a larger Consulate General next to us in Hamburg.

Q: Were you aware how politically sensitive the textile and clothing industries were in terms of U.S. trade?

WHITE: I was aware of that, but bear in mind that these two industries were not all that sensitive at that time.

Q: By the 1960s the reason that Luther Hodges of North Carolina was named Secretary of Commerce under President Kennedy was that, as Governor of North Carolina, he knew a lot about textile plants in North Carolina, which were threatened by foreign competition, especially at that time.

WHITE: Well, we were getting into that time. Now, we had responsibility for the textile and clothing industry throughout Germany.

Q: I assume that there would be as much interest in the Department of Commerce in those industries as in any industries, given the position of Luther Hodges. What year was this?

WHITE: I'm sure there was great interest in the Department of Commerce in the textile and clothing industry in Germany. This was in 1960, at the tail end of the Eisenhower administration. We had the Chairman or the CEO [Chief Executive Officer] of Burlington Mills, one of the big American textile and clothing firms, visit Bremen.

Q: Do you remember his name, offhand, because that's a major company?

WHITE: I can't remember his name, right now. We had done a study of the textile and clothing industry. I remember going down with one of our local employees to the Ruhr area. In doing this study we worked very closely with the Economic Section of the Consulate General. One of the senior local employees of the Economic Section went with me. We were separate and distinct from the Economic Section but we didn't have a firewall between us. We did a lot of research and came up with a market survey on what items of clothing would be the most attractive in the German market. It was all sort of humdrum, but anyway, of all things, we found out that there was a fantastic market potential for American products in the baby attire and women's lingerie sectors.

Q: Was there a lot of interest in blue jeans?

WHITE: German women loved American baby clothes and lingerie. Don't ask me why. It was a little early for interest in blue jeans. Anyway, that was the potential.

As I said previously, this man from Burlington Mills visited our office, and I gave him a copy of

this survey. He showed great interest in it. I'm sure that he thought that I was a young whippersnapper at the time. I told him about all of these great possibilities. He seemed interested but then he leaned back and said: "You know, it's not worth our while to modify our product lines for this market." That was the attitude, and I don't think that it was unique to him. I think that that was a fairly general attitude in American companies at that time. They seemed to feel that if the world wanted to buy our goods, that was fine. We seemed to feel that our markets were so assured that we didn't have to go out and hustle for new customers.

Bear in mind that foreign trade, as late as the 1950s, accounted for only about 5-6 percent of our GNP [Gross National Product]. It loomed large in absolute numbers. However, the American economy was so vast that, in percentage terms, foreign trade was still rather minimal, unlike Germany, where 33 percent of its GNP was in foreign trade.

We made a lot of calls on business firms in Bremen and Bremerhaven, by myself and my commercial assistant. We would go out and call on big companies, find out what they were interested in, and what American companies could do to supply their needs.

Q: You were looking for trade opportunities?

WHITE: Exactly. We did a lot of that. By the way, I keep talking about Bremen. In fact, the whole northwestern section of Germany was in our consular district, including Osnabruck, Oldenburg, and Emden, right up to the Dutch border. That's a heavily concentrated area in terms both of population and industry.

Q: I had the impression that, with regard to commercial opportunities, many people feel that these are pretty routine and not worth spending much time on. They tend to let the local employees handle them and then send them off to the Department. I gather that you took these commercial opportunities very seriously.

WHITE: We did. Do you remember an officer named Bill Krason? He was our Commercial Officer in Duesseldorf. He was something of a legend in his own time. He flooded the Department of Commerce with a tremendous number of trade opportunities. I remember that, after a while, he came under some criticism because some people thought that this was just a lot of paper work. Well, it was not just paper work. These trade opportunities were being reported to Washington. Now, what Washington did with them is another matter.

Q: We'll get back to that when we get to your assignment to the Department of Commerce.

Did you have a trade mission?

WHITE: Several trade missions came to Bremen. The Port of Long Beach, California, sent a major trade mission. They were interested in promoting the port of Long Beach. Bremen, of course, has been a Hanseatic town and has had close trade relations with the United States. There was a very sophisticated group in the Bremen business community. Bremen is a traditional, cotton importing town.

Q: Was there an American Chamber of Commerce in Bremen?

WHITE: Yes, there was. It was a small group. The main Chamber of Commerce was in Hamburg. I spent a lot of time dealing with people in Hamburg. Pan American Airways was our airline in northern Germany at that time. The airline had a very aggressive promoter who often came to Bremen. We did a lot of travel promotion with Pan Am and with local travel agencies. I remember being asked to speak to the monthly luncheon of the travel agencies on the theme of "Visit the USA."

Q: You mean that you made luncheon speeches.

WHITE: That sort of thing. Oh, yes.

Q: Was your German good enough so that you could make the speeches in German?

WHITE: I made formal speeches in English for two reasons. First of all, they all understood English perfectly, and it was frankly easier for me. My German was good enough for normal conversation, but I don't recall giving any formal speech in German.

Q: Regarding these trade missions, some people see them as a kind of boondoggle and a waste of time and money. Did you feel that they really were useful?

WHITE: That raises an interesting subject regarding the whole issue of trade missions. I've had different views about it at different times.

Q: But now you're speaking of what you observed in Bremen?

WHITE: Well, we thought they were useful. The question is always how useful they were. The Long Beach group was a large mission. They came to Bremen but also went on to Hamburg and, I think, to Rotterdam. They were interested in developing German awareness of the port of Long Beach. They did that. We worked hard. We had a series of conferences and individual one on one interviews between members of the mission and German importers.

Q: Was there feedback later on the value of the trade mission?

WHITE: I'm sure there was, in the normal course of events. There was another trade mission that went to Bonn, and then individual members of it went to different German cities. That was an interesting concept. One of them came to Bremen. I believe that he was interested in the textile industry. We arranged a two-day program for him at the Chamber of Commerce, including a schedule of interviews so that various German companies could talk with him about his field in textiles.

It was a very busy year doing nuts and bolts commercial work.

Q: But before this you had a vague feeling that you might be interested in the business function. This experience presumably heightened this feeling? It didn't turn you off? Did it intensify your

interest?

WHITE: It intensified an interest that I already had. As I mentioned earlier, I was very interested in international business, even before I entered the Foreign Service. I would say that this was a natural progression.

Obviously, I got very interested in it when, out of the blue, I was asked to set up a separate Commercial Section in the Consulate General in Bremen. Remember also that, in doing that, we often had regional meetings in Bonn. I met all of my counterparts at other posts in Germany who were doing commercial work. Of course, I met a lot of people from the Department of Commerce. Do you remember Ted Hadraba? At one point, he was Commercial Counselor in Bonn.

At the end of that year 1961 my tour in Bremen was up. I went back to the States on transfer orders to Africa.

Q: That was quite a dramatic contrast. It could hardly be greater.

WHITE: Very much so.

Q: What did you think of that assignment?

WHITE: That was a time when Africa was very much on the front burner of attention in the Department of State. People tend to forget this today, but back in the early 1960s Africa was coming into its own.

Q: The process of decolonialization was moving ahead. In the aftermath of World War II the old British and French Empires were falling apart. The metropolitan powers were trying to cling to their colonies, but, of course, we were pushing them in the United Nations and elsewhere to apply the principle of self-determination among nations.

WHITE: That was the Zeitgeist [spirit of the times], as the Germans say. At that time, it seemed, every month some new country was gaining independence.

BETTY JANE JONES
Consular/Economic Officer
Berlin (1958-1962)

Betty Jane Jones was born and raised in Wisconsin. She majored in government at Beloit College and entered the Foreign Service in 1954. Her career included positions in Italy, Germany, India, Israel, the United Kingdom (England), and assignments related to the United Nations in Washington, DC and New York. This interview was conducted on March 8, 1993.

JONES: I left Venice in the fall of 1957, went on home leave and went to Berlin in January of 1958. I spent my first tour there as a Visa Officer. Then went on home leave and when I came back I was an Economic Officer.

I did non-immigrant visas, and that was interesting because we issued some to East German residents. Most of the visas that we issued were generally for either visits to the United States to relatives, or business trips to West Berliners. The ones we issued to East Germans were either visits to relatives or invitations to conferences, scientific conferences or things of that nature -- that it was decided was in our interest to let them attend. Many of these people needed waivers of some sort because they were members of some kind of communist organization. But in most of those cases, it was deemed more or less harmless and in some cases they claimed involuntary membership -- that they had to join in order to retain their job or something of that sort. But it was interesting because we had a chance to talk to some of these people, which most people didn't have an opportunity to do. They were able to come across into West Berlin of course without difficulty at that time. Later on, when I was in the Economic Section, the wall was built of course and that complicated things.

Before the wall was built, the number of East Germans crossing into the west was increasing rapidly, and there were many coming over every day. I was not in the political section; I didn't get involved in those discussions whether there was any feeling the East was going to do something to stem this. It was certainly recognized that there was a problem for them, but I don't think that there was any anticipation of the building of a wall -- I mean of the complete closing of the border that occurred. It happened on a Saturday night, Sunday morning. I was awakened about four o'clock that Sunday morning by one of the local employees whose beat in effect was transportation, and he had lots of contacts in the railroad, and he said they had called him up and told him they were tearing up train tracks and putting up barriers, etc., and he just wanted to alert me (to be aware of this), and he was going to go out and tour around and try to learn what was happening. I assumed that, by that time, others knew about it as well, but I did call the duty officer to make sure, and he was not home, he had already gone to the office. So, I waited until six thirty or seven to call the office and find out whether there was anything I could do. They suggested that I come in about eight. They were gathering a lot of people to try and figure out what was happening. I did get another call back from this local employee who gave me more details about what was happening at what place, etc. That Sunday we spent a great deal of our time just trying to find out, because you really had to go out and look and see what was going on, and reporting to Washington. I never wrote so many flash cables in my life as I did that day.

There certainly was a lot of concern in the Mission that something could happen, because initially there were a lot of troops in East Berlin -- they weren't able to build a wall immediately. Many places they just put rolls of barbed wires, but they also had, I remember, a row of East German Volkspolizei (Volpos so called) just standing within a few yards of each other all in a row across where the Brandenburg gate is, and there were Soviet tanks not very far from the West Berlin border. We were still able to drive in if we had the tags for the Mission, and that afternoon I did drive over into East Berlin and toured around a little bit. It was bristling with military at that time certainly. Later on, the Soviets pulled back to the outskirts, but there certainly was a feeling that if we made a move, why, they weren't just going to let us knock the thing down, or eliminate the barbed wire.

I think there was a strong feeling in the Kennedy administration that we had to support West Berlin and the West German government in resisting any encroachment. I am sure there must have been debates about whether to try to go in and eliminate it, but I think there was certainly good reason for concern that that could precipitate a conflict. We instituted a program for West Berlin to try to support its economy. General Lucius Clay came over and was sort of a supernumerary who was looking at all the things that could be done to support that economy. About a week, six or seven days after the wall went up, then-Vice President Johnson came over, and we sent in another brigade of troops. I remember going out to where the autobahn enters West Berlin to see this cavalcade of army troops coming in. There were Berliners all over the place cheering and you had a good feeling inside. The Vice President had a very successful morale booster visit. There was a parade and thousands of Berliners came out cheering him. You could feel it gave them a tremendous boost, because they were really very concerned of course.

We had a section that dealt with East German affairs; so my Economic Section was not involved with East German economy per se. We did concern ourselves with access to Berlin, and I did do some work on East-West trade in terms of trying to figure out who was shipping things through Berlin to the east that were prohibited, that sort of thing. But we didn't really try to evaluate the East German economy. As a matter of fact, at the time that the wall went up, which was of course the month of August when generally business is down and many concerns close, everybody goes on vacation at once. We had a four-person Economic Section, that is, four officers; two of them were on home leave because "nothing ever happens in August." We also happened to be the chairman of the Allied Control Council at the time, so we were very busy, the two of us, until one of our colleagues returned.

Berlin of course had been the major industrial city in Germany, and it still had some major industries in the electronics field. I can't remember the details now, but it still was a very important entity for Germany as a whole. The German government provided certain incentives for Germans to move to Berlin, because they were afraid that young people particularly would move out, feeling that there was not as much future there as elsewhere. We, at the time, internationally, were pushing our own exports, but it was agreed that this was not a suitable program for us to push in West Berlin and instead we were trying to promote investments, etc. I don't think it was considered a liability; it was just felt that given the circumstances it needed some extra help and assurance that it wasn't being deserted.

GEORGE F. MULLER
Access Officer
Berlin (1958-1962)

George F. Muller emigrated from Vienna, Austria to the United States in 1939. He received a Ph.D. from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. He entered the State Department in 1949 as Intelligence and Research Analyst for Austria and later became Chief of the Central European Section. Mr. Muller joined the Foreign Service in 1954, serving in Germany, Thailand, and

Washington, DC. Mr. Muller was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 1994.

MULLER: I stayed in my position in INR after being "Wristonized" until I was posted to Berlin in 1958. I was posted to Berlin to succeed Karl Mautner, whom I did not know very well at that time. As an old Berlin-hand, Karl had been the U.S. Liaison Officer with the Senat and Governing Mayor of Berlin since the end of the war. After many years he was supposed to return to the States and I was sent out to take his place. (In Berlin, the Senat is the governing body, not a part of the legislature.)

After consultations in Bonn, I arrived in Berlin by car on January 15, 1958. Had I been on the military train, I would have had a long ride because that night we had a "train crisis." The Soviets had held up one of our trains because of allegedly incorrect documentation. Martin Hillenbrand, the number two in Berlin, was in charge since Mr. Bernard Gufler, the Minister, was on vacation.

Marty had been up all night. As I presented myself, he said, "You have 3 days to learn all about access to Berlin because our Access Officer, Bill Kelly, has been assigned on TDY to Indonesia." Kelly was one of the few Indonesian language officers in the Service; he had previously served in Medan and there was some crisis down there.

So, instead of replacing Karl, who was once again extended, I first became the Access Officer. Since the Soviets were frequently harassing us -- crises with the trains, Autobahn and air access were practically a daily occurrence in Berlin -- or at least a weekly occurrence. My INR background, while useful, had not prepared me for these frequent pin-pricks, nor for the complexities of the access situation.

Kelly came back, having done nothing for 90 days in Indonesia, he told me; his temporary duty to Jakarta had been predicated on the assumption that there would be a Sumatra independence movement, but it folded. The machinations of the Embassy, at the time under the control of an "activist" political appointee, earned us Sukarno's enduring hostility and may well have been responsible for his leading role in the Third World Movement.

I finally took over when Karl left, I believe in June 1958. I spent mornings in the U.S. Mission, and afternoons in the U.S. Liaison Office located in the West Berlin Rathaus (as were the British and French Liaison officers) just around the corner from the office of the Governing Mayor who was, of course, Willy Brandt. So I got to know Brandt quite well. With my British and French colleagues, I met regularly with the Berlin Chief of Protocol, as well as with Brandt's Chief of Staff. In addition, I maintained contacts with the District Mayors in the U.S. Sector of Berlin, but my door was open to anybody, including on frequent occasions members of the Berlin legislature. I tried to keep my finger "on the pulse" of Berlin opinion.

The ultimatum was announced by Khrushchev in September of 1958. We then entered a period of considerable tension. Khrushchev gave the Western powers 6 months to get out of the city of Berlin, after which there would be established a so-called "free" City of Berlin, on the model possibly of Danzig or some other "free" cities. Our historic experience with "free" cities has not been exactly promising.

The City Government, the Western allies, and the population of Berlin were determined not to let this happen -- not to be pushed out. But as I said, it was a period of very high tension because nobody knew exactly what the Soviets had in mind.

The first serious event after the Khrushchev speech was a convoy incident at the Berlin end of the Autobahn leading to West Germany. As I mentioned before, the Soviets were masters at finding fault with Allied documentation. In the past, when they found real or alleged errors, they would permit convoys to return to base -- after holding them for some time -- to get corrected documents. What made this crisis serious, in the context of the Khrushchev "ultimatum," was that the Soviet checkpoint officer would not permit the convoy to either proceed or return to base. This was a "first" since the days of the blockade, and we didn't know what it meant. The convoy commander reported that the Soviet checkpoint officer had said he would hold the convoy until "hell freezes over" or until he could inspect the vehicles. Inspection was an absolute no-no; we steadfastly resisted any kind of inspection because we were not going to make our convoy movements dependent on the whims or the goodwill of Soviet checkpoint officers.

So, we had a crisis on our hands that day in November, I believe it was the 10th. The Chargé from Bonn, Bill Trimble, happened to be in town. Findley Burns, who had succeeded Martin Hillenbrand as the No. Two at the U.S. Mission, was in charge in Mr. Gufler's absence. The question was: was this the action of an excessively zealous checkpoint commander; or were the Soviets probing; or was there some more sinister purpose to their action, like a new blockade?

What made the crisis potentially more significant was that we were unable to communicate with Soviet HQ in Karlshorst/East Berlin. By way of background, these communications were at best tenuous. There was only one military line to Soviet HQ and that was from British HQ near the famed Olympic stadium built by Hitler. We had to have an interpreter go through several switches, but if the Soviets didn't want to be reached, they simply didn't answer the phone or had some soldier say that there was nobody around. The usual way to resolve an impasse was to set up a meeting at Political Advisers' level. This time our efforts to do so were to no avail.

Mr. Trimble, Mr. Burns and I met with the Berlin Commandant, Major General. Barksdale Hamlett, at the latter's residence in the late afternoon. In the meantime, the General had ordered the Berlin garrison into a state of alert. The GIs were called back from the movies, for instance. The motors of our tanks, stationed on Huettenweg, not far from the Autobahn, were revved up. The General called in the tank task force commander, Major Tyree, and instructed him to hold himself in readiness; if necessary, he wanted to extricate the convoy. We were of course certain that the activity at U.S. HQ would be reported to the Soviets.

At this point Mr. Burns suggested that he and I go over to Soviet HQ in a last effort to resolve the crisis; until we reported back, military action would be held in abeyance. Mr. Trimble and Gen. Hamlett agreed. Findley then asked Mr. Trimble if he could use the ambassadorial Cadillac, flags flying, to impress the guards at Brandenburg Gate with the importance of our mission. When we told the driver to take us to Karlshorst, he said he wasn't sure the Caddy could make it; it had transmission trouble. So we also took Mr. Burns' official car as a backup.

We arrived at Soviet HQ in the early evening; the place was fully lit and we were immediately

ushered in to meet the Acting Political Adviser, a major, whose name I forgot. It was obvious that we had been expected. After going through the ritual of assuring the Soviets that the convoy contained only what was on the manifest, the Soviet major told us the convoy would be released. Needless to say, we returned happily and wrote the telegram to Washington saying that this particular crisis was over. (I might mention parenthetically, that Gen. Hamlett was reprimanded by his superior, Gen. Hodes, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Army Europe, on the grounds that he did not have the authority to mount an extrication operation -- although this was in his contingency plans. Happily, Gen. Hamlett survived the reprimand and rose to 4-star rank as Vice-Chief-of-Staff, U.S. Army.)

I should perhaps add a word about the inspection of the vehicles, which was one of the things that we constantly had to worry about, and had to coordinate with our allies, the British and the French. As I said, we had an absolute prohibition on the Soviets inspecting our vehicles.

The British did not. The reason was that the British lorries were much higher than our trucks. Whereas a Soviet checkpoint officer could look into our trucks and see -- the Soviets were always checking for East German refugees or fugitives being smuggled out of Berlin -- whereas a Soviet checkpoint control officer could visually inspect our trucks, he could not visually inspect the British trucks. So the British permitted them to climb up on the back and look in.

This is the sort of thing that, as Deputy POLAD, I was charged with trying to work out with the British and the French. But of course we also met with our Soviet counterpart from time to time, until the Wall crisis. The original Soviet POLAD, Colonel Kotshuiba, had been very difficult to deal with -- at least until he had downed a few Vodkas. His successor, Lt. Col. Markushin, was more relaxed and spoke passable German, so I could converse with him before or after the official part of meetings.

My Berlin contacts feared another blockade. We and they were concerned about that. This is perhaps one of those situations when you plan for the last emergency because you don't know exactly what the next emergency would be like. Against the possibility of a blockade we had accumulated vast stockpiles in Berlin, in cooperation with the Berlin city government. After the Khrushchev ultimatum we brought our contingency planning up to date.

The situation was quite different from that when the blockade occurred in 1948 because Berlin was now an economically growing city. It was not just a question of maintaining a then-starving or near starving population. This was now a question of keeping things going at a high level of industrial activity. So it was not merely a question of supplying food in case of blockade, but also a question of raw materials, heating materials, etc., etc. We were planning for that.

One of the concerns we had in our contingency planning was the S-Bahn -- the rapid transit railway that crosses from East into West Berlin. One mustn't forget this was the remnant of a once very large city. Under the post-war arrangements, the right-of-way of this rapid transit system was in East German hands, it belonged to the Reichsbahn. The East Germans had traffic police patrolling the right-of-way from time to time in West Berlin.

One of the contingencies we were concerned about was the possibility that, using the S-Bahn, the

East Germans would infiltrate large numbers of paramilitary forces, under one guise or another, into West Berlin to stir up trouble. Of course we also considered other contingencies, possibly involving East German military forces taking over checkpoint control from the Soviets.

The Gary Powers incident affected us only indirectly in that the summit between Eisenhower and Khrushchev was canceled. We had all expected some alleviation of the Berlin pressure from those discussions.

But actually, before the shoot-down of Gary Powers, there was one other event that I think I should mention. Just a few days before the expiration of the Berlin ultimatum issued by Khrushchev in late 1958, we celebrated, quite purposely and very determinedly, the tenth anniversary of the termination of the airlift. I remember Ambassador Bruce came up from Bonn, as did the British and French Ambassadors. We had a large ceremony at the Airlift memorial in Tempelhof.

It so happened it fell just a few weeks before the expiration of the so-called ultimatum. The Khrushchev deadline came and went and nothing more happened. So we felt that we had won that round, at least. The ultimatum just disappeared.

I might add, another important event was a huge demonstration on the First of May 1959. May Day being an important Social-Democratic holiday. Willy Brandt addressed this immense gathering in front of the old Reichstag. The banners proclaimed "Berlin remains free," and Brandt said, "We are already a free city, we don't need to be a "free" city". That was his slogan.

We did not foresee the erection of the Wall. Afterwards the canard was spread, and I think it was spread by the Soviets, that the Allies knew about it. In fact, one of the Berlin newspapers had a headline "The Allies Knew It." But I can assure you that we, at least at my level, I was at that point Chief of the Political Section, did not know anything nor did Mr. Lightner, the Minister who was in charge of the State Department component. Nor did anybody else. With the wisdom of hindsight some analysts claimed we should have drawn appropriate conclusions from large quantities of building materials the East Germans assembled close to the Sector borders. I never saw such reports.

What happened was that there was an increasing stream of refugees coming West, not only from East Berlin but also from all parts of the GDR, the German Democratic Republic. One could sense that something was brewing -- that East Germany was stirring. We tried to keep our ears to the ground as best we could.

To forestall any kind of movement against West Berlin, President Kennedy gave a speech on the 25th of July, 1961, in which he reiterated the firm U.S. commitment to the freedom of West Berlin and the people of West Berlin. Now mind you, West Berlin; he did not say anything about East Berlin.

We didn't particularly care for the way this was presented because we had always felt there was a unity to the whole city, to the fabric of the city, despite the East having effective control, of course, over its sector. There still was, first of all, a great deal of movement through the city.

People from the East could still go to the movies in West Berlin, they could go to the theaters; Church meetings, so-called Kirchentage, and important political meetings, with people from both parts of Germany, took place in West Berlin.

So West Berlin was a meeting place of considerable importance. We felt that just to reiterate the freedom of West Berlin, while of course very important -- that was after all the mission of the allied military presence in West Berlin -- nevertheless, something should have been said about vestigial allied rights in East Berlin. In fact, we had patrols going through East Berlin, army patrols. It was U.S. policy to encourage visits by us, by the Western diplomatic establishment, to East Berlin, including such things even as the opera. This was part of showing the flag and demonstrating our presence, observing the quadripartite status of the city as a whole.

As I said, the refugee stream increased. On Saturday, August 12, I had a call (of course I was in the office), from the Chief of the Senat Chancery, Heinrich Albertz, who subsequently also became governing Mayor of Berlin. He then was Chief of Staff to Willy Brandt.

He asked whether the U.S. could make emergency rations available for the refugees because the processing at the Refugee Reception Centers could not keep pace with the stream of people coming in. People were starving in the receiving lines. So I got on the horn to our military and we made some K-rations available; I don't know how much the refugees liked the K-rations, but we delivered them.

Then later that evening, around 11:00, I was at home at that point, Mr. Albertz called me again and said, "We have noticed something very odd and that is that the S-Bahn (the rapid transit trains) are going into the East but don't come out. The railroad seems to be stopping."

He and I talked about the possible significance of this, bearing in mind, that one of the contingencies we were worried about was the S-Bahn as a kind of Trojan Horse bringing East German thugs and paramilitary forces into West Berlin, but there was no indication of this.

The next thing we learned was that the East Germans had blocked all the crossing points within the city with barbed wire entanglements, and were not permitting anybody to go from West to East or East to West. Now, this kind of blockage had happened before when there were currency conversions in East Germany; so we, at the Mission, were not quite sure what the East German objective in doing this was.

There had also been reports that the East Germans were going to reissue identity cards all over East Germany with the objective of limiting the access of people from, say, Leipzig to Berlin. The cards were to be issued for zones, going in concentric circles toward East Berlin, so that with one card you could perhaps only go from Dresden to Leipzig but not to Berlin. You would need another card, and so on, to get into the city. That would be to staunch the refugee flow. Previously, the crossing points had been closed when there was a new issue of ID cards.

So there was all these reports, many of them confusing or conflicting. I would say at about 1 or 2:00 in the morning, I called Dick Smyser and Frank Trinko, who were junior officers in the Eastern Affairs Section of the U.S. Mission. I asked them to go into East Berlin, in an official car

of course, to see what the situation was at the checkpoints, at the Brandenburg Gate, and to pick up any kind of information they could.

They came back at about 3:00 in the morning. They said that they were actually waved through quite easily, whereas Germans could not pass, but they also brought back a copy of "Neues Deutschland," the official organ of the East German Socialist Unity Party. It contained the text of a decree of the East German government stopping all transit between East and West Berlin, save for a few crossover points which would remain open; it also contained a communique of the Warsaw Pact declaring that the Warsaw Pact forces were fully behind this action of the East German government. It was only then that we knew that a very dramatic step affecting the 4-Power status of Berlin had been taken.

The press was running wild, writing about the blockade. We decided to first get all the intelligence together. Commandants' meeting with the Governing Mayor was set-up in the course of the night. We decided to have a full report after having reported preliminarily the text of the East German decrees and official announcements. The meeting with the Governing Mayor, took place in the Allied Kommandatura at 11:00 in the morning of August the 13th -- an unusual event for a Sunday.

Willy Brandt was at that point engaged in an election campaign. He had been campaigning in West Germany. Mr. Albertz, his Chief of Staff, had him taken off his train and brought by the fastest means possible to Berlin. Brandt hadn't had much sleep. He had been briefed by Mayor Franz Amrehn, who was the number two in the city administration.

The two of them, flanked by Albertz and one or two others, came and briefed the Commandants to the extent that they knew the situation. But I must say, it was a desultory meeting. Amrehn did most of the talking; Brandt said very little. No great decisions were taken, partly because we really didn't know exactly what to do, except to lodge a Commandants' protest. Which we then, immediately after the meeting, set upon to draft.

Only East German forces were visible in East Berlin. The first day or two they placed barbed wire entanglements, something akin to sawhorses, that were pulled across these various crossing points. These were reinforced, as the days went by, with more barbed wire; by mid-week they began to actually lay masonry, cinder block, right across some very important intersections, for instance at the Potsdamer Platz. They didn't bother about foundations, they just put the mortar on the pavement and set the cinder block on top of it. I should point out, though, that all this was done in the name of the East German government. Although the action could not have been taken without the approval of Moscow, the Soviets were not involved in the closing of the crossing points.

The problem was that when there had been past Soviet infractions or East German infractions against what we called the "status of Berlin," the Commandants had immediately lodged a protest. As I said, that Sunday we drafted the protest and we telegraphed a proposed text to Washington.

Either later that day or the next day, I am not sure which, Foy Kohler, who was the Assistant

Secretary for European Affairs, called Allan Lightner on the phone from the Secretary's office. It had been decided that there would be no Commandants' protest at this time because this was so important an infraction of Berlin's quadripartite status, that the Allies wanted to make an Ambassadorial level protest in Moscow.

This however did not happen until Wednesday. The way it looked to the Berliners was: Here is one of the worst situations that we have had since the blockade, and the Allies don't do anything! The Berliners did not know, of course, that the Moscow level protest was being negotiated at the moment among the Western allies -- its exact language, etc.

So Berlin morale plummeted terribly Monday, Tuesday and on into Wednesday. Wednesday Ed Murrow came to Berlin on what had been scheduled as a routine visit. He knew Brandt fairly well and Brandt told him that something needs to be done.

In the meantime, we had drafted our own recommendation that in view of the disintegrating morale of the Berliners, we should have a high level visit from Washington. We suggested either the President or the Secretary of State or somebody at that level. Murrow sent his message with similar recommendations.

Very soon after that we learned that Vice President Johnson would be sent to Berlin, and that the President had ordered U.S. forces in West Germany into a state of alert. In addition, a battle-group would be dispatched to reinforce the Berlin garrison. The arrival of the battle-group from West Germany was to coincide with the Vice Presidential visit, so that LBJ could receive the soldiers as they were driving along the Autobahn into Berlin.

I was the action officer for the Vice President's visit and, of course, it was a highly charged two days. A Saturday and Sunday, if I remember right.

The Vice President addressed a special session of the Berlin House of Representatives, reiterating the U.S. pledge to the freedom of West Berlin. The next morning he greeted the commanding Colonel and the soldiers of the battle-group as they rode into Berlin.

I monitored the progress of the battle-group through military channels from the moment they entered the Autobahn at Helmstedt until their arrival.

The Soviets made no direct attempt to hinder them, but they did have a very involved checking procedure set up at the western end of the Autobahn before the Americans were allowed to enter. Unfortunately, a new precedent was created. The Soviet soldiers counting the American soldiers on their trucks, came up with a different headcount every time. Either they honestly miscounted or they purposely miscounted, I don't know. But the count did not jibe with the documentation that Colonel Glover Johns, I believe was his name, had.

His mission was to get to Berlin, and fast, and he didn't know whether this was a delaying maneuver or a mini-blockade. When the Soviet checkpoint commander requested, or demanded, that the U.S. soldiers dismount for a headcount, Colonel Johns, after some argument, gave the orders to do just that. We had never dismounted for a headcount before. After this precedent,

when the Soviet count of our soldiers did not agree with a convoy's manifest, they would make the troops fall out, often in inclement weather. We had to protest against their playing games with the headcount procedure.

Other than that, the battle-group arrived in good shape. The West Berliners greeted the soldiers with a great deal of joy. Their arrival was generally interpreted as further manifestation of the American will to defend Berlin.

In purely military terms, obviously, one battle-group didn't make all that much difference. The total garrison of the Allied soldiers in Berlin was about 10,000, the largest contingent of which was American.

The British and French put their troops on a higher state of alert but they did not augment them. Even so, being surrounded by, I think, 20 or so Soviet divisions the Berlin garrison would not have had much of a chance in case of armed conflict. But this was a question of perceptions and perception of the power behind the trip-wire; and the trip-wire was the American forces. Some Berliners said American wives and babies were just as important. It was our total presence that counted. We always had some difficulty in getting the French to agree to things because they had to check with General De Gaulle, apparently personally. And, of course, it took some time to get to "Le Président" and for the French to get their instructions.

Subsequent to the Wall, the Ambassadorial group was set up in Washington. It may already have existed in a more or less informal way before. It became a quite formalized mechanism and all decisions affecting Berlin had to be explored and discussed in Washington by this Ambassadorial group. The three Western Allies and the Federal Republic of Germany were the members.

Our representative on that was Martin Hillenbrand; actually Foy Kohler, the Assistant Secretary, but Marty substituted for him most of the time.

Our relationships with the Embassy in Bonn were all involved, but the lines of command were clear. I always think that the amazing thing is that, in the end, it worked. Much better than you would think if you saw a diagram of the thing. It worked and it worked partly because the people had the same ultimate objective in mind. They may have differed as to tactics and so on.

In Berlin you had 3 allied pyramids of command, at the pinnacle of each of which was the Commanding General -- U.S. Forces, British Forces and French Forces in Berlin -- who at the same time was the Commandant of these respective sectors.

These Generals were not only the commanders but they also carried a second hat as deputies of their respective ambassadors. Our General had a letter from the Ambassador designating him as "Deputy Chief of Mission" in Berlin, the Ambassador being the Chief of Mission in Berlin as well as Bonn. Allan Lightner, the senior State Department representative, was the Deputy Commandant in every respect. On the political side he had the unhappy title of Assistant Chief of Mission, even though he was a Career Minister and the job called for the rank of Minister. (When Arch Calhoun took on that job, he didn't like that title at all, so he simply called his office

the Office of the Minister, which was much better.)

As you see the political and military lines of command were intertwined. We worked very closely with the General's office in Berlin. Under this 2-star General there was a 1-star General who commanded the Berlin Brigade. He was the troop commander. His job, of course, was to have the forces in readiness, take care of training, etc.

We reported through Bonn to Washington but in effect, simultaneously. So whatever reports we sent to the Embassy were also received in the State Department; we also informed Paris, London and Moscow.

Conversely, State sent instructions to both us and Bonn; when Bonn sent something out to Berlin it also went out to all posts concerned with Berlin matters, i.e. London, Paris and Moscow where Berlin working groups were set up. So it worked pretty well, the Ambassadorial group in Washington, which also had representatives from the Pentagon, the Berlin Working Groups in London, Paris and Bonn, all interacting with us in Berlin. Of course initially it took some trial and error, but after a while it became a well functioning mechanism.

Now, one of the major problems that arose then was the tank confrontation. When the Vice President came, he was accompanied by Chip Bohlen, General Clay, and General Howley, who was the first American Commandant. The Berliners were especially beholden to him because he really told the Soviets where to get off, in no uncertain terms, way back; and of course also to General Clay who was something of an icon. And Frank Cash, from the Berlin Task Force, and Karl Mautner also came.

I guess it was out of recommendations that resulted from that visit that President Kennedy decided to send General Clay as his personal representative to Berlin. In the sense that General Clay became kind of an American Super-Commandant; this created, as you can imagine, some difficulty, both in Berlin and Bonn.

It not only created difficulty protocol-wise, which obviously was secondary, but because General Clay, being a very prominent Republican and at one point rumored as Republican Presidential timber, had a very strong and forceful Berlin policy in mind, much more forceful than the President and Secretary of State Dean Rusk. Yet the President was caught, as it were, by the recommendations of his special representative in Berlin. General Clay had a very short fuse. I remember one evening hand-carrying a message from Washington to him (he stayed at our official guest house on Wannsee) thinking he would want me to draft a reply. But no, he decided to call the Command Center where there was a scrambler phone, and he told "Dean" in no uncertain terms what he had in mind.

Another problem was that Clay was not in the military chain of command. He could not directly order the troops around -- frustrating for a 4-star general. As winter set in, he felt that we were not showing our presence enough on the Autobahn, the vital land access road. So he wanted more small convoys to go back and forth. The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Army Europe, in Heidelberg grumbled that this would disrupt the integrity of his forces. Eyes flashing, Clay told me that was the best damned experience a young second lieutenant can have, being in charge of a

small troop movement. He eventually got his patrol convoys approved. His biggest concern -- the concern of all of us -- was to keep allied access to West Berlin open and to force the Soviets to accept responsibility for the actions of their East German puppets.

This was dramatized by the incident of Allan and Dorothy Lightner going to East Berlin -- they were on their way to the opera -- and being refused entry at the sector border. Again, I should emphasize that it was our policy to show the flag, to go to cultural and other events in East Berlin to make certain that not only the population but also that the authorities knew that we had these residual rights in East Berlin which we were intending to uphold.

Allan drove their own private Volkswagen; though not an official vehicle his low license number was clearly identifiable as that of the Deputy Commander. When they were denied entry General Clay ordered armed escorts to take them through the East Berlin checkpoint, and a few hundred yards into East Berlin, and then back again.

It was reported afterwards that on reading the report of the incident, President Kennedy said, "What the hell was Lightner doing going to the opera in East Berlin?" Which to me indicates that the President was not fully aware of what our policy with respect to showing our presence and circulating in all of Berlin, had been.

Subsequent to that General Clay ordered U.S. tanks to Checkpoint Charlie. The Soviets responded by bringing their tanks to the other side of the checkpoint. And so there were the two columns, 3 or 4 tanks on each side, facing each other across Checkpoint Charlie.

Well, the press played this up as World War III practically about to start in Berlin; that this tank confrontation would develop into a major confrontation. I went down to Checkpoint Charlie, and I am not the world's greatest hero by any means, but I felt quite secure standing there because I was so convinced that this was a carefully controlled situation on both sides.

But General Clay had achieved, which the press never recognized, Soviet accountability and responsibility for what was going on in East Berlin. One mustn't forget that the closing of the borders was undertaken by the East German government claiming that they were acting on their own authority, disclaiming any kind of Soviet involvement.

The fact that the Soviet tanks responded to our presence clearly indicated that the Soviets were in control. We knew it, of course, but now it was there for the world to see. However, as I said, it was played up as a confrontation that could ignite World War III. After several days of the confrontation, I forget how long it was exactly, by mutual agreement the two tank columns left. Ours rumbled back to Huettenweg and the Soviets returned to wherever they were stationed.

Which leads me to comment that public opinion regarding the Berlin situation was the prisoner of three basic misconceptions. I think that goes probably as far as the high reaches in the State Department and the White House, and I am including the President.

Misconception number one was: Berlin is a divided city and East Berlin is part of the Soviet sphere of influence and we cannot change that except at risk of war. In fact, the President had

said on July 25th, "We only guarantee the freedom of the West Berliners."

That, of course, was true but we still had these residual rights for the city as a whole. Therefore, we did have responsibilities, if not for the people of East Berlin, but for the city as an interfacing network of communications with a myriad type of communications.

It was not fully realized that before the Wall went up, East Berliners and, to some extent also, East Germans could come to West Berlin. As I mentioned before, important church and other meetings, political meetings, took place in West Berlin to which East Germans and East Berliners could go. The Berliners regarded this as the city's mission in the East-West struggle.

So, while Berlin was a divided city, it was not divided to the extent that the Soviet sector of Berlin was completely severed from West Berlin. It was still a living organism as a city, a meeting place of East and West. The emission on radio, television and so on from West Berlin meant an awful lot to the people of East Berlin. Therefore, they sought contacts, bought newspapers, went to the movies, that kind of thing. This human dimension was overlooked in the West, even in the Federal Republic.

The second misconception was: World War III would break out over Berlin. We at the Mission felt that Khrushchev was continually probing -- probing allied intentions, allied steadfastness, and that he would continue to probe until we told him that we would resist any further steps that what Brandt called, the "salami tactics" had to stop. But we also felt that the situation was tightly controlled by Moscow -- the appearance of Soviet tanks at Checkpoint Charlie proved this -- and that Khrushchev would not go to war over Berlin.

The third misconception was that if we didn't make too much of the Wall crisis, this would defuse the Berlin situation. People in high places, and that includes such highly respected experts as our ambassadors to Moscow, "Tommy" Thompson, and to Belgrade, George Kennan, held this view. The argument went something like this: daily hundreds of refugees were streaming West; the lifeblood of the Communist state in East Germany was being lost, especially young people, people in the productive ages. Khrushchev (at the behest of the East German government) had to apply a tourniquet to stop this hemorrhaging -- this was the Wall. Once the refugee flow was stanching, things would return to more or less normal.

We at the U.S. Mission, to the contrary, thought that the Soviet objective was still to solve the Berlin problem their way, and that if he got away with this one, he would try again, perhaps something bigger. In my view our position was justified because only a few months later we faced strong Soviet attempts to interfere with our air access and then we had the Cuban crisis. While we can never prove the "what ifs" of history, I believe that if we had shown the same kind of tough, immovable resistance to the situation in Berlin, that we were forced to show, simply by virtue of geography and for other reasons, in Cuba, we might never have had the much more serious confrontation over Cuba. That is my speculation.

What I thought should be done, and I think Allan Lightner agreed, was to make a grave statement at highest levels, that a situation seriously endangering world peace had arisen through the Soviet-East German actions; that we should so inform the United Nations Security Council,

and call a 4-power conference to deal with this unilateral violation of the quadripartite status of Berlin. My thought was that this conference should be held on alternating days in East and West Berlin. This would have demonstrated the symbolism of Berlin being one city.

The simile I used in a draft message that never saw the light of day because we were overtaken by Washington's decision not to react forcefully was that: if you are out on a boat with two people and one person is rocking the boat terribly hard, if the other person just tries to steady the boat, he is at a great disadvantage; but if he also starts rocking, then maybe the initial rocker will come to his senses and stop it -- before both of them drown.

I have a picture that General Clay gave me, with his inscription to me reading: "with admiration for his sound judgement and bold spirit." In thanking him, I said if I had sound judgement, I wouldn't have shown any bold spirit. He laughed.

Again, I don't want to say "we told you so," but the U.S. Mission, not just myself, but Lightner and others on the staff also, felt that the Wall incident wasn't by any means going to be the end of the Berlin crisis. In late January and through February, 1962, we had the "corridor crisis," a Soviet attempt to interfere with air access to Berlin. This was a totally new development, one that hadn't even happened during the blockade. This did not receive much play in the press, though it was potentially a far more serious thing than the tank confrontation.

By way of background I should say that air access to Berlin took place through three clearly defined corridors, from Frankfurt, Hannover and Hamburg to Berlin. Only the commercial carriers of the Western Allies (PanAm, British Airways and Air France) were authorized to fly into Berlin. The control mechanism for these flights was the Berlin Air Safety Center (BASC) which was a quadripartite organization -- another one of those remnants from the days of the Allied Control Council for Germany. The four air controllers sat at a huge desk. The Western controllers would pass the flight plans of their aircraft to the Soviet controller who would routinely initial it; this meant that the Soviets were keeping their military air traffic clear of that aircraft.

All of a sudden, the Soviets began to inform us through the BASC that certain altitudes at certain times would be reserved for Soviet military flights and that they would not guarantee the flight safety of aircraft in the corridors at such "reserved" times and altitudes. I should have also mentioned that the air corridors were not only delimited geographically, but also by altitude. They were really "air tubes" if you will; we did not fly under 3000 and above 10,000 feet.

(At one time we had tried to lift the height limitation on the Berlin corridors, which really stemmed from the days of prop airplanes. When jets came in, the normal operating altitude of a jet flying into Berlin would be much higher than 10,000 feet. When we tried to get this height limitation lifted we didn't get very far.)

We immediately realized that the "salami slicers" were at it again. If the Soviet reservation of times and altitudes would go unchallenged; if the Soviets expanded their "reservations" for hours or days, this could lead to a strangulation of air access. There were many daily flights in and out of Berlin. For political reasons, many Berliners preferred to fly, rather than to expose themselves

to East German controls on the ground. So this was an extremely sensitive issue.

Obviously, the commercial air line companies were kind of nervous about this thing. We felt that we had to challenge these reservations with military transport aircraft, while the commercial schedules were somehow arranged so that they would not directly fly in defiance of these "reservations." In this case I think it was a little difficult to get the British and French to go along with us, but we flew military transport aircraft (that is, unarmed aircraft, I am not talking about fighter planes) in "violation" of these Soviet "reservations." Pretty soon our two Allies joined us and we flew these challenge flights without Soviet approval -- and without incident.

Thereby hangs the story of my trip to Rome. The Attorney General, the President's younger brother, Robert Kennedy and his wife Ethel, were due to come to Berlin in the course of a trip around the world. General Clay sent me to Rome where the Kennedys had been received by the Pope, to brief the Attorney General on the air situation because he knew that Mrs. Ethel Kennedy's parents had died in an airplane crash. We felt that the Attorney General and his wife should know what was going on.

So I went to Rome to the famous Hassler Hotel, atop the Spanish steps, where the Attorney General was staying. The Kennedys were to fly in on the command aircraft of Gen. Landon, Chief of U.S. Air Forces, Europe. I told the Attorney General that if the Soviets made a corridor "reservation," we would nevertheless fly, unless he directed otherwise. He asked me what Gen. Clay recommended. I said "to fly; the chance of Soviet interference was minimal." The Attorney General said, of course, we will fly as General Clay recommends. We flew into Berlin without interference. The Soviets, I am sure knew whose aircraft it was and, I suspect, also who was on board.

Along with the party was Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and a number of people of the press corps. One of them came to me and said, "Are you the fellow who wrote this report from Berlin?" He had just read a confidential report of mine, an assessment of the Berlin situation prior to the Attorney General's visit -- the sort of thing every post sends out when a VIP is coming in. The fact that he was complimenting me on it didn't diminish my surprise that our telegram, along with other confidential papers, was lying around on one of the tables.

Mr. Kennedy then told me that he wanted to make a very short arrival statement on landing at Tempelhof airport and that he wanted to make it in German, but didn't speak any German. He, and principally Arthur Schlesinger, and somebody else on Kennedy's staff and I sat together and we drafted a 10-line statement.

It was then my task to turn this into phonetic German. If you know German and you have never done this before, it is a very difficult thing to put yourself into the mind of somebody who cannot pronounce, or cannot speak German at all, and put this into phonetic language.

I might say, that it was Bobby Kennedy who first said, "Ich bin ein Berliner." He asked me, "how do I say, "eech?" "No", I said, "it is "ich." I remember coaching him during a rather bumpy descent into Tempelhof.. When he arrived at Tempelhof, he read this short statement in this phonetic German. He said, "Ich bin ein Berliner." (JFK's famous speech wasn't until June 1963)

I might just add that eventually the Soviets ceased making these air corridor "reservations" and the crisis abated. It faded away as had the ultimatum, possibly because they were beginning to prepare for Cuba. Had they installed the missiles, can you imagine the leverage they would have had, worldwide, including Berlin?

ALBERT E. HEMSING
Information Officer, USIS
Berlin (1958-1964)

Albert E. Hemsing was born in 1921 in the Ruhr area near Wuppertal, Germany and emigrated to the United States at the age of two. He attended the City College of New York. He worked for the Office of War Information Film Division, and for the Marshall Plan Film Division. Mr. Hemsing's career with USIS included positions in the United Kingdom (England), India, and Germany. He was Director of Radio Free Europe, Director of the Amerika Haus, and Assistant Director for Europe. This interview was conducted by Robert Anderson in 1989.

HEMSING: I sweated June and July of 1958 out at the Sanz School on 14th Street, learning German four hours a day, one-on-one, with a wonderful teacher -- an older Austrian mountain-climber with a horrible accent. But he gave me what I needed: grammar, and drill in specialized vocabulary. He made up word lists on his own time for me -- political, journalistic and economic vocabulary, and social usage. I was not at all sorry that FSI, the Department's Foreign Service Institute, had been unable to accommodate me.

We arrived in Berlin in August. Berlin was indeed quiet and surprisingly green, the kind of big city of over 2 million in which Esther and I, as New Yorkers, felt reasonably at home from the very beginning.

We lived in a lovely part of town, Dahlen, and argued our too-young Josephine into a German school down the block. She continued in German schools until she was 13.

But soon came November, and the Khrushchev Ultimatum which, as you remember, gave the three Western Allies six months to get out of town, or else!

The effect was immediate, Berlin became the focus of world attention, in a way that the city had not been since the 1947-48 Airlift and the June 1953 East Berlin uprising. In no time at all the news organizations strengthened their bureaus and sent a stream of visiting newsmen.

What was in store for me became clear within a day or two. David Bruce, our Ambassador in Bonn, was scheduled to arrive in Berlin on a regular visit. He would be coming on his own Army train, the so-called Ambassador's Train -- a left-over of occupation days -- and would be accompanied by Mrs. Bruce. Because of the early hour of the train's arrival at the Army depot in Lichterfelde West, the Bruces never wanted to be met. But I forewarned his aide that this time

the press would be on hand.

And were they! Reporters and dozens of photographers and TV people. As the Ambassador started to step down from the train, his two dachshunds, held on a leash by Mrs. Bruce, managed to scramble around his legs, and he stumbled on to the platform. I quickly introduced myself and suggested a "re-take." So, that night, Berliners and TV viewers around the world saw a tall, dignified American calmly come to Berlin to assert America's resolve to stay in the city.

If this was "press handling", I was going to be OK; it was more like directing a film. And, in fact, the logistics, coordination and "people skill" required in motion picture work always stood me in good stead in Berlin. The Berlin drama, from the Ultimatum to the Wall, to President Kennedy's "Ich bin ein Berliner" visit, always played out on two very different levels -- as a media event of parades, VIP visits, tank confrontations and grandstand speeches on the one hand, and as an intricate chess-game of arcane political disputes and maneuvers, best analyzed in serious journals like the Neue Züricher Zeitung or the Foreign Affairs Quarterly.

My on-the-job training progressed rapidly under Charles Blackman, the PAO and chief of USIS Berlin. Chuck, an ex-newspaper reporter, was an experienced USIS hand, and a willing, if testy, teacher. I came to appreciate him immensely. He and his wife Martha were splendid mentors for Esther and me both.

Our boss, in turn, the U.S. Minister, was Bernard Gufler, an able, old-line career officer. His reputed heart of gold was kept pretty well hidden from junior officers like me. The Berlin Mission, as you probably know, was a "mixed economy", reflecting our occupation status. Chief of Mission was the Ambassador in Bonn, his deputy was the U.S. Army Commandant in Berlin, a two-star general, and the day-to-day head of the Mission was the Minister.

The Ultimatum period was one during which Berliners required a lot of reassurance. We Americans were highly prized and made to feel welcome in every way possible. Meanwhile, West German business enterprises put a hold on expanding their tax-supported operations in the city, and some quietly shifted the guts of their business to the Federal Republic. Governing Mayor Willy Brandt was at his best in those six months. He had a wonderful capacity for instilling confidence in his Berliners.

Eleanor Dulles made her contribution. As sister of our Secretary of State, she used her economic officer position on the Department's Berlin Desk to pay frequent visits and promote various schemes to bolster the viability of West Berlin. I thought the snickers she provoked among some officers on the Department side of the Mission were unwarranted. We stayed in friendly touch for many years.

Another source of reassurance to Berliners was the media play given to the many Congressmen and Senators who favored us with their visits. Between November 1958 and May 1959, when the Ultimatum expired, Chuck and I counted up something close to a quorum of both houses. All wanted their pictures taken by USIS for use back home -- standing tall and courageous in the face of the Communist threat -- with the Brandenburg Gate in the background.

A later crisis was reached when many refugees kept crossing the East-West Berlin borders. In 1961, it reached an apex of some kind. First of all, why the hemorrhage of refugees? Refugees had been coming across to West Berlin right along. But after the GDR put through its decree forcibly collectivizing agriculture, the nature of the refugee flow changed. Hundreds, and soon thousands, of farmers and their families came out, as well as the normal flow, which was more urban in nature. By May 1961 refugees were coming to the Marienfelde camp in West Berlin at the rate of 3000 a day.

It became clear to everyone that this could not go on.

The Western Allies speculated on what the so-called German Democratic Republic authorities might do. Our intelligence people picked up word that new identity cards were being printed for the citizens of East Germany, color-coded cards, which would readily identify what part of the country the holder came from. This, it was thought, would allow the GDR to throw a control cordon around East Berlin and keep non-residents out. You see, we thought they might seal off East Berlin from the rest of the GDR and thus get a handle on their refugee problem.

Of course, that is not what happened. Instead, as you know, on the night of Saturday to Sunday, August 13, 1961, the GDR sealed off East Berlin from West Berlin -- at first with barbed wire, then with a wall.

The timing could not have been better. President Kennedy was vacationing in Hyannis Port, as was Prime Minister Wilson in Northern England, and De Gaulle was at his country home in Colombey-les-deux-Eglises.

For that reason, and, I'm afraid, for other, profounder reasons, Western reaction to the building of the Wall was painfully slow and uncertain. All the Western Allies dragged their feet; we more than the rest. This made a profoundly negative impression on the people of West Berlin and on Willy Brandt, the Mayor. In fact, I am convinced it spurred his subsequent "Ostpolitik" initiatives.

For anyone really interested in the Wall, I recommend Curtis Cates' book The Ides of August, written about 10 years ago; it was very well researched. There is also Norman Gelb's The Berlin Wall, published in 1986, I think. Peter Wyden has also been in touch with me. He is doing a major book on the Wall for Simon and Schuster that is scheduled to come out late this year.

The Wall boggled the mind. Let me give you an example. That wonderful journalist Joseph Wechsberg came to Berlin that September to do a three-part article for the New Yorker. The first question he asked as he checked in was: How do I find out how many apartment units could have been built with the preformed concrete slabs that were used to build the Wall? I put him in touch with the head of West Berlin's Building Trades Union. They figured out that, had the slabs been used for what they were intended, they could have built 20,000 small apartment units. Instead they built a wall 26 miles long. How, in retrospect, could the manufacture, transport, and storage of that number of slabs have escaped the huge contingent of U.S. and Allied intelligence people, civilian and military, who scrambled all over Berlin at the time? This is but one of the many signs which, with hindsight, should not have been missed. The Wall was, of course, a

tremendous blow to the morale of West Berliners. Common sense told them that the all-powerful (they thought) Western Allies must surely have known what the East was up to. Axel Springer's newspaper Bildzeitung fanned that speculation. At every turn we were faced by the no-win proposition that we (especially the Americans) were either stupid or perfidious.

Let me try to recollect some of the highlights of the Berlin experience: the Ed Murrow visit; Al Lightner's armed-escort foray into East Berlin, when I sat with him in his Volkswagen; the tank confrontation with the Russians; and President Kennedy's visit. Oh, and the sojourn in Berlin of General and Mrs. Clay and Dr. and Mrs. James Bryant Conant.

Edward R. Murrow, the new director of USIA, came to Berlin on the night of August 12, 1961. The visit had been planned weeks ahead, which is something else that Berlin journalists refused to believe -- which is the same night the Wall went up. He arrived from Bonn at 10 PM, accompanied by Joe Phillips, USIA's European Area Director, and Jim Hoofnagle, the Country PAO. Chuck Blackman was on home leave in the USA. So, as acting PAO, I met them at Tempelhof Airport, together with Bob Lochner, the director of RIAS, the American-run German radio station in Berlin.

Bob and I took them to the Army's Wannsee Guest House and briefed them there, mostly on the headline-making refugee situation.

I left as soon as I could, after arranging that Lochner give Murrow and the others a tour of East and West Berlin next day.

Just before going to the airport I had two somewhat puzzling telephone calls -- one from Panitzer, who had just arrived in Berlin from Paris, where he was the European representative of Readers' Digest, and the other from a Reuters correspondent, also new to Berlin. Both had been in East Berlin and along the downtown East-West sector border around the Brandenburg Gate that evening. Both reported an unusual number of Volpos (East German police) and a sense of tension in the air. I checked with the Mission and Army duty officers and told the callers that there was nothing unusual, as far as we could tell.

Maybe it was only in retrospect that I came to ascribe a sixth sense to these reporters.

On coming home at about midnight, I had more calls of the same kind. I never did get to bed that night. I was not only the U.S. Mission press spokesman but, since the U.S. was in the Western Allied chair in the month of August, automatically also the Allied press spokesman.

By one A.M. Bob Lochner called me to say that RIAS had picked up an East Berlin radio announcement (which a few minutes later also ran on ADN, the East German wire service). The decree said that, with the backing of the Warsaw Pact states, the German Democratic Republic, to thwart the reactionary designs of West Germany and NATO, etc., was taking measures to protect its borders -- including the border between East and West Berlin. There it was!

Soon I had dozens of phone calls from various reporters telling me (rather than asking) that barbed wire was being strung along the downtown sector-to-sector border, and presumably else-

where; and about the angry reaction of the crowds there.

I used my second telephone, connected via the U.S. Mission switchboard, to try to get confirmation from the U.S. Army and U.S. Mission duty officers in the operations center -- to no avail. All that night I seemed to be feeding them information (from journalists) while they had little for me, or so they said.

At first, Allan Lightner, the U.S. Minister, could not be reached at home, and I had to threaten the Army duty officer that I would call Al Watson, the Berlin Commandant myself, before they finally roused the general from bed.

Late in the night, I received a call from Lothar Loewe in Washington. He represented West German radio and TV there. We had become good friends after an initial series of friendly tiffs when he was a brash young reporter for a Berlin tabloid. Loewe asked for a complete fill-in on the night's events.

Lothar has been dining out on that telephone call story ever since. He insists that it was he who filled in the State Department's Berlin Task Force officials on the details of what was happening in Berlin, and so generated a higher state of alarm. That, in turn finally led to President Kennedy being notified on his yacht, off Hyannis Port, at about noon, Sunday, local time, or 6 P.M. Berlin time. Let me put a spoken exclamation mark in there!

Ed Murrow. Bob Lochner had taken Mr. Murrow all over Berlin from early Sunday on. The old reporter in Murrow was aroused. He carefully interviewed a flock of Berliners, East and West, that day. I was also aroused by the time I joined Murrow at the Wannsee Guest House on Sunday evening.

That morning I had attended a misery-filled Western Commandants meeting with a bleary-eyed Willy Brandt, who had been campaigning in West Germany for Chancellor in the upcoming national election. He had spent most of the night trying to get back to Berlin.

The meeting consisted mostly of hand-wringing. Nobody could suggest any major initiatives, Brandt included, though he later maintained otherwise. In fact, he had very little to say. Of course a protest to the Soviet Commandant was agreed; that was routine for "incidents" along the sector-to-sector border.

But even a quick protest was not to be. We had worked out tripartite agreed language for the protest, with the British group along only reluctantly. I was just ready to issue it to the press, when a telephone call came to Al Lightner, in his office, over an open, non-secure line. The call was from Assistant Secretary of State Foy Kohler. I couldn't believe my ears (I happened to be alone with Lightner) when Al started to plead for issuing the protest as soon as possible. Instead he learned that Secretary Rusk vetoed the idea. Washington would make the protest.

Many hours later, 56 hours from the time the Wall went up, I recall, Washington issued a protest, notable for its mild language. West Berliners, already angry, greeted the protest with dismay and anger. The West Berliners, and the world, had awaited anxiously what the Allies would say and

do.

The Wall took the President and his closest advisors completely by surprise. Notwithstanding the fact that the Mission's and our own daily USIS summaries of the East and West Berlin press reported that a crisis was clearly on the way.

Those of us who were in Berlin at the time came to realize, in retrospect, that the President had never really understood the Berlin situation, and maybe Secretary Rusk had not either.

In the mind's eye of those around Kennedy, East Berlin "belonged" to the Soviets while West Berlin was "ours." From the time of the Khrushchev Ultimatum onward, the whole Western emphasis was on the Western Allies' right to be in West Berlin and to have access to it, and on their right of movement in all of Berlin.

That left moot the original Four Power-agreed right of free movement of Germans between both parts of the city. It was that right, and that reality in practice, that the Wall abrogated. And what was so bad about that? Our rights had not been touched. The GDR declaration had made sure that we understood that.

The reality of Berlin life, that thousands in East Berlin came to work in West Berlin every day, that West Berliners also worked in the East, and that tens of thousands crossed the sector-to-sector border every day to visit family and friends, that seemed not to have dawned upon Washington until the Wall went up. Briefed on these facts, the President is reported to have said "Why didn't somebody tell me!"

I would add some other factors. Germany and Germans were not exactly popular in the Kennedy White House -- their very mention seemed to produce glazed eyes. Many have confirmed this to me. Then there was Kennedy's unfortunate summit with Khrushchev in Vienna, in June 1961, so soon, too soon, after the President's Bay of Pigs fiasco. The young President apparently came away shaken. The threat of nuclear war was a reality, and Berlin was certainly not worth that. Some historians have concluded that Khrushchev only agreed to let Walter Ulbricht, the East German dictator, build his Wall after the Soviet Premier took Kennedy's measure in Vienna.

One of those who first told the President what a blow to West Berlin morale the Wall represented was Ed Murrow.

When I got to the Wannsee Guest House that Sunday night Murrow was smoking even more of the many Camels that finally were to kill him. We roundly applauded his decision to send a personal telegram to the President, giving an eyewitness account of his day in Berlin, and urging action to restore confidence at least to West Berliners.

Joe Phillips volunteered to get Murrow's thoughts down on paper, and pounded away on a typewriter. Lochner and I acted as a local resource, inserting required facts and figures.

Finally, Murrow took the draft and made the message his own in another hour of rumination; this time he was at the typewriter.

I looked over the message again on the way to the Mission's code room, on my way home. To this day I believe that Murrow's message helped tip the scale in getting the President to act. As you know, he sent Vice President Johnson to Berlin on the following weekend, accompanied by the hero of the Berlin Airlift, General Lucius Clay. And, of course, we also sent a U.S. Army battle group of 1500 men under Colonel Glover John up the Autobahn from Helmstedt.

Due to a series of snafus, the troops arrived unshaven, tired and slightly dirty, not show troops, but real fighting men. Their march through West Berlin was sheer theater. It got a tremendous response.

Now to Johnson's visit. The previous day, at the City Hall, the crowd had fired up the Vice President. He had departed from his prepared text and pledged "our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor" to defend West Berlin and its future. I was not the only skeptic among our Mission staff.

Another vignette I shall never forget was a press back-grounder for the White House press at Ambassador Dowling's Berlin residence. "Chip" Bohlen was in the Vice President's party and he soon dominated the dialogue, pushing his schemes for detente with Moscow. Never was there an occasion more insensitively out-of-sync with the local reality. I became very unhappy. Johnson just got bored and wandered off, followed by George Reedy. Reedy and I found the Vice President on the street, pressing the flesh, which made a good deal more sense than what was going on inside.

Because it was so impromptu, the Johnson visit was relatively painless, and certainly much welcomed by all of us at the Mission. He left the usual spate of Johnson stories behind. I will just mention one. He admired the china at Brandt's official City Hall dinner, and nothing would do but that the historic KPM porcelain factory be opened for his inspection that Sunday.

I stood behind Johnson as he asked the KPM director, "How much is that set, service for six?" "We would be honored to make you a gift, Sir," was the reply. "Fine," said Johnson, "make it service for twenty-four."

Then came Attorney General Bobby Kennedy's visit. That visit, in February 1962, I found very trying. It was my first experience of the ruthless, athletic Kennedy gang in action, and of the, to me, dismaying projection of American imperial power abroad; that and the manipulation of the media.

His advance men, to give you but one example, had spotted a high school on the route the motorcade would take from the airport. So it was arranged that a soccer match be going on there on the day of his arrival. And, sure enough, the Attorney General stopped the motorcade and joined in the game, along with his young son, while Ethel beamed. By the time I had occasion to accompany President Nixon on his five-city tour of Europe, much later, that gimmick had been given an official designation: "The unannounced human interest event of the day!" These serve the White House TV correspondents and their networks with manufactured-to-order coverage.

The Attorney General's behavior toward the U.S. Minister in Berlin was condescending. So was it toward the faculty of the Free University.

A condition for his coming to Berlin was that the University confer an honorary degree on him. The faculty, at first, asked for copies of his published works in the law; honorary degrees in Germany are taken seriously. Our Cultural Officer had to do a lot of arm-twisting until the faculty got the message: this was an order!

At the Auditorium Maximum, where the degree was conferred, Bobby Kennedy began with "Today is the birthday of two distinguished Americans, George Washington and my brother Teddy."

With which Teddy got up out of his front seat, turned to the audience and to the robed academics in their splendid colors, clasped his hands over his head, prize-fighter style, and beamed. All that day American reporters dogged him, "Now that you are thirty, will you run for the Senate?"

Of General and Mrs. Clay -- I can only say that two finer and more decent Americans I never met. I served as Clay's press officer as well. Clay's very presence (for about 10 months), as the President's personal representative in Berlin, reassured the people enormously. He was a thorn, however, to the Army chain of command and to the Department.

Clay's not-so-secret agenda was to make it clear that the Soviets continued to have responsibility for all of Berlin, and that it was they, and not the East German regime, who were responsible for the Wall.

That opportunity came the evening of October 22, when the U.S. Minister and Mrs. Lightner were held up by Volpos at Check-point Charlie, on their way to an East Berlin theater performance. They were in their own car, a Volkswagen, with U.S. Army plates.

In accordance with practice, Lightner refused to show the Volpo his diplomatic passport because the U.S. Army plate was supposed to assure all of us free movement in Berlin. He was not allowed to enter. I got an immediate call from the Checkpoint, raced there -- the first Mission officer on the spot, as it turned out. Meanwhile, Clay had gotten General Watson, the Commandant, and Lightner to agree to a test. If necessary, Lightner would enter East Berlin with an armed U.S. Army escort, foot soldiers with drawn bayonets.

At the scene, Al and I convinced Mrs. Lightner to get out of the Volkswagen. That courageous lady kept arguing not to change the original configuration. I got in instead. We went into East Berlin twice, each time with the escort.

The exercise did not please Washington at all, especially not when it evolved into the tank confrontation, a few days later, at Checkpoint Charlie.

We called up some of our tanks to the Checkpoint when free entry was again refused. From the East, nose to nose, came their tanks, bearing East German insignia. But, lo and behold, the tank drivers spoke Russian, as the press dully noted. So General Clay proved his point -- it was the

Russians who were responsible, and responsible for the Wall. It was the last initiative Washington allowed him to take. My most vivid memory of that day is of an old East German in shirt-sleeves who used the very moment of the tank confrontation to come running across at breakneck speed, shouting, "Ich bin frei, Ich bin frei!"

Dr. and Mrs. Conant made their home in Berlin for nearly a year as the Ford Foundation's contribution to bolstering the viability of cut-off West Berlin. He served as adviser to the Free University and worked with educators from all over Europe, attracting them to the city. Like the Clays, they made one feel proud to be American.

Let me tell what happened to Chuck Blackman. It is not an edifying story.

When Ed Murrow came to Berlin he became so involved with the Wall that he probably forgot I was only the acting PAO. Furthermore I was not unfamiliar to him. About a year before the Wall, when Ed was on a year's sabbatical from CBS, I found him strolling along the Kursdamm one Saturday afternoon. I introduced myself, and invited him home for dinner later that evening. Well, until two in the morning, Esther and I had a great time. We talked about CBS and USIA and Berlin, and all kinds of things, including his homesickness for his wife and son Casey, evoked by the voice of our young daughter, calling down from her bedroom for a glass of water.

On the occasion of the visit as USIA Director in August, 1961, Murrow postponed his departure from Berlin until Wednesday, August 16. As a result, Chuck Blackman arrived at USIS, bearing a copy of the Arizona Desert Gazette, with the Wall headline. Good soldier that he was, Chuck had abandoned his family on a cross-country trip, and flew back to Berlin as quickly as he could.

As was his style, Chuck entered the office with some quip about why I hadn't kept things quiet during his leave. No one who knew Chuck could have taken offense. But Murrow clearly did. That was to have consequences.

Some few months later Chuck's tour was cut short. He was ordered back to Washington and I was put in charge, for six months, at first, on an acting basis. So, even Ed Murrow could be guilty of the kind of unfair snap judgments we have all experienced in the Foreign Service.

Thus when President Kennedy came to Berlin in June 1963 I was the PAO.

That day was certainly a high point for beleaguered Berlin, and a complete success for the planning that went into the visit by the Mission and USIS. We were given seven hours and 15 minutes, and the day's schedule was fine-tuned like a Swiss watch. No small thanks for that goes to the Berlin Command and the late Lt. Colonel Louis Breault. I leaned heavily on his know-how and on the resources he commanded as Information Officer.

But, for me, the day started with a near fist-fight with Pierre Salinger. Salinger had come to Berlin for some hours while the Presidential party was in Bonn. That resulted in our having to raise the height of the TV platform in front of the City Hall, with workmen hammering away all night. Pierre was right about that.

He was dead wrong about the path the small White House pool press bus should take with him and me on it, as we left the welcoming ceremonies at the Tegel Airport in the French Sector.

To have the pool bus at the plane-side on arrival, and yet to insert it up front in the motorcade, the bus, as rehearsed, would briefly move on its own, and then insert itself into the motorcade at the exit to the airport. The reason is now obscure to me, I think it had to do with security.

As the Presidents' car started to move, and our bus took the deviation, Pierre grabbed the driver and shouted, "Get into line, get into line, stay with the President," while I grabbed the driver and told him to stick to his orders. Which, he did, and all went well. It was the only glitch all that day. But Salinger had been ready to sock me.

Later in the day all was sweetness and light.

On arrival at the City Hall, the President was to get out at the front entrance and go inside for the brief ceremony of signing the City's "Golden Book" for VIP visitors. Meanwhile, I had organized USIS and army staffers to lead various groups of the privileged press to their stations, using color-coded standards, held high.

Our White House pool bus used a rear entrance to get into the City Hall. But I had not counted on the huge spread of delicatessen meats and beer the city had laid on in the basement press room. Pierre fell on the food and pointed out to me that there were plenty of TV monitors. We could watch the President's speech from there.

I insisted on tearing him away to an upper balcony, above the President, where our only other companions would be German and American security people.

All during the President's address before that electrified audience of over 100,000 cheering Berliners, Pierre kept saying, "Gee, I am glad we came." To this day I have visions of Pierre sitting out "Ich bin ein Berliner" in the basement, with a ham sandwich in his mouth. Somewhere I have a very warm thank-you letter from him.

That visit surely must be counted as perhaps the visit with the most impact of any foreign visit any American President has ever made, because of the context of the East-West relationship, because of the big crowd there.

On that very same spot, of course, I also witnessed what will always give me a chilling memory: the spontaneous public memorial to the President, the day after he was murdered.

It was a twilight ceremony in the same Rathaus Square where the President had spoken only so recently. Mayor Brandt gave a very moving speech. The Berlin police and our Army trumpeters played "Taps" across the vast space, from one rooftop to the other.

But what I remember most was the complete silence in which the 100,000 people broke up at the end. They moved down the side streets without a push or a shove, and did not utter an audible word. It was uncanny, and Esther and I were deeply touched as we moved with the crowd.

ROBERT GERALD LIVINGSTON

**Economic-Labor Officer
Hamburg (1958-1960)**

**East German Affairs
Berlin (1964-1968)**

**Political Officer
Bonn (1968-1970)**

**Council on Foreign Relations: East Germany Study Group
New York (1970-1971)**

Robert Gerald Livingston was born and raised in New York City. Prior to attending Harvard University and the University of Zurich, he served in the US Army during World War II. He entered the Foreign Service in 1956 and held a number of posts including Germany, Austria and Yugoslavia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: You were in Hamburg from '58 to...

LIVINGSTON: '58 to '60 or '61, I can't remember which it was

Q: Hamburg is in Hanover. No, Hamburg is a city-state.

LIVINGSTON: It's a state itself, yes, a city-state.

Q: Was this a CDU state?

LIVINGSTON: No, it was definitely an SPD state. There was, I think, maybe even during the time I was there, a brief period when they had a CDU governing mayor, head of the government, but he only lasted for a short time. But otherwise I think they've had SPD guys right down to the present day.

Q: Who was the consul general in those days?

LIVINGSTON: I'm sorry you asked that because I can't remember who it was. I do remember where he came from, though. He'd been head of the Consular Section at the State Department. My wife will remember who he was. I can't remember his name. I can see him in front of me, but he was definitely a consular official, and I think this was kind of his farewell post. It was interesting, going back just briefly to Salzburg. The Consul General there was a man named Rieger, who was a protégé, had been in the security part of the State Department.

Q: John Rieger.

LIVINGSTON: John Rieger, and he was a protégé of whoever the guy was that was head of security...

Q: Scott McCloud.

LIVINGSTON: Scott McCloud. He was a Scott McCloud protégé and he'd been given this job as kind of a reward because the State Department and McCloud, you know, a lot of bad blood... Anyway, he had gotten this plush post as consul or consul general in Salzburg. He was very nice to me, you know. I think, in retrospect, although I was probably too naïve at the time. This was a farewell posting for the consul general in Hamburg and as I say, I can see him in front of me. My wife will remember his name. I can't remember his name.

Q: Did you find that, as the economic officer... I would imagine being in an SPD place, you were really talking...

LIVINGSTON: Yes, I got to see a lot of people, you know and by that time my German was reasonably good and so I started giving talks and I remember the first talk I gave. The CDU had a left wing which comes out of the Catholic trade union movement. They were very weak in Hamburg because there aren't that many Catholics in Hamburg, but they asked me to speak for them. I remember I was kind of embarrassed that they placarded it all over Hamburg, you know, and I gave a talk for them, something about America or whatever. Then, I started getting invitations from the SPD, you know, and I gave talks for them.

Q: But you're saying you found the SPD really was a different type of socialist party than, say, maybe the labor movement?

LIVINGSTON: Well, I dealt with the right wing, obviously, with the SPD though I didn't quite recognize it at the time. As I say, the right wing, right down to the present day, is that way. I went to a conference three weeks ago in Berlin, where I gave a talk on the SPD with a funny title of "*What Should We Be Doing For Our Relations With America.*" I really thought that was kind of a subservient, funny title. But right down to the present day they want to show to the German electorate that they are not anti-American. They can't be "tarred with that brush" although the CDU has always tried to "tar them with a brush." To some degree they had that on their left wing guys like Bahr with lots of connections to the East. But the right wing of the SPD cozied up to the Americans and cozied up to the Agency, particularly.

Q: Were you sort of aware of our labor unions passing out money and things like that?

LIVINGSTON: I didn't know that. Again, I didn't know that at the time. Again, I may have been too naïve, but in retrospect, sure. We occasionally got visits from various labor union people, not very many, but some and - good old' Foreign Service where you had to entertain all the time - I had to entertain these guys and invite the local trade union people in. I did that and obviously they maintained connections with these guys. In retrospect, the answer is yes, sure. But I didn't know it at the time.

Q: Were there any, in this sort of '58-60 period in Germany...I can't think of any outstanding events...

LIVINGSTON: Well, that was the beginning of the Berlin Crisis. I was trying to think of who the ambassador was. I think he was the great man who was ambassador in Britain, France.

Q: Oh, yes, Bruce.

LIVINGSTON: Bruce, right. I think Bruce was ambassador because I remember him coming into Hamburg. And it may have been Dowling, too, I'm not sure. But anyway Bruce was ambassador part of the time. It's funny now in retrospect, the Berlin Crisis, which Khrushchev unleashed in '58. Somehow or other, I can't even remember it from my service there and maybe, again, I was too narrow-gauged and wasn't paying attention.

Q: The real Berlin Crisis came, I guess around '61 because Kennedy came in.

LIVINGSTON: It'd started already in '58 because that's when Khrushchev gave his ultimatum and then he sort of backed off the ultimatum. So it was sort of "hanging fire" for quite some time. In '58, Dulles was still in before he died and I guess Herter became Secretary of State in what, '59? Dulles developed the "Agent Theory," remember? We could treat the GDR people on the access routes to Berlin as agents of the Soviet Union. Some lawyers' ploy. I remember the Germans were appalled at that, you know, the idea that the Americans would deal with the East Germans. I must say, in retrospect, there may have been a Berlin Crisis, but I didn't really feel it at all, doing my labor reporting and all.

Q: Did you feel the hand of the Department of Labor and was it Jay Silverstone?

LIVINGSTON: No, not that I can recall. There was a guy named Meyer Bernstein. What union did he come out of? He basically interested himself in the international affairs. Maybe it was the International Department of the AFL-CIO. I'm not sure. He came over a couple of times. He lived in the Watergate, as a matter of fact, in his later years. I remember visiting him. He was a bachelor, an odd-duck, one of these Jewish, intellectual unionists who knew the German union movement quite well. Again, in retrospect, one realizes how naïve one was and how little one knew and how unsophisticated one really was. While I was there, they replaced the Labor Attaché in Bonn with a Foreign Service officer and he did some reports about the union movement which were more, quote "objective," and I remember the AFL-CIO descended on him like a ton of bricks. I can't remember the details but whether it was the fact of dealing with the East, I remember saying, "Ah, ha." The AFL-CIO really put a spoke in this guy's wagon. It must have been '60 or so.

Q: Well, how did we feel in Hamburg? Was there much concern about the quote "Soviet Threat?"

LIVINGSTON: Yes, there was. One of the typical things which we still believe, was if there was an attack from the East, one of the first cities they'd take was Hamburg and there was a question of blowing up the bridges over the Elbe and things like that, so we operated under that as late as

the late '50s, under the idea of a possible Soviet attack. I believed that and, in retrospect, that lent the frisson to serving there. We were really on the front lines.

Q: Today is the third of March 1998. Gerry, you're off to Berlin. You were in Berlin from '64 to when?

LIVINGSTON: '64 to '68.

Q: What were you doing in Berlin?

LIVINGSTON: I was first Deputy Head and then I was head of the Eastern Affairs Division which was basically the division that dealt with East German Affairs. We called it Eastern Affairs. It was not called the GDR section, because we had no diplomatic relations with the GDR.

Q: In '64, could you describe what was the situation with Germany when you arrived.

LIVINGSTON: There was still, three years later, the echoes of the crisis of '58 to '61 that ended more or less with the building of the Wall. You still had the feeling that everything you did was monitored on an hourly basis by Washington and that this was still potentially the flash point of East-West confrontation. Soon after I got there in June of 1964, the Soviet Union signed a treaty with the GDR which, more or less, in our interpretation (those of us in the Eastern Affairs Division headed by Frank Meehan, who was an old Soviet hand), put an end to the uncertainties, which made it clear that the Soviet Union was signing on to the status quo and was not going to try to change it. You got the feeling, you know, that the Soviets, prompted by the East Germans, otherwise might try to make a grab for East Berlin.

Q: When you say the status quo, what had been the concern?

LIVINGSTON: The concern had been, as the Kennedy tapes during the Cuban Missile Crisis show now, how, at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis which was the Fall of '62, the feeling had very much been that Berlin and Cuba were tied together, that Khrushchev was using the Cuban Missile Crisis to force us out of Berlin or, if we reacted in a hard line, this is what the tapes show, with some sort of a strike against Cuba that Khrushchev might respond with an attack on West Berlin. Of course, we were very clear that this was militarily not to be held, that it was very vulnerable. There was still a feeling that was very much - though it diminished as time went along - of the beleaguered city, the outpost of freedom and all that business. It could all be traced back to the Berlin Blockade.

Q: In Berlin itself, when you arrived in '64, what was the spirit? Was it a mission?

LIVINGSTON: It was called a mission, a U.S. mission. Basically, it was a military mission. In theory and, I think, in international law, the city was still under occupation status. We rather emphasized that because we also emphasized, against the facts on the ground, that this was a

four-power city and that, even though there was a wall, we had access - we being the American occupying authority - to East Berlin on the basis of so-called four-power rights, and we did not have to deal with the East Germans. One of the sort of hang-ups, big hang-ups, was, "Do not have any dealings with the East Germans." That would tend to undermine this four-power, I wouldn't say fiction, but certainly only a de facto status. And I remember riding over to East Berlin with the then ambassador, who was the chief of mission in Berlin when he came to Berlin since he was the heir to the position of the military governor of Germany and the heir to the position of the high commissioner of Germany. We were riding over to East Berlin with George McGhee and his wife and daughter in their limousine and the East German guard came up to us and McGhee pulled out his passport, and I said, "Put that damn passport back."

Q: Well, were you able to sample the feeling of the Germans in West Berlin at the time?

LIVINGSTON: Well, that wasn't part of my duties. I mean, we obviously had acquaintances. I think, generally, one did have the feeling that, even then, I mean this is all hindsight, that the city was drained and that the people that remained were second-raters. Brandt, by that time, had left. He had already been candidate for chancellor once. German industry had left, of course, right after the war. The city existed on subsidies from Bonn. There was a great deal of artificiality about the situation. The people who were there, even lots of my friends, and who wanted to get ahead in their careers left Berlin and went down to the Federal Republic and made their careers there. Even though they may have been Berlin patriots and swore they would come back and even though the Parliament went through this routine of holding committee meetings in Berlin from time to time still you had a feeling that it was a lot of bravado and a lot of Chamber of Commerce hype but beneath it the city was not in too good shape.

Q: How about our mission? Was there concern among you and others who were dealing with this at the political level about the ultimate survival of Berlin, of West Berlin?

LIVINGSTON: Well, I don't know. I guess my perspective was too narrow then and I wasn't concerned with West Berlin. One of the interesting things with a large mission was that you had a lot of interaction with the military. This was very much in the tradition, which even dates back to the Second World War, of political-military affairs and a big effort to maintain cordial relations with the military. You had the feeling that the U.S. Army sent some of their very good people. There was a commandant of Berlin, who was an Army major general. By the time I got there, they were no longer destined for four star rank, so it was clear the Army wasn't sending their very best people. I still think there was a feeling that the Russians might try to grab this one day. An interesting aspect of it was that you were involved in a lot of details of city administration, you know, and concerned with public safety and working with the Berlin police and things like that. I wasn't but my colleagues were.

Q: Let's talk about how you dealt with your area of competence which was both East Berlin and East Germany.

LIVINGSTON: In theory, yes, but in point of fact, it was for us still the heyday of Kremlinology, which by that time was much less used in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe where you could get around, because of our attitude that, "We don't have any dealings with these guys,

these East Germans.” There was very little official contact with the East Germans. So it was Kremlinology in the sense that we spent a lot of time reading the East German newspapers. The only operative work we did, basically, was in relation to Americans who had been arrested in the GDR and there we dealt through German lawyers to get them out. Frank Meehan started that. He was involved already in the Abel -Powers exchange which I think was ’62.

Q: This was Colonel...

LIVINGSTON: Abel, the Soviet spy and Gary Powers, the man they shot down...

Q: The U-2 incident.

LIVINGSTON: ...and they were exchanged on the Glienicke Brücke, the bridge that ran from West Berlin to Potsdam. That was one of the first of several exchanges. Frank was one of the first people involved in that. We got involved then with an East German lawyer who had been cleared by the East German government and was working with the East German government to handle these exchanges and handle prisoner exchanges. When a young American would get thrown in jail, his family would hire a lawyer over here, and they would come over and he’d deal with the East Germans. So we were kind of facilitators when we dealt with one West Berlin and one East Berlin lawyer. Subsequently, one of them became quite famous actually. This East German had a monopoly on prisoner exchanges.

Q: Well, I would have thought it would have been a difficult job and sort of frustrating to be,, at least the Kremlinologists in the Soviet Union could talk to officials one way or another there and here you are looking... it’s almost like being inside North Korea, and not being able to talk to anyone.

LIVINGSTON: It was rather hard but Berlin is a very pleasant city so you had plenty of diversions. That did change, and I guess I was the person that sort of fell into it. I don’t know how it happened. I started by 1966 or 1967, meeting fairly regularly with a man who made it clear that he was sort of the confidant of the Minister-President of East Germany, Willi Stoph. We met periodically every two weeks, every 10 days or whatever for a chat about politics and economics and this and that in the *Opera Cafe Unter den Linden* in East Berlin. I’d write a report and he’d get back and he’d write a report. It’s sort of curious. I just received a letter three days ago from the archives of the East German secret police files that I have a file of 160 pages and that I can now come over and look at it, so I’m sort of curious what this guy wrote about me (laughter).

Q: It does sort of sound “spy vs. spy.”

LIVINGSTON: Well, the Agency, the CIA, was very big in Berlin. They had operations going over there, at least they liked you to think they had operations going. We did go a lot to the theater in East Berlin and try to follow the intellectual world. We could meet and did meet with intellectuals and writers to the degree they it wasn’t dangerous for them. I guess, in retrospect, I wish I’d done much more of that. I did have a very good friend who was a leading actor at the Brecht Company, you know, and we used to see him and his wife quite regularly. Jeanne, my

wife, and I used to go over. He was this kind of a “golden boy.” We used to go touring on the lakes. We occasionally got out of East Berlin on those lakes that are on the borderline, you know, and in retrospect, I suppose we could have done a lot more. We were conscious we were being watched. This was partly my experience from Yugoslavia. You didn’t want to endanger somebody by being too pushy. So I sort of took the attitude that they would let us know if it was any danger for them. A couple of times that did happen, and we didn’t see the people again. I really felt, maybe exaggeratedly, I didn’t want to endanger anybody by having contact with a person who might get in trouble with the authorities.

Q: Were you getting the feeling that the people in East Berlin were pretty well informed about what was happening in West Berlin?

LIVINGSTON: Oh, yes, sure, because there was radio and television throughout the entire existence of the GDR. Television became fairly widespread in the late 1950s. The East Germans were incredibly well informed about what was going on in West Germany and in the West because they saw West German television and they heard West German radio. We had this radio in the American sector, RIAS, which was, I guess, an American-owned radio station and rather important at the time of the 1953 uprising. By broadcasting factual bulletins about what was going, RIAS let the people in Magdeburg know that there were people on the streets in Berlin and people in Leipzig know people were on the streets in Magdeburg and so on.

Q: Did you ever have to be concerned about being set up?

LIVINGSTON: Well, I was a little nervous about that but one’s attitude was, “If you’re going to get in trouble, don’t talk to an East German, demand a Russian.” There were a number of people before me who, if not cowboy-like, were at least daring fellows. One had a girlfriend in Warsaw, who in effect did what he wanted to do. He’d drive down to Warsaw from Berlin through the GDR.

Q: Were you allowed to do that?

LIVINGSTON: No, theoretically not, and I guess he was showing his passport to the East Germans. We went back and forth to Berlin. If you didn’t go by air from West Germany, which the East Germans didn’t control, you went by Army train. There was this great Army train every night. It was still the Cold War, a little bit this James Bond type of stuff and, as I say, the Agency was very present in Berlin. Berlin was, during the Cold War along with Vienna, *THE* spy capital. They had all kinds of operations against each other, the western and eastern spy organizations.

Q: Were you getting anything useful from the Agency?

LIVINGSTON: Well, I must say, I always had the feeling, having been in that type of work earlier, that you didn’t see everything, not by a long shot. I must say that what I was permitted to see was not very enlightening, as a general rule, but they certainly had a lot of operations. That may have been bureaucratic. We talked to a lot of West Germans who were working on the GDR, and the SPD had had a big net in East Germany right down to the wall and even after the Wall. I already then had the feeling, which I subsequently found out was so, there was a hell of a

lot more going on between the two Germanies than we knew about or that the West Germans were telling us about. We did have regular meetings with the West Germans who ran the so-called inter-zonal trade operation. How much they confided in us I don't know, but it was a regular meeting to impart information. It was once a month or so about how trade between the two Germanies which still had the sort of quaint occupation status name of "inter-zonal trade."

Q: Were you watching the economic side of East Germany?

LIVINGSTON: Yes, we had one guy. This was the heyday, as you know. The large, overstaffed mission in Eastern affairs. Working on the GDR, we had four maybe five people. We had Frank Meehan. We had William Woessner. We had Richard Smyser and we had one or two other people from time to time so we had four or five people all the time working on East Germany. *Q: And, at the same time, you really weren't able to talk to anybody.*

LIVINGSTON: Well, I mean we did talk to some people. We talked to West Germans who were working on the GDR, the newspapers, men who had contacts with some East Germans. Generally, I tended to stick with intellectuals, because we thought they had a little bit of *carte blanche* to talk to foreigners. There were then some opera singers who had permission to sing in the West. The great German theater, the Brecht Company, was still stronger than subsequently. Even then it was becoming somewhat routine but it was still quite creative. Then there was the jewel in the East German crown, which was the comic opera "Felsenstein." We went to a lot of performances there. Basically, we thought this was a West German problem. We didn't want to get ahead of the West Germans. We didn't recognize East Germany until well after the West Germans and after the British and the French. We always were in the wake of the Federal Republic, believing, "This is important to the West Germans. It's not important to us, particularly." There was some minor American interest but even there not a helluva lot.

Q: I think one of the scenarios that I used to hear around this time and really for the next 30 years or so, was that something might happen in East Germany whether it be riots or something, the West Germans might get involved and then all of a sudden we'd have World War III.

LIVINGSTON: Well, yes, looking back on it maybe it was stupidity, but I never thought that that was very much of a real possibility. I think that was colored a good deal by the 1953 uprising and then, of course, there was the '56 revolutions in Hungary and Poland. But by my time, I don't think we ever operated on the premise that there was going to be an East German uprising.

Q: Were you able, or was it your responsibility for looking at East Germany as country dealing with other countries because East Germany had a rather aggressive stance?

LIVINGSTON: Oh, yes, sure. We followed that through the paper. I should say one other quote "source," though, I would really put with some question marks, was a military one. There was a military mission in Potsdam which was a vestige of the four-power occupation of Germany. There was British one, a French one, and an American one in the GDR. And there was a Soviet one in each of the former Western zones, a Soviet one in Baden-Baden, a Soviet one in Moenchengladbach, I think, and a Soviet one in, maybe, Heidelberg in the former American

zone. They were kind of authorized spies. They traveled around in uniform. It was kind of a cops and robbers game. They'd try to observe some Soviet military units wherever they could. Sometimes they'd get caught and get into trouble. It was headed by a colonel, usually a Russian-speaking colonel, and five or six fellows from military intelligence. They went all over East Germany. There were forbidden areas, but they went all over in their jeeps. We used to meet with them fairly often and talk about East Germany. Then, of course, there were analysts at RIAS, the radio station in the American sector, because, of course, their job was to broadcast to East Germany. Also, they had some sources, and we'd talk to them. So, we didn't have much if any contact with official East Germans, and not too much with East German non-officials. We never got out of East Berlin, which was another big drawback. We did have indirectly other sources than the newspapers, and we did follow the diplomatic activities there.

Q: I was going to say the diplomatic activities, the East Germans had made quite a name for themselves. I'm not sure if it was this time or a little later about setting up some secret police activities to support some rather nasty people.

LIVINGSTON: Oh, yes. Germans are good policemen right down to the present day and their main objective right down to the very end was to gain international recognition outside the Warsaw Pact. The West German response was the so-called Hallstein Doctrine which said that they would break relations with any country that recognized East Germany. Then, they started making exceptions when they started founding trade missions in East Europe.

Q: Right.

LIVINGSTON: They started making more exceptions. And they finally - I can't remember when it was - the East Germans achieved some breakthroughs in Egypt and elsewhere and they gradually expanded their diplomatic presence. They were quite active in the Third World. Most of West German aid to the Third World, it was then called the Third World, had one aim in mind and that was to prevent other countries from recognizing the GDR. India used that very effectively against West Germany and got a lot more aid than they probably otherwise would have gotten. East German aid was technical aid, since they didn't have any money. Among the technical aid they provided was aid to the police in South Yemen, and in a number of other countries, I'm not sure which ones they were, but East Germans were there all right. And they gave, as time went along, training to Palestinians.

Q: What was the general feeling about the East German economy at that time?

LIVINGSTON: Again, I think we exaggerated but we thought that they were much stronger than they evidently were, you know. That was partly, I think, because we compared them to the Soviet Union. Most of the people who worked on the GDR came out of a Soviet specialty in the Foreign Service. Meehan was a good example. I think they tended sub-consciously to compare East Germany to the Soviet Union and the other countries of Eastern Europe. By that comparison, the East Germans were considerably ahead, you know, and I think that distorted our views right down to the end. It distorted the views of the West Germans, too. In retrospect, the West Germans were not good analysts of East Germany, they were poor analysts of East Germany.

Q: Was there concern about East German espionage within elements of the West German government while you were there?

LIVINGSTON: Yes, I think one did have the feeling that it was fairly easy to penetrate. I know the Agency felt that way. You'd talk to Agency people about the West German government, particularly the Social Democrats. There was in 1963, maybe, something like that, one well known case of an SPD Bundestag deputy who was an agent for the Czechs and there have been several since. There's a guy that they just sentenced recently on the basis of materials uncovered subsequently in the GDR. I think there was a tendency to not fully trust them, the Social Democrats. There was also concern, I think, that the East Germans had penetrations of the U.S. Mission among the local employees. There were a lot of Agency-sponsored organizations, Committee for Free-Jurists or something like that, which, during the '50s and on into the '60s up until the Wall, put a spoke in their wheel, but even beyond, which had been actively working in East Germany, though not carrying on sabotage, gathering information and helping people to escape and that sort of stuff. So, such groups were a prime target for intelligence. A lot of that continued afterwards. There was a lot of intelligence work going on.

Q: During this time, were there any particular incidents that come to mind, of tensions or problems?

LIVINGSTON: We were mostly concerned with the prisoners, American prisoners, you know, and there were some colorful episodes with colorful prisoners, people would get out of jail, and so on. I guess the other thing we were watching, although the people that worked on West Berlin were watching it more, were the beginnings of the effort by the Social Democrats, who were, of course, in the government in Berlin, to initiate contacts with East Germany. When the Wall went up, they initiated what they called a policy of small steps, passes for Christmas visits and so on. I think we were uneasy about that.

I do remember when Kiesinger came in, in 1966, when Erhard fell and they constituted the "grand coalition," i.e. the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats. We also had the Berlin Document Center, which was a hot potato because it had a large number of Nazi files. There was quite an effort to find out whether Kiesinger had been a member of the Nazi Party, which he had, and whether he'd been any more than that. I remember a friend of mine who was a reporter for the *Washington Post*, who, in effect, offered me a bribe if I could go in there and discover if Kiesinger had been an SS man or something.

Q: Who was the mayor of West Berlin when you were there?

LIVINGSTON: I think Brandt was mayor down to just when I got there. I think it was then Klaus Schutz, but I couldn't absolutely swear to that.

Q: He wasn't a major figure, then, was he?

LIVINGSTON: No, Brandt was the last major figure. Then he left. All talent was drained away, because if you wanted to make a career, you couldn't make a career in Berlin. And when it was

no longer in the public eye, I think, it was kind of a pain in the neck to the Bonn government in lots of ways. Right down to the present day the quality of the political talent in Berlin is still second-rate, even third-rate.

Q: Well, you left there in '68.

LIVINGSTON: Yes, that's right. Then I went to Bonn. I may have left in '69. The guy who has the Foreign Service list will have that information. I think I may have left in the summer of '68 and then came to Bonn in the fall of '68, as I recall.

Q: Approximately, from '68 to when were you there?

LIVINGSTON: I was there until '70 or '71 and there I was the Number Two in the Political Section and worked mainly on the continuation of *Ostpolitik* and what the Germans were doing with the East because we still, I think, were somewhat suspicious of what the hell they were doing.

Q: The West Germans.

LIVINGSTON: The West Germans, yes. Have you interviewed Jonathan Dean?

Q: I'm doing it now.

LIVINGSTON: Yes, well he came in toward the end of my time and basically preempted me. He outranked me, had much more experience. He also a lot of experience in Germany, and this was clearly a big career jump for him. He preempted most of my work. He was a very hard worker and wrote incredible reports. It was clear to me that I wasn't going to get anywhere in Bonn with Dean there, so I was just as happy, then, to leave in '70. Then I went to the Council on Foreign Relations, where I ran a study group for a year on East Germany.

Q: Let's talk about '68-70. What were we concerned about with the West Germans and East Germans? You say we were concerned that "things might be happening."

LIVINGSTON: I think our general feeling was that they weren't telling us everything. Our whole position in Berlin was based on a continuation, odd as it may seem 20 years after the war, of these Four-Power rights. Dealing with an anathematized communist regime like the East German was based on the West Germans telling us, "You mustn't recognize these guys; you've got to uphold your position in Berlin." We were basically trustees for West Germany in Berlin.

At the same time they were telling us, "Don't recognize East Germany. Hang on to your Four Power status." We had been used to having the "big word" there. Behind our backs, the Social Democrats were dealing with East Germany and, goodness knows, did they tell us everything?

Q: Was there a concern of the West Germans going "soft," that if there could be some sort of

amalgamation between West Germany and East Germany, they might opt for that?

LIVINGSTON: Yes, we saw this happen in 1990. This was of much greater concern to the Brits and the French than us. They were concerned that the Germanies would get together and united Germany would be a big power again. They conveyed some of that to us. 1990 proved the case, but we weren't as worried about that as the Brits and the French. And, of course, the other factor was the party politics of it. While I was in Bonn, in September of 1969, of course the Social Democrats actually didn't win the election but they were able to pry away the Free Democrats from the coalition with the CDU. We had a lot of people in Bonn on election night and they made a big mistake. They looked at the returns which showed that the CDU may have even picked up a point or two. Nixon sent a congratulatory telegram or made a telephone call to Kiesinger. The FDP jumped ship and the Social Democrats formed a new coalition with the FDP. It was an exciting time. It was the first real change in government since 1949, so in that sense it was an exciting time to be there. It was kind of a fresh start. Brandt had made it very clear. Although we didn't know this, they started backchanneling with Kissinger. This is not something I knew at the time. I always had the suspicion that there was a helluva lot more going on. The CDU, with whom we'd been dealing all these years, and gotten used to, and all our friends were feeding our suspicions about the Social Democrats. After all, in the '50s the CDU had run against socialism as well as communism. The Social Democrats were just a tad different than the communists, not much, you know. This divide was very big. The other thing that happened during that period which we did not deal with very well was the whole turmoil connected with two things, with the student revolt and the real effort by young Germans to shake some of the patriarchal, if not autocratic structures of society along with opposition to the Vietnam War. Most of our friends, even on the moderate left, thought Vietnam a mistake. One of my friends, Richard Loewenthal, who is now dead, a professor at the Free University, jumped all over us and said, "You guys, with this Vietnam focus on containing communism in Vietnam, you are losing your focus, you are losing your European focus," and, of course it was true. Our troops in Germany were run down in quality and also in quantity in order to fight the Vietnam War. '68 was a year of upheaval everywhere, you know, in Western Europe and in the United States, too; so that combination of domestic upheaval and opposition to the Vietnam War was the first, how shall I say, active anti-American outbreaks in Germany we had ever had since '49.

Q: Was Red Rudy one of the...

LIVINGSTON: Yes, he was a student leader.

Q: Of course, there was not only what was happening in the U.S., but also in France.

LIVINGSTON: It began in '67, maybe, when the Shah of Iran visited Berlin and there was the big demonstration, partly a combination of students plus exiled Persians living abroad against the Shah. It got out of control somewhat, and a student was killed by the police. That unleashed a storm of unrest in West Berlin, which had been the great bastion of freedom. The Free University turned, I wouldn't say anti-American, but there was a lot of anti-American sentiment on the campus in West Berlin and to some degree I suppose the East Germans helped it along.

Q: What about when you were in Bonn? Were you able to get the spirit of the German

universities in West Germany?

LIVINGSTON: No. Again, in retrospect, you think of all the things you should have done. But I was a good Foreign Service officer; I stuck to my list, which was an interesting list because it was a developing policy, but I really had the feeling, I knew there was more going on with the East. I'll tell you how I knew: in the summer of 1970, it must have been just before I was due to leave, I remember going down to the foreign office and getting from the Soviet desk officer a memo which had listed points that Brandt had brought up directly with, I guess it was Brezhnev, and I said, "When was this?" and he said, "This was in March." So I said, "You're just telling us now?" I realized that they must have given it to Kissinger or given it to the Ambassador, or something. They were just going through the motions of quote "informing" us at the time. I was, I suppose in retrospect, rather naïve at the time. There were a lot of very important points that were in there, eight points or whatever they were. And I thought, "Here it is, what June or July, and you're just giving us this thing *now*? What *is* this anyway?"

Q: Did you have any feeling... of course, Henry Kissinger was National Security Advisor, both German born and a born participant in back channel operations. It sounds like the sort of thing he would have enjoyed.

LIVINGSTON: Well, I have got to be careful and try and just talk about my own recollections. Last November, I was invited to a conference in Vienna on the beginnings of Ostpolitik and I had to give a panel contribution. I did a little bit of research on this you know, with Kissinger's memoirs and Bahr's memoirs. So I know now things I didn't know then. So I'm a little worried about projecting backwards. I don't think we were really aware in Bonn, at least at my level, about this back channeling between Kissinger and Bahr. I'm almost sure we weren't but I wasn't sophisticated enough to recognize from the conduct of the Germans, except from this example that I gave you that something was going on. I want to put a bookend here because this is stuff I know now because of having done this research for this talk I gave. Kissinger and Nixon were very suspicious of Brandt and his Ostpolitik at the beginning when Bahr came in to see Kissinger before the government was even formed. This is, again still with the bookend. When it was formed, they sent Bahr over here.

Q: Bahr being who?

LIVINGSTON: Egon Bahr, who was really Brandt's right hand man. Negotiator, both in Berlin and in his formal job later as head of the planning staff of the Foreign Ministry when Brandt was Foreign Minister. Then he became - I don't remember what his title was - sort of a national security advisor in the chancellery when Brandt became Chancellor. I know now that he came over here before the government was even formed and told Kissinger, "This is what we're going to do, we're going to let you know about it, but we're not asking your permission. We're going to go ahead and do it." Then, by early '70, there were already signs of success. That made Kissinger very nervous. He worried that the Germans were negotiating with the Russians because that brought all kind of recollections - and this is still within the bookends - of the Rapallo, the Stalin-Hitler pact, etc., and the old tradition of German-Russian connections. I guess I can close the bookend now. My own point as kind of a middle-ranking diplomat in Bonn was that I was not aware of any of this back channeling at all. You'll have to ask Jock Dean how

much he was aware of it.

Q: Had there been anything in Willy Brandt's background or writings that you were looking at to see whether they were going to take a different point of view?

LIVINGSTON: Oh, yes, they made it clear. Brandt, himself, made it clear. The whole policy of small steps was that they were not going to be inhibited in dealing with the East Germans and then he made it clear they were not going to be inhibited in dealing with the Soviets. When he was Foreign Minister, they'd already opened relations, they modified the Hallstein Doctrine when Kiesinger came in. They modified it when they opened up trade missions. I think already under Erhard they opened up trade missions. So that's why I had an interesting job. This was the revival of traditional German interest in the East, which had been cut off in '49. Adenauer, was not interested in the East, but only interested in reconciliation with France. So this was a restoration of traditional German interest in the East and, therefore, very worth reporting on. I think there was suspicion among people that "Ah ha, it's going to be an old German-Russian deal again." The Russians held the cards. We knew that. We still felt East Germany was totally in Soviet thrall. Obedience to Soviet direction and command. We felt that the Soviets would sell out East Germany to Bonn for concessions. The old bugaboo was that maybe West Germany would go neutral in exchange for unification. Even I thought that was possible. We thought the Social Democrats might do it.

Q: What about relations between West Germany and the Czechs and the Poles?

LIVINGSTON: Well, there was a period, I think it was the very beginning of the Brandt government when they tried to do the small East European countries first, then the Soviet Union. The Soviets made it clear to them, "With us first, or not at all." It was right after the Soviet entry into Prague. There is one interesting story I can tell you. It was August of '68, and I was already in Bonn then, and there are two anecdotes that are sort of amusing. Number One, in the safe we had all sorts of contingency plans. When this happened, we said, "Ah ha, we'll go look for the contingency plans." You know, "What do we do when the Soviets march into the Czech Republic?" And, of course, there was no contingency plan, none at all. We had no idea of what to do and that was amusing. That was the first thing. The second one was amusing. We got a phone call from Franz Joseph Strauss. I didn't take it but I think the DCM took it. And Strauss was in a state of panic. He thought that the Soviets might not stop at the border. He was, I guess, Minister-President of Bavaria. He no longer was in the national government. He was pushed out as a result of the Spiegel affair in '63. I take it back. He may have been in the government. He may have been the finance minister in the Kiesinger-Brandt government. Anyway, he called from Munich or he called from Bavaria; I can't say he called from Munich. And he was absolutely panicked. I didn't take the call so this is second hand, but he said, "What are you guys going to do? How are you going to save us?" Well, we had assurances from the Soviets, we got them during the day, that they weren't going to come over into Germany. So there were some assurances that were given us somehow. I remember it was a kind of exciting day.

Q: Oh, yes.

LIVINGSTON: That was the very beginning of my Bonn period because I must have just gotten

back from summer vacation in August.

Q: While you were in Bonn during the '68-70 period, I would assume you were always looking at East Germany. Was there any sign that East Germany was becoming more independent? Any feeling that, you know, we always think of Tito and other places.

LIVINGSTON: No, I think we operated, and this is probably to some degree projection of our "legal" standpoint, that, "The Soviets are responsible, and we've got to stick with that view." I think a projection onto East Germany. Certainly they were satellites compared to Czechoslovakia's or particularly to Poland or the Hungarians. After '53, there was no real East German effort to defy the Soviets. There was a little bit, and that happened after I was back here. That must have been '72, I guess. When the Soviets deposed Ulbricht, allegedly that had to do with differences, because he opposed Soviet detente policy with West Germany. But generally, to answer your question, we certainly were projecting our legal standpoint onto the situation. We felt that the East Germans were very dependent on the Soviet Union, very much under the Soviet thumb, and this really was a satellite that was totally under Soviet control partly because, and maybe again this was a product of Berlin, we looked at things maybe too much from a military point of view. We said, "My God, they've got 12 divisions there in East Germany!" We also looked at it in this way: that if there were an uprising in East Germany - that's what they did in '53, you know - send in the tanks. I think we believed that the Soviets would send in the tanks and the East Germans would never get anywhere. The Soviets did send the tanks into Prague after all in '68.

Q: Oh, yes. After the Prague Spring came the Prague August and East Germans went in with them.

LIVINGSTON: I'm not sure how much the East Germans really did; again it's a little murky. I think what they did was send some small signal units just over the border into Sudetenland. They certainly didn't go into Prague and how much of a penetration they actually made, I don't know. And I'd guess the Poles did something, too, but I think that was very minor. It was a Soviet operation.

Q: In 1970, you left Bonn and you went where?

LIVINGSTON: I went to the Council on Foreign Relations. That's something I cooked up myself. I guess it was a kind of reflection of the fact that I wasn't getting anywhere in Bonn. I knew that when Dean was there that I wasn't going to get anywhere, that he was holding everything to himself. Because of Ostpolitik, there was an interest in the United States and I think maybe it was even at the recommendation of Kissinger, I can't remember, that I got a fellowship to the Council on Foreign Relations. I had leave without pay. The Council paid my salary. It wasn't a government thing. The State Department didn't send me. I did it myself. I was there I would guess from October of 1970 until December of '71. I wanted to stay longer but the Department said, "If you don't come back, you won't get a promotion."

Q: What were you working on at the Council on Foreign Relations?

LIVINGSTON: I ran a study group on East Germany. It was the first thing they'd ever done on East Germany. I was supposed to write a book, but I never did. I gathered material for a book. The year changed my life I suppose. You know, I'd been abroad all those years from 1956 until 1970, a little more than 14 years. I'd had an exaggerated view of the Foreign Service's role in foreign affairs. Then I suddenly got to the Council and saw that there were all these bankers and lawyers and ex-Foreign Service officers who were running the big insurance companies in New York and scholars from Princeton and Harvard and Yale and all this East Coast elite establishment who *really* were running foreign affairs (laughter). And their views of the Foreign Service, to say the least, were somewhat mingled. There was still an air of "gentlemanliness" about the Council on Foreign Relations, which there is right down to the present day. I just had a letter published in *Foreign Affairs* and they edited out all my polemical language before they published it. So they're still gentlemanly.

Q: Could you explain, what, at that time, the Council on Foreign Relations was?

LIVINGSTON: Two things. First, they were torn by Vietnam.

Q: Who were they?

LIVINGSTON: The President was a guy named Bayless Manning. Its building was there on the corner of East 58th Street. They still regarded themselves as really the center of the American foreign policymaking establishment. And, all these figures like Jack McCloy and George Ball, all these people would come in for seminars, and I mingled with them. They were, however, going through a very traumatic period because William Bundy was the editor of *Foreign Affairs*. There was, just before I arrived, a kind of uprising among some of the members, the younger members, who were opposed to the Vietnam War. Bundy particularly had been a big advocate, as the State Department's Assistant Secretary for Asia, of the Vietnam War. His memoirs are due to come out soon as a matter of fact. Are they out already?

Q: I don't think so.

LIVINGSTON: They are due fairly soon because I've talked to him on the phone a couple of times. He [William Bundy] was the *Foreign Affairs* editor. Bayless Manning was the president. He didn't last too long. They still regarded themselves as the place where real policy was made and also provided a recruiting ground and a reservoir of talent to send down to Washington. Kissinger, 12 years before, had begun his career there. He was the quintessential CFR person. I guess Rockefeller got him the slot, and there he wrote his book on nuclear weapons in foreign policy. He was the sort of typical example of the kind of guy who went from academia to the Council then to the government.

Q: When you say this was sort of the heart of American foreign policy...

LIVINGSTON: They thought they were.

Q: They thought they were. How was this transmitted from their perspective and what you were seeing into actual policy?

LIVINGSTON: Well, they would bring all these people up from Washington. Later, they set up an office in Washington, a few years ago, but they felt very much very in the tradition of the Second World War. Simpson and Bundy and all these people who went from this complex, all these people played a role in foreign policymaking in Germany. McCloy was the quintessential Council on Foreign Relations man, you know, head of the American foreign policy establishment. He was one of the main figures at the Council. We had all kinds of study groups on important issues of foreign policy. When it got down to the real, most important issues like Vietnam, they clearly were beyond their depth. Still, there was this belief that, "This is the place where the real issues are discussed and we provide outside," but not really outside, "input into the deliberations of government." That's how they still think down to the present day.

Q: I know. I see all these discussion groups and I've often wondered how...

LIVINGSTON: After I leave you, I'm going to a meeting down at the Council on Foreign Relations with a typical figure on the Council, General Wesley Clark, the Supreme Commander of NATO, and he's going to talk about restructuring NATO for its new mission. A very Council on Foreign Relations type topic.

Q: Keeping to the '70-'71 issue, you can have people talking about things but then you have very busy people in Washington who are responding often to what's in the paper today or you have Congress which is responding to their constituency.

LIVINGSTON: I was a visiting fellow there and I wasn't in any sort of inner circle. You always had the feeling there were inner circles, though. There was this great rabbit warren at the corner of 68th and Park Avenue. You were given the feeling that upstairs the Under Secretary for Political Affairs was meeting with the Soviet ambassador, chatting about arms control. But it was an exciting period, because it was the Nixon period, though Nixon himself hated the type of figures the Council represented. The Council was very pleased that he's one of two people that they expelled for not paying dues. He wanted to be expelled. (Laughter)

Q: What about your German expertise? How did that play I this?

LIVINGSTON: They'd had quite close relations with Germany going back to the '20s. Originally they were New York bankers that established it. Of course, the New York banking community in the '20s in the Dawes and Young plans had been quote "pro-German" and very anxious to help Germany. People forget that right down to the '30s, John Foster Dulles and his law firm were very, I wouldn't say pro-Nazi, but continued doing business with Germany right down to '39 or '40. So they were really the center, I think, of the effort to rehabilitate Germany after the Second World War. McCloy was the exemplar of that. It was very much East Coast Establishment. If you look and see who was involved, you see Clay, who really was a Southern boy in many ways but still part of it, but then there was McCloy and there was Conant. Both of them were East Coast establishmentarians.

Q: Conant was president of Harvard.

LIVINGSTON: Yes, that's right. So they felt that they had been part of the tradition of building up the Atlantic Alliance and bringing the Germans in. Part of the tradition of NATO and the European unification movement. Connections with Jean Monnet and all that business. This was very much of a trans-Atlantic league in action. So they were obviously very interested in Germany. My little thing was kind of an aberration because there was the fear, particularly by McCloy. I heard him say himself (he was an old man by then.), "There are two souls in the German breast: one of them looks east and the other looks west and you've always got to watch out that they're not going to cook up a deal with the Russians." Of course, the CDU and the CSU were feeding these guys stuff about, "Watch for these Social Democrats. They'll make a deal with the Russians, and you guys will be out; because, after all, they're really Marxists, you know."

Q: While you were looking at Germany from the New York Eastern Establishment perspective, was there such a thing as "the Germanophile" or something like that because we have the Anglophile in the United States. We have a very large community of people with German heritage, myself included. Lochner was my mother's name. I've never really heard of much of a German lobby.

LIVINGSTON: That's one of the things I'm looking at. Of course, when you look at numbers, it is true that the Germans are, by far, the largest group by ancestry in this country. Particularly in the First World War, but also in the Second World War, their willingness to maintain a pro-German attitude was suppressed. There was a really a strong wave, stimulated by the British, rather cleverly, I think, in the First World War beginning about 1916, a wave of anti-German hatred, hysteria. Every street in Baltimore that had had a German name before 1917 was renamed. I remember once being on a platform with Senator Lugar and I said, "Well, Senator, did you know that in Indiana," (he was talking about friendship with Germany) "They passed a law in 1917 that no school should teach German?" And they didn't change the law until 1923, years after the war.

Q: My mother's family had rocks thrown at them. He was a German-American lawyer in Chicago.

LIVINGSTON: Oh, yes. So they started to lower their heads for some reason, which I think has to do with German willingness to accept authority. They always assimilated much more rapidly; is true, except for the religious dissenters like the Moravian Baptists and the Amish, they tended to assimilate much more rapidly. This was given a big push back in the First World War and to some degree a push by the Second World War, but much more in the First.

Q: There was no particular German Lobby or anything like that?

LIVINGSTON: I think to some degree what happened was they didn't dare lobby like the Irish and the Greeks did. Right down to the present day, that's true. But the people in the New York establishment were quite pro-German for strategic and business reasons. Then interestingly enough they had something which comes out here in Washington quite strongly because there

were German Jews, including some who'd emigrated as late as the '30s, who felt that they had a job to rebuild relations with Germany. Kronstein, who was one of the big donors at Georgetown, was an example of that. He was a lawyer. He was trained in Germany. He practiced law in Germany, emigrated here in the '30s. His son still works for one of the big firms in Washington. And he was very active. He was the guy who got Adenauer over here and got Adenauer his first honorary doctorate at Georgetown in about 1950. The Jesuits. So they did have certain lobbies and did have certain policy lines, and I've heard it from the German ambassador in the 1970s that, "We are not going to be like the Greeks and the Italians and Irish and the Jews. We are going to be like the French and the British. We are going to operate as part of *that* club, of the "Trans-Atlantic Elite" and we are not going to play the ethnic card." They don't play it right down to this day. I've told them that now, 50 years after the War, they should be more willing to do that. The other thing, of course, is that during the Cold War, there was a willingness, even on the part of the American-Jewish community, to downplay the Holocaust. That only really, interestingly enough, started to change in the 1980s. I think it has to do with generational change among American Jews. The Holocaust survivors are dying out. Two-thirds of Jewish girls marry non-Jews. I think that the leadership of the American-Jewish community is concerned about this since the Holocaust has assumed a much bigger role since about 1980. Because we needed Germany as an ally, I wouldn't say it was a conspiracy, that word is strong, sort of a Hillary Clinton type word, there was a kind of unwillingness to really raise this issue at all. It didn't play a role in American-German relations as much as you might think.

Q: This raises a question, during the '64 to '70 period when you were in Berlin and Bonn, did the Holocaust...

LIVINGSTON: It never even crossed my mind. I must say I think the Germans got a bum rap. Even as early as when I was in Hamburg in the 1950s, German television and German publications like the *Spiegel* carried quite a lot of exposes. We didn't let it affect policy because we needed the Germans. I can't remember, looking back, that I ever wrote a report on it or that it ever concerned me at all. As I say, it's an interesting phenomenon that started to come up really strong in '85 when Reagan went to Bitburg. From then on and now, there are all of these Holocaust museums, of which there must be about 10 now. They didn't get started until the '80s either.

KENNETH M. SKOUG
German Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1959)

Political Officer
Munich (1959-1961)

Kenneth N. Skoug was born in North Dakota in 1931. He attended both Columbia College and George Washington University. His career included positions in Germany, Mexico, Prague, Moscow, and Venezuela. Mr. Skoug was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in August 2000.

Q: *Well, you went to the German Desk when?*

SKOUG: In June of 1959.

Q: *Had you already had an assignment to Germany?*

SKOUG: No, I was still on my first tour.

Q: *No, I mean was an assignment to Germany in the offing?*

SKOUG: Yes, definitely. I was assigned to Germany.

Q: *Where were you going to go?*

SKOUG: Munich.

Q: *While you were on the German Desk, what were you doing?*

SKOUG: Well, it was mainly the reviewing the reporting in connection with the Geneva Conference. John Foster Dulles died around that time, and there was a hiatus between the first round in Geneva and the second round. The Geneva Conference came about because Khrushchev had given the United States, Britain, and France six months to get their affairs in order and make an arrangement with the German Democratic Republic, and then he was going to dismiss any responsibility of the Soviet Union for the situation in Berlin. It looked, of course, like a major crisis. It was a crisis. Adenauer and De Gaulle really wanted to tough it out. They just wanted to thumb their nose at Khrushchev and say, "Just try it." But the United States, under pressure from the British, decided to negotiate. Macmillan was really the one who wanted to negotiate. I was handling reporting coming out of Germany or out of the Soviet Union. In one case I translated a German telegram from their embassy in Moscow which the Germans showed to us. I was learning what the issues were, getting a first-hand close-up on it.

Q: *Was there within the State Department a real sense of crises, that we might be going head-to-head with the Soviets?*

SKOUG: Yes, until late 1959 that was a tense period. It wasn't until the autumn Khrushchev visit to the United States, that tension was allayed. Eisenhower took him out and showed him Roswell Garst's farm in Iowa and so forth, and Khrushchev seemed to be a jolly gentleman. He wasn't. It didn't last long. It was his crisis. He created it..

Q: *While you were on the German Desk, what were you seeing in reports about how the German people felt about all this?*

SKOUG: Well, it wasn't so much reporting on how the German people saw it. The German Government essentially, was Adenauer who was worried that our talking to the Russians would end up in some, what he would call, "*fauler Kompromiss*," a 'lazy compromise,' and we would

give the Russians essentially what they wanted under cover of a bargain. That didn't happen. In fact, the talks lost their meaning really when Khrushchev decided to do his travels. I think that ended the Geneva Conference. It had been intended to see what would induce the Russians to back off. In the circumstances of the Soviet threat, one can hardly understand having diplomatic talks otherwise than a willingness to consider making some concessions, and Adenauer was terribly worried about the possible concessions. He didn't want to make any and did not feel they were necessary. He and De Gaulle were more inclined to call what they regarded as Khrushchev's bluff.

Q: It's interesting, I've interviewed people who were in Berlin a little later and were extremely worried - Dick Smyser, among others - extremely worried when the Kennedy Administration came in, because they felt that they were ready to deal, to make compromises which would have jeopardized our position in Berlin. They didn't know the territory, and it took a while for the Kennedy group, you might say, to understand the issues. You were in Munich from when to when?

SKOUG: From August, 1959, to August, 1961.

Q: Who was the consul general there when you were there?

SKOUG: Eddie Page was the first one. Page had been a colleague of George Kennan and Charles Bohlen, and he was widely regarded as an expert on Eastern Europe. He went from Munich to Bulgaria. He opened our post in Sofia, which had been closed for a number of years. So he was only in Munich until the last part of 1959. I liked Page. He was a nice gentleman. Then he was succeeded by Ken Scott, W. Kenneth Scott, who had been in the administrative area of state and had not previously served abroad. A nice man, he didn't speak German. Page spoke fluent German, so it was tough for Scott to follow him. One of the things Scott did was to get rid of the so-called *Hochadel*. Bavaria was full of royalty, you know, going back to its independent days, and these people took themselves quite seriously. They were always on guest lists, and Eddie Page handled them very well. Scott wondered how important they really were. They were not important. They were important maybe socially, but they were not of any political or economic importance. So they were dropped as contacts, and of course they resented Scott as a consequence.

Q: No, I think a lot of our posts suffer from these sort of hangers-on who have been around for a long time. Well, what were you doing, to begin with?

SKOUG: In Munich. Well, I was assigned as a visa officer, and so I did visas. I did immigrant visas to begin with. Again, it was sort of like being at GW. I soon found that I had plenty of time on my hands. We had more than enough officers to handle immigrant visas, and frequently the consul - not the consul general, but the fellow running the visa section - would knock off and have a beer or do something in the afternoon. I used to go out to German events, in the evening or on weekends because I was interested. Of course, I was doing a Ph.D. dissertation, and I was hoping to get my feet wet on the political side. About three weeks after arriving, I attended a speech by Pastor Martin Niemöller, who had been a German U-boat commander in the First World War. An anti-Nazi, he became a militant pacifist. He thought Adenauer was leading the

country to war, building up the German army and so forth. Niemoeller was a very controversial character. He spoke on September 1, 1959, and I attended it with my wife. The question was *Wo stehen wir heute?* 'Where are we today?' It was 20 years since the German attack on Poland, and in Niemoeller's view the Federal Republic was going down the same road again. Well, the talk went on and on and on for literally two or three hours, so at a certain point, I got tired. I could see my wife was tired, and I was tired, too. And Niemoeller's message was quite clear, that we were in a very terrible situation. We went to the door to leave, and it seemed to be locked. And for the first time in my life, I experienced a situation where I was trying to open a door that was being pressed by a horde of people on the other side. There was a great crowd outside the door. Anyway, they finally allowed me to push it open. My wife and I walked out, and here was this hostile crowd standing there. First there was silence, and then one of them said, "*Die sind nicht Deutschen*" 'They aren't Germans.' They let us pass through.

Q: *You were virtually walking out on the hero, is that it?*

SKOUG: No, no, no. These were anti-Niemoeller troops.

Q: *Oh, I see.*

SKOUG: Niemoeller was very controversial, and Niemoeller only had a crowd of people, of enthusiasts inside. He also had some enthusiasts who didn't like him on the outside. They were going to egg him, I suppose, when he came out. I wrote this up. I wrote it as a report and I gave it to the chief of the Political Section, who sent it back, "Thanks, but we don't need this." His boss was an old-timer named W. Garland Richardson, the deputy principal officer. My wife later spoke to Mrs. Richardson and mentioned having heard Niemoeller. Richardson called me in and asked why I had not reported on the speech, I said, "I did report it, but it was rejected." He said, "Let me see the report." I gave him the report, it went out to Bonn and Washington unchanged. The Political Officer was upset, "Why didn't you tell me you were doing..." I said, "Well, that's for you two guys to work out." The long and the short of it was, they decided to set up a rotation program, and they decided to establish a joint political-economic reporting section - well, they were two sections - but this swing man would be reporting on both of them. I was named to that position in late October. Remember I'd been at post less than three months. I got pulled out of the Visa section to become the political-economic officer. We had an economic officer who did little reporting, so I did almost all the economic work, and I did a substantial amount of political work. I thought it was great. I was very busy, but I was learning a lot. But anyway, that's how I got from visa work to political work....

Q: *You were in Munich until 1961. Were you able to keep track of Franz Josef Strauss? Was he sort of a contact, or was he pretty much Bonn-centered?*

SKOUG: Oh, no. He was a little too high to be a contact. I was a vice-consul, and he was the defense minister of Germany. But he was an approachable guy. He was very, very sensible. His German was beautiful. In Bavaria, even if you speak German and understand it, Bavarian German is a little different, but Strauss's, although he was the son of a Munich butcher, I think, spoke beautiful German. I attended some of his speeches. He was one of those orators who knew how to deal with hecklers. He would, for example, say, "If there were no German army..." and

then the hecklers would say, "That's what we want," and he would say, "Then you wouldn't have the freedom to be here" or "You wouldn't be here to be able to say that." He could always use hecklers.

Bavaria had on April 1, 1960, local elections which proved very significant nationally and even internationally. The SPD in post-war elections had done well in local elections, particularly in major cities. But it had failed to win in national elections. The Social Democrats could govern cities and states effectively, but their vague melange of pacifism, neutralism and nationalism could not compete on the national level with the straightforward pro-Western foreign and defense policy of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. In West Berlin, however, the mayor was Willy Brandt, a very popular Social Democrat who had just won an election there and who was even traveling abroad to win support for the Allied position in the face of Khrushchev's threat to the city. The SPD decided to try to use Brandt's popularity in the Munich mayoralty election where Hans Jochen Vogel was running against three rivals. Brandt did not speak in Bavaria, but his presence on the podium with Vogel and with another Social Democratic candidate for mayor in Regensburg, which Martha and I attended, was sufficient to transfer his popularity. The result was a tremendous success for the SPD in both places, a success which Brandt repeated in other local elections in the Federal Republic. He made it clear even to the party leadership, which did not much like his views, that he could help the party if given a chance. Even to the thickest skulls-and some were quite thick-it was apparent that if someone liked Brandt could neutralize Adenauer's foreign policy advantage in a national election, the SPD could hope to govern in Bonn. Adenauer at that time happened to be in Japan. I recall attending a victory celebration held by the SPD in Munich where it was confidently predicted that the news from Munich would go right to Tokyo. I'm sure it did because Adenauer was astute politically and must have been disturbed by the outcome of that election. By the way, Adenauer did lose his absolute majority in the Bundestag in the election of September 1961 when the SPD ran Brandt against him and a few years later the SPD would be in power.

You already had the Bad Godesburg Party program, which was a reform movement in the SPD, and then you had the appeal for what they called a *gemeinsame Aussenpolitik*, a joint foreign policy. That was an appeal by Herbert Wehner, who had been one of the extreme left-wingers in the SPD, but Wehner was the man controlling power in the SPD who realized how important - he was the boss, you might say - how important it was to have Brandt as a candidate. And so you had essentially what the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* called "Wehner's Brandt." Wehner helped bring Brandt to power although Adenauer immediately rejected the call for a joint foreign policy, saying more important than a joint foreign policy was a "*richtige Aussenpolitik*," a 'correct foreign policy.' Still, Brandt had an issue, and the SPD knew it, and they didn't let go of this. And so in the late 1960s the SPD came to share power in Bonn. In 1969 the SPD came to power in its own right.

Q: Well, then, this might be a good place to stop, I think. Is there anything else we should cover about Germany on this particular go-around? I put at the end where we are.

SKOUG: Sure, yes, I think so. I have a few additional recollections. A couple vignettes might recall the flavor of those days. The post had sent Hans Goppel, Minister of the Interior in the Bavarian Government, on a USIS sponsored tour of the United States. He was viewed as a

“comer,” and he later did become Minister President of Bavaria. But he was not at all impressed by his tour. Upon return he gave a lecture with slides to the *Columbus Society* in March 1960 which Martha and I attended. Goppel came late, and the room was dark when he began to speak and show his slides. His reactions were highly adverse until he showed a German merchant ship in New Orleans- “*Gott sei Dank, die deutsche Fahne!*” - thank God, the German flag. Then the lights came on and he saw us sitting there. “*Sie verstehen nicht deutsch.*” “(You don’t understand German)” he said hopefully to my wife. “*Doch, Herr Minister.*”

In May 1960 the post got a traveling group from ICAF, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, together with the top leadership of the Bavarian branch of the DGB, the German trade union federation. Erwin Essl, head of the far left Metal Workers Union, was holding forth on how hospitals, schools and transportation were what West Germany needed-not an army. A tranquil social order was the best security against attack. I inquired what happened to France in 1940 when attacked by a stronger power. Essl paused, then said that France was conquered because it lacked social justice. On that occasion the DGB deputy chairman, Seitz, smilingly called me a “*kalte Krieger*” (Cold Warrior, but worse in the German context) for seeing the USSR as some kind of threat.

Another memorable event was lunching close to Hans Seehofer, the federal Minister of Transport and “Speaker” of the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* who delivered a speech on the occasion. He not only belabored the Czechs, who had expelled his countrymen from Bohemia in 1945, but also the American occupation authorities in Bavaria. He dwelt upon his own suffering under the Nazi regime, the facts of which were somewhat obscure. In those days the refugees wielded considerable influence in all the Bavarian political parties and had their own “Bloc” of those “Torn from their Homeland and Deprived of their Rights,” the GB/BHE. When Seehofer later spoke at “Sudeten German Day” in Munich, the huge square was jam-packed. But the refugees, fortunately, were all the while being enveloped peacefully into the democratic social order in the Federal Republic. Orators like Seehofer were useful to the Soviet Bloc propagandists as bugbear for a non-existent German lust for revenge.

HERBERT DANIEL BREWSTER
Political Officer
Berlin (1959-1961)

Herbert Daniel Brewster was born in Greece to American parents. He attended Wesleyan University. Mr. Brewster’s Foreign Service career included positions in Turkey, Lebanon, Greece, France, Italy, and Washington, DC. Mr. Brewster was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on December 11, 1991.

BREWSTER: I was assigned to Berlin in the summer of 1959 as political officer . This assignment was primarily based on the fact that I had S-4 German language efficiency which grew out of my entire training in the early years, as well as at Wesleyan. The assignment itself was not a great success because I was to fill in and work with the Berlin Senat and the officer already there, who was a bilingual German speaker, had made all the best contacts as liaison

officer with the Senat for two years and was staying on. So it turned out that I was used primarily as an internal head of the political section, managing a staff of eight who were reporting on a variety of things. We had a large share of incidents in that period just before the wall was put up. These revolved around army people or civilians who got over into the Soviet zone and had to be pulled out with negotiations, and that was one of my tasks. We also had responsibility on a rotation basis for the prison in Berlin -- the Spandau prison. The extent of the work was one monthly luncheon with representatives of the four occupying powers. It did give me a chance to see from a distance Rudolf Hess who was the only person there. It was certainly an expensive venture to be carrying on but the Soviets were not about to give up on keeping him in custody in those surroundings.

I think it amounted to tokenism -- to keep a reminder right in Germany of this person and what he had done. I believe that there were pressures put on, but the French, I think, were a bit on the Soviet on this issue. Anyway, unanimity was not in view in terms of making a change.

Each of the occupying powers had a zone; we had the southwest zone under our command with a military commander, a two-star general, in charge. Our Allen Lightner was his political advisor; the other missions were built up that way. Willy Brandt was at a very strong point at that stage as mayor of Berlin, and there were many close contacts with him.

The French and British zones were very accessible; that represented three-quarters of the city. The most beautiful part of the city was in our western zone -- the lakes and swimming and all of that. The Soviet side had a fabulous zoo and having children of the age interested in zoos, we did go over; but it was an occasional trip. I don't think I made, on a private basis, more than three or four trips; there was always a chance that they would find some reason for stopping you, saying your license wasn't in order or something like that, or having the Soviets raise an incident. We were discouraged from going over and it wasn't part of my job. We had an Eastern Affairs section that dealt with the East side of things and they did that work.

The wall went up after you left two weeks after I left, following a major influx of refugees. Many came over on the subway; the subway was sort of an around the city subway and they could come over that way. They did get through. I think that may well have been the reason -- that the drainage was increasing to the point where they felt it necessary to do that.

I don't think we were particularly on the alert at the time. We were watching their moves but I don't think we felt a threat on that score, any more than people would have in Bonn or other western capitals. We certainly lost no sleep over it; life was very normal with football games, good shops to go to and so on. It was a nice post from that point of view, not one which generated tensions.

We did have incidents; we would be alerted any hour of the day or night to cope with them. The military did the coping but they needed the advice from us. But we had enough people to do it. Findley Burns was my boss, and Al Lightner; often those things wouldn't come down to the third level. To sum it up, I sensed that I was a fish out of water there, because you can't make a Berliner out of someone who has never been there before. We had Eleanor Dulles around our neck and she was "Madam Berlin" -- she was back here. So you had a group that were Berliners

and German experts and "other people." And I was in the "other" category.

Eleanor Dulles would have an idea or float an idea and she could be difficult about wanting it pushed through and people didn't dare not do it or do it in a sloppy fashion. She did have a vast personal knowledge of things so she had a one-upmanship position by the length of time she had devoted herself to these things. She was back here at the desk, usually.

BRUCE A. FLATIN
German Affairs, Intelligence and Research Bureau
Washington, DC (1959-1961)

Bruce A. Flatin was born in Minnesota in 1930. He received degrees from the University of Minnesota and from Boston University. After serving in the U.S. Army, Mr. Flatin entered the Foreign Service in 1956. His Foreign Service career included positions in Afghanistan, Germany, Australia, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1993.

FLATIN: Then we went back to Washington where I served in INR from 1959 to 1961. In INR I was in the section that dealt with Central European affairs, the German speaking part of Europe. There I was pleased to see that our particular part of INR was very closely integrated with the desks. The practice in GER at that time was to ensure that all the INR officers participated in all the staff meetings. And indeed the purpose was to ensure that they had a reservoir of officers to assign to jobs in Europe. There were a lot of jobs in Germany, and these jobs were largely staffed by people who had experience in either GER, or in the INR equivalent to GER. All of us at one time or another finally ended up in Germany on assignment. We were one of the very few INR units that had that close relationship with our desks.

I think there are a lot of Ph.D studies that could be done on our occupation of Germany. It was rather exciting. This was the late 1950s and early 1960s and already at that time Helmut Schmidt was being identified by our officers in Germany as a young and coming politician. And it was predicted even as early as 1959 and 1960 as a future Prime Minister of Germany. When he became Chancellor it was as if a train had come into a station on time.

We made an effort to get along with all parties, and in Berlin where I worked, the SPD was in power and we had no problem. The SPD and the CDU were both committed to German cooperation in NATO and of the British economic organs of Western Europe.

Indeed it was against our policy to favor one party over another. The policy was to address ourselves to all parties, not just the CDU and SPD, but also the Free Democrats. I have never seen any American officer in Germany try to favor one party over the other. And indeed that paid off because we were constantly dealing on an even level with the other party, and eventually when they came into federal power, they held no resentments against us.

I would say that we regarded Germany in the context of our Cold War confrontation as being our

strongest position. We were positioned right up against the Iron Curtain with a state which fortunately was well led, and was wealthy, and was doing well and we regarded as a linchpin of our defense against the east. A strong united and prosperous Germany, and one friendly to us. Germany was regarded as of great value to us.

Reunification was our stated policy. It was the stated policy of the German government. It was in their constitution. If you recall the constitution provides that these other "laender" in the east could just simply apply to enter without any further ado. Now there were people who said, at a certain stage the Germans had lost heart in the possibility of reunification and that some didn't think it was a good idea, or didn't think it was realistic. But if you ever got to know Germans really well, you could see that this was indeed still on their agenda, and you saw how fast it finally occurred in the moment it came. So it was always our intention that this occur, and indeed in Berlin we had the discipline of ensuring that we kept this in front of us. We regarded Berlin as one city, and that the Soviet sector was the Soviet sector of greater Berlin. We didn't use the term West Berlin. West Berlin was a defeatist type of term. We would say, the western sectors of greater Berlin.

One thing I remember about the incoming of the Kennedy administration was the great attention that President Kennedy gave to details. There was a colleague of mine at the neighboring desk who was dealing with Canadian affairs, and he had done a position paper on our relationship with Canada, particularly in the economic area. And one day he got a telephone call at his desk and the person was asking all kinds of questions about something on page 27 or 33, and he was in a hurry because he had another project. And the person said, "I really would appreciate more information on that." And then he said, "You are going to have to come through channels because I have just had so many other projects to pick that up would involve having to shift priorities." And the caller said, "I didn't explain. This is President Kennedy." And it was indeed President Kennedy, and actually he swept everything off his desk. But it illustrates how Kennedy really did get down to the nitty-gritty of detail, and it was an exciting time.

But vis-a-vis Germany, our posting to Germany, and in my whole Foreign Service career, has been consistent. And I have watched it closely, and I still watch it. I think its really something we deserve good credit for. We have followed a consistent, productive policy on Germany as a nation. We've pursued our own interest as well as those of the Germans very well.

I was later in charge of the police in Berlin; we were constantly looking for not only communists in the police leadership, but also ex-Nazis. I observed especially right-wing groups and their activities. I never had any concern that this was going to be important danger for the future of German democracy, and German unity. And yet you shouldn't forget that Hitler had only about 22 people with him when he got underway. We had indications of hundreds of thousands of Germans marching in the streets to protest this type of right-wing action.

I think in the case of the Germans one has to fairly remember that more than one-half of the German population living today wasn't alive at the time of the Third Reich. And I think Germans are perfectly aware of not only the morale considerations, but what disaster brought on their heads. The destruction of their country, and the fact that they had to live under alien control for half a century. That is pretty sobering.

CLAUDE GROCE
Radio Operator, Voice of America, USIS
Munich (1959-1961)

Claude Groce began working for the Voice of America in 1950 in Washington, DC. He has also worked with the Motion Pictures Service and served abroad in Germany. Mr. Groce was interviewed by Jack O'Brien in 1988.

GROCE: I applied for the job in Munich and Barry Zorthian picked me. The Munich operation of the Voice had, since 1951 or 1952, been a radio center. It was a forward outpost of the Voice of America, actually broadcasting, originating programs to be broadcast into Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union a la Radio Free Europe, which was also created about the same time by the U.S. Government.

There was a newsroom established over there; there was a policy office -- policy mechanism. But in 1958, at the time John Albert was assigned over there and at the time Jerry Donohue was assigned over there, a change occurred. I don't know whether the change was strictly for budget reasons or because of some of the problems that had developed in the political involvements of some of the staff in the Munich operation and their opposition to some of the instructions and guidance they'd been getting from Washington and, worse, in some cases, their actual subversion of such guidances. In any case, it was decided and decreed that all original broadcasting would be done from Washington. What had been a so-called radio center in Munich would become a program center in Munich, recording program materials for sending back by tape in the pouch to Washington for rebroadcast in the languages and in English.

So by the time I arrived there in the spring of 1959, we were covering international conferences, covering disarmament talks, covering international organizations headquartered in Geneva or Vienna or wherever. We would go from Munich to Berlin or to Geneva or to Paris or to London, but the center, the focal point was Munich, partly for the historical reasons of the existence of the facilities there, the office space, and the people with the expertise.

We used old SCODA transmitters which the Germans had seized from the Czechs in 1938. Some of them are still broadcasting today.

I was called a program officer, but I was made the senior editor, in effect. I would edit the work that other people did. I also did a lot of writing myself.

In converting it from a radio center to a program center, a number of the people who stayed on there had been connected with foreign language operations, and had done relatively little writing in the English language, certainly in broadcast terms, short sentences. So one of my chief responsibilities in the early days was to teach these people to write standard radio English.

I will never forget one of the first scripts I got from one of the foreign language broadcasters,

who had been an eminent journalist in his own right for many, many years, including in the English language. The first script of his I saw, the second or third sentence was a page long. You would think it was a novel by Thomas Mann! I had to sit down with this gentleman and go through it very carefully, line by line, and we made a script out of it.

John Albert was in charge of the Munich operation when I arrived. John Albert is probably the single most politically sensitive -- fingertip sensitive -- person I have ever known. The man had an almost uncanny ability to sense moods, to sense trends, to sense what was going to happen next. It was really a fascinating thing to watch and to try to learn from him, although I am afraid some of that can't be learned; it is almost intuitive.

When I arrived, John came back from Geneva, where he, and Jerry Donohue and Ed Brown were covering a conference at the time. He came back just to greet me and went right back that weekend.

I was then, in effect, in charge of at least the program side of the Munich operation. Al Julia, his deputy, was in charge of running the whole shebang. But I would be on the phone to our people in Geneva every day, because they would feed a spot in the afternoon for transmission back to Washington. On some occasions, such as this, we would be feeding Washington rather than sending it in by tape when it was obviously a topical event that had to be covered that day. This was the beginning, in effect, of what became the bureau, which is constantly feeding back to Washington.

I will never forget one day there was a grammatical error in a spot that had been fed up from Geneva. I said, "There is a grammatical error here."

John Albert got on at the other end and screamed at me, and said, "Damn it, we know it is a grammatical error! It had to be written that way because otherwise we would be acknowledging the legitimacy of the East German Government!" This was at the time of the arguments over the shape of the table -- remember that discussion?

So I backed off quickly, but I had the feeling I would never get along with this guy -- I would never be able to work with John Albert, because he was such a tyrant, seemingly. Although I had been told by people who worked in his office in Washington before I went over there that he was really a pussycat beneath all that bluster. And he turned out to be really one of the finest bosses I have ever had.

It was a very interesting series of events and of coverages. During that period, I learned that I could collaborate with somebody. As a reporter or writer, I had always operated strictly alone, but there I met the man that I could really collaborate with -- Jerry Donohue. I would be at the typewriter, and he would be at my shoulder, and it was as though these two minds were funneling in together into that typewriter. It was just incredible. We really thought right together.

KENNETH N. SKOUG

**Political Officer
Munich (1959-1961)**

Kenneth N. Skoug was born in North Dakota in 1931. He attended both Columbia College and George Washington University. His career included positions in Germany, Mexico, Prague, Moscow, and Venezuela. Mr. Skoug was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in August 2000.

Q: Well, you went to the German Desk when?

SKOUG: In June of 1959.

Q: Had you already had an assignment to Germany?

SKOUG: No, I was still on my first tour.

Q: No, I mean was an assignment to Germany in the offing?

SKOUG: Yes, definitely. I was assigned to Germany.

Q: Where were you going to go?

SKOUG: Munich.

Q: While you were on the German Desk, what were you doing?

SKOUG: Well, it was mainly the reviewing the reporting in connection with the Geneva Conference. John Foster Dulles died around that time, and there was a hiatus between the first round in Geneva and the second round. The Geneva Conference came about because Khrushchev had given the United States, Britain, and France six months to get their affairs in order and make an arrangement with the German Democratic Republic, and then he was going to dismiss any responsibility of the Soviet Union for the situation in Berlin. It looked, of course, like a major crisis. It was a crisis. Adenauer and De Gaulle really wanted to tough it out. They just wanted to thumb their nose at Khrushchev and say, "Just try it." But the United States, under pressure from the British, decided to negotiate. Macmillan was really the one who wanted to negotiate. I was handling reporting coming out of Germany or out of the Soviet Union. In one case I translated a German telegram from their embassy in Moscow which the Germans showed to us. I was learning what the issues were, getting a first-hand close-up on it.

Q: Was there within the State Department a real sense of crises, that we might be going head-to-head with the Soviets?

SKOUG: Yes, until late 1959 that was a tense period. It wasn't until the autumn Khrushchev visit to the United States, that tension was allayed. Eisenhower took him out and showed him Roswell Garst's farm in Iowa and so forth, and Khrushchev seemed to be a jolly gentleman. He wasn't. It didn't last long. It was his crisis. He created it..

Q: While you were on the German Desk, what were you seeing in reports about how the German people felt about all this?

SKOUG: Well, it wasn't so much reporting on how the German people saw it. The German Government essentially, was Adenauer who was worried that our talking to the Russians would end up in some, what he would call, "*fauler Kompromiss*," a 'lazy compromise,' and we would give the Russians essentially what they wanted under cover of a bargain. That didn't happen. In fact, the talks lost their meaning really when Khrushchev decided to do his travels. I think that ended the Geneva Conference. It had been intended to see what would induce the Russians to back off. In the circumstances of the Soviet threat, one can hardly understand having diplomatic talks otherwise than a willingness to consider making some concessions, and Adenauer was terribly worried about the possible concessions. He didn't want to make any and did not feel they were necessary. He and De Gaulle were more inclined to call what they regarded as Khrushchev's bluff.

Q: It's interesting, I've interviewed people who were in Berlin a little later and were extremely worried - Dick Smyser, among others - extremely worried when the Kennedy Administration came in, because they felt that they were ready to deal, to make compromises which would have jeopardized our position in Berlin. They didn't know the territory, and it took a while for the Kennedy group, you might say, to understand the issues. You were in Munich from when to when?

SKOUG: From August, 1959, to August, 1961.

Q: Who was the consul general there when you were there?

SKOUG: Eddie Page was the first one. Page had been a colleague of George Kennan and Charles Bohlen, and he was widely regarded as an expert on Eastern Europe. He went from Munich to Bulgaria. He opened our post in Sofia, which had been closed for a number of years. So he was only in Munich until the last part of 1959. I liked Page. He was a nice gentleman. Then he was succeeded by Ken Scott, W. Kenneth Scott, who had been in the administrative area of state and had not previously served abroad. A nice man, he didn't speak German. Page spoke fluent German, so it was tough for Scott to follow him. One of the things Scott did was to get rid of the so-called *Hochadel*. Bavaria was full of royalty, you know, going back to its independent days, and these people took themselves quite seriously. They were always on guest lists, and Eddie Page handled them very well. Scott wondered how important they really were. They were not important. They were important maybe socially, but they were not of any political or economic importance. So they were dropped as contacts, and of course they resented Scott as a consequence.

Q: No, I think a lot of our posts suffer from these sort of hangers-on who have been around for a long time. Well, what were you doing, to begin with?

SKOUG: In Munich. Well, I was assigned as a visa officer, and so I did visas. I did immigrant visas to begin with. Again, it was sort of like being at GW. I soon found that I had plenty of time

on my hands. We had more than enough officers to handle immigrant visas, and frequently the consul - not the consul general, but the fellow running the visa section - would knock off and have a beer or do something in the afternoon. I used to go out to German events, in the evening or on weekends because I was interested. Of course, I was doing a Ph.D. dissertation, and I was hoping to get my feet wet on the political side. About three weeks after arriving, I attended a speech by Pastor Martin Niemoeller, who had been a German U-boat commander in the First World War. An anti-Nazi, he became a militant pacifist. He thought Adenauer was leading the country to war, building up the German army and so forth. Niemoeller was a very controversial character. He spoke on September 1, 1959, and I attended it with my wife. The question was *Wo stehen wir heute?* 'Where are we today?' It was 20 years since the German attack on Poland, and in Niemoeller's view the Federal Republic was going down the same road again. Well, the talk went on and on and on for literally two or three hours, so at a certain point, I got tired. I could see my wife was tired, and I was tired, too. And Niemoeller's message was quite clear, that we were in a very terrible situation. We went to the door to leave, and it seemed to be locked. And for the first time in my life, I experienced a situation where I was trying to open a door that was being pressed by a horde of people on the other side. There was a great crowd outside the door. Anyway, they finally allowed me to push it open. My wife and I walked out, and here was this hostile crowd standing there. First there was silence, and then one of them said, "*Die sind nicht Deutschen*" 'They aren't Germans.' They let us pass through.

Q: *You were virtually walking out on the hero, is that it?*

SKOUG: No, no, no. These were anti-Niemoeller troops.

Q: *Oh, I see.*

SKOUG: Niemoeller was very controversial, and Niemoeller only had a crowd of people, of enthusiasts inside. He also had some enthusiasts who didn't like him on the outside. They were going to egg him, I suppose, when he came out. I wrote this up. I wrote it as a report and I gave it to the chief of the Political Section, who sent it back, "Thanks, but we don't need this." His boss was an old-timer named W. Garland Richardson, the deputy principal officer. My wife later spoke to Mrs. Richardson and mentioned having heard Niemoeller. Richardson called me in and asked why I had not reported on the speech, I said, "I did report it, but it was rejected." He said, "Let me see the report." I gave him the report, it went out to Bonn and Washington unchanged. The Political Officer was upset, "Why didn't you tell me you were doing..." I said, "Well, that's for you two guys to work out." The long and the short of it was, they decided to set up a rotation program, and they decided to establish a joint political-economic reporting section - well, they were two sections - but this swing man would be reporting on both of them. I was named to that position in late October. Remember I'd been at post less than three months. I got pulled out of the Visa section to become the political-economic officer. We had an economic officer who did little reporting, so I did almost all the economic work, and I did a substantial amount of political work. I thought it was great. I was very busy, but I was learning a lot. But anyway, that's how I got from visa work to political work.

Q: *Well, you mentioned something called "a wife." What was her background, and how did she get on the scene?*

SKOUG: It's hard to say exactly where she is from. She was born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, named Martha Reed, lived in Uniontown I think two weeks, and then went with her dad to Washington where he was working for the Roosevelt Administration closing or regulating banks. She went then to New York, where he was working for the Office of Alien Property on seized German and Italian assets. After high school in Forest Hills, her parents sent her to college in Virginia. I never met her in New York even though we overlapped there. In 1949-50, when I reached Columbia, she was a high school senior. She went to Randolph Macon Woman's College, and I met her in 1956, when I was in the CIC. We got married in 1958, and she's been with me ever since.

Q: What did she think when you thought about the Foreign Service?

SKOUG: Well, she knew that I was going into the Foreign Service, and I told her that this would not be the career for everyone. Well, she decided that she would do it, that she was interested in that. She had, you see, lived in various places, gone to college one place, lived in another. She studied French and German in college, so she was qualified.

Q: Once you start moving around it's a lot easier.

SKOUG: She was a tremendous Foreign Service wife. I mean, in the days when they still could comment on wives. I was sorry to see that end, because my wife always got tons of praise. She had been a prize-winning artist, an art major in college, and she used her access to foreign countries to do a lot of water color and acrylic painting. She's still painting, winning prizes, putting on exhibitions.

Q: We used to... Let's face it, an awful lot of the wives were a hell of a lot more important in getting the job done than the men.

SKOUG: She was a tremendous asset. For example, when we had a CODEL - my first CODEL was Allen Smith from California along with a man named Henderson from Ohio. I escorted them all around, and we also had a nice cocktail party for them. She fell right in to that. You see, my wife was born knowing how to do that. So when a lot of wives complained about having to make cookies or make this or that, Martha never complained. She just did it and she did a great job. So she was a tremendous help to me.

Q: You were in Munich until 1961. Were you able to keep track of Franz Josef Strauss? Was he sort of a contact, or was he pretty much Bonn-centered?

SKOUG: Oh, no. He was a little too high to be a contact. I was a vice-consul, and he was the defense minister of Germany. But he was an approachable guy. He was very, very sensible. His German was beautiful. In Bavaria, even if you speak German and understand it, Bavarian German is a little different, but Strauss's, although he was the son of a Munich butcher, I think, spoke beautiful German. I attended some of his speeches. He was one of those orators who knew how to deal with hecklers. He would, for example, say, "If there were no German army..." and then the hecklers would say, "That's what we want," and he would say, "Then you wouldn't have

the freedom to be here" or "You wouldn't be here to be able to say that." He could always use hecklers.

Bavaria had on April 1, 1960, local elections which proved very significant nationally and even internationally. The SPD in post-war elections had done well in local elections, particularly in major cities. But it had failed to win in national elections. The Social Democrats could govern cities and states effectively, but their vague melange of pacifism, neutralism and nationalism could not compete on the national level with the straightforward pro-Western foreign and defense policy of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. In West Berlin, however, the mayor was Willy Brandt, a very popular Social Democrat who had just won an election there and who was even traveling abroad to win support for the Allied position in the face of Khrushchev's threat to the city. The SPD decided to try to use Brandt's popularity in the Munich mayoralty election where Hans Jochen Vogel was running against three rivals. Brandt did not speak in Bavaria, but his presence on the podium with Vogel and with another Social Democratic candidate for mayor in Regensburg, which Martha and I attended, was sufficient to transfer his popularity. The result was a tremendous success for the SPD in both places, a success which Brandt repeated in other local elections in the Federal Republic. He made it clear even to the party leadership, which did not much like his views, that he could help the party if given a chance. Even to the thickest skulls-and some were quite thick-it was apparent that if someone liked Brandt could neutralize Adenauer's foreign policy advantage in a national election, the SPD could hope to govern in Bonn. Adenauer at that time happened to be in Japan. I recall attending a victory celebration held by the SPD in Munich where it was confidently predicted that the news from Munich would go right to Tokyo. I'm sure it did because Adenauer was astute politically and must have been disturbed by the outcome of that election. By the way, Adenauer did lose his absolute majority in the Bundestag in the election of September 1961 when the SPD ran Brandt against him and a few years later the SPD would be in power.

You already had the Bad Godesburg Party program, which was a reform movement in the SPD, and then you had the appeal for what they called a *gemeinsame Aussenpolitik*, a joint foreign policy. That was an appeal by Herbert Wehner, who had been one of the extreme left-wingers in the SPD, but Wehner was the man controlling power in the SPD who realized how important - he was the boss, you might say - how important it was to have Brandt as a candidate. And so you had essentially what the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* called "Wehner's Brandt." Wehner helped bring Brandt to power although Adenauer immediately rejected the call for a joint foreign policy, saying more important than a joint foreign policy was a "*richtige Aussenpolitik*," a 'correct foreign policy.' Still, Brandt had an issue, and the SPD knew it, and they didn't let go of this. And so in the late 1960s the SPD came to share power in Bonn. In 1969 the SPD came to power in its own right.

Q: Well, then, this might be a good place to stop, I think. Is there anything else we should cover about Germany on this particular go-around? I put at the end where we are.

SKOUG: Sure, yes, I think so. I have a few additional recollections. A couple vignettes might recall the flavor of those days. The post had sent Hans Goppel, Minister of the Interior in the Bavarian Government, on a USIS sponsored tour of the United States. He was viewed as a "comer," and he later did become Minister President of Bavaria. But he was not at all impressed

by his tour. Upon return he gave a lecture with slides to the *Columbus Society* in March 1960 which Martha and I attended. Goppel came late, and the room was dark when he began to speak and show his slides. His reactions were highly adverse until he showed a German merchant ship in New Orleans- "*Gott sei Dank, die deutsche Fahne!*" - thank God, the German flag. Then the lights came on and he saw us sitting there. "*Sie verstehen nicht deutsch.*" "(You don't understand German)" he said hopefully to my wife. "*Doch, Herr Minister.*"

In May 1960 the post got a traveling group from ICAF, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, together with the top leadership of the Bavarian branch of the DGB, the German trade union federation. Erwin Essl, head of the far left Metal Workers Union, was holding forth on how hospitals, schools and transportation were what West Germany needed-not an army. A tranquil social order was the best security against attack. I inquired what happened to France in 1940 when attacked by a stronger power. Essl paused, then said that France was conquered because it lacked social justice. On that occasion the DGB deputy chairman, Seitz, smilingly called me a "kalte Krieger" (Cold Warrior, but worse in the German context) for seeing the USSR as some kind of threat.

Another memorable event was lunching close to Hans Seeböhm, the federal Minister of Transport and "Speaker" of the Sudeten German *Landmannschaft* who delivered a speech on the occasion. He not only belabored the Czechs, who had expelled his countrymen from Bohemia in 1945, but also the American occupation authorities in Bavaria. He dwelt upon his own suffering under the Nazi regime, the facts of which were somewhat obscure. In those days the refugees wielded considerable influence in all the Bavarian political parties and had their own "Bloc" of those "Torn from their Homeland and Deprived of their Rights," the GB/BHE. When Seeböhm later spoke at "Sudeten German Day" in Munich, the huge square was jam-packed. But the refugees, fortunately, were all the while being enveloped peacefully into the democratic social order in the Federal Republic. Orators like Seeböhm were useful to the Soviet Bloc propagandists as bugbear for a non-existent German lust for revenge.

Q: *Well, why don't we stop here, and we'll pick this up the next time in 1961, and you're ready to go where?*

SKOUG: To Mexico. The Consul General in Munich and the Political Section in Bonn wanted me transferred to Bonn, an assignment I would have welcomed, but personnel in Washington assigned me to Panama. When that fell through, they switched me to Mexico, so there we went.

PERRY W. LINDER
Consular Officer
Hamburg (1959-1961)

Perry W. Linder was born and raised in California. He attended San Jose State College and the University of California at Berkeley. He entered the Foreign Service in 1957 and held several positions in Germany, Jamaica, Honduras, France, Benin, Belgium, Jordan, Greece and Spain. He was interviewed by

Raymond Ewing in 1996.

Q: So after your initial orientation training period at the Foreign Service Institute, did you go immediately abroad, or did you stay in Washington...

LINDER: No, my first assignment was here in Washington. I worked in the Office of German Affairs. At that time the Office of German Affairs was like a bureau today; it was a very large organization. I worked initially in the public affairs office, and later became a special assistant to the director, Jacques Reinstein.

Q: Of German Affairs?

LINDER: Yes, he was the head of the office of German Affairs.

Q: About how long were you in Washington in that office?

LINDER: Not very long, maybe a year and a half.

Q: And then you went to your first post?

LINDER: My first post was Hamburg, Germany, a natural follow-on to an assignment in the office of German Affairs...

Q: Had you learned some German when you were stationed in Germany in the Army?

LINDER: Not really, no.

Q: Did you have some German training before you went to Hamburg?

LINDER: At that time we had a German language school in Frankfurt, and I was assigned there. I spent three months in Frankfurt and then on to Hamburg.

Q: And in Hamburg you did the usual kind of junior officer consular work?

LINDER: That's right, I was a consular officer, and I issued visas and refused visas, and then became the consular officer for passport and citizenship, shipping, that sort of thing.

Q: American services?

LINDER: American services, yes.

Q: Who was the Consul General, do you remember?

LINDER: His name was Ed Maney; I think it was his last post; he retired from there. He was from Texas. Quite a role model, a person who had been in the Foreign Service for a long time, and who was comfortable at what he was doing, and managed the consulate general well.

Q: This period at the end of the '50s was a time when there were a number of posts in then-West Germany, Federal Republic, and of large US presence, there were military in the Hamburg area, I think, were there?

LINDER: Hamburg was in the British zone. We had a group of military veterinarians, in the consulate. It was a large consulate--we had a large CIA presence, USIA had a big establishment there as well. We also had an office at that time in Hannover. It was a sub-office of Hamburg with two FSN's.

Q: Providing consular services?

LINDER: No, it was there for commercial reasons. Irv Shiffman was the Consul in Hannover at the time. When he went on home leave I spent three months in Hannover; that must have been 1958. I know I did a report on Volkswagen; they were in that consular district.

Q: Did you see if they had some promise?

LINDER: At that time, they were already selling Volkswagens all over the world and doing very well.

Q: The Beetle and the Bug.

LINDER: Yes.

RICHARD R. WYROUGH
US Army
Germany (1959-1962)

Richard Wyrrough was born and raised in New Jersey. He graduated from West Point in 1950 and then went on to Georgetown University. He served in the United States Army in Germany from 1959-1962 as an Operations Officer and Battalion Commander. He later held positions in the Pentagon and served in Vietnam. He also held several positions in the Department of State. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1996.

Q: You left West Point when?

WYROUGH: I left West Point in the summer of 1959 having just been promoted to major, and went to Germany where I was an infantry officer assigned to an armor division. My principal assignment there, in the course of a year, was the S-3, or operations officer of a tank battalion, and then later battalion commander. Do you have a military background, before your Foreign Service?

Q: I was in the Air Force as an enlisted man but military history has always been my bag.

WYROUGH: While I was with this tank battalion...in those days in Germany, there was a fierce competition among armor units, tank battalions, for something called the Seventh Army Tank Gunnery Trophy. As an infantry officer, my battalion won it. I used to take great glee in goading over my armor friends. In any event, after a year there, I was assigned as the senior aide to the Seventh Army commander and served in that capacity for a couple of years.

Q: Who was the Seventh Army commander when you were there?

WYROUGH: His name was Garrison Davidson. His wife was a sister of Al Grunther. It was from that perspective that we watched the developments leading up to the construction of the Berlin Wall. During the summer of '61, I was assigned to the job in the summer of '60, actually all through the spring and the summer of '61, we would get these daily briefings by the staff about the influx of East Germans into West Berlin.

Q: As refugees.

WYROUGH: It was a tense moment. So I must say, like so many people having lived through all of that, it was with great surprise that we watched the wall come down.

Q: What was the attitude within the Seventh Army about when the wall went up? In the first place, did it come as a surprise?

WYROUGH: I think as the summer wore on there was a sense that something had to happen. Something had to be done to stop the flow. But it's been so long ago that I'm not one of these people that have great instant recall. But I know that my wife will tell stories now that we had to keep rations in the trunk of our car. We had to periodically go on little exercises, to evacuate if necessary. What kind of a mobilization there was? I just don't remember.

Q: Obviously it was a time of tenseness.

WYROUGH: Oh, it was certainly a time of tenseness, and I was really very fortunate given my vantage point. I was able to accompany the Army commander as he visited the units throughout the Army. We went into Berlin before the wall went up. I was in Berlin after the wall was up, just before I came home. The change was really quite dramatic. We visited units of the Seventh Army that were very close to the East German border, the Czech border. There was a high state of readiness and, I suppose, certainly some uncertainty as to just what was going to happen.

I came home from Germany in the spring of '62, after our youngest son had been born in Germany. By then we had three sons. We came home on the USS Independence. It was an interesting time. I accompanied General Davidson who was then assigned to command the First Army in New York, Governor's Island, and I had been selected before I came home to go to the Army Command Staff College. We were at the Army's Command Staff College during the Cuban missile crisis.

My first visit to Berlin, incidentally, backing up a little bit, was part of a trip to Copenhagen and to the Netherlands. That was in April of '61 during the Bay of Pigs.

A year at the Leavenworth Command & General Staff College, then I came to Washington for my first three year assignment in the Pentagon. In the military your assignments are certainly influenced by your networking and previous assignments. So having had the four years at West Point I was assigned to something called the Office of International Policy Plans, or something like that, in the Army Staff Strategic Plans. That was very short lived, because I was assigned as the Military Assistant to the Army General Council in his capacity as special assistant to Cy Vance, who was then the Secretary of the Army, but also the Defense member of an ad hoc group that was overseeing the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs. The ransoming of all the brigade people. When I joined the group, it was Al Haig and myself, and Joe Califano who was the general counsel. We worked for Cy Vance.

The Cuban exiles captured by Castro at the Bay of Pigs had been ransomed and they were scattered in a series of small military posts around the country: Ft. Knox, Ft. Benning, Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio.

WADE MATTHEWS
Consular Officer
Munich (1959-1962)

Wade Matthews was born and raised in North Carolina. He attended the University of North Carolina and served in the US Army between 1955 and 1956. He then entered the Foreign Service in 1957 and held positions in Munich, Salvador, Lorenzo Marques, Trinidad and Tobago, Lima, Guyana, Ecuador, and Chile. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.

Q: After the course, you served briefly as an exchange officer in the Department and then were assigned to Munich. How was the exchange officer assignment?

MATTHEWS: First, I should note that I really didn't want that job. I wanted to go to Munich right away. In fact, I had applied for a consular job in Munich. I probably would have preferred an assignment to a political job, but consular work ran a close second. I had no problem at all in doing consular work; in fact, I was quite open minded about the possibility of making that my career. I had no particular economic background and my interests were not that great in that subject. I might have taken an economic assignment if it were in a particularly interesting post where I could have some challenges even as junior officer. I probably would have tried hard to steer away from administrative work.

In Washington, I was happily assigned to the International Exchange Service. That was an office in the bureau for Public Affairs. I had one of the better junior officers' jobs. I was a special projects officer in the Special Projects Division of IES. That meant that issues which couldn't be pigeon-holed neatly into some other divisions were assigned to us as well as those which may

not have appeared important enough by other division chiefs. The latter tended to land on my desk. We had no geographic focus nor much functional one. So it was a challenge and learning experience which is the reason why I joined the Foreign Service.

As an example of what I did, one case involved Joe Blachford, a tennis star who later went into politics. He and his partner wanted to play exhibition games and give clinics around the world. We didn't have resources for such a program, but Blachford was more interested in facilitative assistance to work out arrangements for his program, which was a new enterprise for him. So I helped him to the extent I could.

Another case involved a physician who came to the Department with an idea: establish a program called "Project HOPE." This program consisted of sending a medical ship to underserved areas of the world. Since it was not clear that such a project could be implemented, the Department didn't want to invest any resources in it. The sponsor said that he had an offer of assistance from the U.S. Navy, but questions remained. Could he get a surplus ship from the Navy? Could he find the resources necessary to equip it? This case came to me. I developed the initial Departmental assistance program for "Project HOPE." Today the program still continues although it has left the seas and is now implemented on land. That was a very successful program. I don't claim much credit for that success, but I was the project officer for the Department and developed the Department's involvement, which consisted essentially of providing facilitative assistance.

Those are two illustrations of what I did in IES; I lasted there for about eighteen months.

Q: In 1959, you went to Munich, a large consulate general, where you served until 1962. What were your duties in Munich?

MATTHEWS: I think I was one of the very few officers in our class who was assigned to his or her first choice of posts. Most of my colleagues tried for embassies and many were disappointed. When I first arrived I participated in the general rotation program that the C.G. had developed for junior officers. Since I was assigned by the Army to Augsburg, I had some familiarity with Munich. I spent a year in the consular section, exclusively in the Visa Section. That was a normal assignment for a junior officer regardless of background. We had a large Visa Section; we had about six or seven officers in that Section. About half were junior officers like myself on their first tour. I believe that I spent the first six months working as immigrant officer in charge of one of three teams. Each team consisted of about 5 or 6 local national employees. They processed the applications - according to an alphabetical order. We processed both German citizens as well as refugees living in camps. The program was in full swing. We had a large number of refugees applying for immigrant visas; many came from Eastern Europe.

Each application required a lot of processing. We coordinated with Immigration and Nationalization Service (INS). Each applicant had to be interviewed; it was then a much more drawn out process than today's. We asked a lot of questions about the individual's background; there were many records that had to be reviewed which often raised many more questions. One of the most difficult issues was the applicant's involvement in Nazi activities or in a communist movement. Many applicants had criminal records; a few applicants had been in and out of insane

asylums. So we were quite busy and I enjoyed it for the six months I worked on immigrant visas.

Then I was offered an opportunity to head up the non-immigrant unit. There was only one American officer in that unit and I served there for about six months. Munich was a center for the Eastern Europe emigres. I had to go to Neuberg once a month; I would exchange information with knowledgeable people including interviewing refugee camp residents. Those were preliminary contacts with applicants. Most of my time in Neuberg was devoted to information collection from the German authorities - information we needed to pass on an applications from refugees in camps. I had hoped that after one year in consular work, I could move to a political job. There were two positions in the Consulate General for junior officers. One job was the second position in a two officers unit which concentrated on internal political affairs. The other was the second officer in the Eastern Europe political affairs - again a two officer unit. That section dealt with Radio Liberty, Radio Free Europe and liaised with groups working on Eastern Europe, including East Germany.

When I first arrived, I had an interview with Ken Scott, the Consul General, who later became our ambassador to Ghana. The Deputy Principal Officer for most of my tour was Owen Zurhellen who finished his Foreign Service career as Ambassador to Suriname where I had contact with him again when I was DCM and Chargé in Guyana. Both Scott and Zurhellen told me that after a year in the Consular section, they were prepared to let me try a political job. So I talked to Richard Johnson who was the head of the Political Section. He told me that there was a Bavarian Party which in the last election had garnered about 20% of the vote. The consulate general did not think that this party had much of a future, but wasn't certain. In any case, the Political Section did not have enough time to pay much attention to it, but Johnson was ready to let me become the expert on that Party. He said he would help and provide guidance if necessary. He did note that I was still fully employed in the Visa Section. So all political work would have to be done in the evening and on week-ends. That is what I did; I met many Party member officials. When they would come to see the CG, I would be asked to sit in, if I had time. I went to their various rallies and conventions. I wrote some reports on this Party which reflected some skepticism about its future. In fact, the Party disappeared in the longer run. But I got a good introduction into political work - contacting, reporting, etc. Munich was unique among the CGs because it had a lot of political reporting to do.

So when I moved to the Embassy, I was well prepared for report writing. My work had been critiqued by the CG, I had learned how to make contacts; I had learned interviewing skills.

Q: What was the Munich CG's view of Germany and its future? Were we still concerned about a rise of the right again? Was there any concern about Germany splitting into separate Laender?

MATTHEWS: The prevalent view, which I shared, at the time was that Germany's policies were in accord with our own interests. When I was in the Army 1955-1956, *Ostpolitik* was well underway at the time and was blossoming while I was in Munich and thereafter.

We had some concern for the reappearance of a Nazi-like movement as well as the possibility of a fragmented Germany. But I think in general these potential problems were not high on our agenda. We wanted a viable central government which was not immobilized by powers given to

the states. We of course supported federalism, which is common to Germany and the U.S. If one of the states had seceded, it most likely would have been Bavaria because that Land had a lot of unique institutions. The Christian Democrats were the largest party in Bavaria at the time, but it had to go into a coalition with the Christian Social Union (CSU) to govern Bavaria - as it still true today. Strauss at the time was the Chairman of the CSU. He was dynamic and very conservative; he would from time to time snipe that the CDU in Bonn. The Social Democrats were the opposition in those days. It was a powerful party and we believed that it might take over the government sometime in the future - as it did.

We were very concerned that the Social Democrats maintain an anti-communist attitude - an attitude more in tune with our security interests and U.S. interests in Germany. The party had a radical left group which were suggesting policies entirely inimical to our interests. Fortunately this group was a small minority. We were concerned, but ranked the possibility of a party take-over by the radicals in Bavaria pretty low on the scale. We maintained close contacts with all three major parties. In fact, I think CG Munich had better contacts with the Social Democrats than it had with the CSU.

There was some concern, although relatively minor, about Strauss' tendencies to the right. We had very good relations with him. Strauss was no one's puppet; he had his own mind, but we did not view at the time as a potential leader of a revanchist neo-Nazi group. I think we might have been a little more concerned had Strauss been Chancellor rather than Konrad Adenauer or Ludwig Earhart. We viewed Strauss as a generally constructive force. His economic policies were certainly in accord with ours. The chancellors in Bonn had similar views on economic development, so that worked well. Strauss was one the most fiercely anti-communists in politics.

As I remember, we were most concerned with was the DFU (the German Peace Movement). Included in the membership of that party were some old communists who dominated the party, some radical socialists, etc. The Communists Party was illegal in Germany at the time.

The DFU either existed when I arrived in Munich, or was founded around that time. It had been a splinter group which organized itself into a political party. We were somewhat concerned that this party might grow; it didn't, but we kept a watchful eye on it. We had contacts with that group, as we had with all political parties in Bavaria, but we left no doubt in the DFU that we didn't approve of it. It was not a group of people who were supporters of the U.S.

Q: The period we are discussing was post-Hungarian uprising. We were concerned that the emigre group, much through Radio Free Europe, was trying to incite Hungarians to take up arms again - without U.S. support. Did we watch these emigre groups to make sure they were not inciting action that might drag us into a development with which we wanted no part?

MATTHEWS: Yes and No. The U.S. government was watching these groups. But I was in the Internal Political Section and this issue was not on our agenda. I did of course talk to my colleagues in the Eastern Affairs Section who sat just down the hall from us. Kermit Midtune was in charge assisted by Kenneth Skoag. They were in the CG for about the same period that I was. They carried out the liaisons with the emigres and wrote reports on these contacts. There were other parts of the U.S. government who also had a watch brief - i.e. elements of an

intelligence agency, the Embassy in Bonn, our defense establishment in Bavaria as well as probably our people in Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty. I think it is fair to say that there were some concerns about U.S. policy before and at the time of the Hungarian uprising. A number of people thought that we had been a catalyst or at least not tried to hold back the Hungarian insurgents in 1956. I think that experience had soured most the emigre groups; they did not look to us for military support or other assistance had there been another 1956 event.

PAUL M. KATTENBURG
Political Officer
Frankfurt (1959-1962)

Dr. Paul M. Kattenburg was born in Brussels, Belgium and emigrated to the United States in 1940. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina and served in the U.S. Army in the Office of Strategic Services. He later received a master's degree from Yale University before entering the Foreign Service in 1955. Dr. Kattenburg's Foreign Service career included positions in Guyana, Vietnam, Germany, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

KATTENBURG: I had it directly from Mr. Williams, Elwood Williams, on the German Desk, the permanent fixture on the German Desk, that I was picked out to go to Germany because I was capable of contact-making. They wanted someone in the Embassy in Bonn who would be around the Bundestag more. So I would supposedly do what I was doing in Manila -- I couldn't understand Germany as an assignment. I didn't know German and couldn't figure it out.

My original assignment had been to Bonn. While on home leave in Michigan we got a phone call that Wendell Blancke, who had known me earlier when I had been Vietnam Desk Officer and he had been Burmese Desk Officer, and who was then Consul General in Frankfurt. He had picked me to replace his departing political officer and he said that I should go to Frankfurt rather than to Bonn. I called Mr. Williams about this [I was quite happy to work for Wendell, by the way, as he was a wonderful person)

Williams told me that we did most of the important political reporting from the Consulates in those days. I think that changed over the years and more was done in Bonn. But it is quite true that Bonn didn't really have an internal political section that was worth a great deal. They followed the Bundestag, but they mainly negotiated.

One of the things that I remember was that it was a wonderful assignment. There are two points that I want to make about it. One was that I did a lot of liaison at the local level with elements of the U.S. military and helped them settle local problems that were apparently almost insuperable. Now Dennis Flynn was the political-military officer in Bonn, but he was totally tied up in high strategy and negotiations and NATO relations; so that someone was needed to help settle the problem we had, even in Wendell's time, with the mayor of Kaiserslautern whose garbage bills were not being paid by the army because the commander, Northern Area Commander in

Frankfurt, refused to pay because he felt they were over charging him. Then we had electric bill problems. I had a hand in those which gave me a new type of experience which I enjoyed entirely.

I also established a kind of informal POLAD position at Wiesbaden with the head of the Air Force in Europe, USAFE, or his staff, really. This was blessed by Wayland Waters, who was deputy to Wendell, and by Wendell and later his successor, Doersz, Edmund Doersz. Now Edmund Doersz was not really the smartest guy who ever came down the pike, but he was a very decent man, one who would do the right thing. Wayland Waters, who you may have known, had some physical problems that prevented him from doing a lot of traveling and moving about. But he was a wonderful officer. He was the executive, and I was sort of the deputy executive and political officer. Anyone who has as consular districts, the Saar, with its rich liquors and wine, Rhineland and Hessen, is bound to have a wonderful time. We had a great time. This was good for our children, who were going to the American Schools.

The other thing I wanted to signal, an unforgettable thing, was that I was there when the Wall was built in Berlin and I was there in October, 1961, and really lucked out. Mary and I were designated alternating officers from the consulates to drive the autobahns, the one from Munich, the one from Helmstedt and the one from Hamburg, and maintain our right to have access via Soviet controls, rather than East German controls, which was at the heart of the crisis of 1958-61. I turned out to have been picked at the time of confrontation at Check Point Charlie at the Wall on October 24, 1961. I will never forget the date. That was a great moment. All of a sudden my wife turned to me at about midnight -- we were there with the PAO in Berlin and a couple of people from the Mission in Berlin -- and said, "What are we doing here?. The kids are in Frankfurt." War did not erupt but it was an unforgettable moment. [I have just been back to Berlin in the past two weeks, and there are quite a number of changes!] So it was a very good assignment.

RICHARD W. BOEHM
Assistant General Services Officer
Hamburg (1959)

Economic Officer
Berlin (1959-1962)

Richard W. Boehm was born in New York, New York in 1926. He received a bachelor's degree from Adelphi college in 1950 and joined the Foreign Service in 1956. Mr. Boehm served in Japan, Germany, Luxembourg, Turkey, Thailand, Nepal, Cyprus, and Oman. This interview was conducted by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 27, 1994.

BOEHM: I think that you could express a preference at that time. You could put down three choices which you wanted for your next assignment. I got one of mine -- Germany. I forget what the other two were. Probably France was one of them, but I never was assigned to France, though

I kept thinking that I would be.

To my surprise and my horror, and this showed me the impact of my famous report on Okinawan reversion and the effect it had on the assignment process, I was assigned as Assistant General Services Officer in Hamburg. I didn't know what to make of this assignment. That was via the German language school in Frankfurt -- a three month course. It had just been cut back from a four month course.

I took my wife and children to Hamburg. I had two children by that time. I installed them in a house in Hamburg and went off to the language school in Frankfurt. I felt that I had better leave them in Hamburg, to get them settled, leaving me to concentrate entirely on German. That way I wouldn't be tempted to speak English all the time.

The language school then was headed by a very fine gentleman and a distinguished scholar of languages, Fritz Frauchiger, an American, despite his very German name. Immediately before that he had been head of the French language school in Nice. He had a traumatic experience there with Congressman John Rooney, who visited Nice and was displeased by what he thought was the life style of the students there. They were living in a very French style, having wine with their meals! Rooney didn't like this, although he had a taste for liquor. He arranged to have that school closed. Frauchiger was very much intimidated by the experience and was running the German school very carefully. We had to account in writing for every minute of the day. I thought that this was ridiculous, but I spent three months there.

The school was very good. You learned German, if you had any aptitude for languages. You learned good, solid, basic German in the three months. At the end of the school program, they asked us for recommendations on the school itself. My recommendation, which wasn't followed but which I still think was a very good one, was to get rid of the school and place the people assigned to the school with families in German university towns for the three months. Just let them learn German that way. It would have been a whole lot cheaper. The school was closed eventually. The reason given was that it was more cost effective to do the training in Washington, which is nonsense. It would have been even more cost effective to put people out among German families in university towns. But my idea was not taken seriously.

While I was at the language school, I was promoted. At that time it was felt that your assignment should roughly reflect your grade, which, I think, ceased to be the case later on. So I could no longer be Assistant General Services Officer in Hamburg. Instead, I was to be sent to the Economic Section of the Mission in Berlin. What a stroke of luck that was! So I called my wife with the good news of my promotion. The day I called her she had just finished unpacking and installing us in the house in Hamburg. I also told her that we would be going to Berlin. Her joy was less than unrestrained because she had been through this really difficult period by herself, not speaking any German, settling into Hamburg. She had finally completed the process, only to be told the very day that she had unpacked everything that we were going to move to Berlin, which we did. She came to love Berlin, as we all did. It was a great experience.

Let me give some background. I started the German language school at the very end of December, 1958, or the beginning of January, 1959. This meant that I went up to Berlin in April,

1959. At that time, of course, the United States and its two Western allies, Britain and France, were regularly facing off with the Soviets and their East German pawns about the status of Berlin, the rights the Western allies had in East Berlin, and the question of access -- the autobahn and the air corridors. The question was to what extent we could accept East German or, for that matter, Soviet control of our movements either within Berlin or to and from Berlin from the West. The tension was greatly enhanced when Khrushchev, in late 1958, demanded that the Western Allies get out of Berlin in six months. He said that the Soviet were going to turn over control of Berlin to the East Germans and end the Occupation. This was a virtual ultimatum.

It was under those circumstances, shortly before the ultimatum was to take effect, that we moved to Berlin. I found this a very exciting time to move up there. We drove in on the autobahn. I had bought a German car. You had to get Allied Berlin license plates and put them on the car before you entered the autobahn from the West. I had travel orders -- called flag orders -- issued by the United States Commandant in Berlin, which entitled me, then, to go through without being stopped, interfered with, or checked or controlled in any way by the East Germans -- or, for that matter, by the Soviets. You handed over the travel orders at a Soviet checkpoint and that was supposed to be it. That was one area, of course, where the Soviets and the East Germans had been hassling us -- trying to get us to hand a passport to an East German policeman on the autobahn and that kind of thing.

So we set out. We had been instructed on what to do if we were stopped by an East German or a Soviet. The standard procedure, if you were stopped by an East German, was to say, "I will speak only with a Soviet officer." I had to learn how to say this in German. I needed it, because we were stopped on the autobahn by an East German cop who wanted to see our documents. I said I would speak only to a Soviet officer. I said this in German, which he understood. Then he pretended to be stupefied by this, because this was on the utterly flat, northwest German plain. You could see for miles in every direction, and there was no sign of a Soviet officer anywhere. He said, "Where am I supposed to find a Soviet officer?" I said, "Well, that is your problem." So after holding us for five minutes he let us go on, and we got to Berlin without further incident. That was just the beginning of my introduction to what you had to expect.

I was assigned, as I said, to the Economic Section in Berlin. The head of the United States Mission at that time was Bernard Gufler, who left Berlin about a year after I arrived there. I stayed there for almost four years. Gufler was succeeded by Allan Lightner, a marvelous man who became a life long friend -- both he and his wife. He has since died -- about five years ago, but his wife is still in Maine, and I keep in touch with her. So I was in the Economic Section, although I didn't have any economic background.

On the Khrushchev ultimatum: there was a lot of excitement, but it varied. Some people were calm and others were nervous. I found that most Americans and Germans in West Berlin were calm. I didn't have any particular feeling or worry about the ultimatum but I didn't know enough about it to have much of a feeling as to what it meant. I found that most of the Americans, British, and French felt that the Soviets were bluffing and that we weren't going to be attacked or forcibly ejected from Berlin. Of course, this turned out to be true. Khrushchev more or less backed away, postponing his ultimatum. So I would say that Berlin was calmer than Washington. Washington took the situation very seriously and was always excited about it. In my view

Washington always misjudged or overestimated what the Soviets were capable of doing in Berlin. When I say "capable," I don't mean physically capable. I mean what they were politically capable of doing. In my view, there was never any question of an attack by the Soviets, or of the Soviets allowing the East Germans to use any rough stuff against West Berlin. But Washington was where the nuclear button was, and they took it much more seriously than we did in Berlin. Later on, this culminated in the Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting in Vienna.

The feeling in Washington was that there was a danger of a Soviet or Soviet-provoked East German attack of some kind on West Berlin and that this might lead to war, including nuclear war. It was generally agreed by everybody that the Allied forces in Berlin could not defend Berlin against a determined attack by the Soviets. The Soviets had something like 800,000 troops in East Germany -- a huge army, organized in what was called, Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, or the GSFG. Really, between us and the British and the French we probably had 11,000 or 12,000 troops in West Berlin. The West Germans, who at the time couldn't maintain an Army in West Berlin, had the Ready Police, a paramilitary, well trained force, consisting of 11,000 or 12,000 men. There was no question of defending the city against an attack. It was generally agreed that if war came, the Soviets could roll right through West Berlin and that the only way to stop them would be a nuclear response to such an attack.

Since nobody wanted to say that would never be done, the debate at the time was over agreements providing for no first use of nuclear weapons. It was proposed that we and the Soviets should reach agreement on "no first use" of nuclear weapons. We never would enter into such an agreement. Berlin, Germany, and Central Europe were part of the reason. The Soviets, as I say, really had us outgunned there, so we had to have the nuclear threat available.

However, in the minds of the policy makers and those responsible in Washington -- and I suppose that you have to give them credit for this -- was the fear that a nuclear war might be ignited over Berlin. In our view -- and I think that I can speak for almost everybody that I knew in West Berlin -- the Soviets simply were not interested in provoking that kind of conflict. They would bluff and toy and see what they could get away with, they would harass and hassle us, but they would always know when enough was enough. I still think that was the case.

The job of Economic Officer was a very interesting job. Berlin, of course, was in a tough spot economically. It was cut off from West Germany and depended on various kinds of subsidies and special conditions granted to it by both the West Germans and the Allies. West Berliners were exempt from service in the West German Army [the Bundeswehr], which, of course, was also required by the Occupation Statutes. There were subsidies. Orders for industrial goods from West Berlin firms placed by companies in West Germany were given transportation subsidies. There were grants of various kinds to keep the West Berlin economy afloat, because shipping costs and other difficulties caused by isolation were an economic disadvantage to Berlin. So they were getting extra help. The main thing for me was how West Berlin was doing economically, how these subsidies and various encouragements were working, where the economy was going, and how the population was going.

Berlin had an aging population. It was very underpopulated. We are talking about West Berlin. Berlin as a whole had been a city of five or six million people before World War II. West Berlin

in my time had a population of two million, and East Berlin maybe had a population of one million. So it was an underpopulated city. That made it very pleasant to live in. You could jump into your car and park right in front of the Opera House -- it was wonderful. I think that our life in West Berlin was probably the most agreeable that we had anywhere.

Governing the city you had a Kommandatura setup, which nominally included the Soviets, but from which they had withdrawn; so there was an empty chair. This came down to a Western Allied Kommandatura, which, in principle, was the governing body of West Berlin, for three sectors -- the American, the British, and the French. Their commandants constituted the Allied Kommandatura, whose function was to approve or disapprove of laws passed by the Berlin Parliament or Senate.

While I was an economic officer, Berlin was prohibited from manufacturing anything military. So the Allied Kommandatura had committees. As an economic officer of the U. S. Mission, I participated in the Economic Committee of the Allied Kommandatura which screened applications from Berlin firms wanting to manufacture and sell anything. Most of it was routine. If the application concerned clothing, including men's or women's clothing -- no problem. But if it concerned radios for the police (and Berlin was a center of electrical manufacturing) the question was whether this equipment could be considered a military item. This is something, of course, which has been going on for decades -- the question of dual use items. The question was whether we should ban exports of this kind or not. Lots of stuff produced in West Berlin -- in fact, I would say a substantial component of West Berlin's industrial output -- fell under the dual use category.

We and the British tended to take a relaxed view of this. If it was radios for the cops, fine. The French didn't. They took a much stricter view and said, "Well, these radios could be used in military operations and therefore constitute military material." They were not going to authorize their manufacture and sale. So there was a constant struggle going on within the Allied Kommandatura between us, the British, and the Germans on the one hand -- for the Germans would also come to meetings of this kind -- and the French, on the other hand. The French representative was a very interesting and complex man, who had been a prisoner of war of the Germans for quite a long time during World War II. He had no love for the Germans and was very happy about taking very strict position on these issues.

I will give you one example of how the French viewed Berlin. Under the agreements at the end of World War II the officers in the Allied military were entitled to be supplied by the West Berlin Government in their various sectors with cut flowers in their houses every day, with riding stables, and with various perks of other kinds. We and the British had given up our perks long ago, but the French had not. When I was there, which was almost 15 years after the end of World War II, the French were still getting their cut flowers and maintaining their riding stables at German expense. This was the view that they took. After all, they had beaten the Germans and they had it coming to them and weren't going to forget it. They were the last to give up their privileges and the first to say, "No, you can't manufacture this."

One of the more interesting things was participating in that committee. We had to refer any disputes and disagreements within the committee to the Allied ambassadors in Bonn, who were

also, ex officio, Allied High Commissioners for Germany. They would have to sort out any dispute. Ordinarily, we would end up winning any disputes. The French Ambassador in Bonn would be persuaded to reverse the decision of the French Commandant, and the Germans in Berlin could go ahead and manufacture radios, or whatever it might be. But at times there was a struggle about it.

We tried to get our position accepted by the others by talking to them. Horse trading, I would say, probably did not take place, because the French simply would not trade. They were the main problem. I tried to get to know the senior French economic guy, the man I referred to a few minutes ago. As I said, he was a very complex man, a very interesting one. He was a hard man. He had been scarred by his experiences as a POW in Germany. He loved the French language and culture. Because of my background in France, having gone to the Sorbonne for a year, I had a pretty good knowledge of French literature and culture. I could quote Baudelaire and Racine to him, and he liked that. So we were able to become friends. I would like to think that, once in a while, he would make a concession to us out of friendship, but nothing serious. He was a very strong-willed man and had a strong mind.

Our authority was limited to West Berlin. However, at the time I got there, we had full access to East Berlin. Once in a while, when you crossed into East Berlin, an East German cop would try to control you. You would take the usual position, "Sorry, no, I don't do that. Just look at my license plates." And eventually we would get into East Berlin. This happened on a sporadic basis and was obviously done with Soviet approval. We had access to East Berlin and would go over there often. There were great museums, and the great theaters and opera houses were all in East Berlin -- right near the sector border. So we went over to East Berlin quite often.

We didn't deal with the East Berlin authorities. We sought to deal with the Soviets only, because we wanted to keep responsibility for East Berlin firmly on them. So we didn't deal with the East German authorities. However, we had a whole section in the Berlin Mission, called Eastern Affairs, which covered and reported on what was going on in East Berlin, including the German aspect of East Berlin. But the Eastern Affairs Section didn't deal officially with any East Germans. We wanted to keep the Soviets in the forefront and prevent them from doing what they were obviously trying to do, which was to disengage and force us to deal with the East German authorities. At that point maintaining our position in Berlin was certainly a holding operation. We didn't recognize East Germany at the time, of course. Our position was to prevent East German recognition and to reject and rebut the East German claim that Berlin was the capital of the German Democratic Republic, as they called it.

Of course, eventually we came to recognize the GDR. We opened an Embassy in East Berlin in the 1970's, but at the time I was in Berlin the whole idea was to make it clear that we did not accept the East German Government. We did not recognize it and we didn't accept any limitations on the rights we had acquired under the Potsdam Agreement of 1945. This agreement was the settlement reached at the end of World War II, which established the whole structure of Berlin and the Allied military government. So we tried very hard to preserve that position.

The ultimate objective, of course, was German reunification which we felt at the time -- as it turned out to be the case later on -- would mean that West Germany would be the model that

would be followed, not East Germany. The Soviets, of course, were trying to do precisely the opposite, to freeze the situation, leaving a separate East Germany as a state.

What we had in the Economic Section, of which I was the junior member, was Inter-Zonal Trade, as it was called. That is, trade between West and East Germany. This heavily favored East Germany. It was kind of a bribe that the West Germans paid to the East Germans, in return for the East Germans letting people out of East Germany and not hassling people. It was structured to favor the East Germans and to prevent things like the airlift from having to be resumed. We wanted to prevent another blockade from taking place, by making inter-zonal trade attractive to the East Germans. The West Germans, of course, had also accumulated vast supplies which were stored in West Berlin, against the possibility of the resumption of a blockade. All of that came under the scrutiny of the Economic Section of our Berlin Mission [USBER], of which I was a part. The inter-zonal trade question involved regular meetings between West German and East German representatives. It was almost the only official contact between West and East Germany, so it was used for all kinds of other purposes as well. We sometimes would ask the West German representative at these meetings to feel out the East Germans about one thing or another. So it was a very active and interesting kind of job.

West Germany, of course, was doing very well. You had Ludwig Ehrhard, who was Minister of Economic Affairs of West Germany. Konrad Adenauer was Federal German Chancellor at the time. It was the time of the West German *wirtschaftswunder*, or economic miracle. West Germany was burgeoning.

East Germany was probably doing somewhat the same by Eastern European or Soviet Bloc standards. It was the most advanced country in the East Bloc, but in comparison with West Germany it was a slum. It looked pretty bad. At the time I was in Berlin, we couldn't travel anywhere in East Germany. We could only go to East Berlin. So we couldn't go and eyeball the situation in East Germany for ourselves. Once in a while -- once a year -- at the time of the Leipzig Fair in East Germany, some of the people from the Western missions in Berlin were allowed to go to Leipzig, to the fair. They could see what they could see as they went. Some Western businessmen also went, so obviously you couldn't keep a country like that completely hidden from outside scrutiny. But we couldn't give it the kind of examination that we would like to have done. However, it was very clear that East Germany was lagging way behind West Germany, though it was well ahead of the rest of the East Bloc.

Then came the US elections of 1960. I think that our concern in the foreign affairs field, especially with regard to a long-standing problem like Berlin, is that when a new administration enters office, you are going to be dealing with a whole new group of people. This especially applies to a change of political party, not just a change in administration. Almost everybody is replaced. You are dealing with a new administration, a new President, new Secretary of State, new everybody. Your concern is that there's going to be a long indoctrination process involved. You wonder, will they listen or won't they? How much background will they have on this situation, on which to base their policy decisions? We had all of these concerns with President Kennedy and would have had them with anybody else.

We had that concern, because Berlin was always either on the negotiating table or hovering

around the edges of it. We wanted to make sure that the situation was fully understood and appreciated by the Kennedy people coming in. I'm not sure that it was. We wanted to get everybody to come and visit, brief them on the spot, and look at it. We tried for years to get Walter Lippmann to go to Berlin. He never would go. He said that he didn't want the kind of emotional involvement that the administration wanted to get him into. He said that he wanted to remain detached and objective. That was his view. He never would go. But we tried to get everyone to come and look at the situation.

Of course, with President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles the situation was very clear. Eleanor Dulles, by the way, was very much involved. I had occasion to escort Eleanor Dulles sometimes, when she would come to Berlin. She did run her own show. She didn't try to conceal her last name. In fact, she was married, and Dulles was not her married name. She called herself Eleanor Dulles, so the fact that she was John Foster's little sister or big sister -- I'm not sure which -- was no secret. Eleanor had been very much involved in German affairs. There had been a separate bureau, at one point, which dealt exclusively with German affairs. Eleanor was a major player in that. Again, because she was the Secretary of State's sister, she had even more impact that she would have had otherwise. I think that her role had been shrinking a bit by the time I knew her. Her main function in Washington in the Berlin context, in the Bureau of German Affairs, and later in the Office of German Affairs, which became part of the Bureau of European Affairs, was the revival and stimulation of the Berlin economy. She had money and grants to hand out. Her trips to Berlin were primarily in the context of funding various kinds of activities -- cultural activities, and one, huge project costing millions of dollars, a new hospital for West Berlin. It was U.S. and German money. We put in some and then the Germans put in some. We put in a lot. It was a big grant. This project involved a brand new teaching hospital. I suppose that the Germans had a lot of voice in it, but Eleanor Dulles had a lot of clout, too. When she really wanted something, she tended to get it. I would go with her to these long meetings with the Germans, as the construction of the hospital was proceeding. The Germans and she disagreed on certain things that should or shouldn't be there. I can recall spending an entire morning, listening to Eleanor Dulles and the then president of the Berlin House of Representatives, a plumber by the name of Willi Henneberg, arguing. Eleanor wanted the nurses' rooms to have bathtubs. Willi thought that this was an unnecessary luxury and they could damn well settle for showers.

But the question of the plumbing in the nurses' quarters became an issue that took up almost an entire day to argue out. Henneberg said, "Look, if we give the nurses this facility, every other nurse in Berlin is going to want it in every other hospital, and we just haven't got the money to provide it." Eleanor Dulles said, "This is to be a model, a teaching hospital. Damn it, they will have the bathtubs." Well, they got the bathtubs. That was the kind of thing that Eleanor was doing.

She was treated very well by the Berliners and was given red carpet treatment. She was an interesting figure. I lost complete touch with her when I left the Economic Section. I was in that job for only a year and then moved on to a different job in Berlin.

The new head of the Mission, Allan Lightner, wanted a staff aide and wanted me in this job. I was 29 when I joined the Foreign Service. By this time I was in my mid-30's, and the idea of

being a staff aide didn't appeal to me. But I had to take the job, so I took it.

I did that for a year and then moved on to the Political Section, where I had always wanted to be. I spent the last year or year and one-half in the Political Section in Berlin, which was the place to be. In the Political Section I was called the Access Officer. The Access Officer watched over the Autobahn, the air corridors, the movement between West Berlin and West Germany and between East and West Berlin. So I handled all aspects of the whole thing. The Autobahn crisis and the air corridor crisis were all mine. I moved into the Political Section just before the crisis involving construction of the Berlin Wall.

Access was a constant problem. It was more than a full-time job. The military can do things whose significance they do not always appreciate, but which represent a concession. Or you have some of these people -- like me and my family, for example -- coming in for the first time on the Autobahn. I had been briefed and did the right thing. If I hadn't been briefed, I might have handed this East German cop my passport, and he might have tried to put a stamp in it, which was, of course, a big no-no. So, we did have problems of naivete and the word not getting around. You could have a U. S. military convoy leader agreeing to let the Soviets count the number of men in the back of the truck. We would only drop the tailgate. They could count from outside, but we didn't get our men out of the truck, and they couldn't go in and check them.

When mistakes were made, we didn't accept the notion that that would establish some kind of precedent. The Soviets would try that on us. They would say, "Well, your guy did this yesterday. What are you making such a fuss about?" We took the view that a mistake made by a subordinate or unwary person didn't change the rules, and we weren't going to accept mistakes as precedents. But you would have holdups. You would have delays and obstacles. You would have convoys sitting for eight hours on the Autobahn because the Soviets were trying to create problems or were trying to use the East Germans.

I can probably tell this story because it happened a long time ago. It must have been 35 years ago. We had some large vehicles going up and down the Autobahn. At one point the Soviets allowed the East Germans to set up baffles, or a series of barriers, so that only relatively small vehicles could weave their way through. The larger vehicles would get stuck there. Then there would be an incident. The East Germans wanted to prove something. An idea which I had permission to try out was to get a very large vehicle, a low-boy, as they were called, a vehicle with a big flatbed loaded with girders. As it would try to maneuver, it would knock these baffles out of the way. As I said, I got permission to try it out. Our military agreed to it. They loaded up the low-boy with girders. It did what it was supposed to do. It knocked the baffles out of the way. It went on down the Autobahn, and nobody stopped it. So we got away with it. The Soviets were furious about that, by the way.

More often than not we would protest. We were protesting all of the time. There was a Four-Power structure of POLAD's, or Political Advisers. They would go over and talk to their Soviet counterparts at Karlshorst, which is where the Soviets headquarters were, just outside Berlin. They would try to negotiate an end to difficulties of that kind. But the Soviets were becoming tougher and tougher.

Of course, there were times when, I think, there were genuine misunderstandings, when a low-ranking Soviet military type would go beyond the point where his masters wanted him to go. That kind of thing could generally be settled. The Soviets would never admit that they had made a mistake, but they would stop doing what they had been doing. In general, the Soviet attitude was hardening. It was getting harder and harder. The Soviets were trying to prevent us from meeting with them. They wouldn't be in their offices, or our man couldn't get into their headquarters because it was closed. They wanted us to back away. They wanted to force us to talk to the East Germans. But when it came to a real crunch, when something got out of hand, the Soviets would be available. They would make themselves available, and you could talk to them. When these issues threatened to become very serious, the Soviets tended to stop. The issues tended to go away. I was convinced that the Soviets had a limit, beyond which they didn't want to go. We assumed that Moscow was calling the shots. The East Germans probably had some leeway, within limits set by the Soviets. When the Soviets wanted to turn up the heat, they would do it, using either their own people or the East Germans. Very often, they would do this directly. For example, the question of Allied flights in the air corridors. The Soviets themselves -- this had nothing to do with the East Germans -- would say, "You can't use flight levels 10 or 12 or whatever." This meant 10,000 or 12,000 feet. The air corridors were divided up into flight levels. The Soviets would try to bar us from using certain flight levels, whereas under the Potsdam Agreement and related agreements, we simply notified them of where and when we would be flying. The air corridors had been set aside for our use. When we had a flight coming or going, we would notify an organization known as the Berlin Air Safety Center, a four-power body staffed by Air Force people from the three Western Allies and the Soviets, which had its offices in the Allied Control Council building in West Berlin. They would pass these notifications around. The notification would say that we were going to have a flight at such and such a flight level on such and such a date and what have you.

The East Germans weren't involved in that. However, once in a while the Soviets would hand the notifications back, saying, "No, we are going to have some flights crossing the corridor at certain levels, and you can't use that level." Then we would say, "Well, you can't do that. These are our corridors and our altitude levels, and we can use whatever we want." However, a rule of reason would apply. If, in fact, the Soviets had a legitimate reason or problem of some kind, we could change the flight level. The system worked fairly well.

The question, also, of flights within the Berlin Control Zone would be at issue, because any flights coming into Berlin -- or going out of Berlin, for that matter -- would fly over Berlin. Tempelhof Airport, for example, was right in the middle of the city. So you had these Allied military flights coming right in over Berlin at low altitudes. That raised other issues, such as noise, for example. You had special rules for helicopters. We took the position that helicopters could fly anywhere within the Berlin Control Zone; that is, the air space above the city. At times, the Soviets would say, "No, they can't. They can't fly below a certain altitude." We couldn't accept that. What happened on one occasion was that a low-flying U. S. helicopter was hit by a metal bolt. The pilot actually saw somebody shoot it at him with a slingshot. This was very alarming, because it isn't very hard to bring down a helicopter. You hit a rotor with that bolt, and down goes the helicopter. So there was that kind of problem. We had constant alarms and excursions of all kinds.

I think that we were always aware that an American soldier could also cause some mischief. It could go one way or the other. Either a low-ranking, subordinate American or, at times, somebody a little more senior, who would go too far in accommodating the Soviets or, all on his own, would decide to try a little probe of some kind. We took that possibility into account. We didn't always assume that everything that happened was a Soviet plot. We recognized that things could happen through our own fault, as they did, at times.

Let me now turn to the Berlin Wall crisis. From my perspective -- and I think that I said this in a book, though not my book. It was by a man named Catudal, an historian who wrote a book on the Berlin Wall crisis. He got in touch with me, and with a number of others who had been in Berlin at the time. I talked to him off the record. He left my name out of the text but put it in his footnotes. He quoted me by name on this, so it is in print already.

In the summer of 1961 -- I think that it was in mid to late July -- President Kennedy gave a speech or made a statement on Berlin. It seemed to me at the time that in that statement he unmistakably made a sharp distinction between the extent to which we were committed to West Berlin and Berlin as a whole. Up to that time we had always taken the position that we made no such distinction, although in practical terms, we made this distinction every day. However, formally speaking and as a matter of policy, we made no such distinction. We said that the four sectors of Berlin were set up entirely for administrative convenience but have no political significance. We said that all of the Allies have rights in all of Berlin.

At that time, in July, 1961, Kennedy took a different position. He said that West Berlin was what we were really committed to. That left East Berlin out in the cold. There was a mild shock in Berlin, but it didn't seem to hit the press. It seemed to me that it wasn't recognized as the major departure from previous policy which, in fact, it was. I am convinced that it attracted the attention of Moscow, where they pored over every word.

I think it was deliberate change in US policy. I think that Kennedy was preparing the ground to avoid making a huge, life and death issue out of East Berlin. You can have your own view as to whether that was right or wrong, but in fact I think that was taken by the Soviets as a signal that we weren't going to go to the mat with them on East Berlin. The Berlin Wall began to go up in the following month. Also, Kennedy and Khrushchev had already met in Vienna a few months earlier. From my point of view that meeting was a disaster because Kennedy didn't come out as forcefully as one would have liked. We later came to think of Kennedy as the hero of Berlin because of his appearance in Berlin after the Wall went up and his statement that "I am a Berliner." At the time of the Vienna meeting with Khrushchev and in the speech he made in July, 1961, it seemed to me that he wasn't taking a very strong position.

After the Berlin Wall went up, Kennedy called up the US military reserves. It was part of the Wall crisis.

In Berlin, until the wall went up, you had large numbers of people called border crossers. They lived in one side of Berlin and worked on the other side. Primarily, they lived in East Berlin and worked in West Berlin. There also were people who lived in West Berlin and worked in East Berlin, but there was a smaller number of these. That was a legal arrangement. They could go

back and forth on the subway. There had always been a trickle of refugees coming into West Berlin. Suddenly, the whole situation swelled, and the border crossers simply stayed in West Berlin. I am not sure what it was that brought on this migration at that particular time and I have always wondered about it. There was a theory at the time that the refugees knew that something was up. They somehow sensed that the wall was going to go up and they wanted to do something. They wanted to get out of East Berlin while they still could. That seems to be perfectly plausible. They were reading the tea leaves, just as we were.

There were rising tension because of the flood of refugees. Of course, that was an everyday involvement for us and our wives, who were working at the refugee camps, feeding people, giving them blankets, and so forth. Refugees were pouring in in large numbers, and the refugee camp at Marienfelde filled up. They were eventually taken to West Germany.

We thought that the East Germans would have to stop this refugee flow. I don't think that we anticipated -- I didn't, anyway -- that they were going to build the wall. I didn't see them as physically building a wall, although there were people who thought that they might do that. We all felt that they had to take some measures to stop this flow. The most likely measure would be to prevent people going from East Germany into East Berlin. They were going through. They would go to East Berlin and then to West Berlin. I haven't got a breakdown on this, but perhaps a majority of those who were coming into West Berlin were not East Berliners, as such, but were from elsewhere in East Germany. So we had an idea that they might close that border, and they had more or less taken some steps in that direction. If you were an East German, you had to have a permit to go into East Berlin from elsewhere in East Germany. It seemed more likely that they would cut that off. In fact, they ended up building the wall.

When the wall went up I was on vacation in Bavaria. I had taken my wife and children to Bavaria. I heard on the news that something was going on in Berlin -- the wall, or something else was happening at the border with the Soviet sector. I cut short my vacation. We went back to Berlin. Depending on how you define the wall, we probably got there two days after construction of the wall started. It didn't start as a wall, as far as I was concerned. It initially consisted of rolls of accordion barbed wire. Then they replaced that with kind of a flimsy cement block structure. It was worked on over a long period of time, before it became the full-fledged wall.

On the day after I got back to Berlin we had a meeting at the U.S. Mission. It was decided that we ought to probe to see how the Soviets were playing the Allied access rights. I think that we had recognized the fact that we really couldn't control what was done with Germans going back and forth to and from East Berlin. We wanted to see whether Allied rights of access would be respected, probably as a way of finding out what they the Soviets were up to or what they were trying to do.

Another officer from the Mission and I were instructed to make probes. There were eight or 10 places along the sector border where you could go back and forth to East Berlin. So we took an official Mission car with U. S. military plates on it and went to each of these places to see if we could get into East Berlin. We found that we were able to get through at some places but not at others. We then proceeded to analyze the situation. We thought that instructions had been issued to stop all Allied cars, but not all of the checkpoints had yet been plugged in. Eventually, of

course, access boiled down to Checkpoint Charlie. Everything else was closed, but they never actually and totally cut off Allied access to East Berlin. I was able to go back there years later, when the wall was coming down. I got a couple of pieces of it.

So the question became, "There they are. They are building this wall". You could see that. What should we do about it? This was where the Mission in Berlin and Washington disagreed on how strong our reaction should be. I think that Washington more or less took the view that unless Allied access were totally cut, our public, propaganda reaction could be large scale, but our physical reaction would be muted. In Berlin many took the view that we should just push our way through the wall and that the Soviets would collapse like a house of cards. Well, it was impossible to get Washington to agree to try that, so it never was put to the test. Kennedy's earlier statement had accepted the fact that East Berlin was gone, in effect. As long as we had a shred, a less than total cutoff of Allied access, we could accept it. So we ended up accepting it.

There were all of those terrible incidents, of course, of East Berliners throwing themselves out of windows and landing on the pavement in West Berlin because the sector border happened to be the wall of a house or an apartment building. The people living in a given building were in East Berlin. However, once they were out of the window, the sidewalk below was West Berlin. They would try to get out that way until all of those windows were bricked up. It was a very strange and tragic situation.

I wouldn't say that there was a sharp difference between the US military and the civilians. Very often, the civilians talked tougher than the military. I have seen this everywhere, including at war games at the National War College. The military are the ones who actually have to do it. They tend to say, "Well, wait a minute." They look at the balance of forces and at what was actually going to happen, whereas the civilians are ready to say, "Go ahead and do it." I wouldn't say that the military in Berlin were particularly bellicose in the way they looked at the situation. I think that they were waiting for political instructions. If they had been ordered to send a tank or something like that, pushing through the barbed wire, they would have done it. But I don't think that they were eager to do it. They were prepared to do what they were told to do, but they weren't beating the war drums. I think that they recognized that if it came to a real fight, they were going to take an awful licking in Berlin. They knew the realities of tank warfare. They tend to be realistic about such things.

I felt disheartened by the fact that Kennedy, in effect, had laid the groundwork for this. Washington calls the shots. They make the policy. I felt -- and I am convinced now that I was right -- that the Kennedy administration decided not to make a fight for East Berlin. That being the case, there you were. Looking at things from a practical point of view, the wall was right on the sectoral border -- and I am talking about inches. Well, first of all, you couldn't knock down the wall initially. It was made up of barbed wire. You could push it back but you couldn't knock it down. Then, when a wall went up, suppose you knock it down, and they build the wall 50 yards farther back in East Berlin. Do you knock it down then? What are the legal aspects? It looked to me like a sticky wicket, given the fact that Washington clearly wasn't prepared to make a major issue of it. Our hands were kind of tied.

People in Washington were scared to death. We were not. I wasn't and I don't think that my

colleagues were, either. We were right in Berlin. I don't think that we could visualize the Soviets or, for that matter, Washington, starting a war. I couldn't see Washington doing anything unless West Berlin were attacked. I couldn't see the Soviets doing that in West Berlin. On the contrary, having taken this step -- or having allowed the East Germans to take this step -- of starting to build this wall, they didn't want to do anything else.

Kennedy sent a battle group under then Colonel Glover Johns, belting down the Autobahn into Berlin to show our resolve. They were met at the West Berlin by then Vice President Johnson. It was a morale question, I think. It was not a matter of intimidating the Soviets but of bolstering the morale of the West Berliners. And it worked. Their morale was bolstered. Of course, Kennedy followed it up, before too long, by sending Gen. Lucius Clay, the former military governor who had saved Berlin during the Blockade by arranging for the airlift. Kennedy sent Clay as a personal representative of the President to West Berlin. These measures did, in fact, restore the morale of West Berliners. I don't think that they scared the Soviets. They did show the Soviets that, perhaps, they should cool it.

I don't think the Berliners were ready to go to war. They were dismayed, of course, but they were waiting to see what the Allies would do. They hoped that the Allies would take a strong position but at the same time I don't think that they wanted the Allies to start fighting. They would be the first to suffer and they knew that. I think that they were worried about their own security, primarily, and those worries were eased and allayed by these measures that I have just referred to: the sending of the battle group and Lucius Clay. There was no mass exodus from West Berlin.

Everybody was dismayed by the human consequences of the wall; that is the inability of the East Germans and East Berliners to come to the West.

After the construction of the wall, we had an Autobahn crisis and an air corridor crisis. The Autobahn crisis was basically just more of the same. It involved hassling and harassment of U.S. military convoys on the Autobahn. After the initial shock of the wall began to subside, the Soviets again wanted to turn up the heat and isolate West Berlin, or make it feel isolated. A convoy would be stopped, so that they could lower the tailgate and count the number of people inside. They wanted a roster of names of the people in the trucks, but we wouldn't provide that, and there were very frequent and constant delays. The Soviets would say, "You can only send convoys with less than 10 vehicles in them." So we would send one with 15 vehicles. Then it would go to the checkpoint, and the Soviets would hold it up. They would sit there for a while, and then the Soviets would allow them to go through. The Soviets always backed off from those things eventually. They were just playing around and hassling the convoys, trying to create a psychology of concern and feelings of isolation and fragility about the situation in West Berlin.

The air corridor crisis was more serious. By that time Gen. Lucius Clay had arrived. The whole Clay episode was extraordinarily interesting. As I recall it, Clay had visited West Berlin at the time of the sending of the battle group. Then Vice President Lyndon Johnson arrived in Berlin just in time to greet the battle group. His timing was beautiful. He had come from Helsinki, as I recall it. Was it Johnson -- or maybe it was Bobby Kennedy -- who had Lucius Clay with him? Everybody was going to Berlin. It might have been Bobby Kennedy, but I can't recall. Clay was

not the principal visitor -- whether he was with Johnson or Bobby Kennedy, I can't remember -- but to West Berliners, Clay was the main event. When the visitors would appear on a balcony of the Rathaus -- City Hall -- the crowd would be yelling, "Clay, Clay," not Bobby or anybody else. The star visitor -- whether Vice President Johnson or Bobby Kennedy -- brought back to Washington a report of Clay's enormously high standing with the Berliners. President Kennedy decided that it would be a good idea to send Clay to Berlin again to bolster morale. But the President misjudged or underestimated his man. Clay didn't regard himself as a figurehead who was going to bolster morale. He regarded himself as a decision-maker who was somehow going to push the Soviets back. He was a proponent of strong measures which culminated in the famous tank confrontation at Checkpoint Charlie.

Clay was a very strong man. He had a gaze that would shoot right through you. He was an imposing figure. His presence there was confusing to everybody, because he didn't have any counterparts. There was no British, French, or Russian Clay. The Soviets managed to drag out of mothballs Marshal Konev, who had been, I think, military governor of East Germany at the time Clay had been his U.S. counterpart in West Germany. Konev was sent back to East Germany as a sort of Soviet answer to Clay. They had one meeting, as I recall, at Potsdam. Nothing came of it, and it didn't settle anything.

Clay's position was that of Special Representative of President Kennedy, but no one knew how to fit him into the Berlin structure -- the Allied Kommandatura in Berlin or the Allied Control Council, whose headquarters was in Berlin but which consisted ex officio of the American, British, and French ambassadors in Bonn and the Soviet Ambassador in East Berlin. He didn't fit into any of these niches. At the same time everybody knew that he was very important and that he had a direct line to President Kennedy, although he didn't have separate communications. He used U.S. Mission communications facilities. His messages had to be released for transmission by the assistant chief of the Mission, as the senior State Department representative was called.

That is something I should have discussed before. The Berlin structure was that the U.S. military commander was the United States Commandant in Berlin, and the senior State Department representative was the deputy commandant. Then you had the Mission's structure in which the Ambassador in Bonn was chief of mission in Berlin. The senior State Department representative was assistant chief of mission.

Clay's telegrams had to be approved by the senior State Department representative in Berlin. But basically that was a rubber stamp. The only thing was that it enabled the senior State Department officer to read what Clay was saying. If he didn't like it, he had the opportunity to go to see Clay and say, "Of course, if you want to send this, we will send it, but I wonder if you would listen to my thoughts on it," and try to get Clay to change it. Sometimes this function fell to me. As I said, Clay was a very imposing figure who wouldn't hesitate to say, "What kind of wimp are you? Are you a commie or something?" But if you stood up to him, he would listen. Sometimes, I found that if I said, "Look, this is the way I see it. If we do this, here's what is going to happen. If we do what you are recommending, here is what's going to happen," he would listen and very often make the changes I wanted. But you had to stand up to him, and he was a very intimidating person.

So, as I said, he was there, and everybody knew that he was important, but nobody knew quite what to do with him. He was taking a strong position. One night Allan Lightner, the senior State Department officer at the time, and his wife, were going to attend the opera in East Berlin. On the way into East Berlin they were stopped by East German cops. They had passed through the American military police at Checkpoint Charlie but hadn't been able to get all the way through to the other side. They were in a kind of No Man's Land. They were stuck there. Lightner wouldn't give them his passport, and the East Germans wouldn't let him go. Eventually, they persuaded Mrs. Lightner to come back out, and Lightner sat there. Eventually, he came back out. Then we decided to do it again. We decided that we would have him go in again, this time escorted by armed U.S. military personnel in jeeps and all of that. There was an enormous American lieutenant, Lt. Pilchuck, about 10 feet high and eight feet wide. We had him standing in a jeep, cradling a gun. Lightner then got through.

Gen. Clay's idea was to force the Soviets to get involved in this matter because it had all been East German up to that point. That is, stopping Lightner, fooling around with him, holding him, and all that sort of thing. So he began to escalate the issue, beyond armed escort. He sent tanks up to Checkpoint Charlie, which was then just a little shack. I was down there that day when our tanks came. They were old M-48's. However, an M-48 in a narrow street can make quite an impression. They came racing up to the sector border, and Soviet tanks showed up on the other side. That was what Clay wanted. He wanted to get the Soviets to acknowledge their responsibilities.

It all eventually subsided. We came out ahead on that, and we were able to go back and forth. The Soviets backed off. This is my recollection of it.

Then the air corridor crisis came along. President Kennedy was famous at that time as the Berlin Desk Officer. Everybody knew that Kennedy was calling all the day-to-day, working level shots. Frank Cash was the number two in the Office of Berlin Affairs. Martin Hillenbrand was then the director of the Office, and Frank was his deputy. Frank called me up in Berlin. I was Access Officer, so I was the one to call. Frank said, "Thought is being given" -- and I knew he meant that President Kennedy was giving this matter the thought -- "to suspending our flights to Berlin." They had been flying passenger flights. Pan Am had been given the charter for the Berlin flights. And the British and French also had their airlines flying in and out of Berlin. Soviet aircraft were cutting in close to these aircraft to stop the traffic. The Soviets were making threatening noises and were dropping what is called chaff or window anti-radar device, like Christmas tinsel in the air corridors to upset the radar. So Kennedy was thinking of stopping the flights. We didn't want to. We were convinced that the Soviets did not want to bring down Allied civilian aircraft or, for that matter, Allied military aircraft. Suspending the traffic would really have been a serious blow to West Berlin, because that was the lifeline. You can cut the Autobahn any time, but the only way you could cut the air corridor is by shooting down an airplane. We were convinced that the Soviets wouldn't do that. So this lifeline had to be kept open.

Frank Cash said, "I have been asked to get the Mission's answers to 10 questions. I would like to give them to you on the phone and then you can send in your replies by telegram." The questions included points like: what if we stopped civilian flights but continued military flights or what if we were to let the flights continue with Pan Am aircraft, although piloted by U.S. Air Force

personnel, and with no passengers. There were various possibilities about how to respond to this threat in the air corridor. I said, "I am going to give you the best answers I can over the telephone ahead of time." I said that this was going to have to be a Mission position and I would have to get it approved at the top level. So I gave him my impressions of what the answers would probably be. What it added up to was "Keep 'em flying." Then I drafted a telegram containing these answers and went over to Lightner's house. He was at home. I showed the telegram to him, and he said, "Good." However, he said, "You had better take this out to Clay." Clay was having dinner that evening with Willy Brandt, the mayor. Clay was having dinner with Brandt. I was sent out by Lightner to clear this telegram with Clay. I had to have Clay pulled out of the dinner party. Clay was giving the dinner party himself. Clay came out, and we went into a little library. He read the telegram and said, "Fine. Just add one further recommendation: send fighter escorts." I gulped and said to him, "General, if we include that recommendation, you know what's going to happen in Washington, don't you? They are going to stop the flights, because they won't send fighter escorts. If they see that fighter escorts are necessary, they will just stop the flights." He thought for a minute and said, "All right, just send it the way it is." Our recommendations were accepted in Washington. Like all access crises, that one eventually just blew over.

I thought very highly of Willy Brandt. I think that everybody did. I didn't know him that well. I didn't have occasion to deal with him officially, myself. That was done at higher levels. But I would meet him occasionally on social occasions and then I would talk with him for a few minutes. He was also an inspirational figure. He was the right man to have in Berlin at that time.

The French and British were co-equals in Berlin and in Bonn. In the various Allied bodies they had an equal voice with us. We placed considerable value on getting Allied unanimity and usually were able to get it. The commandants in Berlin -- by which I mean their political deputies, including people like our senior State Department officer and his opposite numbers -- were generally in agreement on what was to be done. They took a fairly firm position. They weren't panicked by the Soviets. They had taken a pretty steady position -- not an aggressive position, but a steady, firm position, as firm as you could. Each commandant took account of what he thought his own capital would go along with.

From Berlin the U.S. Mission could communicate directly with Washington, and we did so when I was there. That had not always been the case. I think that, at times, everything had to go to the Embassy in Bonn and then from Bonn to Washington. By the time I got there, Berlin was communicating directly with Washington, with an information copy to Bonn, so that Bonn could provide its input. Or, at times, you might want to get Bonn to agree first. You would send a message to Bonn first and then, when they concurred, send it in to Washington. But we had the right to send messages directly to Washington. Bonn could monitor our traffic and then express its views. I don't recall that Bonn ever, on a serious question, sent in a dissenting voice after Berlin had recommended something, because we kept in very close touch with the Embassy.

But the British and the French didn't have that much latitude. I am not sure about the British, but the French had to communicate with their Embassy in Bonn, which then communicated with Paris. While Paris was very tough on French rights in Germany, they weren't that much concerned about German rights. So on some issues it was hard to get the French on board, but you had to try.

The air corridor crisis might not have involved the British and French. I can't recall now. We used different air corridors. The corridor we used was the one that went almost directly East and West. The British corridor ran Northwest from Berlin to Hamburg. The French corridor ran Southwest toward Bavaria and Baden. I think it was only our air corridor that was having these problems. What Pan Am did, what we asked Pan Am to do, was basically our affair. If we had decided to take action which might have led to more widespread problems or something really serious, like fighter escorts, for example, we would certainly have had to consult the British and French. We might even have felt that we had to get their concurrence. But in this case we didn't.

Here is another Clay story, to illustrate the character of the man, and his shrewdness, at the same time. Just outside of the American sector of Berlin there was a little, what was called an exclave, called Steinstuecken. That is, it was a small area -- properly a village -- that was part of the West Berlin Burrough of Dahlem. It was separated from Dahlem by 300-400 yards of East Germany. It was just sitting out there in East Germany. It had schoolchildren and was connected to West Berlin by a road which ran through East Germany. The road itself was East German. But the people who worked in West Berlin, while living in Steinstuecken, and the children who went to school in Dahlem could go back and forth. The people could go shopping in Dahlem and buy their food there. Then one day the East Germans cut off Steinstuecken.

Clay decided that he would drive there and open up the road. He decided to go down there very early one morning, around 6:00 or 6:30 AM, and just go on through and ignore any East German police that might be there. He said that nobody was to know this. It was important that the East Germans not be prepared for this. He said, "I want them to be taken by surprise, have no instructions, and not know what to do." We said that we thought that was a good idea but that we would have to tell the mayor of Dahlem. He had been very cooperative, and his nose would be far out of joint, since it was his borough. We thought that we ought to tell him but swear him to secrecy. Clay was extremely reluctant to do this, but he finally agreed that we could tell the mayor. So we did. Clay arrived at the checkpoint at 6:00 AM, and there was the mayor, his wife, 300 West Berlin schoolchildren, and about 500 East German cops. Clay could instantly see that he had a loser on his hands. He accepted the bouquets and turned around and went back to his headquarters. He didn't try to go through with the program. He saw that it was not going to work.

On the next day he went over by helicopter. This led, of course, to a mini airlift, which went on for months and maybe years, during which Steinstuecken was supported by and communicated with West Berlin by U.S. helicopter. The road was never opened. That situation was only solved years later, when the East and West Germans eventually recognized each other. East Germany then sold that road to West Germany, so the road, which had been part of East Germany, is now part of West Berlin. Steinstuecken was no longer an enclave.

But I wasn't aware of that when I went back to West Berlin in 1990, just when the wall was coming down. I was itching to go to Steinstuecken. I drove to it. I thought that I had cross to it through East Germany. I came back. The Ambassador in Bonn was then Vernon Walters. He had invited me to stay at his Berlin residence. He was in Bonn or somewhere. I had the whole residence to myself. I told the butler that I had made it to Steinstuecken, fulfilling a long-standing ambition to drive there through East Germany. He said, "That isn't East Germany at all.

We bought that road."

It wouldn't have mattered. By that time the wall was coming down, and East Germany was disappearing. It was a fascinating experience for me.

I left in the summer of 1962. Of course, many of these problems continued after that. They would flare up from time to time -- the Autobahn, the air corridor, and so on. But I can't think of a more thrilling and exciting time to have been there. I had a marvelous time.

PAUL D. MCCUSKER
Chief, Economic Section
Hamburg (1959-1963)

Paul D. McCusker was born in New York in 1921. He graduated from Holy Cross College in 1943 and from Cornell Law School in 1949. He was a Fulbright Fellow in Italy and graduated from the University of Rome in 1952. Mr. McCusker served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1943-1946 and joined the Foreign Service in 1950. His career included positions in Italy, Germany, Indonesia, and Washington, DC. Mr. McCusker was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.

Q: You served 1959 to 1963. What were you doing there? And could you describe a little about the operation of the Consulate General.

MCCUSKER: A large Consulate General authorized to issue immigrant visas at that time, and an important listening post because it was the closest to the East German border of any of our consular offices. We had all the usual consular functions there plus one political officer, and a large office called the Office of the Political Coordinator, or some nonsense like that, which everybody, the local staff -- I didn't know it, I didn't realize the extent of that office -- but it was the Central Intelligence Agency's contingent. These days you can talk about it. We didn't know what they were doing. The guy who was Consul General when I first arrived was a man named Ed Maney who had been in the visa office for years, a very nice gentleman. He retired from there, as Tom Bailey later did. Hamburg is a delightful city which very few Americans know much about because none of the tourists go through there, businessmen occasionally. I started as head of the consular section, which as I say, had all the usual functions, and then I moved to be head of the economic section, which was actually economic-commercial, and I finished up there. But I spent a lot of time...since Tom Bailey was away from post a good deal for either health reasons or being called back to serve on a selection panel, or whatever...being in charge of the Consulate General for extended periods which gave me an overall view of the functions of a consulate, with the exception, of course, of the secret functions, which were not really under State control.

Well, of course, these were years of intense intelligence activity. One of the most significant things, and I don't want to spend too much time on Hamburg. I loved the place. Probably the

most significant thing that happened while I was there, and it happened also at a time when I was in charge of the post, was the first post-war visit of a U.S. naval...NATO unit to the port of Hamburg. It was a most successful visit. It was not simply a courtesy visit because it lasted for ten long days. Well, it was absolutely amazing because there wasn't one single adverse incident involving...we had 4,000 sailors, and something like 400 officers. There was an aircraft carrier called the Essex, since decommissioned, or at least laid up, which was headed by an admiral whose name was George Koch, and George Koch was one of the most deft public relations experts I ever met. He was himself an interesting fellow. Among other things he was a good cook, which made the name Koch (pronounced "cook") particularly appropriate. He got along fine with the Germans. But the whole idea of the American Navy coming into this ex-enemy's major port, under the NATO shield, was very touching, and particularly with the labor unions. North Germany in general, Hamburg in particular, was a socialist city. There was, of course, a good deal of opposition from the socialists to the whole idea of a NATO force. So it was daring politically, but it was a huge success on the personal level.

We had the People-to-People program operating...we put up a separate switchboard to handle the flood of calls and offered anybody who wanted to take in an American sailor for a few days and the number of calls we got from women saying, "six feet, blue eyes, blonde hair," they'd like to welcome. We came out very well and it was a huge public relations success. I can tell you exactly when it was because our first son was born in Hamburg, and we came close to considering calling him Essex, based on the fact that the Essex was in port when he was born. So it was an exciting time for us personally, and we didn't call him Essex. We called him Alexander instead. It was actually '62, he was born in January -- had just been born when the fleet came in, my wife was in the hospital most of the time that the fleet was there.

It served a good purpose as far as indicating that the socialist opposition in North Germany to the NATO treaty was not so ferocious as it could have been. Not so effective anyway. Of course, the CDU (Christian Democratic Party) had at that time an absolute majority and it worked out. By the way, the other I think great thing that happened to me was meeting Helmut Schmidt...well he was already a Bundestag member from the Socialist Party in Hamburg, and he loved Hamburg. He hated being in Bonn, as a matter of fact, away from his wife. He was a very brilliant man, and I was glad to see that he had such a long regime as the "Bundeskanzler".

Hamburg was a great place. We had all kinds of...Willy Brandt would come and give speeches. The ambassador came up for the visit of the Essex. The ambassador, who was Walter Dowling at the time, and he went aboard the Essex. They had gotten together a kind of a Marine band, which played some music. He went down to congratulate the officer who was in charge of the band, and all the Marines were standing at attention, and the Marine officer in charge of the band had his sword at the tip of his nose holding it stiffly in his right hand, and Ambassador Dowling, in one of the major faux pas I've seen in the Foreign Service, stuck out his hand to shake hands with the officer. And here, of course, is the officer standing there...I tell you the officer didn't blink an eye. And I must say my admiration of the Marines went up considerably. He took his left hand, grabbed the blade of the sword, took the sword out of his right hand and returned the Ambassador's proffered hand. The ambassador didn't really realize how he was putting this guy in a very tough spot. That was an incident I'll long remember.

Other than that I'd say I had a nice time, particularly representing because you could do that all day long. If it was the 50th anniversary of the establishment of a firm, for example, they would start serving the "Sekt", the German form of champagne, at 11:30 or so in the morning. The amount of alcohol that got consumed...

GUNTHER K. ROSINUS
Director, Amerika Haus, USIS
Koblenz (1959-1963)

Gunther K. Rosinus was born in Germany in 1928 and emigrated to the Cincinnati, Ohio in 1938. He received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Harvard University. In 1951, Mr. Rosinus joined the State Department, serving in the Information Research Bureau and as a Southeast Asian Affairs analyst. When USIS began in 1953, he transferred. He served in Germany, and Japan, and with the Inspection Corps. Mr. Rosinus was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1989.

ROSINUS: Then we went to Germany. We went to Koblenz first in 1959 -- again to direct the America House, as it was called -- an information cultural center in the city of Koblenz and subsequently, in 1962, to assume as Cultural Affairs officer job in Bonn at the Embassy responsible for the program content and direction of all the America Houses in Germany at that time.

Once again, I would say I carried a political thrust with me into Germany to fit that particular situation. Germany, at that time, in 1959 was moving toward NATO -- was into NATO involvement and NATO membership, moving out of its post-war occupation period and, of course, trying to find its psychological way out of the morass of World War II and Nazism.

In Koblenz, it so happened, we had a unique opportunity to work with the German military because Koblenz had what was called the School for Inner-Leadership for want of a better translation. This really meant a school for the psychological preparation of officers who were going to lead the new German military which was to be a part, of course, of the NATO alliance.

That school was very much concerned with matters democratic and historical and political/psychological; so it was a very natural wedding. By establishing relationships with their commanding general, who was General DeMaiziere, who subsequently became the number one officer in the German armed forces and the Inspector General of those forces and who himself was a splendid and very untainted individual, we were able to do a lot of work again with our resources, be it books or films or speakers and personal contact and discussions with the future officer corps of the German military, of the German forces.

That was satisfying work. Again, the unions were important; German unions had always been important. They were, of course, social democrats by tradition. Communism was not an issue, but social democrats tended to look a little more askance at times at the growing alliance with the

United States, with the capitalist United States, than others, so we continued to work with union groups there as well.

In effect, I guess you might say in Germany and, again, particularly later, I will demonstrate this in the Philippines, USIS public affairs officers have a particular contribution to make to American diplomacy in their ability to work effectively very often with important opposition groups within a country, more difficult for other embassy representatives to achieve for obvious reasons.

This was particularly important, as I say, subsequently in the Philippines, but again, in Germany by working with people like the labor people, the Social Democratic party at a time that Adenauer seemed to be the eternal leader of the country, but subsequently gave way to Social Democratic leadership.

I think that helped prepare, again, on a modest scale, a generation of future leaders to look with more tempered mien at the United States and its intentions and its policies.

Working on the principle that a good public affairs officer must be a substantive exponent on American society in policies, I also became personally very active as a speaker on NATO topics, on the whole concept of integration of forces and of the *raison d'être* for the Atlantic Alliance and traveled a good deal around the country, particularly once I was in Bonn, as a participant in seminars and so forth, which subsequently led to publication of such talks, so I hope that perhaps there was some personal contribution there on these political issues.

I often worked in tandem with an economic officer at the embassy, Emmerson Brown. I would give the political side of the NATO integration aspects and he would give the economics side of the Atlantic relationship and that made for an interesting dual presentation to a variety of seminars, particularly this time to teachers and younger intellectuals in Germany.

They, too, were an important audience group because they, of course, were the ones who had to struggle most with the sins of their fathers and how they were going to present this to their students over time. This whole aspect, therefore, which links to my view of USIS' role in projecting the virtues of the open society and of democratic societies, became an important aspect, an important political aspect in the development of programs in Germany.

I would say that it took me about six months to re-acclimate. I was on my way with fair fluency and by the time I returned for my first home leave, which was after my first two years in Germany, I tested bilingually and have ever since been on a bilingual level.. I had therefore the advantage of being able to deliver my talks in German and to discuss -- more important -- to discuss in German.

There is one other thing is to be said about the German labor movement. As Social Democrats, they were, of course, in the vanguard of anti-communism, because they had direct experience combating the communists within their own ranks for so many years in the pre-Nazi era. So, it was not the same problem of communist infiltration or influence that we might have found early on in Japan. On the other hand, I think you can find that the labor movement was more oriented

toward the Social Democrats than towards the more conservative parties.

I didn't find the German officers to be perhaps more cultured than their American counterparts. DeMaiziere was himself an exception. He was a fine pianist. He had come from an unusually gifted family and so forth. As I recall looking back on discussions with the officer group and talks to the group, I think the response was pretty much at the levels that I experienced subsequently in many other military commands around the world, particularly when I was working with Commander-in-Chief Pacific and I was going to say, within the National War College, which I attended, of course, in 1968. On the other hand, I think these being a group of chosen individuals, they tended to be maybe a notch above the norm. So, I would say the level of interest, the level of comprehension was not significantly different in the German officer corps, but they were much more focused because they had to be.

They were starting out, they were under the gun, so to speak. They had to prove themselves, as divorcing themselves completely from the Nazi tradition while retaining the best elements of the Wehrmacht tradition and fitting into a democratic society that they had never known before, so that was a fascinating era in terms of German development and one that was fun to work with.

At that time, I think Germans were predisposed to like America and, basically, its leadership. Kennedy, for example, was a magical figure in all of Germany as well among the young people. I still recall the night of his death, we were in Bonn. I spoke to a number of groups who subsequently commemorated the Kennedy death. It was as if we were in the United States. They were burning candles and, you know, that sort of thing, and I represented the Embassy at some of these events. That is a predisposition that in part is natural through long relationships, the one that has grown today and, in part, I fear has been caused by some very dubious international behavior and policies on the part of the United States which I will come to at some other point of our discussion because it bothers me to have had to speak to and defend such things, not defend them, but at least to explain them.

What anti-Americanism there was started in West Berlin in a sense that it came into West Berlin by virtue of convenience, and I will tell you why. Anyone who lives in West Berlin is exempt from German military service, therefore, by definition, those youthful elements that oppose the established order went to Berlin and then in Berlin, they began to cause problems of sorts and then expanded outward from Berlin again, like the Greens, for example.

Berlin, in a sense, did not generate the problem. They received it and then passed it back again because, as I will mention when we get to Berlin or as we might emphasize when we get to Berlin, the Berliners are very closely tied to the United States by virtue of post-war history and even in emotion still today. I think the last thing they would wish to see in the great majority, and that includes both the SPD and the Christian Democrats, would be a disappearance of the American presence from Berlin. But these youthful elements gathered there and then from there were able to propagate their faith as well to other places.

EDWARD ALEXANDER

**Head of Cultural Programming, Voice of America, USIS
Berlin (1959-1964)**

Edward Alexander was born in 1920 in New York city. He received a bachelor's degree from Columbia College and a master's degree from Columbia University. After working with Psychological Warfare during World War II, he joined the Voice of America. Mr. Alexander served in Budapest and Berlin. He was interviewed by Hans Tuch in 1988.

ALEXANDER: The Director of the VOA European Division at the time was Alex Klieforth. He was transferred by George Allen to West Berlin in 1959 to be Director of RIAS, Radio in the American Sector. Before he left, Alex said to me, "Why don't you join me in Berlin?" He said, "You know German, you have broadcasting experience, and it is time for you to get away from the Armenian Service and to get into the Foreign Service". So I said, "Okay, fine".

However, Barry Zorthian, the VOA Program Manager, said, "I am not letting you go until you find a successor." That took a long time but it finally worked out, and finally I went to Berlin. In 1961 Ed Murrow -- the next USIA Director -- brought Alex Klieforth back to the Voice of America. And that was when I said, "Alex, how can you desert us like this?" And he said, "When Ed Murrow asks you to do something, you have to do it."

So there I was at RIAS. In those days, not recently, but in those days, the United States had a very firm hold on RIAS. We funded most of it, controlled policy, and had at one time seven Americans there. I was one of the seven Americans. Each one of the Americans had a different part of RIAS to control; outside of the director there was a deputy director, then there was administration, then there was political programming and economics, things like that. I had all of the cultural programming. I had the cultural and the music, and it was tremendously enjoyable. We had our own symphony orchestra. Ferenc Fricsey was the conductor. Absolutely great days. As the years went on, little by little, that it was whittled away. The Germans slowly funded it more and so in consequence there were fewer Americans.

While I was there, being in charge of the music, I was dismayed at how little American music was played at RIAS. And so I went to the Music Department, called a meeting, and I pointed this out and they just looked at each other and said, "We are a German station." As a matter of fact, on one Fourth of July, I asked them why they didn't acknowledge the occasion and they said because RIAS has nothing to do with the United States. Well, this was very dismaying, you know. So I decided to do something on my own. I got in touch with people at State in the Cultural Department. Joe Roland, Guy Corriden and people like that. With their support I arranged a festival of American music in Berlin and invited Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, Gunther Schuller, Elliot Carter, Roger Sessions, and Henry Cowell. That was really the top. They all came. Not all together, but separately so that they would come, record music, lecture at the Amerika Haus, give public concerts and so forth. It was really, as far as I was concerned, the high point of my time at RIAS and I was very proud of it. Berlin never heard so much American music as at that time. And it was really great, and those recordings live on.

ERNEST KOENIG
Assistant Agriculture Attaché
Bonn (1959-1964)

Ernest Koenig was born in 1917 in Vienna, Austria and was raised in Czechoslovakia, where he attended Masaryk College. He also studied at the German University in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Mr. Koenig later emigrated to the United States and enrolled in the City College in New York, New York. He also attended graduate school at Johns Hopkins University. In 1951, Mr. Koenig joined the Department of Agriculture, working for the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. He also served in Belgium, Switzerland, and France. Mr. Koenig was interviewed by Quentin Bates on August 19, 1995.

Q: When did your foreign assignment begin?

KOENIG: In 1959. In that year the Department of State invited two German farm leaders, Sonnemann and Rehwinkel, to visit the United States. Given the importance of these visitors a civil servant who would also be able to interpret was to be appointed to accompany them on their trip. I was selected. Upon their return they expressed satisfaction with my help. Thereafter, I was appointed Assistant Agricultural Attaché in Bonn with the special task to report on the development of the EEC's common agricultural policy (CAP) from the vantage point of Bonn.

Q: At that time the common agricultural policy was already in force, was it not?

KOENIG: It was not yet in force. But U.S. agriculture feared the application of this policy because it presaged a shrinking of our market outlets in Germany and in Europe as a whole.

The Treaty of Rome, signed in 1957, came into force on January 1, 1958. This meant that beginning with 1958 the internal tariffs between the EEC countries were to be gradually reduced and their tariffs vis a vis third countries were to be harmonized. Tariffs on farm products were also to follow this schedule. But German agriculture was mostly protected by non-tariff measures, and the Germans balked. They resisted any change in their quota, licenses and admixture system. They did not wish to take any steps towards a common agricultural market.

Q: Was German protection higher than that of any other common market country?

KOENIG: The internal German price level was much higher than that of other EEC countries. Protection was consequently also higher. The Germans feared the efficiency of French agriculture. Yet the French were not more efficient than the Germans, but their price level was much lower. German resistance to a common agricultural policy continued until 1961. In that year de Gaulle, who was in power in France, confronted the Germans with a kind of ultimatum: either they would agree to a common agricultural policy, which would entail opening their markets to their partners, or the French would stop reducing their industrial tariffs (in which the Germans were very interested) and also stop harmonizing their external tariffs with those of their partners. In other words: the French threatened to suspend the building of a common market.

The U.S. Government was strongly interested in a Common Market because it wished to see Western Europe united and Germany integrated in such an entity. The U.S. Government also knew that without a common agricultural policy a common market (i.e. the European Economic Community) would be impossible. It therefore pressured Germany to accept such a policy.

Q: And that overrode our concern about the effects of the common market on American agriculture.

KOENIG: Certainly. This was clearly shown in the outcome of the first so-called GATT Article XXIV:6 negotiations with the EEC. The purpose of these negotiations was to grant compensation to the U.S. for the impairment of its GATT rights, caused by the common agricultural policy with regard to several major commodities. Instead, these negotiations suspended our claims and nullified, in fact, our rights. They resulted in almost unilateral favors for European farm interests.

Yet before these negotiations occurred and up to 1962, the German farmers, who were led by my German travel companions in America, opposed the creation of a common agricultural market. Chancellor Adenauer was willing to accept it but was hampered by his farmers on whose support his coalition government largely depended.

In the course of the negotiations between Adenauer and the farmers, the President of the German Farmers' Association met frequently with Adenauer. Thereafter, he would often invite me for a beer and tell me that no progress had been made towards Germany's acceptance of a common agricultural policy.

Q: You had a real inside track.

KOENIG: A fantastic inside track, which was the more valuable as my State Department colleagues reported every day that an agreement was just around the corner. In retrospect, it seems possible that the Germans might have known of the unjustified optimism permeating State's reporting from Bonn to Washington, and thus might have wished to counteract it by giving me a more realistic assessment of the situation.

My boss, Phil Eckert, was a protégé of Barry Goldwater, whom many people expected to be our next President. Phil's position was therefore very strong and the Office of the Agricultural Attaché enjoyed a high degree of independence in the embassy. Our State Department was, of course, right in giving priority to America's political aims over those of certain economic interests. At times, however, their attitude was too indulgent vis a vis European or German farm interests. It bordered on the ridiculous. When I once told the head of the Embassy's economic section that we should ask the German Government to liberalize canned fruits, which were still subject to quotas, he told me that I have no political sense. He said that such a request would be very embarrassing to the German Government. Didn't I know that it could weaken its political strength; that we must avoid everything that could have such an effect? The following day it became known that two high American officials would visit Bonn in order to solicit a German contribution to the maintenance costs of U.S. troops in Germany. Fearing possibly excessive American requests and wishing to mitigate them in advance, the German government announced

several trade concessions favoring American exports even before the talks had taken place. Among them was the liberalization of canned fruits and vegetables -- and western civilization did not break down.

Before 1962, the U.S. Government exercised ever stronger pressure on Germany to adhere to a common agricultural policy. The U.S. told them that without such a policy, the common market will not advance. Hence there will be no European integration and no unified Europe. The Germans will be guilty of the disintegration of Europe, and the whole blame for this failure will fall on them. Under this pressure the Germans agreed finally on the principles of a common agricultural market.

Q: How about your German friends, the head of the farmers organization and their allies?

KOENIG: They had to accept it, but they extracted considerable concessions from their government.

Q: Were they fairly satisfied with what they got?

KOENIG: They were unhappy because they were obliged to lower their prices a bit, though the French had to raise theirs. All in all, the common agricultural market was based on very high common prices.

Q: Thus the Germans demanded the highest common denominator.

KOENIG: Yes, but it was only in 1968 that the support and minimum import prices were truly unified.

Q: High domestic prices entailed also high import protection.

KOENIG: Indeed. In a certain sense we were paying for the creation of the common agricultural market. To the extent that the common agricultural policy stimulated internal production, its self-sufficiency increased. Our outlets declined not only inside the common market but also in third countries because higher output led to increasing and necessarily subsidized exports. Thus they agreed on the largest common denominator -- i.e. on the highest possible domestic prices.

Q: When were these prices finally applied?

KOENIG: It took another six years, until 1968, before the prices were really unified.

Q: But high domestic prices entailed also high import protection.

KOENIG: Indeed. So in a certain sense we were paying for the creation of the common agricultural policy. But not only this. To the extent that the Common Market increased its production under the impact of high prices, its self-sufficiency increased. After a couple of years they produced exportable surpluses to an increasing extent. Since they could not well compete on the world market owing to their high prices, they subsidized their exports to the detriment of the

United States and other third countries.

I should also mention the so-called "chicken war." America was exporting broilers and other chicken products to Germany. Exports were growing. U.S. poultry products found a rapidly growing market outlet in Germany, also because the price of American poultry was much lower than that of German or Dutch products. When the EEC began to implement the common agricultural policy, German impediments to the importation of U.S. poultry products were growing. The U.S. protested frequently and vehemently against these German, i.e. common market, import measures. American poultry exporters had strong political backing at home. Thus the so-called chicken war was elevated to a high political level. Finally President Kennedy approached Chancellor Adenauer in this matter. In spite of all the many American efforts to lower the common market import barriers, they became more and more restrictive. Our poultry exports began to fall. The U.S. finally brought the matter before the GATT which agreed that the common market countries owe compensation to the U.S. This compensation assumed the form of increased U.S. import duties on a number of EEC export products.

Thereafter, the chicken war lingered on for many years. It had many hysterical and hilarious aspects. One of them touched food legislation about which I will speak later on because it goes beyond the "chicken war."

LUCIAN HEICHLER
Political Officer
Berlin (1959-1965)

Lucian Heichler was born in Vienna, Austria in 1925. He emigrated to the United States with his parents in 1940 where he later attended NYU and was naturalized as a US citizen in 1944. He served in the US Army during World War II. He entered the Foreign Service and held positions in Germany, Cameroon, Zaire, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium and Turkey. Lucian Heichler was interviewed by Susan Klingman in 2000.

Q: I do know Elwood Williams, yes. I did know him very well.

HEICHLER: Well, Elwood was sort of a king maker when it came to picking people for overseas assignments. He seemed fond of me, perhaps because I had worked hard and promptly for him. When he needed a biography, I supplied it, usually the same afternoon. He called me up one morning - I guess it was January 1960 or December '59 - and said, "Lucian, how would you like to go to Berlin?" I said, "I most certainly would." What had happened was that the labor officer of the Political Section, U.S. mission in Berlin, Dan Montenegro, had suddenly had to go back to the States on compassionate leave. His replacement, Ernie Nagy, whom you probably know-

Q: Yes.

HEICHLER: --was then in training for the labor officer's position but not yet ready to go, and so to fill the gap, Elwood picked me to go to Berlin to become, temporarily, the mission labor officer. And so I was suddenly set free from what had become a boring job, financially difficult to sustain, with no real future to it, and sent to Berlin and able to start a real career, because when Ernie arrived on the scene, I was kept on in the Political Section as a regular political reporting officer.

Q: And what particular aspect of political reporting were you asked to specialize in?

HEICHLER: Berlin internal political affairs and matters pertaining to the interaction of the three allies with the city government. I became the American secretary of the Allied Kommandatura, which was the allied authority governing Berlin, at least on paper - by then on paper, because certainly by 1960 the Germans had obtained a great deal of autonomy.

Q: Who was the minister in Berlin at the mission at that point?

HEICHLER: Allan Lightner.

Q: Okay.

HEICHLER: And I was a member of the Civil Affairs Committee; I was secretary of the Kommandatura. And then just two weeks before the Wall went up, the American liaison officer, George Muller, was promoted to be chief of the Political Section, and I was put in his place as the Senat liaison officer.

Q: That must have been very interesting.

HEICHLER: It was a fascinating job. I had an office in the City Hall. I had another office out on Clay-Allee. I was fairly junior. I was an FSR-5 at the time. That was under the old system.

Q: Yes, right. You were an FSR-5 under the old officer ranking system.

HEICHLER: Yes. I guess it would have been FSR-6 later. But because of the nature of the job, I was always in the midst of whatever was going on.

Q: And I'm sure your fluency in German was indispensable.

HEICHLER: Yes, I did conduct just about all my business in German down at the Rathaus (city hall). And once the Wall went up, and Berlin really became the center of world attention, I had the privilege of escorting just about anybody who was anybody up the steps of the Rathaus and into Mayor Willy Brandt's office and sitting in to take notes. And I reported on the first set of talks to allow Berliners to visit relatives in East Berlin, talks that went on for a couple of years. It was hard work, but absolutely fascinating work and a very good life.

Q: I must say, just to interject, perhaps unbeknownst to either of us, we might have met hobnobbing with Willy Brandt. At that time I was a Fulbright student in Germany, and the group

of Fulbrighters went to Berlin in May of 1960 and were welcomed at a reception hosted by Willy Brandt, and he left an enormous impression on me for many years.

HEICHLER: In May 1960, I would not yet have been involved; however, a few months later I would have been. This Senat liaison officer's job was in some ways an enormously privileged reporting officer's position. It gave you a level of access that without this strange status of Berlin you never would have had at that level.

Q: I'm just pausing here for a moment because I think the tape is about to run out and I want to just let it go. But I think when we turn the tape over I would be interested in hearing more about the Berlin Wall going up during your period there. Let's just see how this goes, since this is the first time I've used this machine.

HEICHLER: Do you think this is going okay?

Q: I think it's wonderful. The first part was just very interesting, you know.

HEICHLER: As I said, I lived very well, and I felt I had a very privileged position.

Q: What Germans did you have liaison business with besides -

HEICHLER: Well, my principal contact was the head of the Senat Chancery. When I first started, this was Heinrich Albertz (Albertz was a most interesting man -- a member of Brandt's Social-Democratic Party (SPD) and at the same time an ordained minister in the German Evangelical Church. After his resignation as Governing Mayor of Berlin in 1967 over the police shooting of a student protesting the visit of the Shah of Iran, Albertz became pastor of a church in the poor working class borough of Berlin-Wedding. He later moved to Bremen, where he died during the 1990s.) who later became deputy mayor and finally governing mayor of Berlin, and then Dietrich Spangenberg, both of them now long gone. I also knew and dealt with a number of other people, like Otto Bach, the president of the Berlin House of Representatives -- the legislature. I knew the man who conducted the negotiations for the *Passierscheine* - Korber, Horst Korber - very well.

Q: How would you translate Passierscheine?

HEICHLER: 'Transit passes.'

Q: Transit passes, between East and West Berlin.

HEICHLER: These had been terribly difficult to negotiate. Here again, I had a very small role. The East Germans originally wanted to open some kind of "passport offices" in West Berlin to issue these passes, which would permit West Berliners to visit their relatives in the Soviet Sector (East Berlin). This was nothing but a device to gain some recognition and a foothold in the Western Sectors of the city.

Q: Which, of course, we would not allow.

HEICHLER: Which we did not allow, and as chairman secretary of the Allied Kommandatura for the month, it was I who signed the Allied Kommandatura order forbidding this.

Q: *I see.*

HEICHLER: There is a book called *Dokumente zur Berlinfrage* in which you will find that order with my name on it.

Do you want me to start talking about the Wall?

Q: *Well, I think we might as well since the tape is still running. You were in Berlin at the time. What was it like? Did it take us by surprise or not?*

HEICHLER: It did and it didn't. We have been accused over and over of having had foreknowledge of the Wall, and I'm absolutely convinced that this is not the case.

Q: *Why?*

HEICHLER: Because we naïvely did not believe that the Russians and East Germans were capable of just cutting the city in half the way they did. We were naïve in other ways as well. This particular chapter in the Berlin crisis began in 1958 with the Khrushchev ultimatum. Khrushchev insisted that it was time for the occupation of Berlin to end, for the Western Allies to leave, and for West Berlin to become a free city, whatever that meant, with East Berlin already established, illegally in our eyes, as the capital of the German Democratic Republic, a status which we never recognized. The crisis became more and more exacerbated. Years passed and we refused to budge. The Russians continued to issue threats. And of course for many years Berlin had been the only place through which people could leave East Germany, the only window in the Iron Curtain. Until August 13, 1961, it was still possible to get on a subway train or an S- Bahn train in East Berlin, get off in the West, and there you were -- free. You couldn't leave Berlin by surface transport, but you could fly out. And over the years an average of 10,000 people a month left East Germany that way, an enormous number.

Q: *And yet you say that the U.S. and others in the West still did not foresee a Berlin Wall?*

HEICHLER: No, what we foresaw... We realized that because of this human drain, this veritable hemorrhage, the GDR was experiencing an ever more serious economic crisis. What we expected, if we expected anything at all, was that the East German regime would make it more and more difficult for people to reach East Berlin. And that was naïve on our part, because as long as the GDR insisted that East Berlin was its legal capital, it would have been politically awkward, to say the least, to prevent its own people from going to their own capital from which to flee into West Berlin. But the idea that they would actually block access between the two parts of the city seemed too outlandish and too difficult to implement. There were, after all, something like 88 crossing points between the Western and Eastern parts of the city, and there were buses and streetcar lines and subway lines that ran between the two parts of the city. The phones lines, to be sure, had been cut years before.

Q: That's what I was going to say. In some respects it was divided.

HEICHLER: Well, over 100,000 people who lived in East Berlin and worked in West Berlin, the so-called "border crossers," or *Grenzgänger*, and their jobs ended from one day to the next.

Q: So what happened on August 13, 1961?

HEICHLER: Well, it was a Sunday morning (see endnote 4), and I went to church, and when I looked around, I suddenly realized I was the only man there, surrounded by women and children, and I thought: Something is definitely wrong here.

Q: This was a German church?

HEICHLER: No, it was the Lutheran American Church in Berlin. It was an all- American congregation. And I suddenly realized that except for the pastor I was the only male present. Alarm bells went off in my head. I rushed to the office, called my boss (George Muller) who reacted furiously, wanting to know "where in hell I had been," because he had been trying since three o'clock in the morning to reach me, and I reminded him that I had just moved a week before. He'd been calling my old phone number, which was no longer in service. And so I was apparently the only person left in Berlin who didn't realize that a Wall was going up. But what happened - of course people have asked me how could they build a wall overnight. Well, they didn't build a wall overnight. They strung barbed wire and put up a human wall of East German army troops and police behind it.

Q: And what was going on in the mission when that all started?

HEICHLER: Well, crisis, big-time. Flurries of immediate cables back and forth.

Q: To Washington? To Bonn?

HEICHLER: To Washington, to Bonn, to military headquarters: "What do we do now?"

Q: Right. And the answer that came back?

HEICHLER: The answer that came back was: "Wait, we're considering the situation."

Q: We're talking about it, yes.

HEICHLER: It took three whole days before we even managed to cobble together a rather feeble protest note.

Q: That's astounding.

HEICHLER: It was horrible.

Q: Was this because of the number of people, offices, et cetera, that were involved, like the military and the White House and the State Department and all of that?

HEICHLER: It was because we feared that military intervention on our part might provoke World War III. Military intelligence told us that the Russians had deployed two armored divisions around Berlin to deter us from any such move. Anyway, we didn't have much in the way of military force on the ground in West Berlin. We had about 12,000 Allied military personnel. We had about an equal number of Berlin police. We had one American reinforced tank company. We had nothing to pit against a significant real military force, and the U.S. Army was not the least bit anxious to get into a totally unequal fight. The State Department was far more eager to test this Soviet-East German "surprise," at least, to try to break through, to prevent the Wall from being built.

Q: So the State Department was more hawkish than -

HEICHLER: Much more hawkish than the military or the White House, for that matter. I mean they were all set to send our few tanks up against the Sector border and keep these people from stringing their wire. But nothing of the sort ever happened.

Q: Do you think that if we had done that it would have been successful?

HEICHLER: People said, "There is no point to this. Either they're going to clobber us or else, more cleverly, they're going to just move back 50 feet and start over. And what are you going to do? Occupy East Berlin 50 feet at a time?"

Q: Yes, interesting concept.

HEICHLER: That kind of reasoning went on. It fell to me, of course, August being one of the four so-called American months in Berlin -

Q: Which means?

HEICHLER: Which means that every month the chairmanship of the Allied Control Authority moved from one of the three Western Allied powers to another.

Q: To the United States.

HEICHLER: In other words, every three months the chairmanship came around to us. August was "American month," and we automatically held the chair of the liaison offices, the Allied Kommandatura Secretariat and everything else. As chairman liaison officer, I was sent to show Willy Brandt a copy of this miserable protest note.

Q: And what was his reaction?

HEICHLER: Oh, he boiled over.

Q: *I can imagine.*

HEICHLER: And the whole wrath of this man - and he really could get pretty angry - descended upon my innocent, junior, FSO-5 shoulders.

Q: *Maybe that was your calling at that time.*

HEICHLER: Maybe it was. I was given a history lesson unlike any other I have ever received, because he started to lecture me, and I came to feel afterwards that I had been "present at the creation" -- the birth of what became known first as the "policy of small steps," and later the German *Ostpolitik*.

Q: *Well, what did Willy Brandt say to you?*

HEICHLER: For some surprising reason Brandt had believed -- rather naively -- that the "Protective Powers," as he called the three Western Occupying Powers, would move with courage and dispatch to stop this latest Eastern outrage. And when it didn't happen, he suddenly lost his faith in the Allies; his confidence in the West collapsed all of a sudden. He then developed the concept that something had to be done to change what he called this "frozen landscape" between East and West, even if it were only small technical steps that could gradually evolve into larger political steps, but that we couldn't afford to go on like this.

Q: *So already at that time he had a concept beyond the Iron Curtain, a concept of rapprochement with the East in some small steps?*

HEICHLER: Yes. Well, he felt that Adenauer's policy of simply standing firmly with the West was a dead end. Something had to be dreamed up to substitute for it. The people who did the dreaming were he and Egon Bahr. And Bahr announced the new policy in a subsequently famous speech delivered at the Tutzing Annual Conference in Bavaria and made the Allies furious.

Q: *I can imagine.*

HEICHLER: They felt that he was betraying us. In fact, he was not doing anything of the kind; he and Brandt were simply searching for possible solutions to get out of an absolute dead end. Nobody wanted war; nobody could conceive of nuclear war over Berlin, and the Russians had the upper hand geographically and militarily.

Q: *And Berlin was divided.*

HEICHLER: Berlin was divided. Families were divided. People could suddenly no longer talk to each other, see each other, go to work.

I had a very moving experience which might be made part of this record. A few days after the Wall went up, I got a call from the gate at headquarters saying there was a young Berliner there who wanted to speak to a political officer, and I said, "Well, send him up." And the young man came up and said, "Look, I have a fiancée in East Berlin. We were going to get married. I can't

call her because the phone lines are cut. I have no way of seeing her. I want to, I must get this girl out. How am I going to get her out of there?

"If she went to one of the other Communist countries on some pretext - international youth festival, or whatever, World Peace Congress, one of the innumerable Communist front organizations - if she went to Budapest or Bucharest and went to the American embassy there for asylum, would she be able then to get out?"

I replied, "No, my friend, I'm afraid not. We have no such asylum policy. Cardinal Mindszenty was an exception. And he lived in the ambassador's office in Budapest for 15 years before he was able to leave the building." I said, "There's no point to this. If your girl goes to Budapest and goes to the American embassy, they won't let her in. And if they did let her in, she wouldn't be able to leave the building again without being arrested as soon as she set foot outside. There's no sense in this. You've got to find some other way."

He said, "Well, I'm going to find a way." I said, "Well, if you do, let me know. I'm very interested."

So he went away, and three weeks later I got a call from the guard shack at the Clay-Allee entrance to the American headquarters, saying, "There are two young Germans here to see you." And I said, "Well, send them up." And here comes my friend with this very pretty girl in tow and says, "Well, I did it." I said, "How did you do it?" He said, "Well, I found a car that has no hump..." - you know.

Q: *"Hump" meaning... trunk?*

HEICHLER: No, not trunk, but the drive shaft that runs down the middle of the floor of the car, elevated - you know.

Q: *The axle?*

HEICHLER: Not the axle, the drive shaft which runs the length of the car, connected to the universal joint - or whatever it is.

Q: *Okay. So he found a car.*

HEICHLER: He found a car with a flat floor where he was able to take out the back seat and make enough room for a small human being to hide in there and put the back seat back and cover it with blankets and stuff. "I arranged with her brother that they would drive out to a rest area on the Autobahn between Berlin and Helmstedt, and I would meet them there with this car, and when nobody was there, nobody was looking, she would slip from her brother's car to my car and get down into this hidey-hole I had made, and I would drive back into Berlin," which he did. And the East Germans were not yet clever enough then to search cars with the thoroughness with which they searched them later. And so he got through the checkpoint okay into Berlin, and here she was in West Berlin and free, and all they needed to do now was get married and emigrate.

He invited me to the wedding. It was a lovely little family affair. And then they flew to Canada, where, as the German fairy tales always say, "*Wenn sie nicht gestorben sind, dann leben sie noch heute.*" [If they haven't died, they're still alive today.]

Q: *So they lived happily ever after.*

HEICHLER: They lived happily ever after, I hope, and they're probably in their 60s now, somewhere in Canada. That is one of my favorite Wall stories. A few months later it couldn't have happened, because by that time the East Germans were hep to just about everything. They had mirrors on long handles to hold under a car, and all kinds of other detection devices.

Q: *Well, so after the Wall went up and we had, in effect, done nothing, did things change with regard to your job as liaison?*

HEICHLER: Well, no.

Q: *I mean were the Berliners really -*

HEICHLER: Hostile.

Q: *Hostile, you would call it.*

HEICHLER: Hostile. I remember the one and only time in my whole six years in Berlin when I feared for my safety on being recognized as an American officer, and this was during a protest rally that Brandt held on the Wednesday after the Wall went up. It must have been the 17th of August or so, a protest rally in front of the Rathaus, directed as much against the Allies as against the Russians. I attended as an observer in order to report on it, but it was scary - the anger. However, that period lasted only about a week, and then Kennedy came through. It was, of course, all political; it was all smoke and mirrors, but -

Q: *When did Kennedy come through this time?*

HEICHLER: Kennedy did two things. He sent -

Q: *This would have been when, in the fall of '61?*

HEICHLER: No, it was just a week after the Wall went up.

Q: *Oh, right after the Wall.*

HEICHLER: On the 20th of August.

Q: *August 20, 1961.*

HEICHLER: He announced that he was sending an additional [third] battle group to Berlin, as a signal to the Russians that we were prepared to fight for West Berlin.

Q: *Okay, so that was the American reaction, in a sense.*

HEICHLER: And the second reaction was that he was sending Vice-President Johnson to Berlin, and the two arrived more or less simultaneously. It was an unbelievable circus.

Q: *I can imagine. What all was involved?*

HEICHLER: Well, LBJ came and as usual behaved like a politician running for office, and when word came that the first elements of the additional or third battle group were arriving in Berlin off the Autobahn, having marched all night from Mannheim, Johnson insisted on being there to greet them "on behalf of the President and the people of the United States." I was in his retinue, and it was truly a wonderful moment. LBJ made the most of it. Those poor guys were not allowed to go to bed and sleep. They were paraded through Berlin for the rest of the day, everywhere. And anyway, LBJ enjoyed himself. I have some wonderful stories about LBJ.

Q: *Well, he was a character of the first order.*

HEICHLER: I mean this was just about the time, Susan, when the Vice-President was given his official residence, the Naval Observatory on Massachusetts Avenue..

Q: *Yes.*

HEICHLER: Until then he had his own housing somewhere, and LBJ was interested in furnishing the residence, and so his last Sunday in Berlin he went--

Q: *He went shopping.*

HEICHLER: He went shopping. You know the story.

Q: *No, I don't. But he visited Manila when I was there, and he went shopping there also. He shopped everywhere.*

HEICHLER: He made the famous Berlin porcelain manufacture factory, the *Königliche Porzellan-Manufaktur (KPM)* open its showroom on a Sunday afternoon, and we all had to go there. The poor director came down. And LBJ announced that he was looking for a nice set of china for the vice-presidential residence in Washington. And they showed him one beautiful set after the other, and they were all too expensive for him. And he finally - and this is true; I was there - he finally said that what he was really looking for was "seconds."

Q: *He was really looking for seconds. That must have gone over very well with the Germans.*

HEICHLER: By that the Americans looked for holes in the ground to crawl into.

Q: *Yes, but I would have thought he would have asked if they would give it to him as a gift.*

HEICHLER: Well, he didn't have to, because they -

Q: *They did!*

HEICHLER: The deputy mayor of Berlin, a man named Franz Amrehn, who was CDU, quick-thinkingly stepped forward and said, "But Mr. Vice President, the Senat and people and Berlin want to give you this as a present." And, "Oh, well, in that case..."

Q: *What a great surprise that must have been.*

HEICHLER: In that case, he picked the fanciest set he could find - a 36-person set of everything, and then arranged that his office would send us the vice-presidential insignia through the diplomatic pouch to give to KPM to be painted on every plate, saucer, cup, and bowl, and so it was done. But these are my little anecdotes, you know.

Q: *Yes, well, and all of this in the context of the Wall having just been erected throughout Berlin.*

HEICHLER: And then there was the matter of the Vice-President's shoes and shavers.

Q: *Tell me a little bit about that.*

HEICHLER: Okay. On the second day of the visit, at five o'clock in the morning, I got a phone call from a deputy chief of protocol saying, "Mr. Heichler, I'm so sorry to wake you so early in the morning, but we have a problem. Yesterday, the *Herr Vizepräsident* admired the mayor's shoes, and the mayor said that he wants to give him a pair just like them, and we don't know the size. Could you find out what size the Vice-President wears?" So I called the residence at five-thirty in the morning and asked to speak to his valet, who was very angry at me.

Q: *For waking him up.*

HEICHLER: For waking him up at five-thirty in the morning, and I asked him about the shoe size, and he blew his stack. He said, "The Vice President has his shoes made to order. We don't know what his size is. They're all handmade." I had to report back to Herr von Selchow that I had failed in my mission, and he cleverly solved the problem by sending an entire range of sizes, maybe 20 different pairs of shoes, to the residence of the American ambassador in Berlin. And that was the last I heard of it until three days after the Johnson party had mercifully left Berlin, and the ambassador's wife, Mrs. Walter Dowling, a very nice lady, called me at the office and said, "Lucian, can you get these damned shoes out of my living room? And also, while you're at it, there are all these electric shavers sitting around, because he was interested in buying an electric shaver and some man came around with samples and left them, and they're still lying around here as well, and I want them out of my living room."

Q: *Well, he left quite a wake in all of his travels, but getting back to Berlin, post-Wall, how much longer were you in Berlin after that? Quite a few more years?*

HEICHLER: Five more years.

Q: Five more years. So you must have been there during Kennedy's visit - when was it - 1963?

HEICHLER: 1963. I worked on the Kennedy visit. I was a member of the control officer team. I was with Kennedy the whole eight hours he spent in Berlin. I drafted one of his speeches. It was actually not used the way I drafted it. I wrote the draft of the City Hall speech, but he used most it at the Free University, and so the famous line, "I am a Berliner," was not mine, I'm sorry to say.

Q: Well, it was a good line, in any case. That's the one that everyone remembers, but the visit was... By that time, I assume or I have the impression, the Germans were enthused about the United States again.

HEICHLER: Oh, they were all in love with Kennedy.

Q: Yes.

HEICHLER: Totally and completely, and if Jackie had come along, it would have been an even greater love feast. She didn't, which was a pity, because I would have liked to meet her at least once. I was tremendously taken by John Kennedy myself. He actually shook my hand, but that was because he took me for a German.

Q: Well... whatever works. What did he say besides "I am a Berliner" that struck a chord? Was it just simply his presence, the American presence, or was it his youthful enthusiasm?

HEICHLER: His youthful enthusiasm; it was the strength with which he spoke - I mean it was the whole powerful passage that led up to this "I am a Berliner." "If you want someone to see so-and-so, then let him come to Berlin," over and over. It was a fantastically good speech.

Q: Yes.

HEICHLER: There was this one little interplay I was privy to because I was standing two feet away from him during the minutes-long applause which erupted after the "I am a Berliner" line. The interpreter, taken by surprise, simply repeated the phrase in German. This interpreter was a Herr Weber, assigned by Adenauer as the best German-English interpreter in the Foreign office, but when Kennedy said, "*Ich bin ein Berliner*," Herr Weber automatically repeated, "*Ich bin ein Berliner*." And Kennedy, who had this wry sense of humor, quickly leaned over to him and said, "Thank you for correcting my pronunciation."

Q: Yes, wonderful.

HEICHLER: A few of us overheard this and never forgot it.

Q: Well, it had a quite a play in the United States as well, the speech. I remember it very well.

HEICHLER: Of course it did.

Q: *Yes.*

HEICHLER: After that, during my last few years in Berlin, I was more occupied with internal politics.

Q: *Before we go to that, it couldn't have been very long after that Kennedy was assassinated.*

HEICHLER: Well, no. That came just a few months after that.

Q: *And so what was the reaction in Berlin?*

HEICHLER: Unbelievable. I've written that up (see endnote 5). Like most people I remember exactly where I was when we got the news of the assassination. The cultural affairs officer was giving a reception for returning Fulbright students, to which I was invited. And a few minutes after the reception began, we got the news on the radio that Kennedy had been shot. And very quickly thereafter came confirmation that he had been killed. Well, the reception broke up instantly, as did everything all over Berlin. It was amazing. Theaters closed. Movie houses closed. Restaurants closed. Bars closed. The city *died*.

Q: *I believe that happened all over Germany.*

HEICHLER: Yes. I went to the "bunker" - a situation room we had at headquarters which was used for emergency situations - spent the night there with colleagues from the mission and the military, mostly trying to figure out what to do -- protocol matters. Nobody knew what the protocol is when a sitting president dies. So we occupied our minds with that, and somebody was sent out to buy condolence books and this and that and the other thing, and it was a good way to keep from being emotionally overwhelmed. Nobody - but nobody - was prepared for the reaction of the Berliners - that once these condolence books had been placed in strategic locations, people would line up for days on end and blocks on end to sign them, millions of signatures. We got condolence notes from strangers, from neighbors, from waitresses who had once worked a cocktail party for us. The Army organized some particularly impressive military reviews for sad events like this, particularly powerful, slow, measured, muffled-drum kind of march. Willy Brandt was invited to the one the Army did at Andrews Barracks. One of the things the Army did was to position a bugler at each end of the parade ground to echo "Taps" back and forth between them, which was incredibly moving. And Willy sent for me - I was sitting a few feet away from him - and he said, "Herr Heichler, I am going to have a *Trauerfeier* (memorial service) at the Rathaus Monday night. I won't be there; I'm going to the funeral in Washington, but would you please arrange for this exact same thing to be done at the Rathaus?"

Q: *The bugles at this memorial service.*

HEICHLER: I'm getting ahead of myself. Brandt had been on a trip to Africa, and he had only come back that evening and gone to bed because he was very tired. Charlie Hulick, whose name you may not know -

Q: *Yes, I do know the name. H-U-L-I-C-K?*

HEICHLER: --who was the political advisor - *de facto* DCM of the mission - and I spent hours trying to track him down, finally got him on the phone, told him the news. By pure coincidence, the governing bodies of the three university student organizations were holding a meeting that evening, and when they got the news, they organized a spontaneous procession with candles -

Q: *Of students.*

HEICHLER: --of students, and people, ordinary people, passersby, kept joining this procession until by midnight there were 60,000 people standing in front of the Rathaus calling for Brandt to come and speak to them, because that was a Berlin tradition: if something bad happens, you go down to the Rathaus and wait for the mayor to tell you what's going on. And so we got Brandt up from his post-African nap, and he went down and made an impromptu speech -- one of his best - - during which he announced that he was flying to Washington to attend the funeral, but that in his stead, Mayor Albrecht would preside over the *Trauerfeier*.

Q: *Okay - 'condolence ceremony,' I guess you would translate it.*

HEICHLER: Condolence ceremony, yes, or a memorial service.

Q: *Memorial service, yes, sorry, memorial service.*

HEICHLER: And the day after Brandt asked me to arrange this business with the two buglers. We put one on the Rathaus roof and the other on the roof of an insurance building, the Viktoria Versicherungsgesellschaft, on the other side of Rudolf Wilde-Platz, then immediately renamed John F. Kennedy-Platz. And for the first time ever in the history of postwar Berlin, the city invited an American honor guard, a platoon of American soldiers, to be deployed in front of the Rathaus. The city government traditionally had been careful to keep the American military away from there, but they broke with that principle that night. I was there, sitting in the bleachers with my wife, and the contrast between the jubilant throng of June 23, 1963, and that cold, misty November night four months later was emotionally shattering. There were not nearly so many people in the square, but still there were a few hundred thousand of them, now weeping rather than cheering. For four days this went on, four unbelievable days. I will tell you this: I'm not ashamed of it. I guess it was the fourth day, Sunday or Monday afternoon, the day of the funeral in Washington. I'd been working at the mission the entire weekend through, until late afternoon. For the day of the funeral of a sitting president, Army protocol called for six big guns, six howitzers, to be drawn up, three on each side of the flagpole, to fire all day long, every minute on the minute - one round in rotation every minute on the minute. This went on the entire day.

I went downstairs when it came time to lower the flag for the night, and they marched a platoon of infantry and a band up to the flagpole to play "Taps," lower the flag, with the guns going off -- all of this at the same time. A few people, civilians like myself, stood around and watched this, and suddenly I started to cry.

Q: *Well, it must have been wrenching and shattering.*

HEICHLER: All this is in the papers I gave you.

Q: *Well, I think Berlin probably was the most stirring place to be at that time. I remember, I was in Düsseldorf at that time, which did not have anywhere near the connection to Brandt, but the effect there, as I described to my oral history, was also very, very moving. People were crying in the streets who had no official function whatsoever.*

HEICHLER: That's right. I was incredibly fortunate to have experienced all this myself, and then from 1963 on my last few years in Berlin were occupied with crises, crisis on the Autobahn, crisis with the last meeting of the Bundestag in Berlin, with Soviet MIG's buzzing the city in protest.

Q: *So it was a time of harassment and lots of messy things to deal with.*

HEICHLER: Messy things to deal with. And Brandt's own political ambitions. And I was, by dint of my position, the political officer assigned to report on Brandt and his doings and what he wanted, and I was sent to attend the SPD *Parteitage* (political conventions), even those held outside of Berlin.

Q: *The SPD Party Congresses.*

HEICHLER: And I remember Brandt's unsuccessful run for the Chancellorship in '64, after which there was not talking to him for weeks on end.

Q: *Well, this was at the time after Adenauer, was this the Erhard time in Bonn, right? So it was kind of a transitional time in German politics.*

HEICHLER: So it wasn't until after I had left Berlin that Brandt and - what's his name - sorry, the man who succeeded Erhard became chancellor. [trans note: Kurt Georg Kiesinger]

Q: *After Erhard.*

HEICHLER: I'm sorry, I've forgotten his name right now.

Q: *Well, I have, too. We'll both have to look that up.*

HEICHLER: Anyway -

Q: *But then Brandt came in later.*

HEICHLER: -- They formed a "grand coalition" (CDU-SPD) and Brandt became vice-chancellor and foreign minister.

Q: *That's right.*

HEICHLER: And then he became chancellor.

Q: *Right.*

HEICHLER: And remained chancellor until the Guillaume affair.

Q: *That's right, in '74. So you were in Berlin, then, until -*

HEICHLER: Until October of '65.

SUSAN M. KLINGAMAN
Fulbright Scholarship
Mainz (1959-1960)

Vice Consul
Dusseldorf (1963-1965)

Political Officer
Bonn (1973-1975)

German Desk
Washington, DC (1977-1980)

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

Q: Well first you went to Germany for a year is that right? Where did you go and can you talk about what you saw in Germany? This would have been in 1959?

KLINGAMAN: Yes, right, 1959-60. I went to Germany in September of 1959 to the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz. That university was chosen because there was a professor there who was specializing in French-German relations which is a subject I had thought I would like to focus on. As it turned out he wasn't there the year that I got there. But Mainz was really an ideal place for an American student because there weren't many Americans there. It was a wonderful year. I studied what Europeans consider to be modern European history and I also studied international law, all this in German.

The most important thing was that I really had a chance to practice German. I had had only two years of German in college. I had taken German strictly as sort of a last minute fling at Oberlin.

basically in order to learn the language of my father's ancestors, and it led to the Fulbright grant. I read and spoke and wrote in German at the university in Mainz. I also did a lot of traveling during the two month semester break. And in the spring of 1960 they gathered all the Fulbright students together in Berlin and that is where I met Willy Brandt for the first time. He was the mayor of Berlin, and he received the American Fulbright students then. It was very impressive for me as a young student.

Q: Tell me, coming from the quintessential American liberal arts school, Oberlin, and going to a German university can you compare and contrast the styles of teaching?

KLINGAMAN: Well the basic contrast is that the German style of teaching is the lecture with very little questioning on the part of the students. I did have two professors there who actually did allow questioning. One of them was a Swiss professor of international law who was in that respect very different from German professors and very much adored by the German and American students. I also participated in a seminar in which there was some limited discussion. But basically German education is much more formal with no exams until the final state exam at the end of the student's university career. So for me of course it was much more relaxed. I didn't have to study for tests although I did have to earn a certificate saying that I had satisfactorily completed a seminar.

Q: Did you get any feel for German political movements in particular as pertained to students?

KLINGAMAN: Not too much at that time. The university in Mainz was not a real hotbed of student activism.

Q: I don't think any were in the '50s.

KLINGAMAN: Possibly in Frankfurt but I just don't remember that international issues or German domestic politics were much on German students' minds in those days. This was still the Konrad Adenauer post war period. Germany was concentrating on rebuilding itself in every way, economically and politically. I will note, though, that some of the German law students I knew were struggling with what their parents and professors might or might not have known or done during the Nazi period.

Q: Actually on the interview I feel that the women's role is an interesting one. But you were in Dusseldorf from...

KLINGAMAN: October of 1963 until December of 1965.

Q: Incidentally because of the timing what was the reaction in Dusseldorf to the assassination of President Kennedy?

KLINGAMAN: I remember it very distinctly. That is one of my vivid memories. The news came through on a Friday night, after work. I had been invited upstairs to one of my colleagues for

dessert and coffee and when I got up there she said they had just heard over the news that President Kennedy had been shot in Dallas. We were very concerned and then when I later left and went back to my apartment news came over that he had been killed. This was on a Friday evening there. The next morning, early in the morning, I went next door to the newspaper kiosk to pick up my newspaper. The old woman at the kiosk had tears streaming down her face. I was amazed. This was a woman who was sour and had never spoken a word to me. She was muttering over and over that this was such a terrible loss to Germans.

The streets were quiet. You could hear a pin drop. This was a Saturday morning in Dusseldorf, usually a time when Germans would be bustling around doing their errands. On this Saturday morning people were walking up and down the street with tears running down their faces. We opened up a mourning book at the consulate general. People lined up for days to sign that book. It was a deep, deep shock for all of Germany and of course for us as well. But I was struck by the impact that it had on Germans.

Q: Can you describe some of the problems that you had to deal with as a consular officer?

KLINGAMAN: Well they were varied. On non-immigrant visas the problem was always to determine whether or not an applicant was a bona fide non-immigrant or whether they in fact were really intending to immigrate and were trying to circumventing the immigration laws. There were a number of Germans who wanted to immigrate and at that time there were also some foreign workers in Germany who wanted to go to the United States. We had to do a lot of interviewing to determine whether or not they were bona fide non-immigrants. There was also the issue of former German war criminals wanting visas to the United States for whom we had to apply for a special waiver from the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) Actually in both issues, the bona fide non-immigrants and the waivers, I ran into some problems with the consul general.

The consul general was a very nice man, very enthusiastic and hard charging but he really knew nothing about consular work. He was a lateral entrant. He had been "Wristonized," which meant he had been integrated into the Foreign Service from the Civil Service. I remember very distinctly having a major difference with him. One of his German business contacts wanted "a clean visa" a visa stamped in his passport that would not indicate that he had received an INS waiver. This businessman had been convicted of hiring prison labor during the war and consular officers were required by law to apply for a waiver in such cases. I had to present the consul general with all the regulations to convince him that I had no discretion in such a case.

The other case concerned a woman who in my judgment intended to immigrate. I turned down her application for a visitor's visa, and the next thing I knew the consul general called me up very upset about it. I remember going up to the consul general's office and explaining to him that this woman was not a bona fide non-immigrant, that she did not qualify for an non-immigrant visa. The consul general argued that for public relations reasons, because she knew one of his contacts, she had to receive a non-immigrant visa. I remember that I stood up and pounded my fist on his desk. I said that if this was the way it was in the Foreign Service, if I had to issue a visa when I didn't think it was legal, I didn't want any part of it. I am amazed now to think I had the gumption to do this as a green vice consul. But I did it. The consul general just stared at me.

He looked stunned. I think that probably after I left he called the embassy and found out that in fact I was correct. Anyway he called me up to his office the next day and said he wanted to thank me very much for bringing this to his attention as none of my predecessors had ever brought it to his attention. He said he had never really known what the criteria were for non-immigrant visas. So I think it was probably just plain greenhorn's luck, or whatever, but I am very glad that I did that and he commended me for it on my efficiency report, which is what performance evaluations were called in those days. So this consul general was a major difficulty for me at first but we worked it out.

Q: Were there any problems with Americans in the area?

KLINGAMAN: Yes. There were a number of naturalized Americans, German Americans, who returned to Germany because their social security went farther there in their retirement. We had some that were on German welfare, some who were mentally ill who gave us problems. I remember one woman who was both on welfare and mentally ill who came in to my office and wanted yet another loan from our consular contingency slush fund. I declined to give it to her for various reasons and I distinctly remember her standing up, this is a woman giving another woman lots of problems, standing up, looking at me, saying "Have you ever had your eyes scratched out by a woman?" Obviously I hadn't. I just looked wildly around me on my desk and saw the large, heavy black iron instrument which we used to imprint the seal of the United States on visas, with the long black handle. I stood, picked it up and said that no, I had never been scratched by a woman and didn't plan to be now. She just moved right out of my office and I realized that I had the seal of the United States as my best defense weapon from there on out!

I also handled some legal depositions, visited some Americans in prison, sealed the casket of an American citizen that was being shipped to the Philippines, and so on. It was interesting. I loved the special consular services' aspect of the job because you never knew what was going to happen; you never knew what was going to walk in the door.

Q: I am a consular specialist by training. What about life in Germany in those days for members of the consulate?

KLINGAMAN: It was fun. The mark was four to one so our salaries went a long way. This was very fortunate for me because when I entered the Foreign Service I had exactly \$100 to my name. I was able to buy a little Volkswagen Beetle after I had been there four or five months. I did a lot of traveling and I was able to start building up my household furnishings. I spoke German and enjoyed myself a great deal. My colleagues and I in the consulate went to Amsterdam on weekends a lot as we were near the border, and we enjoyed the old city sections in Dusseldorf and Cologne and other spots along the Rhine.

Also I think I should tell you that I became unofficially engaged to a German during this period, a German law student I had met during my Fulbright days in Mainz. So much of my social life was going back and forth to Mainz where he was. And he was coming up to Dusseldorf.

The marriage regulations, which we have mentioned, never really distressed me because I figured that if I married this German I would have had no intention of staying in the Foreign

Service anyway. But I also want to tell you that the consul general wrote a very enthusiastic note in my efficiency report saying Miss Klingaman is a wonderful officer but she is now engaged to a fine German man and will be leaving the Foreign Service because of this. It was all very upbeat. Today of course you would not be allowed to mention something like this in a performance evaluation but he did, and it didn't upset me at the time. As it turned out I didn't marry this German. When I returned to Washington on home leave from Dusseldorf I saw that efficiency report in the personnel files and lo and behold that portion of my efficiency report had been underlined in red and flagged by the promotion panel. I was in fact promoted during my stay in Germany. I met one of the men who had been on that promotion board later and he said that they had decided to promote me anyway, despite the fact that I was going to get married. But the point is that a comment like that in my efficiency report could have kept me from getting a promotion and wouldn't be allowed to be mentioned today in an efficiency report. But the fact that it was mentioned did not bother me at all at the time. Times have changed.

Q: You were there until 1965. Was there any sort of looking at politics in the Rhineland or anything like that?

KLINGAMAN: The consul general was the primary reporting officer on politics in the Rhineland. He never sought the assistance of the vice consuls in this effort. The closest I got to that was to be invited numerous times to his dinner parties. Why was I invited? Because every once in a while at seven o'clock at night after I had returned home from work I would get a frantic call from the consul general. "Miss Klingaman, Miss Klingaman, one of the German wives can't attend the dinner tonight. You know the Germans are very superstitious about having odd numbers at the dinner table so could you please come and fill in?" I went with mixed feelings, annoyance that my own plans for the evening had been disrupted but glad that I could be included at least to that extent with some of the higher ups. It was interesting for me although of course when the time came for after dinner discussions the men adjourned for their cigars and cognac and I went with the women into the sitting room. That bothered me at the time because I was interested in German politics, but it wasn't something that I was going to make an issue of. I really couldn't make an issue of it, and I wasn't really so inclined.

Q: Also, it was a disciplined Foreign Service and it wasn't just the women excluded.

KLINGAMAN: No, I guess the male junior officers were excluded, too. Actually they were not even invited to the consul general's dinners because it was always a woman needed to fill in.

Q: I ran a big reception in Frankfurt. I ran the hat and coat concession. That was my job on a major event.

KLINGAMAN: Right. In those days junior officers didn't question, and I was new and this was what you did and so that was that.

I was quite upset about one other thing though. Sometime during that period, I think probably in 1965, the embassy in Bonn invited the consulate general in Dusseldorf to send a junior officer to the embassy's political section meetings. Our consul general sent the other vice consul in Dusseldorf, a male, who didn't want to go. His interest was in becoming an administrative officer. He wasn't interested in politics. He kept complaining to me that he had to go down to

Bonn every week to these political section meetings. I said that I would really like to go but I never had a chance to go. I don't know why I didn't take it up with the consul general but I didn't. It's interesting when I think of it, because some time later I worked in the political section of the Embassy!

Q: You were there until when?

KLINGAMAN: I was going to be there for four years. I ended up being there until September of 1975.

Q: What was your job in Bonn?

KLINGAMAN: I was in the political section. I was one of two officers reporting on German domestic politics, the number two of two on the internal side of the political section. It was a large political section. I would say there were about ten officers in the political section: the political counselor, assistant counselor, politico-military officer, external political officers, and two or three working on nothing but Berlin matters at that time.

Q: Who was the ambassador and who was your immediate supervisor?

KLINGAMAN: The ambassador was Martin Hillenbrand; the political counselor was Frank Meehan, his deputy was David Anderson and my immediate supervisor the first year was Chuck Kiselyak, and the second year Bill Bodde.

Q: It was a very strong section.

KLINGAMAN: Yes, it was.

Q: I know David Anderson. I supervised him as a vice consul in Belgrade, his first overseas job.

KLINGAMAN: Wonderful guy.

Q: Yes...it is too bad...he just died.

What sort of piece of the internal political pie of Germany did you have?

KLINGAMAN: Basically we divided it between younger and older politicians in Germany. In other words I was primarily responsible for establishing contacts with younger politicians and students and the youth wings of the parties. My supervisor was in charge of the more senior politicians. But it wasn't that clear a division. Actually in the first year my supervisor was away part of the time on promotion board duty so I established contacts with some of the senior politicians also in his absence and attended the political party congresses. So it wasn't an exact division but that is basically how it was.

Q: Talking about the student wings and all, '68 was the big year of students all over. You had Red Rudy and others and student demonstrations helped bring down the De Gaulle Government in France and all...were the students pretty active when you were there?

KLINGAMAN: Well this was '73 to '75. This was later. It was not so much the students any more. Those who were really politically active had gotten into the youth wings of the parties and that was really where the young political action was taking place. At that time it was the Jusos, the Young Socialists, the youth wing of the Social Democratic Party (SPD). That was the big focus of attention. Now the Christian Democrats (CDU) also had a youth wing, as did the Liberal Free Democrats (FDP). They all had youth wings and the youth wings were important within the parties because for one thing they were channels for the ideas of political young people. And they were also the reservoir and the training ground, if you will, for future political leaders not only for the state governments of Germany but also the national Parliament, the Bundestag. I spent a lot of time developing contacts with the leaders of the youth wings of the three parties.

I also developed good relationships with young parliamentarians in each of the three parties, and also with some of the younger functionaries in the party headquarters and some the staff assistants of some of the political leaders. I had good contacts with Kohl's staff assistant in Bonn and I also knew Horst Teltschik, who was Kohl's assistant in his office in Mainz.

At that time we were encouraging US-German youth exchanges. I worked with the German political parties in organizing some exchanges of young German and American political leaders. The Social Democrats were particularly interested in developing contacts with young Americans, and I worked with a man named Hans Peter Weber in the SPD headquarters on this. There were some visits back and forth with some American groups. I think one was called the American Youth Council and the other was the Young Political Leaders or something like that. They weren't really the equivalents of the youth wings of the German parties but at least it was some sort of contact.

I also worked on nominating embassy candidates for the U.S. government "young leaders grants," which was an excellent program for sponsoring orientation trips to the U.S. for people we thought might become future leaders in their countries.

I had a special opportunity to establish some new contacts with the Young Socialists. My predecessor had started this and I was able to continue it. The Young Socialists were much more interested in talking with the United States than they had been when we had been involved in Vietnam. When we disengaged from Vietnam it was then politically okay for them from their point of view to have contacts with American embassy people.

I was able to develop a very good contact with the man who had been the chairman of the Young Socialists in the early '70s. When I arrived he had graduated from that position and was very active in politics in the state of Hesse in the Frankfurt area. I was interested in getting to know him; and he was interested in getting to know someone in the embassy that he could present his views to. His name was Karsten Voigt. I met him in Bonn; I was introduced to him. He was not in the Bundestag at that time. I was introduced to him in Bonn and he invited me to visit him and his wife in Frankfurt for an evening, which I did. I think it was in the spring of '74. We had a

good rapport with each other. One reason was that he had spent time in Denmark. He had studied for a year or so at the University of Copenhagen. So we had that common interest. But I really didn't know much about him except that he was one of those young, left wing socialists. We didn't really know what they wanted except they had been anti U.S. involvement in Vietnam; they were left wing socialists. They wanted more government involvement in the economy of Germany and so on.

I did visit him in Frankfurt. I had dinner with him and his wife in their apartment in Frankfurt. In the course of the evening Voigt set forth all of his ideas about where he thought Germany should be going. His main interest was in foreign policy and he presented his ideas about NATO, the United States, and whither Europe. He had ideas about greater cooperation eventually between western Europe and eastern Europe. He wasn't radical. He went to great lengths to say he wasn't anti- NATO. He said he didn't really like it but it would not be realistic to call for the abolition of NATO. He hoped eventually there could be a regional security organization including countries of both western and eastern Europe. He was not communist. But he was a left wing Social Democrat. He said he did see the possibility of greater eastern-western European cooperation over the long term; he saw the possibility some day for the enlargement of NATO.

Voigt's wife mentioned to me that one of the reasons Voigt had not liked Americans over the years was because when he was a child in Germany he watched American planes bomb his neighborhood. So he had some very bad memories. Voigt also told me that he always held against the United States government the fact that as he put it we tilted toward Adenauer in the post war years. He really felt we had tipped the balance in favor of the Christian Democrats in the post war government of West Germany.

Q: Schumann was it?

KLINGAMAN: Kurt Schumacher.

Q: Kurt Schumacher.

KLINGAMAN: Right...who was a Social Democrat and a very strong political leader. Actually, I knew something about Schumacher so I was able to talk with Voigt a little about that period. One of the biographies I had read years before was about Schumacher. Now I don't know enough about what we did or didn't do in those post war years but Voigt's perception was that the United States had been more comfortable with Adenauer and the Christian Democrats in the early postwar years and had tilted toward them rather than Schumacher and the Social Democrats. Well socialists conjure up communist images for many Americans. There are German socialists of different stripes and there were some very left wing socialists who did work with the communists. But in any case I had a very long conversation with Karsten Voigt that evening. He clearly wanted to present his views to the American embassy; he clearly wanted to stress that Young Socialists as a group and left wing socialists in West Germany were not communist and were not anti-U.S., in general even though they opposed some U.S. policies, that German Social Democrats were responsible and respectable.

Well of course I went back to my hotel in Frankfurt that night and stayed up late writing all of

this down. I went back to Bonn the next day and wrote a very lengthy memcon (memorandum of conversation) about Voigt's views. Now I would like to tell you a little story about that memcon. My immediate boss at that time was Bill Bodde and he read it and thought it was extremely interesting. We hadn't gotten anything like this before from a young, rising politician in the left wing of the SPD. My report was written as an airgram to Washington enclosing this memcon which was probably twenty pages long. Bodde approved it and then it went in to the political counselor for his clearance and the next thing I knew the political counselor was in my office. He sort of looked over his shoulder and he closed the door. I thought well now, does he like my report or what is coming off here?

The political counselor said it was a very interesting report and that the embassy hadn't gotten that kind of information before. I should note here that on the memcon I just had listed Susan Klingaman and Karsten Voigt as the conversation participants. I had explained in the covering memo that I had been at the apartment of him and his wife for dinner, etcetera. Well the political counselor looked at me and he said that he saw my comments and he saw Voigt's statements but where were the comments of Voigt's wife? And I said she really wasn't political and hadn't made any substantive comments. Then the political counselor said I could get into a great deal of difficulty for this report, that people back in Washington might wonder how I had obtained the information.

Q: Oh, God!

KLINGAMAN: I was totally stunned. I was in a state of shock, totally aghast. I got very angry and asked him what he was implying. It was obvious. I asked him if he was questioning my judgment or morals. He said no, he just was trying to protect me from the gumshoes in the security branch of the Department. I was really deeply upset and I thought that at least he could have said it was a great memcon before he had gone into this! Anyway as a result I did add Voigt's wife's name to the memcon. And I put a note at the end of the report that Mrs. Voigt was present throughout the conversation but had made no political comments because she herself was a professional architect and not politically active. Anyway, with that explanatory note the airgram was sent to Washington. The ambassador liked it, and the memcon was very, very well received in Washington and I received a commendation for it. That took some of the sting out of the incident. The political counselor was a fine person and he felt that he was trying to protect me at the time. But it was one of my experiences of being a woman political officer in the embassy and it put something of a bad taste on what did turn out to be a wonderful special piece of reporting.

I would like to note that Karsten Voigt soon thereafter became a member of the Bundestag, the German national Parliament, and later the foreign policy spokesman of the Social Democratic Party. And now, looking back on it, Voigt's visions of a possible reunification of Germany, the eventual enlargement of the EC and NATO and so on turned out not to have been so far fetched after all!

Q: You know you can get into this more because I had this from some other women, the problem of dinners, lunches, particularly with foreigners and how to deal with them.

KLINGAMAN: Actually that is the only incident that I recall. Voigt was perfectly correct. He invited me to dinner at his apartment with his wife there. It wasn't as if there was anything inappropriate or out of line.

I had begun representational entertaining in Copenhagen. I did some in the Philippines, too, but not too much, mainly in Copenhagen and in Germany. I never had any problems. I liked to cook; I liked to entertain. I did a lot of entertaining in my home. I always invited the wives of male politicians and the husbands of female politicians if they were married. Luncheons were never a problem. I invited men out to lunch in Germany and it was never a problem. They never thought anything about it; I never thought anything about it. They were professional lunches for exchanging views and information.

A number of people used to ask me how I got on with Germans; how did they take to a woman officer? Aren't they very patriarchal? I didn't experience this in the professional world. You know there were German women who were politicians; the President of the Bundestag at that time was a woman. In some ways women were more visible in some of the professions in Germany than they were in the United States at that time, particularly in the medical world. I never had any problems inviting men to lunches in restaurants in Germany or anywhere else.

Q: What government was in power in '73 to '75?

KLINGAMAN: It changed. When I first arrived the Social Democrats were in coalition with the FDP, the liberal Free Democrats. Willy Brandt was the chancellor and Brandt fell in the spring of 1974 while I was there. That was a very sudden, dramatic event. Of course I had met him once way back in Berlin when I was a student, just a handshake. He was the chancellor. He fell over the so-called Guillaume affair. An East German spy was discovered in the chancellor's office.

Q: An affair with a staff assistant?

KLINGAMAN: Something like that... I don't remember the details now. But Brandt fell and Helmut Schmidt, also a Social Democrat, replaced him as chancellor.

Q: In the political section was there a different feeling toward Brandt as toward Helmut Schmidt?

KLINGAMAN: Well many people in the U.S. Government worried about Willy Brandt a little bit; they wondered about his so called "Ostpolitik," in other words his policy toward East Germany and eastern Europe. They wondered about his efforts for rapprochement with East Germany and eastern Europe and the Soviet Union; what did this mean and so on? Helmut Schmidt was much more conservative. Schmidt was a Social Democrat from the right wing of that party and for all practical purposes he could have been a member of the CDU as far as many of his policies were concerned.

I think that probably many in the U.S. Government felt more comfortable with Schmidt. At the same time I don't think that they thought there would be any dramatic change in West German foreign policy. We watched Germany's Ostpolitik very closely in those days, but there was really

no strong disagreement within Germany about it. West Germans wanted to have some reasonable relationship with East Germany; after all they were relatives, and with the countries of eastern Europe they were neighbors after all. Our feeling basically, although I was not working on this issue in the embassy, but our sense was that a West German government would continue to explore the possibilities for rapprochement with the East no matter whether it was Willy Brandt or Helmut Schmidt. And as far as Willy Brandt was concerned his credentials as a democrat were very well established. No one ever questioned that he was committed to a democratic West Germany.

Q: While you were there were we looking for sort of right wing nationalist parties? This was a concern.

KLINGAMAN: It was. Everyone was always wondering if neo-Nazism would take root in West Germany and that is perfectly understandable. It hadn't been that long since the Nazi period and there were right wing groups in West Germany. I think there was a party called the German Party, the DP, the Deutsche Partei as I recall. These small right wing splinter parties did not have great electoral support. Neo-Nazism wasn't really a strong movement or a major threat at that time.

The major concern as far as extremists were concerned at that time was the Baader Meinhof Group. The Baader Meinhof Group was named after two of its founders. The Baader Meinhof Group was a group of extremists who were really anti-government, anti-establishment, anti-industrial state. You really couldn't say they were extreme left or extreme right. They were at that point where the circle becomes one and they were terrorists. There were terrorist episodes during the time when I was in Bonn. The physical security of the embassy was strengthened at that time, and we were told to take precautions such as not taking the same route to work each day. There were kidnappings of some German industrialists and German bankers. There were some murders. That was the concern as far as extremists were concerned, much more so than neo-Nazism. The concern was also based on the fact that most of the Baader-Meinhof Group came out of the German upper middle class. They were, if you will, the spoiled children of the upper middle class who were looking for that perfectionism that Germans are so prone to look for. They were seeing that there were flaws in capitalism; there were flaws in democracy; there were flaws in this government that they had...therefore let's abolish it all and start from scratch. It was that kind of a group.

There was also a terrorist incident in Stockholm at that time. U.S. government concern about terrorism was increasing and steps were being taken to improve the security of our missions overseas.

Q: The time you were there coincided with the Watergate period. I would think that Watergate would be a difficult thing. It forced Nixon to resign. I would think that this would be difficult to explain in a German context.

KLINGAMAN: Well I actually didn't have that opportunity because I was on home leave at that time. I was in the United States when it happened. I recall I was on a trip to Maine with my parents. We drove into Maine with the radio going full blast in the car at the time of Nixon's

resignation. I was not in Germany when it happened, so I can't give you a first hand account as to how the Germans reacted to it. Of course the transition was very smooth to President Ford and I do remember that President Ford made a trip to Germany very soon after he took office. I am sure it was designed to reassure the Germans. The Germans were always nervous about the American commitment and the commitment of American troops to Western Europe and to Germany in particular. Ford did make a visit to Germany that did reassure the Germans.

Q: Was there much concern about the Soviets at this point with respect to Germany?

KLINGAMAN: I would say that the Germans were always nervous about the Soviet Union but not extremely concerned because they were members of NATO and there were American troops stationed in Germany. We had that...what was the expression...the tripwire effect; that is if the Soviets moved from East Germany into West Germany they would hit American troops immediately. Our conventional forces were there of course backed up by our nuclear weapons.

Q: What about Berlin? Was Berlin much of an issue while you were there?

KLINGAMAN: Berlin was an issue in the sense that we had one Foreign Service officer in the political section who did nothing but Berlin matters. Also a great deal of time on Berlin was spent by the deputy political counselor, David Anderson and his successor, who was Bob German. There was the so-called Bonn Group of representatives of the British, French and American embassies who met regularly to resolve issues involving the postwar agreements on Berlin and agreements on what the Germans could and could not do and what the British, French and American responsibilities were. Therefore there was a lot of coordination on various issues involving those three embassies and the three governments. But there was no major crisis involving Berlin at that time.

Q: Are there any other areas that we should talk about during this time in Bonn?

KLINGAMAN: I think we should talk about the women's issue because this is when it hit the fan. The women's issue in the United States Government became a very popular issue in this period with the 1972 Equal Employment Opportunity Act (EEO).

Q: Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan.

KLINGAMAN: There were the front page feminists. There was Gloria Steinem and the National Organization of Women and there were pursuant to the EEO Act new U.S. government regulations on affirmative action for women. We were not talking about quotas or anything like that. Basically consciousness raising about women's issues was very much in the air. Now I didn't feel it as much as I might have if I had been in Washington at the time. I was in Bonn. But I did feel it because I was the only female State Department Foreign Service officer in the embassy in Bonn.

Q: Good God and it's a huge embassy!

KLINGAMAN: It's an enormous embassy. I think at that time we had about 700 Americans all

told, officers and staff and of course many other agencies...the Defense Attaches and USIA and Treasury and FBI and so on. But I was the only female State Department FSO, which was for me very much of a mixed blessing. The fact that I was the only woman when I arrived did not really affect my thinking or the treatment I received one way or another. I didn't feel special; I wasn't treated as being special. But when the women's issue became the 'in' thing tokenism started.

One thing that happened to me which I was not happy about was that shortly after I arrived in Bonn we received a cable calling me and a few other officers back to serve on promotion boards in Washington. I was waiting for a promotion myself! Obviously I was being called back because they wanted a woman on a promotion board. Bear in mind I had had only ten months in Copenhagen, four of which had been in a hotel, and I forgot to mention earlier that immediately on my arrival in Bonn I was sent TDY (temporary duty) to Bremen for six weeks to fill in while that consul general had been called back for a promotion board in Washington. So I had been in Bonn maybe three months and boom, I was being called back to Washington to serve on a promotion board. I said hey, wait a minute, I just got here! I want to get going in my very substantive job here in Germany. I was being called back as a token and I was very upset. I said I did not want to go and the DCM in the embassy, Frank Cash, supported me. The embassy sent back a cable saying I had been moved around quite a bit in the last year and so why don't you give her the opportunity for the promotion board at a later date. The Department said okay. But that was number one. I was wanted to be a female token on a promotion board.

Then the embassy received a request from the International Women's Club in Dusseldorf to send a speaker on the women's movement in the United States. That request came into the ambassador's office and the staff assistant, of course one of my fellow FSOs, bucked it down to me and said Sue, here's your opportunity to go give a speech on the women's movement in the United States. I sent him a note back and said Jack, why don't you do it? Actually another reason why I wasn't too enthusiastic about giving a speech on the women's movement in the United States was that I really did not know that much about it. I really didn't. And what I was hearing about it was Gloria Steinem and abortion and let's call ourselves Ms. and all of this didn't seem to be Sue Klingaman somehow.

The reason the women's club in Dusseldorf asked the embassy for this speech was that the club was headed by Joan Hennemyer, the wife of the consul general in Dusseldorf. I had met her, so I agreed to do the speech. I found that I had to do a lot of research on the situation of women in the United States. USIA had an ample supply of materials. So I did study up on the issue and in so doing I became very interested in it and I wrote a rather substantive speech, which I still have. The speech had a number of statistics about the problem of unequal pay for equal work; statistics about the number of women in various fields and so on. I remember that in researching for the speech I became quite interested in the issue.

I did go to Dusseldorf. I spoke about the subject, and it was then that I began to sort out my own ideas about the situation of American women. Was there a problem? If so what was the problem? Where do I fit into this? One of the things which I said in that speech and which I still feel quite strongly about is that the issue is not whether a few very bright, very talented women can rise to the top in their chosen profession. American history and the history of other countries show that they can. The issue is really whether average and ambitious women can do as well as average

ambitious men. That is really the issue, I think. And that is what seized my interest.

I offered my prognosis about the future of the women's movement in the United States. At that time the so-called women's movement was very dramatic. There was a lot of noise, a lot of rhetoric. It was very shrill. I felt that the issues that I wanted to be concerned with were the substantive issues about pay, about job opportunities, equal opportunities for job, for pay, for education. I was concerned that some of the rhetoric might create a backlash that might be harmful for furthering progress in those substantive areas. I expressed that in one way or another in that speech in Dusseldorf. I felt that the women's movement would probably make better progress over the long term if it proceeded slowly.

What was the German women's reaction?

KLINGAMAN: The German women were very interested in the issue. The German women were interested to hear me say that there were more women in politics in Germany proportionally than there were in the United States. They were interested to learn that there were more women doctors in Germany than there were in the United States at that time. I think that they were somewhat baffled, as I was, by the rhetoric that they were hearing about the women's movement in the United States. They were certainly observing what was going on with the American women's movement, but quietly I would say. As far as the women that I met in Germany were concerned, those who were in the professions were doing well in their professions and were taken seriously.

Q: I think your point is that much of it particularly in the beginning was really focused in the United States on well educated upper class women and not really much farther down the line. There was lip service but the main thing was that as a group this was not very representative and it was shrill.

KLINGAMAN: And as someone mentioned to me the other day in those days in the women's movement the leaders in the public rhetoric really took on everything. They didn't really choose their battles, you might say. They chose to take on these highly visible issues such as shall we call this person a fireman or a firefighter. Well I understand symbolism and language usage are important; that we call them firemen because they were mostly men at that time. Yes there is a point here but is this the main issue that is troubling us? It wasn't really troubling me and it certainly wasn't troubling the many women who were working who had to work to support their families and who were not receiving equal pay for that work.

Q: Again it comes down to the fact that a great many of the people who were leading this did not have children and were being heard because they probably would have been heard anyway because they were very articulate.

KLINGAMAN: Well I'll talk more about the women's issue when I go through my assignments, how I found myself relating to it or not relating to it.

Q: Well you were all by yourself in Bonn so you weren't exactly...I mean any women's organization would have taken place in your mind!

KLINGAMAN: That's right! Well, of course there were other women in the embassy, but there was no other female State Department FSO in the embassy at that time. There had been a few women FSOs in Manila when I was there. There were none besides me in Copenhagen, and in Bonn at that time I was it. The American Foreign Service secretaries were not mobilized in the women's movement. I had very good relationships with all the women staff in the embassy but they didn't seem to be seized by the issue either..

Q: On the issue...could you address it as to how a woman officer, you alluded to it earlier on, but in the mid '70s we are looking at what were supposed to be the regulations. They never really were but you had to be very careful. If you got married you had to resign and all that. That must have been a great damper. If you wanted to go one way or another this must be a problem.

KLINGAMAN: Well for me it was never a problem. As I said early on I had been engaged to a German and at that point if I had married him I would have stayed in Germany. I would not have stayed in the Foreign Service. I think that was my attitude throughout. It really wasn't a damper for me because I had decided that if I met the man I wanted to marry I would leave the Foreign Service. I never felt like I had to have a career for my fulfillment or whatever. I think if I had married, whether it had been a Foreign Service officer or whether it had been someone outside of the Foreign Service I would have raised a family and probably would have been very happy doing that. So it wasn't really an issue for me.

Q: I was just wondering if in talking to any others it was sort of an initial inhibitor in normal relations or not?

KLINGAMAN: I don't think so. I don't recall a single conversation about it. Other than the conversation I had on my oral exam for the Foreign Service I don't recall that I ever raised it or that anyone else ever raised it. It was not a live issue in my circle of women friends in the Foreign Service at that time.

Q: Is there anything else we should talk about on Germany?

KLINGAMAN: In Germany I spent 95 percent of my time doing political reporting and having a marvelous time. It was a great section. Those were the days when we not only had a visit by President Ford but also many visits by Secretary of State Kissinger. Kissinger visited Germany a lot. He was very interested in Germany and Germany was very important to the United States so he came a lot. I was involved in some meetings as a notetaker for him.

Q: Could you talk about some of these?

KLINGAMAN: Well since my German was quite good I was often chosen to be present in case Kissinger started speaking German with the Germans. Kissinger liked to go off to meet with Schmidt outside of Bonn. He would take a helicopter to a castle near Bonn and I would get to go in another helicopter and sometimes I was used as the notetaker and sometimes not, but in either case it was fun. And sometimes Kissinger spoke German with the Germans and sometimes, usually, he did not. But we never knew whether he would or not, so I sometimes had the

opportunity to participate on the fringes because of my German.

Q: Did you get any feel for how Kissinger was responding to Germans?

KLINGAMAN: He liked to deal with Germans. They were engaged in big issues that he was interested in, NATO issues, East-West issues. German views were important and they were intellectually acute conversational partners for him.

Q: Particularly Helmut Schmidt was world class.

KLINGAMAN: Absolutely. And at that time and for many, many years thereafter the foreign minister of West Germany was Genscher, and Genscher's English was not good. It became better over the years but he started out with almost no spoken English. Genscher was very bright. He was not a foreign policy specialist but over the years of course became very, very familiar with the issues. He was a very shrewd politician. So I think that Kissinger felt that he had his intellectual...well I wouldn't say match, because Kissinger would never, never, agree that anyone was his match intellectually. He didn't have any problems with his ego. But he found the Germans good conversation partners and later when I was on the German desk that continued. It was always quite easy to obtain an appointment for a high level German visitor with the secretary of state when the secretary of state was Henry Kissinger.

Q: How did the Ford visit go? Were you involved as everyone else was?

KLINGAMAN: Yes. Everyone was involved. It went very well. I don't remember too much about it. He was I'm sure received by the president of Germany and the chancellor of Germany. It was largely a ceremonial state visit. Mrs. Ford came also. It went very smoothly. There was no issue, no substantive political issue on the agenda for that visit, as far as I know. I think it was mainly a review of the areas that Germans and the United States were working on. It was largely a goodwill visit.

Apart from Kissinger and President Ford, the embassy also had to host many U.S. congressional delegations. I can well remember being the embassy control officer for a visit by Senator and Mrs. Hubert Humphrey. That was an experience! They were both very friendly and pleasant, but as you may know the Senator was extremely energetic and enthusiastic, and also he liked to change his schedule on a moment's notice. He kept me and the German security detail in a state of high alert, I can tell you!

Q: Were you keeping an eye on the Common Market, this having been your beat at one time. I mean how things were developing at least with regards Germany?

KLINGAMAN: I watched it with interest, but I really wasn't involved in doing any reporting on it. The economic section did that. At that time the Common Market was inching along toward further integration. One of my American friends from Oberlin, a woman who was two years ahead of me at Oberlin had married a German who had been a Fulbright student at Oberlin. He became an official in the German economics ministry and he was in the office that was working on the European Communities. He was traveling to Brussels a lot and I got something of the

flavor of the German involvement in the European Communities from him.

Q: Well then you left there in what, '75?

KLINGAMAN: September of '75. I could have stayed in Bonn two more years and I debated whether or not I would do so. But I was given an opportunity to take the job as Austrian and Swiss desk officer. The job opened up unexpectedly and it was in the office of Central European Affairs (EUR/CE) in the Department, the office that included East and West Germany as well as Austria and Switzerland. The director was David Anderson. I welcomed the opportunity to (a) have a desk officer job, and (b) work again with David Anderson. So I accepted that job.

Q: Great.

Q: So your were '77 to '80 on the German desk, when you say the German desk can you explain what that means?

KLINGAMAN: If we could just take a brief detour there are two things I want to talk about here.

One other little side trip that I took when I was on the Austria-Swiss desk was to the United Nations for three weeks. I was sent up as the European bureau's representative to the General Assembly. Once again...it's beginning to get tiresome probably...but I went up there kicking and screaming. I wasn't chosen because I was a woman. I was chosen because Joan Clark told David Anderson that his office had to send someone up to the United Nations. I don't know if she had me in mind or not, who knows. Things were probably very busy on the German side and so he sent me up to New York for three weeks. I thought it might be interesting. It turned out it was a very dull General Assembly and there wasn't that much for me to do substantively.

The regional bureau representatives usually went up there to assist in the lobbying and lining up votes of other countries on issues. There wasn't much of that going on at that particular time. But it turned out to be a delightful experience for me because, probably because I was a woman, I was assigned the job of being the assistant to one of our delegates to the General Assembly whose name was Pearl Bailey!

Pearl Bailey was a black woman entertainer who was a Republican evidently. She was very well known in the entertainment world and not really in the diplomatic world. Pearl Bailey was a woman who just waltzed through the hallways of the United Nations just exuding happiness, love, good cheer – put her arms around everyone – made a big hit in the General Assembly. I was her assistant, accompanying her through the hallways of the United Nations. She always went around draped with all these furry animals flowing off her shoulders and they would slide off. One of my jobs was to pick them up and trot after her and make sure that at the end of the day she had her furs, although if she didn't have them I don't think it would have fazed her in the slightest. It was really a delightful experience. I got to know her a bit and when I left she autographed a whole handful of her books for me.

Q: She also went to Georgetown and got a degree.

KLINGAMAN: That's right. She did. She was a very nice woman, very genuine. I still have some of the books that she autographed for me. I was looking at one the other day and right across the top she had written "Dear Sue, you care, thank God, love Pearl." It was a great experience for me.

Q: What was her particular role at the United Nations?

KLINGAMAN: Her role at the United Nations was basically to be Pearl Bailey, an American black woman who loved the United States and wanted other people and other countries to love her country. That was her role as I saw it. She spoke on some of the issues. I don't remember what they were. Some of the issues at that time at the UN were North-South issues. I don't remember. Basically her presence was her role. She was one of the most genuinely loving, caring people that I have ever met. It was just really and truly a wonderful experience for me.

Before moving on I would also like to say a few words about David Anderson. David was deputy director of the political section in Bonn when I was there and then he became the director of EUR/CE. David Anderson had an innate ability to manage people. I have never seen anything like it. It was almost like he was an athletic coach. We never had scheduled times for staff meetings under his leadership in our office. but we had ad hoc staff meetings all the time. He'd come in the door, clap his hands and say okay, everybody, let's get together. And we'd all come together and David would tell us what had happened in his meeting with the assistant secretary and the other office directors. The flow of information to us was superb. He got information from us on what we were doing. Everyone felt like they were involved, participating. He played to people's strengths. It was just something he had that I never saw before or since. Everyone worked very, very hard and absolutely loved every minute of it. He was a wonderful guy.

My first year on the German desk he left our office, I guess it was 1977, David left our office and went up to be a special assistant to the secretary of state where he was for a year or so and then he went off to be the director of the U.S. Mission in Berlin.

Q: David was an immigrant from Scotland.

KLINGAMAN: And he still had a little Scottish brogue and he used to talk about his "boots." I was confused; he wasn't wearing any boots. It took me awhile to realize he was talking about "books". He was truly a great guy. I really enjoyed working with him.

In the summer of '77 I moved over to be the officer in charge of the West German desk. That desk had three officers: myself, an economic Officer and a political-military officer for West Germany. Again in the same office there was another officer working in a separate entity for Berlin Affairs. That was John Kornblum at the time. Then one person for East Germany and then the deputy director and director of EUR/CE..

Q: Then you moved in the summer of '77 with a new administration beginning to find its way around; beginning to find its legs with political appointees coming in and all. Did you have any

feeling of a change toward Germany with the Carter administration?

KLINGAMAN: In the Ford Administration Henry Kissinger had been secretary of state. Although I was working on Austria and Switzerland at that time I was quite often called on to assist on some German matters as well. I had also done some memcons of Kissinger's meetings with foreign leaders at the United Nations. Kissinger knew Germany very well. The counselor of the Department when Kissinger was secretary of state was Helmut Sonnenfeldt, who also knew Germany very well.

Q: It was basically two German Jews who had left there.

KLINGAMAN: That's right, and had this strange relationship with each other. It was just like they were constantly snapping and sniping at one another but nevertheless these two German Jews knew Germany very well. I have a distinct memory of doing quite a few memcons of conversations of Germans with Kissinger at that time. Probably because there were so many of them we all had to get involved in the act. It was easy to write memcons for Kissinger. They were verbatim memcons because he wanted everything in the exact order it was spoken. You didn't need to sit down and try to make sense of it or organize it, just take notes quickly and have a good memory and you had it made. I did it quite often because Kissinger, as secretary of state, would see German parliamentarians coming in. So the knowledge about Germany at high levels in the Department was very substantial during the Kissinger period.

I might add that two of my male colleagues on the desk were excellent mimics of Kissinger, complete with his German accent. The German desk worked very hard, but we also had a lot of fun in that office. Morale was very high.

Then when the Carter administration came in we had Secretary Vance. There were a lot of visits in both directions at high levels. Chancellor Schmidt came over a number of times during that three year period as did Foreign Minister Genscher. It seems like we always had a Schmidt visit or a Genscher visit. Carter went to Germany during that time. However the knowledge about Germany, interest in Germany, at the high levels in the Carter administration was nowhere near as great as it had been when Kissinger and Sonnenfeldt were there. In a sense it was good for me and good for the desk because we were the only ones in the Department who really knew in depth what was going on with Germany. On the other hand it was difficult because during this period there were really important issues going on involving the Germans...the West Germans and the United States. A lot of them involved domestic political considerations for the Germans that President Carter and Secretary Vance perhaps weren't as sensitive to as Kissinger and Sonnenfeldt would have been..

Of course it was our job to make them aware of it. But this was also a period when Germany was becoming much more assertive. Germany was important, it was economically very strong and very active in the European Communities. It was very active in NATO. It was a time of obviously close alliance with West Germany but also of friction.

Q: Apparently Carter and Schmidt...

KLINGAMAN: ...didn't get on.

Q: I've had other people talk of this. I'd like very much to get particularly the early feeling and then the later feeling of whatever you can tell from the desk perspective about this.

KLINGAMAN: Well personality wise I don't think you could find greater contrast. My impression of President Carter... obviously I didn't know him and I wasn't involved in his meetings. I did meet him a couple of times in connection with Schmidt visits. Jimmy Carter was a very gentle man. He struck me as gentle, unassuming, very much into details. His White House was very difficult to work with but he was personally a very gentle, kind, thoughtful man. Helmut Schmidt in my experience behaved true to his reputation for arrogance and could be quite nasty; he acted as if he knew it all. Those two personalities aren't going to get along too well unless they are very close together on the issues but they were apart on some issues and so it was difficult. I think that Schmidt was just not very well liked in Washington generally, although he was respected. He was a very smart man.

President Carter did go to Germany. I prepared all the briefing memos. I didn't go on that trip so I can't tell you how the trip in Germany went. The embassy could tell you that.

Q: The issue that comes to mind right now was the so-called neutron bomb issue. Did you get involved at all?

KLINGAMAN: Everyone was involved in that.

Q: You might explain what the issue was.

KLINGAMAN: The issue was whether or not a European country would agree to deploy the neutron bomb if the U.S. decided to produce it. It was kind of a circular thing because the U.S. didn't want to produce it if nobody in Europe would agree to have it on their soil. The Germans didn't want it. Nobody in Europe really wanted this thing deployed and it got all tied up in German domestic politics. Schmidt's government was a coalition government of his party, the SPD, and Genscher's party, the FDP. Schmidt was a center/right man in the SPD. The left wing of the SPD and I think also some in the FDP opposed the neutron bomb. And the CDU, the Christian Democrats who were in the opposition, was criticizing Schmidt for being indecisive on this issue with the United States. I think there were a number of misunderstandings between Schmidt and Carter on this issue.

I can't remember the details but I think Schmidt would come to the United States and speak with U.S. officials and then of course would have to go home and speak to the Germans and it didn't always come out quite the same way with quite the same accents. But the neutron bomb issue... this was political/military alphabet days of course, with TNF (Theater Nuclear Forces) and MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions) and also SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty) negotiations all going on. The neutron bomb issue was enmeshed in all those issues.

The German desk had to keep abreast of all those issues. Anytime Schmidt was coming or Genscher was coming or Vance or Carter were going there we had to pull together briefing papers. There was one person on our desk who worked only on political military matters and our

office deputy director and director also were well informed about them. But the people who were really deeply involved and on the front line of these issues were the regional political military office (RPM) in the European Bureau and in PM (the Bureau of Political Military Affairs) which was a separate bureau in the Department. So there was a whole host of officers who were experts on these particular issues.

The role of the German desk was primarily to highlight the domestic political considerations in Germany and what Schmidt might want to try to do to satisfy those considerations. We weren't technical experts on these arms control issues. There were many people in other offices in the Department who were engaged in those issues, as well of course the Defense Department and ACDA (Arms Control and Disarmament Agency). The job of the German desk was to make sure that the secretary of state and the White House were aware that Schmidt had a domestic constituency that colored and shaped his rhetoric on the issues as well as his substantive positions. Schmidt was in a difficult position.

The Germans were saying that they didn't want the neutron bomb on their soil but they would do it if they weren't the only ones, if for example the Belgians or Dutch would do it. Those countries wouldn't do it though. Well I think that eventually Schmidt lined up support in the Bundestag (Parliament) for accepting the neutron bomb if it became clear that there was no progress with the Soviets on arms control issues. Anyway the whole issue became very complex and it was costing Schmidt a lot of political capital at home.

Q: There was this episode where, as I understand it, Carter was pressing Schmidt to accept this. I'm told by Vlad Lehovich who was in Germany that there were a number of niggling little comments that were coming really directly from Carter pushing, pushing, pushing on this issue and then all of a sudden Carter, I don't know whether it is a late talk with his daughter Amy or something, that maybe we shouldn't do the bomb and...

KLINGAMAN: He backed off. Vlad Lehovich at that time was working in the embassy in Bonn during that Carter visit. I don't know the details of that or who pulled the rug out from whom. I think Carter was upset that Schmidt didn't go along with this thing. I don't think Carter ever really understood the domestic political factors that were causing Schmidt to say yes, he would do it to the allies and no, he wouldn't do it because of his political problems at home. You have to remember that I think we were constantly telling Secretary Vance and the White House that Schmidt was in a coalition government; and that Schmidt had a foreign minister named Genscher who came from a different political party, the Free Democratic Party.

The Free Democratic Party was a very small party but it held the balance of power in Germany. It had some rather conservative businessmen in it; it also had some very left wing people who were more left wing than anyone in the SPD. It was a very strange situation. Without the FDP Schmidt would not have been chancellor of Germany. Even though the FDP was this little tiny party with only six or seven percent of the popular vote it was a swing weight. Genscher, the head of the FDP, was foreign minister for years. He later became foreign minister in a coalition government with the CDU and this was exactly the kind of shift Schmidt did not want to see happen. So the desk was constantly saying look, this man Schmidt has political problems. That was our role more than being experts on MBFR or SALT or any of that. It was to bring that

element to bear.

The Carter White House was really difficult.

Q: Could you talk about that for a minute?

KLINGAMAN: It was difficult in the sense that I guess it sort of mirrored Carter's personality. He started out well in a public relations sense with the American people. Remember he had these town meetings on radio and television. That was all nice public relations, nice folksy touch. And Carter really studied the issues but he studied them in great detail for a long time. Consequently in a sense the NSC (National Security Council) that we dealt with, the NSC people in the White House dealing with Germany, moved very slowly. I'm thinking of little procedural things that to Germans made a big difference. For example, Schmidt would come over for a visit. This was the head of the government on an official visit. But we wouldn't know until the morning of a proposed event whether or not President Carter would agree to have lunch with Chancellor Schmidt that day!

Germans want to have things lined up, in advance, well in advance, and on their schedules. But we could not get a timely decision out of the White House. We would send over papers recommending that Carter have lunch with Chancellor Schmidt on 'X' date. 'X' day would come and it wouldn't be until the morning of that day that the White House would say that yes, the President would have lunch with Chancellor Schmidt. This did not set well with Schmidt. It was one of those atmospheric things that for us might seem not all that important. For Germans, for a German like Schmidt, it made a lot of difference. And when you add to that the substantive issues that were involved, it did not make for a good combination. It was very frustrating to us to have to wait until the last minute for decisions on procedural matters.

So some of that probably spilled over into the policy area in the sense that it annoyed Schmidt.

Q: There is this role that the desk often plays in any country of trying to explain the country with which we are dealing; of sort of the political facts of life from that country's side. Sometimes you get accused of being too much a client of the other state when what you are trying to do is to explain the atmosphere in which you are working. Did the White House say to the NSC staff... I mean were they aware of your role or was it just that they were hamstrung...they just didn't seem very effective.

KLINGAMAN: We were never really accused of 'clientitis' by the NSC people ...to my knowledge. Germany was important enough and the political situation in Germany was dicey enough in the sense that it was a coalition government that we were able to make our points. The NSC staff members were aware of the German situation. First of all, obviously, of Germany's international role but also of the domestic political situation. Basically I think they were more or less hamstrung. Who in the end was going to decide whether President Carter was going to have lunch with Helmut Schmidt? President Carter will in the end decide and his office just didn't move that quickly. I think it was because he became enmeshed in the details. Carter was very well informed on the substance but procedural matters seemed to take a long time.

I'd like to talk a little bit about the "clientitis" charge that people tend to level at the State Department in general and the country desks in particular. The role of our German desk was to keep abreast of all the bilateral and the multilateral issues we and the Germans were engaged in together. That meant all the NATO and the EC issues, arms control negotiations, economic problems, and specific foreign policy issues like Greece and Turkey. The German desk in the State Department was the only office in the entire U.S. government that knew about the entire range of issues and relationships we had going on with Germany. It was our job to put that perspective in front of other offices and departments and agencies dealing with the narrower specific issues. .

Q: What was your impression of Cyrus Vance as Secretary of State in dealing with the problems?

KLINGAMAN: He was very methodical, very substantive. I think he was sensitive to the issues. He wasn't considered an expert on Germany; and I don't think he pretended to be either. The Germans did not have anywhere near the access to him that they had with Kissinger. Of course Schmidt and Genscher saw Vance, but many of the other high level Germans who came to town saw other people in the Department. Phil Habib was under secretary for political affairs during much of this time and he often met with the Germans on issues such as the Middle East that the Germans wanted to be kept informed on. They weren't involved in them but they wanted to know about the Middle East, Greece and Turkey and of course Iran. The whole Iran situation was boiling over at this time. Phil Habib and sometimes Deputy Secretary Christopher rather than the Secretary met with visiting Germans..

Q: In November of '79 and December of '79 two major things happened. One was the seizure of our embassy in Teheran and then there was the Soviet attack in Afghanistan. First let's talk about the Iranian situation. Did this concern the desk much?

KLINGAMAN: No, the desk wasn't involved in the hostage situation. We were all of course emotionally involved in it. One of my predecessors in the political section in the Philippines had been Ann Swift and she was one of the hostages. I had met her only briefly when I went to Manila and she was leaving Manila. I remember my clock radio waking me up to the news of the failed rescue attempt. I also remember gathering with everyone in the diplomatic lobby of the State Department applauding Secretary Vance when he left the building the day of his resignation in connection with that issue.

Afghanistan was always an item in the briefing books and the sanctions against the Soviet Union. The Germans didn't like that idea, nor did most countries like the idea of sanctions. The Germans questioned the effectiveness of sanctions and so on. But that didn't matter we went forward with them anyway. We kept trying to have the Germans go along with economic sanctions. I can't remember really whether they did or didn't. I don't think they really did.

Q: How about the Olympics? Does that come up during your time or was that later?

KLINGAMAN: That came up also, boycotting the 1980 Olympics in Moscow because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It was another item for all the briefing books. But I think the

Germans really were more focused on MBFR and all of those issues than boycotting the Olympics. In the end though, they did join us in the boycott I think. This issue was not something the desk really got involved in other than yes, of course, it had to be cranked into briefing books and so on.

Sue, as a desk officer how did you find working with the German Embassy?

KLINGAMAN: It was fun, it was great. Before that working with the Austria-Swiss embassies was also very enjoyable. The German Embassy was large and I worked very closely with them particularly on visit preparations because we had Codels (congressional delegations) going to Germany and they had parliamentary delegations coming to the United States. As I say we had foreign minister visits and chancellor visits often. On visits I worked very closely with one of their officers and we had a great time; we kept each other in good humor laughing about all the inevitable glitches that occurred. The political counselor of the German Embassy...there were two different ones during my tenure on the desk...were very fine people. I worked very well with them. The German Embassy people that I worked with were all men. That never was a problem either for them or for me. They entertained me at lunches and restaurants or in their homes.

Now access to the ambassador was very different on the German desk with the German ambassador than it had been as Austria-Swiss Officer with the Austrian and Swiss ambassadors. I had good working relationship with the Austrian and Swiss ambassadors here, particularly with the Swiss ambassador.

The reasons for this were that when I was on that desk the higher levels in the Department, both in EUR/CE and then at the assistant secretary and the secretary level were all highly interested and involved with Germany. This meant that on many issues the Swiss desk officer was the most frequent link of the Austrian and Swiss Embassies to the Department. So I was invited to many dinners and social functions hosted by their ambassadors and DCMs as well as other embassy officers. In the case of Germany, however, it was of course a larger embassy, a more important country, and very status conscious. So the German ambassador very rarely included the German desk officers in his social representational functions. Sometimes he invited the director for EUR/CE, but usually his invitations went to the deputy assistant secretary level and above. But below that at the level of the German Embassy political counselor and below the German Embassy had a lot of representational lunches and dinners for the German desk officers. The German embassy officers were good to work with, always well informed, always practical, reasonable and enjoyable.

The German ambassador at that time was Berndt von Staden who was highly regarded. He was basically a supporter of the FDP, the liberal party. Therefore his line would have been through Genscher. If I'm not mistaken his wife was quite close to the Social Democrats. Anyway they were pleasant people although I didn't have as much dealing with the German ambassador as I did with the Swiss and Austrian.

Q: Did you find that you were at all involved with Congress or were the German, Swiss and Austrians well acquainted with how to get the Congress...

KLINGAMAN: They were learning. They were learning that Congress played a role and the Germans became increasingly good at it. They weren't great at it but they became increasingly good at it. These countries really didn't understand the American government system that well, even though I am sure they had studied it on paper. Of course Germany and Austria were parliamentary systems and so their chancellor, whether or not in a coalition government, had a majority in parliament. Foreign diplomats usually only slowly became aware that the U.S. Congress had a life of its own, a political power of its own independent of the president and had to be dealt with separately and had to be lobbied separately. The Germans did become better at this in the late '70s. It took a long time.

Q: I think this is one of the great failings of most embassies. They sit down and think if they have a good contact with the Department of State...

KLINGAMAN: ...they've got it made. And you don't...

Q: You don't.

KLINGAMAN: You absolutely don't. That's not all there is to it in our system. An embassy's good contact with the Department of State doesn't guarantee good contact with the Defense Department or the White House. I think the Germans and the Austrians...the Austrians became aware of it because on the steel issue they had to deal with the economic agencies; that just the State Department alone was not going to do it for them. The Germans became slowly aware that even the executive branch is not this monolithic, highly disciplined entity. You've got the Defense Department, which has different ideas sometimes than the State Department and then you have the White House that has different ideas yet.

Then they became aware of this animal called Congress and even then I'm not sure that they were truly aware that our parties are not disciplined, that the Republicans and Democrats go all over the place on issues. But by the time I left there were the beginnings of German and American congressional delegations traveling in both directions meeting with each other.

Going back to Karsten Voigt, the young man I interviewed years before, the young left-winger of the SPD, he became aware of this. He did become elected to the Bundestag soon after I left Bonn in I guess '77 or so. He became elected to the German Bundestag. He is still in the Bundestag. He has been in the Bundestag, their parliament, for twenty years. He became the foreign policy spokesman for the Social Democrats. He started developing congressional contacts and there were the beginnings of congressional exchanges of our congressmen going to Germany, German parliamentarians coming over here and getting to know each other. I think the German Embassy started becoming quite good at that in the late '70s, early '80s.

Q: Were there any other issues during this '77 to '80 period?

KLINGAMAN: There were all the arms control issues that I mentioned. There was CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe). There were also economic issues. That was the beginnings of the Group of Ten or Seven...the beginning of the periodic meetings of the

developed countries. There was talk about North-South issues. There were trade negotiations. There were discussions about whether to give generalized preferences, trade preferences, to developing countries. All of those issues involved the Germans. There was also an issue with the Germans about their plans to export enriched uranium to Brazil. There were issues in Latin America, Salvador at that time. There was the issue of economic aid to Turkey and pressure on Germany to assist more. Germans were important in Europe and NATO and the European Communities. They were also becoming...we wanted them to become...increasingly involved worldwide in giving aid. They were not too keen on the idea but they wanted to be informed of what was going on, particularly in the Middle East. Those topics were always on the agendas of meetings.

Q: Did you during this time get involved with liaising with the Germans over the Camp David Accords with Israel and Egypt?

KLINGAMAN: They came in to the Department to talk about it, to keep informed of what was going on. Our desk was not actively involved in this; that was NEA (the Bureau for Near Eastern Affairs). As I said, the German Social Democrat Wischniewsky was very interested in the Middle East. He had contacts with the Palestinians and with the Israelis. His credentials were apparently quite good with them, and he visited Washington every once in awhile.

To what extent he was involved in any serious Middle East discussions I really can't tell you because it would have been very high level. But his views were heard and he kept the U.S. government informed, I think, of what he was doing.

Q: His position was what?

KLINGAMAN: He was a parliamentarian. He was a member of the Bundestag, and a member of the Social Democratic Party. He was respected in Germany, he was well informed; he was serious. He was not a gadfly by any means.

Q: What about East Germany? Was the desk involved there?

KLINGAMAN: The West German desk was not involved. EUR/CE had an East German desk, which was one officer doing nothing but East Germany. I do recall that the U.S. was in the process of setting up an embassy in East Berlin. German reunification was considered something that would never happen. It was something we were all in favor of, of course, and you could be in favor of it, but it was not going to happen.

Q: Was it ever a topic...what would happen if Germany unified, is this really a good thing for us?

KLINGAMAN: It was never a hot item. As I said, John Kornblum was on the desk part of the time I was there. He was working on Berlin matters. John Kornblum thought conceptually and long range. I remember that John loved to write policy recommendation memos and he was quite seized with the subject of CSCE, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It was the dialog between the countries of Eastern Europe and the countries of Western Europe. At that

time it was just a dialog but it was becoming a sort of a framework that John Kornblum saw as something important, something potentially important. I think he could see the East German-West German relationship in a large, long-range context. That said while CSCE was something the United States was involved with it was not something that many people at that time took as all that serious a matter. It was discussion and talks about how we might cooperate, how East and West might cooperate on environmental issues, human rights, and so on.

But it was a forum for discussions between the countries of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, if you will, the countries of Eastern Europe and Western Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union. It was there. But I never saw any U.S. government memo considering the possible implications of a reunified Germany. It didn't seem realistic to focus on that.

But John Kornblum later went from the Office of Central European Affairs to the Office of Policy Planning. He was very well suited for that. He was a policy thinker. I think much of his focus on the policy planning staff later was on this kind of an issue...whether Europe down the road. I always admired him for that. You know it is very difficult to get anyone to focus on anything more than a year away. Of course that is why we had the policy planning staff, because it was their job to do so. But even they didn't really get much beyond five years.

Q: Were Germany's borders at all an issue while you were there?

KLINGAMAN: That was pretty well settled by the time I was on the desk. That was not a live issue at that time.

WILLIAM PIEZ
Consular Officer
Frankfurt (1960-1962)

Mr. Piez was born and raised in Rhode Island and educated at the University of Rhode Island and the Fletcher School. After service in the US Armed Forces, he joined the Foreign Service and was posted to Frankfurt, Kabul and Manila as Economic Officer. During his career Mr. Piez dealt primarily with economic matters of East Asian countries, particularly Japan, where he served first as Economic Counselor and, from 1983 to 1985, as Economic Minister. In the Department in Washington, Mr. Piez was Deputy Assistant Secretary of East African Economic Affairs, and from 1989-1991, Deputy Assistant US Trade Representative. Mr. Piez was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2009.

Q: So you were in Frankfurt from when to when?

PIEZ: From January of 1960 until the summer of '62. So it would have been practically all of 1960 and '61 and half of '62, a bit more than the two years.

Q: Which job did you have?

PIEZ: Well in those days junior officers got consular work. Rotation meant rotation to different consular jobs. I sort of regret that we don't always do that now because it was really, I think, an excellent introduction, and it was really interesting work. At least I found it so. They put me in the visa section which was again an advantage because you really got to use the German language. Unfortunately it was a limited vocabulary. It wasn't the German of economics or politics. It was the German of law and the words for prostitution and fornication, all of those things that are in the application form. But anyway, we were rotated into different consular jobs, so I did citizenship work part of the time. I registered babies and signed passports and visas.

Q: Did you have the baby birth registration job.

PIEZ: Yes, on rotation. There were two of us, and we registered thousands of GI babies. I figure I registered 6,000 of them.

Q: Many products of the 97th general hospital. My daughter was born there. I was protection and welfare officer there at one point. I had that job from '55 to '58 in Frankfurt. So you sort of followed me.

PIEZ: My consul general was Wendell Blancke.

Q: Oh wonderful man.

PIEZ: Marvelous. I still worship his memory. My son is named after him.

Q: I remember I was just one of many vice consuls but when I left he had a little poem for me going.

PIEZ: Well a very interesting thing happened to me which I will introduce because you wouldn't dream of asking. Because of my absence in the military and the timing of my assignment to the Bureau of Educational Exchange in January, I was not considered for promotion by any panel while I was in the army or after for a year and a half. Then I was considered but the results of the promotion panel were not made known to me until I had arrived in Frankfurt. I got a letter saying I was listed for selection out. The letter said that, having entered the foreign service in 1955, I had made no contribution to the work of the state department.

Q: Good God.

PIEZ: From the time I was in Jan Nadelman's class and thereafter I worked closely with a personnel officer and then they gave me a holding job pending my Draft Board's decision. Before I was drafted he said, "I don't have to do a performance report, but I will send in a memo," but he never did. So literally I had no record. Well this letter arrived and on the outside it was marked *limited official use to be opened by addressee only*. Everybody knew what it was. Wendell Blancke got his copy when I got mine. His aide, another junior officer I knew very well, called to say, "The consul general wants to talk to you." I went to Consul General Blancke's office, and he said, "If you haven't got this letter you are going to. It is grossly unfair considering

your history. It is virtually an insult to say you have done nothing for your country when you got drafted and you served honorably.” And he took my part. He personally wrote the reviewing statement on my next performance report, backing it up with a personal letter saying what he thought of me and my situation. The next promotion panel promoted me. I came in to the foreign service in 1955 as an FSO 6. Then they said the Foreign Service should have eight numbered ranks, not six. So I became an 07 while I was in the army. I didn’t do anything. I was lucky, but you know that is the history of my life - being lucky. My boss in the Bureau of Educational Exchange was unused to foreign service evaluations so she read the instructions. She followed them literally on my first evaluation. Well not long after that I transferred to Frankfurt and because that was in January she didn’t have to write my report until May. In the meantime my replacement came from London. He hated the job and hated her. Thus she had had an unhappy experience with him when it was time for her to report on me. I got a very good report. So I was just lucky, looking good by comparison.

Q: How did you find the visa process? What were you doing?

PIEZ: Well they had recently introduced what was called the Montreal system. Of course in Germany where people are literate, at least in German, and good at following instructions, the Montreal system worked beautifully. A German could just walk into the consulate, go to the information desk, pick up the papers and the instructions, follow all the instructions, get everything in order, but not submit the papers. Just write a letter saying I am ready. We would give them an appointment. They would come in, submit the papers and get the visa the same day.

Q: Was there still quite a bit of sorting out. I mean we had the Berlin document center and all that?

PIEZ: Oh yeah, but I think because of the age groups of the people applying and the large number of GI wives, they had mostly been at least somewhat vetted. We really had a very moderate number of refusals. The quota at that time was open for Germans. An occasional ex-Nazi or SS camp guard would show up, but these were easy refusals. Sometimes the document center would turn up some interesting stuff.

Q: Well did you have a problem with the GI wives with prostitution because many came from that class.

PIEZ: Even if they were married to a U.S. citizen they were initially ineligible for a visa, unless they went to the immigration service and got a waiver. But the immigration service had an office there, and they issued waivers the same day. Then we would issue the visa right away.

Q: How about I assume you had a pretty good file staff. I remember Herr Westphal who was head of the file staff.

PIEZ: Oh yeah, he was there. He worked the information desk a lot. One of the things I found very useful to do was to work the information desk myself. Otherwise it was all done by German employees; the locals did that routinely because it required good German as well as English. He would help me out a bit with a German word that wasn’t coming to me quickly. I found it was a

great way to get language practice.

Q: Oh it was. Did you get into the non immigrant side at all?

PIEZ: I did that job when the regular incumbent was on leave. It was tricky because there were quite a few applicants who really should have been seeking immigrant visas.

Q: Try to sort out, distinguishing immigrants from non immigrants.

PIEZ: Yeah, we would explain that an immigrant visa was advantageous, but they didn't want to go through the paper work.

Q: How was the social life then at that point?

PIEZ: Quite active. With pregnancies and babies we weren't big on entertaining. We really had no obligations, but you did what you wished. It was not easy to develop German friends because we were transients and the American community was so self-contained. We did have some German friends and stayed in touch with them for many years.

Q: This was a period, I imagine it continued for a couple of years later, when almost a third of the foreign service was in Germany.

PIEZ: Yes.

Q: We had a big community in Frankfurt. There are people we knew there I still see. We were all together and many of us were on our first tours abroad. A significant portion of the foreign service had German experience. Now it isn't anywhere near the same thing. Where did you want to go afterward.

PIEZ: I stated on the assignment preference form of the time that I would like an assignment to Africa, and after a suitable tour there I would like economic training, an academic year. This was in the period before the six-month economic training course at FSI (Foreign Service Institute), so if you had aspirations in that direction you indicated it by asking for an economic assignment followed by a training assignment to a college for a year to study. And the powers that be said, "Oh we will short circuit that and send you to your academic year now." So in the summer of '62 I was brought back to Washington. At FSI they had a very good economic cram course, one month. They used the then standard Samuelson economics text. We did that whole book in one month. Then I went back to the Fletcher school. My training officer sort of grumbled about that. He said, "We would like you to get some experience in another part of the country, but maybe it is Ok. Besides the Fletcher School is strong in international politics and law, so you won't be getting purely economic training." So I went back to Fletcher for another year.

Q: Did you get a good dose of economics?

PIEZ: Yes, as a second year grad student I took three economics courses. International monetary policy, international economics, and international economic agreements and organizations. I also

took a course in Asian studies under Professor Allan Cole.

WALTER B. SMITH, II
Political Officer
Frankfurt (1960-1962)

Walter B. Smith, II was born in Providence, Rhode Island in 1929. He received a bachelor's degree from Princeton University in modern European history in 1951. Shortly after graduating from Princeton, he entered the U.S. Army, where he was stationed in Germany. Mr. Smith's career in the Foreign Service included positions in Poland, the Soviet Union, Israel, and Washington, DC. Mr. Smith was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 17, 1993.

SMITH: Then you know exactly what I am talking about. It was one of the largest consular districts in the world in terms of American citizens, mainly because of military dependents. The military thought that the Foreign Service operation was laughable. They were so self-contained. They took care of all of their own requirements, except for one detail. That is, children born abroad to soldier fathers and, in the cases I worked on, non-U.S. citizen mothers. The children could not enter the United States without documentation. We had a very hard nosed chief of the Consular Section then, Henry Goldsmith, who played hard ball and delayed the reassignment of U.S. soldiers back to the United States, if, as often happened to a man with an alien wife, her documentation or their child's documentation were all fouled up. It frequently happened that the child had been conceived and many times even born while the soldier's wife was still married to someone else. These cases got terribly complex. Frankly, I felt that, in the long run, we were doing the child a service by forcing the parents to straighten out the child's documentation while they were right there in Europe.

This assignment lasted a little less than a year because by the end of my first year in Frankfurt the acting Consul General, the late Wayland Waters, yanked me out of the Consular Section and said, "Here, write this post's Emergency and Evacuation Plan." The Consulate General had been completely dependent on the military until then, and someone decided that this was not right and that the Consulate General should have a separate plan. I did not have a clue about what I was doing. I struggled with this for about three months, and then the junior slot in the Political Section opened up in the summer of 1961. I moved down to work with Paul Kattenburg, who was the Political Officer, just as the Berlin crisis was coming to a head.

Q: *What Berlin crisis was this?*

SMITH: It was "The" Berlin crisis, the crisis which grew out of the building of the Berlin Wall. When did the Wall go up?

Q: *In 1961.*

SMITH: It grew out of the building of the Wall. There were U.S. and Soviet tanks squared off

along the Berlin Wall. Khrushchev played "Russian roulette" with us, and it was a standoff, in effect. But it made for a very nerve-wracking situation, and the German public, in particular, was nervous about the possibility of World War III. The function of the political reporting operation at Frankfurt at the time was to try to measure to some extent, not just popular attitudes, but particularly the attitudes of the German political leadership. This was because the opposition party, the SPD [Social Democratic Party of Germany], had its leading lights in the Frankfurt area. That's what Paul Kattenburg and I did.

Q: How did you go about that?

SMITH: Well, Kattenburg's German was absolutely extraordinary -- he is a native of Belgium and learned very good German with a heavy, Belgian-French accent. He had a lot of charm and energy. He would simply go after these people and insist on seeing them. He would take me along. I would be sort of a note taker. Actually, I started to develop some contacts with much younger, aspiring politicians in the SPD, in the Hessian state government and in the Frankfurt city government. It was an act of frenzied energy, for which Paul Kattenburg is famous. We churned out an enormous amount of reporting on what we were told to report on.

Q: How did you, to use a military term, "interface" with the CIA? We had a very large CIA operation there. From what you were gathering, were they getting any better information than we were, or did you have any feel for this?

SMITH: They were not reporting very much, to my knowledge, on the subjects which Kattenburg and I were reporting on. They may have been, but it certainly never came to our attention. They were focusing on some interesting things. For example, there were quite a few African and Asian students who gravitated to West Germany in that period because they were so frustrated at their experience in trying to get a higher education inside the Soviet Union. CIA did a good deal of debriefing these people, probably recruiting some of them as well. That is an operation that I just learned about by accident while I was there.

DOROTHY M. SAMPAS
Consular/Visa Officer
Hamburg (1960-1962)

Dorothy M. Sampas was born in Washington D.C. in 1933. As a foreign service spouse she lived in Ottawa, Paris, Iceland, and Washington D.C. After re-entering the Foreign Service she had positions in Brussels, China, New York, and an ambassadorship to Mauritania. Ambassador Sampas was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in October 1998.

Q: You were in Hamburg from '60 to when?

SAMPAS: The end of '62.

Q: What was Hamburg like then? I know it had terrible bombing during World War II. The first big fire raid of the war was there. Thousands were killed. What was it like when you were there, '60-62?

SAMPAS: They had rebuilt vast areas of it, and so it was this sort of modern apartment or office building humdrum kind of place downtown. You couldn't find very much that had survived the war or represent the atmosphere that they had before the war. Once in a while you'd see the side of an old building. There would be some suburban areas that were still untouched, but as you say, there had been a tremendous fire bombing of Hamburg, and there was no person from Hamburg who was there at the time that it happened who wasn't traumatized by it.

Q: How were relations with the Germans at that time from your perspective?

SAMPAS: I think they were quite good. The Germans relied upon us a good deal. We were, I think, their staunchest ally at the time. It was we who had found a way to get them into NATO without bothering their neighbors too much. We had active military to military relations with them. We didn't see much of that up north in Hamburg. It was only when you got down into Bavaria that you would see so many of our soldiers and so many of theirs as well.

Q: You were in the British Zone, and their military was smaller, I think, than ours.

SAMPAS: That's right, much smaller and, I think, deliberately out of the way. And presumably, there were camps between Hamburg and the East German border, but we didn't often go in that direction, quite frankly.

Q: What type of work were you doing?

SAMPAS: I was doing consular work.

Q: What sort of consular work were you doing?

SAMPAS: Oh, I was examining people for visas - visitor's visas. People were just starting to pick up on the trend toward international tourism and study. Student visas for those who were going to come over and study for a year or two. It was a wide variety of visa work. Indeed, some of the cases I can still remember as if it were yesterday.

Q: To get a flavor for this, can you talk about, say, some complicated visa cases?

SAMPAS: Well, yes, there was one man who came in bearing flowers, of all things, a few flowers. He felt that he had been deported from the U.S. He was a Jewish German and sometime or other toward the end of the war had managed to get into Mexico, and everyone had said, "Well, the Mexican border was the easiest border to cross into the U.S." You didn't have to have a visa anymore. You just drove across the border. So he bought himself a loud shirt and started chewing a big stick of gum while he and his friends tried driving across the border into the U.S. He got in at that time and eventually married someone here. But his wife wasn't perhaps a person he should have trusted with all of his history, and sometime or other she got angry at him and

turned him in to the INS, saying he doesn't really belong here, he didn't come in with the proper documents. So he was sent out, but when we tried to find out about his deportation, INS said it had no record of a formal deportation order. It was an interesting case. The first immigrant visa that I worked on started out as naturally as the visitor's visas. I got a pile of immigrant visas to start on, and I was going over things in minute detail, over and over, to check my German, to make certain that I understood this lady's German and got to that question, "Are you now or have you ever been a communist" and by golly, she said, "Yes." So, of course, you know, my sirens went off, and I asked the chief of the section if he wanted to come in and sit in. "No, no, no, you just finish up and do the right thing." But she had wanted to get a job in a store in East Germany, and things were naturally tight. The East German regime gave jobs to people who were members of the East German Communist Party, rather than to others. The first time she applied for a job, she didn't get it, so she went back and joined the East German Communist Party and, lo and behold, later got the job. Each time you had to figure out what was really at stake here. Was it duress or not? And it isn't always easy to tell. She said she lost weight when she didn't have the job, and I had no problem believing that, but whether it was the only job, the only decent job she could have had as a non-communist - I doubt that as well. There weren't so many people applying for jobs in East Germany in those days. But eventually she convinced somebody, my successor there - she was really, really difficult - and she secured a visa.

Q: I would think being a major seaport - and we had very tight regulations on prostitution - I would think this would make a real problem with sailors and the Reeperbahn and all that for a consular officer. Speaking of new consular officers, I had an awful lot of trouble. I was doing visas in Frankfurt about five years before you and, you know, asking the details - "Have you ever sold yourself for money" and that sort of thing. Did you encounter problems of that nature?

SAMPAS: Oh, yes. We had quite a lot of prostitutes, and I guess I was rather discouraged that the U.S. military would go ahead and authorize our soldiers to marry prostitutes and then hold consular officers accountable if the soldiers' wives couldn't quickly get an immigrant visa to come into the United States. We even had one prostitute who, after she got to the United States, started working at her old trade in houses for Asian gentlemen.

Q: There was no real recourse. If someone was a prostitute, they had to have a special act of Congress to get there.

SAMPAS: Well, they could get waivers of a different sort then. How did that work? The INS would process a waiver at the time I was there, and they did. It just took some time.

Q: Did you have any problems with protection and welfare of Americans, sailors and shipping seamen, that sort of thing?

SAMPAS: I don't recall that we had any jail cases in those days - surprising, you would think that sailors, with their certain history of getting drunk in foreign ports would get into trouble there as much as anywhere, but I just don't recall, but that would have gone to another office in any case.

Q: Who was our consul general there at the time?

SAMPAS: E. Tomlin Bailey. He had been an old-time officer in the Service. His last time before he went to Hamburg had been as head of diplomatic security, and he was a grand old gentleman.

Q: What did you think about the Foreign Service?

SAMPAS: Well, I guess I've always been pulled in the direction of devotion to an occupation (the Foreign Service) that if done well is really a very honorable activity and to be done well must be done with a good deal of sensitivity and toughness, more than is required in most jobs, certainly. And yet, on the other hand, always a feeling that we as a Service have tremendous lapses on the part of individuals or something outside. I can remember one Foreign Service officer who came over to Germany just for a visit - he wasn't assigned there - but we were talking about, I guess, Czech-Polish relations, and here was somebody who had done his doctorate on Eastern Europe. I assumed he had a clear understanding of what the points of grievance were before the war, and since the war in that area of the world. It was hard for me to believe that he could have had his doctorate already, and might have been a teacher for certain aspects of consular work. But after talking to him for a while, I would never have put him up in front of others and expected them to get much of a story of Eastern Europe. He didn't even understand where the boundaries of different countries in Eastern Europe were, and was surprised to learn that Poland and Czechoslovakia bordered on each other.

Q: It's always a puzzlement sometimes about the recruiting process, but I suppose it's natural in almost any business, but it's so evident because Foreign Service officers, you expect a certain amount of I don't know what - expertise, ability to see various sides of a question, poise, and sort of the diplomatic qualities - and I'm not sure we test very well for these.

SAMPAS: No, as a nation, that's certainly one of our greatest strengths. People trust America to get involved in problems because by and large we do manage to sort things out fairly. So you have right now the Israelis and Palestinians looking at us favorably, the Northern Irish and Southern Irish looking at us favorably, and we would never be invited in so closely to their affairs if they didn't have a great deal of respect for us, so when we see somebody in our own Service with such a big gap, it's-

Q: It's a shock. It's a shock. It really is.

SAMPAS: Yes.

Q: Of course this was at the time when they had the Wriston program, when civil servants were coming in who often had an expertise in something but had been rather narrow focused and were really coming out of a different box - not a better or worse box - but just a different box than the people recruited for the Foreign Service. And it was a difficult mix for a few years there.

SAMPAS: Oh, it certainly was, but I had heard about that problem from my father, because he thought that Foreign Service people were often extraordinarily snobbish. One of his friends was a State Department economist who did really splendid work on various aspects of the sugar problem and had applied for the Foreign Service under the Wriston Program. At some point, he

was invited in, but at several grades lower than he had already achieved, and my father thought that was a tremendous slap in the face for his friend and didn't think it was at all deserved. At the same time, at one time there was an assistant secretary of State (and career Foreign Service officer) who gave a speech to a number of people interested in sugar in Latin America, and this man suggested to them that there was big opportunity to grow sugar on the beaches of islands in the Caribbean Sea around Cuba. A number of the attendees phoned Dad to relate what had happened: they were dumbfounded that a senior officer in the Department of State suggested that it would be quick and easy to replace Cuban sugar on the world market. So each side has its strengths and its weaknesses, and often they just don't quite see eye to eye, and don't spend enough time discussing issues respectfully until a real consensus is reached.

Q: Did you have much dealing with the German authorities while you were at the consulate general?

SAMPAS: Not too much, no. Once in a while.

Q: I know, when I was in Frankfurt, at one point I was protection and welfare officer. I had done visas, too. And there you dealt a lot with Germans who, particularly in those days, were a different breed of cat. They would sort of dismiss you until they found out that you were a vice consul - Herr Vizekonsul - and all of a sudden the heels would click, and all the things that... It was sort of a shocker to see this up and down business depending on what your position was.

SAMPAS: Yes, I once had an elderly woman come in one time to my office for a visa, and I tried to help her along. They were not the days of five-minute visas in those days. And she wanted to know what ship she should go on and why and so forth. So we were talking about things, and then finally she said, "Can I have my visa now?" and I said, "Yes, it's already in your passport, here." And all of a sudden, it dawned on her that I was the person she had come to see, this young thing on the other side of the desk, and this up until that time dignified, elderly woman stood up and said in wonderful German, "Oh, if I had known that, I would have said 'Good day' when I came in." And all I could think of was if you didn't think you had to say it to all the people you met before you came to me, don't bother when you get here. It was just the way they were.

Q: We were talking to a different generation. It's a long-gone generation, but they're really coming out of, well, the old period culminating in the Hitler time.

SAMPAS: Yes.

Q: After your time, you've got sort of the traditional Foreign Service initiation, you know, working in a paper mill in Washington and then working on visas overseas, what did you want to do? Did you have any feeling now that you were moving along where you wanted to go and specialize?

SAMPAS: Well, by the time I left Hamburg, I had certainly learned that political work was the place to be - political work (They didn't have "cones" quite yet.) and that it was very difficult work to get into. And I certainly felt that my credentials were as good as anybody else's and that

I must have some chance, with my credentials, but of course, at the time I left Hamburg, I resigned because I was going to get married to a fellow Foreign Service officer. At that time, although there was no rule that you couldn't marry a fellow Foreign Service officer, it was certainly frowned on. The Department was certainly going to do nothing to try to seek an assignment together for the couple. In fact, I'm sure if they had had their druthers, they would have put each one on the far side of the earth, because they didn't believe in it and they didn't want it. And there were no grievances in those days. So I left, thinking, well, that's the end of my Foreign Service career.

Q: How did you feel about that at the time?

SAMPAS: Well, I didn't like it then. I didn't like it then at all. But at least I was going to have the pleasure of seeing different societies, since my husband was also in the Foreign Service.

Q: Well, did you feel, I mean at the time, make sort of a mental calculation, Yes, I could carry on as a Foreign Service officer being married and all that?

SAMPAS: Oh, yes, I thought I certainly could. There was nothing in marriage itself that keeps you from being a good Foreign Service officer, contrary to what the Department's standard opinion seemed to be in those days. Obviously, arrangements have to be made, if you're going to have children, to see that the children are well taken care of. You can't have your children running hither and yon all over the city getting into trouble, but joint careers are possible. If you apply a little intelligence and a little money toward it, there you are.

Q: Well, you were married. Your husband's name is-

SAMPAS: James.

Q: Sampas - where does that come from?

SAMPAS: Greek.

Q: Greek. I was wondering. It looked almost like it might be Finnish or something like that.

SAMPAS: No, originally it was Sampatakakis, but the family decided to shorten it sometime around the Second World War.

Q: You went to Germany in, what, the summer of 1960?

SAMPAS: Yes.

Q: And you were in Hamburg from when to when?

SAMPAS: I was in Hamburg from June 1960, until late November 1962.

Q: *What was your work?*

SAMPAS: I was in visa work. Hamburg was a large visa issuing post at the time, and interesting because there were quite a lot of people from Eastern Germany and Poland, Czechoslovakia, who made their way into Hamburg one way or another but thought of that as merely a way station. They really wanted to move on to the United States. And they had powerful stories to tell about what they had been through in the war, after the war, either at the mercy of the Germans or the Russians.

Q: *Were they living in refugee camps mostly?*

SAMPAS: Some of them certainly were, but not most of them. I think most of them had relatives one way or another that they had moved in with or had lived in a refugee camp for a period of time but then were able to use their skills to get out and have a small apartment someplace.

Q: *Did you find that, particularly dealing with people who were refugees from Poland and East Germany and all, was there a problem given our law, which was I guess the McCarran-Walter Act, which had a great many provisos that you couldn't give visas to people who were involved with communist affairs, and yet anybody who came out of one of these communist systems pretty well had to have had something.*

SAMPAS: Yes, that was a frequent problem that we ran into. I remember the first time - I think it was the first time I had an immigrant applicant in front of me at all. We went over certain questions, and I was probably more repetitive than I needed to be, probably because I wanted to be certain that I understood it, and probably about the third question, the third time I came back to the question of "Are you now or were you ever a Communist?" she said, "Yes." And so then there was the question of trying to figure out whether she was an "involuntary member." And I really didn't think she was. I thought a lot of people had pressure to join the Communist Party, but not perhaps sufficient pressure to qualify under McCarran-Walter standards. But she eventually did get to the United States, and most of the others did, too.

Q: *Well, would you say the attitude of the visa officers, yourself included, was one of sort of understanding where they were coming from and trying to be helpful, as opposed to being rather rigid about letting them get in?*

SAMPAS: I think that's true. We certainly didn't see ourselves as first echelon of any police state that people confronted. I think we all felt that some of the questions that we had to ask were a little embarrassing and were as helpful as we could be.

Q: *On prostitution, which is, of course, a very big factor... I was a consular officer in Frankfurt in '55 to '58, and many of the women, particularly we were dealing with wives of GIs, had started out... I mean, prostitution was - I won't say an "honored profession" - far from it - but it was in the postwar years, this was how you got along.*

SAMPAS: It certainly was, and I frankly rather resented the military for putting all the burden of

that on Foreign Service officers. If these women were considered good enough for our GIs and officers to marry - and these marriages had to be okayed by the military - then why was the burden on us when they wanted to go to the United States?

Q: It was a difficult law, I think particularly for those of us - we almost all came out of essentially the same rather liberal establishment and then all of a sudden to be put up against the nitty-gritty of people who had had to survive - particularly during the war years and the immediate postwar years - was really something that most Americans had no idea of.

SAMPAS: I think that's right, and clearly they had been through the most awful situations at the end of the war. We had bombed so much that there really weren't very many jobs left in certain areas. Hamburg had been quite a bit rebuilt by the time I got there in '60, but I had been in Berlin earlier - 1956 - and it was clearly just flattened.

Q: You mean in 1960.

SAMPAS: I was in Berlin in the mid-'50s.

Q: That's right, before - but when you came as a Foreign Service officer, you came in 1960, I think.

SAMPAS: Yes. I came to Germany as an FSO [Foreign Service officer] in 1960, but I had visited Berlin when I was a student in Paris. Two of my friends from Michigan and I had gone; one was a student at the Freie Universität in Berlin, the other visiting Europe prior to working in North Africa.

Q: Of course, Hamburg was the first city in Germany to have a thousand-plane raid, which was essentially firebombing.

SAMPAS: Yes, yes, and the bombs were apparently particularly awful because people had the choice between staying under water and drowning in one of their famous lakes in the middle of the city or coming out into the air and burning to death. The bombs - phosphorous, we were told - kept burning as long as there was air.

Q: Thermite, I think.

SAMPAS: - as long as there was air around them, and it was clearly a very painful memory for people.

Q: Oh, yes. How did you find the Germans? What was your impression at this particular time?

SAMPAS: Well, I think I was predisposed to like them. My mother's family hailed from Germany, and she had spoken German at home before she went to school in Minnesota. I found them a good deal more formal than I expected. I remember one little old lady who had come in, and she wanted to go to the United States, and in those days there wasn't a window, and you didn't have a five minute maximum to speak to people. You had an office and were there to help

them. She wanted advice about how to come, how it would be most comfortable from her point of view to meet her relatives in the United States, and eventually we got through the visa questions as well, and then she said, "Well, now do I have to go and see the consul?" And I said, "Well, no, you've already seen the person you came to see, and everything is settled." And all of a sudden, it struck her that this young woman in front of her could be the official she came to see, and she was really quite embarrassed, and she said, "Oh, if I had known that, I would have said 'Good day' when I came in." That really was annoying to me because I'm enough of a small-D democrat that if she had been a polite person, I thought she would have said hello, good day, to anyone in any office she spoke to. But mostly they were nice people, pleasant people, middle-class people who, I think, probably shared many of the same values we did.

And sometimes it was a little hard. I know there was one German naval officer who had committed a war crime because when he had torpedoed ships he hadn't picked up everybody. And you know, none of our submarines picked up everybody either. It wasn't possible to put them on a ship the size of a submarine in those days. That really rather hurts, as a person trying to carry American values of fairness overseas, that we couldn't live ourselves by the same standards we were insisting upon from others.

Q: Was it easy to get along? I mean, was there much social intermingling on your part with the Germans, or were you pretty much, you know, involved with the consulate general people?

SAMPAS: No, I think a number of us tried to seek out Germans for friendships, and if somebody came in or we met somebody at a party, we were perfectly happy to cultivate that friendship, have people over for dinner, go to their house for dinner, so that we could get a better sense of the country. It's not really much fun sticking entirely with other Foreign Service officers.

Q: Was there much feeling of tension these days with the Soviets, because this was the time when the Berlin Wall went up and Kennedy had come back from Vienna and Khrushchev had threatened him and we were calling up the reserves? I mean, it was not that peaceful a time in Europe.

SAMPAS: No, it wasn't. Interestingly, none of the political- (end of tape)

-that our government had at that time were really shoved in front of us, as you might think they would be for Foreign Service officers, and said, "Look, this is the problem. Things are getting tenser." But we could, of course, and did read the newspapers and figure things out for ourselves. We were always concerned about, I suppose you could call them, left-wing people who would try to get close to us as a group, but it was just interesting that the kind of questions that a professor would put before a class, calling for discussions and so forth, those were really not put on the table, and I think we were all somewhat sorry for that. I think we all - the young people who were there doing visa work, and there were five or six of us, including the consular side - I think we all expected that.

Q: To have more -

SAMPAS: More give and take.

Q: More give and take, yes.

SAMPAS: About the issues. More exposure, perhaps, to the cables that were coming in.

Q: Who was our consul general there when you were there?

SAMPAS: Well, I did like him very much. I must stop and say it was E. Tomlin Bailey, who had come there after being head of the Security Office in the Department of State, and he was certainly a very gentlemanly person, and I think, behaved as any typical senior officer might anywhere in the Service.

Q: Well, did he have, coming out of the security side, I was wondering whether that background would intrude on the visa officers and their interpretation of the law, or wasn't there much of a connect?

SAMPAS: No, I don't think there was much of a connect. We had one person who came in. He was from Poland, and introduced by some sort of a benevolent organization. He was a person that I thought would be good to have in the United States, but the question was had he been an unwilling member of the Communist Party, and I thought it was possible that he could qualify for that, but it was edgy. And I think we went in for an advisory opinion, and the Department turned him down. And then he did come back, again with the help of this benevolent organization, and at that time the consul general did the interview himself. I think he found the same thing: that the man was more eligible than ineligible, but I don't recall him getting involved in any other case.

Q: What was the social life like in those days?

SAMPAS: Well, the grand days of right after the war, when the Americans had the only food in town, had disappeared. Germans had become wealthy, and their inherent sophistication had come to the fore again. But still, they were happy, I think, to come to a house for a nice dinner, even if it was the house of a junior vice consul. And the consul general himself entertained quite a bit and tried to put a junior vice consul in here or there in the dinners so that they could meet people. One time I met a woman whose husband was a general involved in the German side of the Battle of the Bulge, and they invited me to dinner, and I certainly went. I was happy for the invitation. And he certainly said or did nothing that made me think that he was a secret Nazi hiding out in the new Bundesrepublik. The only time that I ran into - only twice did I run into - a feeling left over from the Nazis that made me shiver. One time was at the political officer's house for dinner. He had invited a German who was married to an Austrian woman. I was translating for the wife of the mayor and was distracted from some of the conversation - but I rather gather that this Austrian woman said something like, "The only problem with Hitler was that he didn't completely kill off all the Jews." And so there was a shocked silence, and I didn't quite hear what she had said, and I didn't want to guess and translate something that was wrong. I only realized later that the wife of the political officer happened herself to be Jewish, and was naturally terribly offended and hurt and angered. And the other time was a German who surprised me. Two American friends of mine who had served in Germany previously, and were both very

interested in classical music, and that was something I related to quite a lot, introduced me to a German who also loved music. I was really quite shocked when this German started berating Jewish musicians. How can anyone like music and be anti-Semitic? And I said something on behalf of Mendelssohn, who was a young prodigy - he did his first symphony at the age of 12 - and really got quite lambasted from this German. I remain surprised that a person so cultivated in an area - music - where Jews have made such a tremendous contribution to civilization could maintain such a feeling.

Q: *It takes training.*

SAMPAS: Yes, I guess it does.

Q: *Awful, awful.*

SAMPAS: And I think we must not have had quite the public affairs programs in Austria that we did in Germany after the war.

Q: *And also, well, I mean, the occupation was a somewhat different thing, and I think it was a secondary theater anyway. I mean, it wasn't strategic, and so-*

SAMPAS: That's right. No one thought that Austria was going to attack the rest of Europe. So the USIA didn't have an equivalent amount of money for Austria as it had to democratize Germany after the war.

Q: *Well, in 1962, by the time you were ready to leave, what did you think of the Foreign Service and all?*

SAMPAS: Well, I thought it was really a wonderful profession, but that it could be much better if the people in the Foreign Service just put more thought to it, but that it was a grand profession and that I was happy to have been associated with it.

Q: *Well, this is one of the things I think these oral histories, we hope, will over time permeate the system, so that people will think a little more about the history of our relations and all, make it fairly easy for them to maybe to think more about not just the next assignment or whether the maids are good in a place, but also to think what can be done to improve both the profession and how can the professional reading essay as the person gets ready for the next post.*

SAMPAS: Yes, I think we should work on it more intellectually, and perhaps we already do. After all, in those first days when I went overseas, there wasn't an Overseas Briefing Center. There wasn't a course that you went to for a couple of weeks to delve into our foreign relations with the area you were going to. And those things may have already made a great difference.

Q: *Well, there have been real efforts, and everything adds up.*

SAMPAS: Yes.

ELIZABETH ANN BROWN
Political Officer
Bonn (1960-1963)

Elizabeth Ann Brown received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in international relations and political science from Reed College. Following World War II, she worked on the War Labor Board. When the War Labor Board ended, Ms. Brown transferred to the Department of State. Her career included positions in Germany, Greece, and the Netherlands. She was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on May 30, 1995.

Q: But then in 1960, I believe, you received orders to go to [the American Embassy in] Bonn?

BROWN: That's correct. I went to Bonn. I had worked with William Tyler at the UN in 1959. He was later Political Counselor in Bonn. At any rate, he knew me and was willing to accept me as a member of the Political Section.

Q: I think that we should put it that he was lucky enough to get you. Ambassador Dowling was in Bonn at the time. What were your responsibilities when you arrived in the Embassy [in Bonn]?

BROWN: I was supposed to deal with the UN, to a degree with NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization], with Franco-German relations, and arms control issues. I worked initially with Frances Williamson. I never really was as busy in the Embassy in Bonn as I might have been. Toward the latter part of my tour there I started writing speeches for Ambassador Dowling because Senator Henry Cabot Lodge had visited the Ambassador and told him that I was "great" at speech writing, since I had written speeches for him in New York. [Laughter] That was sort of an interesting sidelight but not really fascinating.

Q: I can understand that. You had come out of a very hectic and exciting position here [in the Department] where you had been immersed for years in "pressure cooker" type situations.

BROWN: The difference, of course, was that the association in the UN field had been at fairly senior levels, where you're likely to have more responsibility than an officer gets at a post abroad.

Q: You were in Bonn in 1960. We had our presidential election here in 1960. Did Chancellor Konrad Adenauer give any indication whether he favored Nixon or Kennedy in that election?

BROWN: Not to my recollection. You should know, although you came to Bonn a bit later.

Q: Yes, I didn't get to Bonn until 1962. In 1961 there were indications, of course, of the growing Franco-German rapprochement, between President De Gaulle [of France] and Adenauer. You were following that closely.

BROWN: I was following that closely and I was prepared to make my own prediction that this rapprochement might be more detrimental to U. S. interests than it actually turned out to be, in the event.

Q: 1961 was also the year when the Wall went up in Berlin, which had repercussions everywhere, and particularly in Bonn.

BROWN: I'm sure that you know the famous story of the Embassy officer...

Q: No, I don't think that I do. Please tell it.

BROWN: Well, the Wall went up on a Sunday morning. On Sunday afternoon in Bad Godesberg there was a tournament of Little League baseball teams in Europe, which "everyone" was watching. In the course of the games word came to the [Code Room for the] Ambassador about the Berlin Wall, which at that point had been under construction for some hours. The CBS correspondent in Bonn came up and told the Ambassador [about the Wall]. It turned out that an officer from the Legal Office of the Embassy had been duty officer. He had gone into the Embassy and looked at the telegram from the U. S. Mission in Berlin, reporting that the Wall was going up. He wrote, "Noted" on the telegram and never said a word to anyone about it. So he was rather promptly transferred out of Bonn.

Q: I can imagine Ambassador Dowling was livid.

BROWN: Absolutely.

Q: I had never heard that story.

BROWN: Seriously?

Q: I never did. Well, in 1962 De Gaulle's visit to Bonn received considerable attention. Something that I remember very well was that Adenauer, under great pressure, dismissed Franz-Joseph Strauss as Minister of Defense. Adenauer then promised to retire as Chancellor in 1963. People found this hard to believe.

BROWN: There was also the visit, early on, from Secretary of State Dean Rusk. I think that he was making the rounds of European capitals. I had known Rusk from the very early days [of the UN] when he had initially been involved in UN affairs.

Q: That was before my time in Bonn. As I said, I arrived in Bonn in the summer of 1962, just in time for some of those critical events, such as the Strauss dismissal. That caused a lot of fluttering in the "hen house" there [in Bonn].

Then, in January, 1963, came the Franco-German treaty which was later denounced by Ludwig Erhardt, who was regarded as Adenauer's "Crown Prince." There was even concern, I believe -- and I'd like your views on this -- in the U. S. as to the significance of the Franco-German treaty. Would you talk a little bit about how the U. S. saw it?

BROWN: As I said earlier, while this treaty was being worked on, I think that we were genuinely concerned that it was going to break up the dominant position that the United States had in post-war [Western] Germany. At the same time there were mixed feelings on this. I think that my own view at the time, although I was not the best observer, was that [the Franco-German treaty] raised more problems for us. As it turned out, I think that, although enmity between France and Germany had modified, the severe reactions that we had expected [did not materialize].

Q: Now, President Kennedy visited Germany in 1963. Were you still in Bonn at that time?

BROWN: I had left. I don't recall exactly when Kennedy came.

JOHN L. LOUGHRAN
Economic Officer
Bonn (1960-1964)

Ambassador Loughran was raised in Pennsylvania and attended Lehigh University where he studied business administration and economics. He served in the US Army during World War II in the Southwest Pacific and later attended Harvard University. He joined the Foreign Service and served in Germany, France, Liberia, the Gambia, Senegal and Somalia. Ambassador Loughran was interviewed by Horace G. Torbert in 1988.

LOUGHRAN: Off we went to Bonn, Germany, under Ambassador Dowling, where I served for four years. While serving in the economic section, I was appointed by Dowling to sit in on all his political staff's meetings on problems with Berlin. There were many, as you well recall. It was a period when there was the Russian threat of interdicting all access to Berlin, and it during that period, of course, that the Berlin wall went up. So it was an interesting period, particularly to work with a man of the stature of Ambassador Dowling. Later, he was replaced by Ambassador George McGhee, who, as you know, devoted--

Q: Quite a different type.

LOUGHRAN: Quite a different gentleman, and who devoted years and years of his life to public service, and I believe in a distinguished way.

Q: I also worked for Red Dowling, and I was very close to him for a while. That sounds like a very good job for you. Are there any special instances that you remember in that Berlin period?

LOUGHRAN: Yes, unlike the late Ambassador Robert Murphy, who, in Washington, was counseling the serious consideration of militarily interdicting the erection of the wall, I was opposed to such action.

I was called back to appear before a special committee in Washington dealing with the problem, and I believe it was William "Bill" Tyler, who was Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, who wanted to listen to someone who had some intimate knowledge of the problems. I recall my suggesting that we did not need to engage in any military action. I had not known Ambassador Murphy well, but it was my conviction that military action to interdict the erection of that wall was not in our national interest. For all practical purposes, the East Germans were in the Soviet orbit, and there was precious little that we could do about it at that time. I thought a far better way to go would be to continue with the tremendous success of NATO and the Marshall Plan.

Q: What year would this have been? About 1960?

LOUGHRAN: This would have been in the period 1960 to '64.

Q: If Murphy was there, it was still the Eisenhower Administration.

LOUGHRAN: No, it was already Kennedy.

Q: But Murphy was giving that advice. How long did this Bonn job last? That ran to '64 or more?

LOUGHRAN: It ran to '64. During that period, John Burns, later the Director General of the Foreign Service, had been posted to Bangui and had known us in Bonn, our interests in Africa, and asked me to come to Bangui as his DCM. The Department resisted and wanted me to stay for the full four-year tour in Bonn, which I did.

At the end of that tour Burns was transferred to be the political advisor to General Lemnitzer at NATO headquarters outside of Paris in Rocquencourt. When he arrived, he was given the opportunity to select his deputy, and he asked for me; the Department agreed.

MONCRIEFF J. SPEAR
Berlin Task Force
Washington, DC (1961)

Moncrieff J. Spear was born in New York in 1921. He received degrees from Cornell University and from George Washington Universities. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and joined the State Department in 1946. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, the Philippines, Yugoslavia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Bahamas, and Washington, DC. Mr. Spear was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 1993.

SPEAR: The Berlin Task Force was formed at the time of the Berlin Wall crisis in 1961. Because of my previous experience in Berlin, I was detailed to the Berlin Task Force. I was working particularly with Henry Cox on public affairs in that area. I found myself going out and

handling speaking engagements before various groups around the country about what our policies were, what our legal rights were in Berlin, and what our policies were in view of President Kennedy's determination to maintain our position in Berlin. This was quite a tense time during which we sent an Army battle group from West Germany to reinforce the Berlin Garrison. Vice President Johnson was sent over there to reiterate our commitment to the people of Berlin. So all of that was a very interesting, tense, and exciting time.

There may have been 25 or 30 people who used to attend its regular meetings, a couple of times a week, up in the Operations Center conference room. Foy Kohler, who was Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, was the director of the Task Force. He had Maj Gen Gray from the Pentagon as his deputy. A lot of our old Berlin hands, like Marty Hillenbrand, John Ausland, and others were also on the Task Force.

The Secretary and the Under Secretary and other senior officials in the Department took considerable interest in the workings of the Task Force. And the White House as well. Yes, President Kennedy was also very actively involved in those things. Those were the days when he used to call up desk officers in the Department and ask their opinions about current developments.

GEORGE LAMBRAKIS
Political Officer
Munich (1961-1962)

George Lambrakis was born in Illinois in 1931. After receiving his bachelor's degree from Princeton University in 1952, he went on to earn both his master's degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1953 and his law degree from Tufts University in 1969. His career has included positions in Saigon, Pakse, Conakry, Munich, Tel Aviv, and Teheran. Mr. Lambrakis was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in June 2002.

Q: You left there in when?

LAMBRAKIS: I left there two years later. I got there in '59; I left there in '61. I spoke French, Greek, and I had learned quite a bit of Russian. Therefore the State Department decided that I should learn German and go to a country where I didn't know the language, again in the usual way in which these things happen. I was assigned to Germany, and they switched my assignment. I was assigned to Stuttgart first, and then I was assigned to Munich, and sent back to FSI for German language training. I spent four months in Washington, and then became the junior of the two political officers in our consulate general in Munich.

Q: And you did that from '61 to...

LAMBRAKIS: I was in Munich for a little more than one year, after the home leave and four

months at FSI.

Q: '62?

LAMBRAKIS: I wanted to move to something a little livelier. Mind you I had the experience in Munich of working with Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. Again I stood in for a more senior officer when he went on leave. This was the senior officer whose wife had slapped a Russian policeman when he was in Moscow. He was a Soviet specialist, and he was PNGed on that occasion and couldn't go back. because of that. He was our main liaison with Radio Liberty. I had a wonderful personal time as a bachelor in Munich at the time, but I wanted something more exciting politically. I came back to Washington. I think I had the best time in my life in terms of jobs being offered as alternatives. I could have stayed in Washington and started on eastern Europe through Washington personnel, or I could have gone to Rio de Janeiro as political officer. But instead I went to Tel Aviv as political officer, as Steve Palmer's deputy there. Steve unfortunately died, had a heart attack just a year ago.

PETER S. BRIDGES
Soviet Studies
Oberammergau (1961-1962)

Ambassador Bridges was born in New Orleans and raised in Chicago. He attended Dartmouth College and Columbia University and served in the US Army in France. He entered the Foreign Service in 1957 and held positions in Panama, Moscow, Italy, and served as Ambassador to Somalia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.

Q: We're off to Oberammergau. You were there 1961 to '62? This is always a fascinating place. I wonder if you could tell about it other than the fact that you were concerned about getting crucified...

BRIDGES: We got there a year after the passion play; I might say that I've also included a chapter on my nine months at Oberammergau in a book, my first book, which mainly has to do with my experiences in Somalia, called *Safirka: An American Envoy*, which was published by the Kent State University Press in the year 2000. Anyway, there is a chapter about Oberammergau. At the time, the U.S. army unit there was called U.S. Army detachment 'R', for Russia. Two Foreign Service officers were sent there every year for a nine-month course. The course for Army officers was two years, and amounted to the last two years of a four year course for them. They spent a year studying the Russian language at the Army Language School in Monterey, and then a year at the Russian Institute - where I had studied - at Columbia University and then two years at Detachment R, after which they were destined for service in Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union, either embassy service in the liaison group to the group of Soviet forces in Eastern Germany. The liaison group was pretty tough duty. Anyway, I was very pleased to be selected as one of the two FSOs to go Oberammergau, where all the courses were given in the Russian language and the instructors were almost all ethnic Russians. There was one Latvian

and one Chechen, but they were both quite fluent in Russian.

Q: From your perspective, what was the thrust of what you were getting?

BRIDGES: The course was designed mainly for military officers. There was at the time one naval officer there, two Marine officers, and also a number of civilians from the National Security Agency, who I think like us FSOs spent only one year there. The course was obviously pointed toward the Soviet military, but not too much, so that we were given instruction in the modern Soviet economy and modern Soviet politics and modern Soviet military, the secret police system, geography - there was a very good course on economic geography and there was a course on the Russian language given in the Russian language, and it was pretty tough. The instructor was an ethnic Russian who had lived all his life in Poland, his only experience with the Soviet Union came under the Germans when he went into the occupied part of the Soviet Union and he became a school inspector. That was the kind of guys who were teaching us, not necessarily very likeable; there were two former secret police officers, it was a gamut of people.

Q: Did you feel that you all were under the scrutiny of the KGB or anything like that?

BRIDGES: I don't remember how much discussion we had on the subject, but certainly we assumed that one or more of the staff members was still in touch with people in the Soviet Union, although I'm sure the Army had screened them as carefully as they could before they hired them. Some of them had been working for the U.S. Army for ten or fifteen years.

Q: Were you getting a feeling that the Soviet Union has a system that works and going to work into the far future?

BRIDGES: I don't recall that anybody at Detachment R, and I don't recall that anyone at our embassy in Moscow or indeed in the western diplomatic corps there, had gone so far as to venture a guess as to how long the Soviet system might last. Certainly, one could see that the Soviet economic system was inefficient. It was ludicrously inefficient, but the Soviet police system was quite efficient. What was happening was that the big parts of the economy were being used to support the Soviet military and the Soviet police system. But as far as we could see that system was going to remain in effect for a very long time to come.

Q: Was there any talk about the ethnic divisions within the Soviet Union?

BRIDGES: At Oberammergau, yes. I mentioned one of the instructors was Chechen, a man named Avtorkhanov who had grown up as a young intellectual under the Soviets and had been sent to Moscow to study. The Soviets realized that they needed more trained intellectuals from various non-Slavic nationalities. They set up something called the Institute of the Red Professorate in Moscow, and he went there, got a higher education and became a professor, and then went west when the Germans occupied Chechnya. He was very strong on the nationality problems inside the Soviet Union. I knew about this already from studies at Columbia; obviously Stalin had not solved everything by deporting the Chechens and Volga Germans during World War II; those people were still in the Soviet Union, and we all knew that the Balkan republics were not assimilated and that the Jews were persecuted. Nationalities were still a problem in

many ways for the Soviet leadership.

Q: This is seven years after the 20th party congress when Khrushchev told all the secret speech. Was that something that was examined at the time? Looking beyond the veil...

BRIDGES: At Oberammergau, we were studying basics, going back some years into Soviet history, and we did not have a course there on the Soviet intelligentsia per se, although one or two professors were interested in the subject. There was an instructor named Krylov, who taught economics and economic geography but who would also talk sometimes about the intellectual scene. I knew a fair amount about that from my studies at Columbia. Certainly we knew that there was a lot of intellectual ferment, but I waited on getting to Moscow to really understand what was going on.

Q: How did you find working on the military with this? Was there a closeness?

BRIDGES: Oh, sure. There were I suppose about two dozen army officers and one Navy lieutenant and two Marine officers, and we were buddies; my wife and I were hikers and skiers and skaters, and I don't remember if too many of the officers were skaters, but they were hikers and skiers so we did a lot of stuff together. A couple of them I still remember. One was a good hiking companion, Bill Dunkelberger, who returned to Oberammergau some years later as commandant of Detachment R. Captain, later Major Robert Bartos declared himself to be quite right-wing, and liked to make fun of the State Department, but we got along well.

DAVID J. FISCHER
Consular Officer
Frankfurt (1961-1963)

Born in Connecticut and raised in Minnesota, Mr. Fischer was educated at Brown University, the University of Vienna, Austria and Harvard Law School. He joined the Foreign Service in 1961. His various assignments abroad took him to Germany, Poland, Sofia, Kathmandu, Dar-es-Salam as well as to the Seychelles, where he served as US Ambassador from 1982-1985. His assignments at the Department of State in Washington include those dealing with the US relations with China, with Public Affairs, and with Arms Control issues.

Q: So off you went to Frankfurt. Was that kind of a disappointment?

FISCHER: No I loved Frankfurt. For me to go to a German speaking country, I felt very comfortable. My wife (I was then married. I got married in September.) was able to take the language course at FSI, which was a godsend because it would have been very difficult for her to survive in Germany in those days without German. It was a terribly luxurious life. I will never forget that we drove from Washington to New York to board the SS United States. Foreign Service Officers in those days were sent first class as a way to subsidize the shipping business. So I was twenty-two, my wife was twenty. Here we are sitting in first class on one of the most

luxurious ships in the world. Among the other passengers were Catherine Cornell, an aging but still somewhat famous actress. We got to eat at the right tables. It was ludicrous. Here we were these young kids sitting in the first class dining room with everybody else aged eighty. I think the stewards recognized before we landed at La Havre the chances of their getting a decent tip out of these two children was about zero. So they rigged it, I know they rigged it, so that we won the horse race game the night before we landed. I won two hundred bucks, precisely the amount of money we were supposed to tip these people. It was wonderful.

Frankfurt for us was a good posting. I was put to work in the visa section, work I rather enjoyed, frankly. I did citizenship work. It was a chance to use my German. We lived in State Department/Army housing for senior army officers which was owned by the Consulate, very luxurious standards in the early 1960s. My wife enrolled at the University of Frankfurt so she was kept intellectually occupied. Every evening I would leave the office at five o'clock and walk and meet her in the Gruenberg Park in Frankfurt, and we would go out to a restaurant to eat. Coming from the U.S., it was almost inconceivable that we could have afforded a restaurant. We bought our first car, a little Renault, brand new from the factory in Paris for the grand sum of the nine hundred and eighty dollars. On weekends we would go to Strasbourg, all over Europe, and it was a wonderful life.

I think it's worth noting that in 1961 it was only 15 years since the end of World War II. Germany was in the midst of what was called the "Wirtschafts- wunder," the rebuilding process. But compared to the U.S., Germany was a poor country. We were treated as the occupier, even though the occupation had ended ten years earlier. Still, being an American government official gave one certain privileges. The fact that the exchange rate was 4.20 DM to the dollar certainly helped make us very rich in comparison to the local German population. Few Germans owned cars and those that did spend Sundays driving out to the nearest river to wash the family car.

Q: Who was Consul General at that time?

FISCHER: Well I was his staff agent, his name was Edwin J. Dorsz (it means codfish in Polish.) Mr. Dorsz was indeed a very controversial figure. He had a wife who was the typical nightmare of any junior Foreign Service Officer, an absolute shrew. She was incredibly demanding on the spouses. Since I was the staff aide, I can remember Dorsz one night calling my wife up, I guess it was after I had left the office, to demand that she come as a dinner guest at a party he was giving that night. He was short a woman. She said, have you talked it over with David. He said, I'm inviting you, not your husband. She didn't go. She had the courage to say no.

I worked for a guy who was head of the Visa Section, whose name was Charlie Borell. I remember that because Charlie's son had been my freshman roommate at Brown.

Q: Charlie Borell was still there? He was my boss in Frankfurt when I went there in 1955.

FISCHER: Charlie was still there. He was an old Immigration and Naturalization Service Officer. You remember of course the McCarran Act had the famous Asian triangle restrictions on Anybody born in the Asian Pacific triangle had to wait years for a visa since only 100 were granted a year. The law was a holdover from the famous Chinese exclusion laws of the 19th

century. It's hard to imagine now when Asians are the largest immigrant group that as late as the 1960s they were effectively excluded. And Charlie Borell would walk through the waiting room of the Frankfurt Consulate every morning and then would call me up into his office. "I smell a Chinese," he would say. "Woman over there in the gray coat, she looks like she was born in Shanghai." And you know the incredible thing was, he was always right. He was an extraordinary person, an old-fashioned immigration officer that had spent years in Hawaii before he joined the Foreign Service as a visa officer.

Then I worked in the citizenship section for a man named Howard Goldsmith who committed suicide in the Lido Beach outside of Venice. This was a very strange case that has never been fully explained to me. Subsequently, I learned from Vic Dikeos, who was a security officer, it was believed that Goldsmith was involved in an espionage case in the Embassy in Warsaw. Whether Goldsmith was a spy or not, I can remember I was the duty officer the weekend that this happened. It was a Friday evening at about eleven o'clock. I got a call from this Howard's wife saying Howard had gone out at eight o'clock to buy some cigarettes and hadn't returned. So I remember calling I guess the Security officer and within hours a team of security and CIA officers arrived from Bonn. They interviewed all of us who worked with Howard, went through his office, etc. He had simply disappeared. On Monday afternoon we received word that his body had been found floating in the Lido in Venice.

Q: It wasn't publicized particularly.

FISCHER: No.

Q: You were doing both citizenship and...

FISCHER: It was a rotational assignment. You spent six months in the visa section and six months in the birth registration office. I was the birth registration officer. I registered nine thousand babies in my tenure up there. Again one of those consular stories. As you know, when you register the baby of an American citizen you have to swear that the statement is true and whatever. I had an army major and his wife, and I'll never forget this, who came to my office. Of course, this was a fairly standardized quick process ... kind of getting a passport. I asked them both to stand and raise their right hands to solemnly swear that the statements were true. The major said, "I do" but the wife was silent. I said, "Do you swear to this?" And she turned to her husband and said, "John you're not the father of this baby!" I don't know why she chose that moment to say that but oh boy, what a scene!

I had several interesting experiences in Frankfurt. I was the escort officer for Eunice Shriver who was President Kennedy's sister on their famous trip to Germany in 1962. And I spent a lot of time involved in that trip beginning in Bad Godesberg (Bonn) going down around with the Presidential party, spending the night in Wiesbaden. I was the Consul-General's staff aide so I got involved in helping set up the logistics for the Presidential visit. The President was to stay in an army hotel, or air force hotel, called the Wiesbaden Arms. It was a high rise building in Wiesbaden and looking at the room assignments, I noticed that the President was on the top floor and there was a Ms. Smith or Ms. Jones in an adjoining room. The secret service had been very plain, make sure that the President has an adjoining room with Ms. Jones. I can remember being

terribly naïve but my interest was peaked enough to talk to the chief secret service guy and say excuse me but what's the role of Ms. Jones? "I can't get into that. It's the private secretary to the President," he said. Subsequently I learned it that far from being the President's secretary, she was a German that J. Edgar Hoover believed was an East German agent. I don't remember her name, but she had a fleeting moment of infamy when all the stuff about Kennedy's sex life surfaced.

On that trip I was with Eunice Shriver who was very interested in retarded children. I can remember going to a special school or institute somewhere in Frankfurt, and Eunice walked through and looked at what they were doing for children. And she turned to the head of the clinic, I was her translator, and she said in English, "Dr. Schmidt, your work is so fabulous. I want you to go to the American Embassy, I want you visit America and go to the Embassy and we'll take care of it." Even though I was a junior officer I knew we couldn't just hand out VIP visitor programs to everybody we liked, so I translated this into German saying, "Dr. Schmidt, you're doing such a wonderful job, I hope one day you'll be able to visit the United States." He answered in German, thank god, not in English, he said, "that's not what she said and I'll see you in your office Monday morning." Which is what he did. He got the grant.

Q: Did you get involved in Protection and Welfare or anything like that?

FISCHER: No, I don't remember that, I don't think so.

Q: Did you find yourself tangled up with German versus American laws on whose a citizen and whose not a citizen in the baby birth thing? Did this cause any problems?

FISCHER: I don't remember that. I don't think so. I met a woman here in San Francisco about six years ago who reminded me of something which I had totally forgotten. She came up to me somewhere I'm so grateful to you, etc. It turns out she did not have American citizenship according to the law because she had resided overseas one day too long or not one day enough or something. I said this is crazy and I issued her a passport. That's why she came up to me here. She was certainly very grateful that I had ignored the law and decided to act with common sense.

It was a rather humdrum. I tell people today who are interested in the Foreign Service, I use Frankfurt as an example of a post where the work was terribly dull. I'd gone to Harvard Law School and then issued birth certificates for six months of my life. For that matter, dealing with the visa applicants was hardly intellectually stimulating. But, what you could do outside that 9 to 5 job was wonderful. I did political reporting. The head of the Political Section in those days was a fellow by the name of Paul Kattenburg, Belgian born and who had been sent to Frankfurt because as an expert on Vietnam, he had told the Department things they didn't want to hear..

Q: Yes, we've interviewed Paul.

FISCHER: And Paul said if you want to do some political reporting, go ahead. So I ended up following the extreme right wing in Germany the so-called NDP, National German Party. They had a fairly big following in Wiesbaden.

Q: From your perspective where did the NDP fit? Were they extremists or were we looking for extremists?

FISCHER: Oh they were neo-Nazis. I can remember there was a mayor of Wiesbaden, Mix, who had also been the mayor of Wiesbaden once before from 1941 to 1945 but he had been denazified, but then went on to become mayor again. He flirted with the NDP. I remember once going to a NDP rally in Wiesbaden, and my German was pretty good, I wouldn't say bilingual but I could certainly pass without too much notice. I remember half way through this thing, they had over the podium a huge banner, "Our heroes in war, Our heroes in peace: the SS." In 1961 that was pretty blatant neo-Nazism. I can remember half way through this conversation, some guy turning toward me and saying, "You're not a German." I said, "no I'm American." I got thrown out. It was a little hairy, a little scary.

Q: So how long were you there?

FISCHER: I was only there for a year and a half and then I was selected for Polish language training.

Q: So this is 61 to summer of 63.

FISCHER: Let me tell you one last story about Frankfurt that I think is one of the more interesting. Since I was the staff aide of the Consular General, I ended up serving as the escort officer for lots and lots of people and this is the year in which the Berlin wall had gone up so that we had CODEL after CODEL, congressional delegation after congressional delegation. I was with John Jay McCloy, former high commissioner for Germany. We were in his hotel room and this must have been October 23rd or October 21st. We had heard rumors, there was some rumbling that something was going on in the world, but we didn't know what, whether it was a crisis in Berlin or somewhere else in the world. Of course it was the Cuban missile crisis, as we later found out. So McCloy was in the bathroom of the suite when the phone rang. It was a voice vaguely familiar and said, "Can I speak to Mr. McCloy?" I said, "Who's calling?" He said, "The President." And I said, "The President of what?" Kennedy laughed and said, "The President of the United States." This is where I saw real power. I went to the bathroom and I knocked on the door. I said - somewhat excitedly if I remember correctly - "Mr. McCloy, Mr. McCloy, the President is on the phone!" He said, "I'm busy. Tell him I'll call him back." I thought to myself, anyone who can tell the President he's busy, he'll call back, is someone with a helluva lot of self-confidence!

Q: Were you there during the Berlin wall?

FISCHER: Yes. The Berlin wall had already been built in the summer of 1961, just when I joined the Foreign Service. I can remember traveling to and from Berlin a couple of times. You had to get what were called travel orders which were quadripartite orders marked with the Soviet flag. You would drive across the Helmstedt border between East and West Germany and be stopped at the barricades. It was really exciting stuff. This was really a big deal in those days. I went back to Helmstedt last October and there's no vestige of the Cold War. It's all gone. There's isn't anything left except an old gas station which indicates that this is where the border

was.

Q: What was the feeling about the "Soviet menace" when you were there?

FISCHER: Very real. During the Cuban missile crisis, I can remember being on the roof of the Consulate, we took all our papers ready to go. We had the burn barrels on the roof ready to burn on a Friday or Monday night, whatever the major night of the crisis was. I think all of us were convinced that this was it. We'd been told by the military with whom we worked that there was no way we could stop Soviet armor pouring through the Fulda gap. "These guys are going to come charging through there and they'll be in downtown Frankfurt in forty-five minutes." We believed it, at least I did. It was a very tense period. I was called up, and I had never been in the military. I was called by my draft board to have a physical. I remember calling them in Minneapolis and saying I'm in Germany. They said fine just go to the nearest military facility. I fully anticipated getting drafted, even though I was married.

When I had studied in Europe I had met several guys in the U.S. army, and I had nothing but contempt for them. They were probably enlisted men, but I didn't know the difference between an 18 year old recruit and a 50 year old General. So when I came to Frankfurt, this contempt came with me. My wife and I didn't find many army families that shared our interests, although we lived in a compound filled with army intelligence officers. But through my time there I did come to interact with senior officers who were impressive. Gen. Creighton Abrams was the commander of V Corps in Frankfurt. I do remember that his wife was not too impressive - mink coat, army limousine - that kind of army wife who lorded it over wives of lower ranks. But her husband was impressive in the right way: smart, tough. Thirty years later I had occasion as the Consul General in Munich to work with his son who was a one star. He was one of the brightest officers I ever met. But through my Foreign Service career I got to have a considerable respect for senior military.

**E. ALLAN WENDT
Vice Consul
Dusseldorf (1961-1963)**

Ambassador Allan Wendt was born November 8, 1935 in Chicago, Illinois. He graduated from Yale University in 1957 with a degree in History and minor in Political Science. He continued his studies at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris, France. In 1959, Wendt entered the Foreign Service. He held various positions within the State Department which included being sent to post in Dusseldorf, Germany as a consular officer as his first foreign post in 1961. In 1967, Wendt was sent to Saigon, Vietnam during which he experienced the Tet Offensive. From there he bounced between posts abroad and the United States including posts in Brussels, Belgium, Cairo, Egypt, and Ljubljana, Slovenia, before becoming the first U.S. Ambassador to Slovenia in 1992. He retired at the end of his Ambassadorship in 1995. Ambassador Wendt was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in May, 1996.

WENDT: I left Washington in December of 1961 for my first overseas post. I went to Düsseldorf, which was then a consulate general in the most populous state of West Germany. Actually, I could have gone to Bonn. One fringe benefit of my service in Personnel was that I could influence my next assignment. I chose not to go to Bonn because I thought in Bonn I would be too caught up in the large American community there. My opportunities for involvement with the German people and learning the language would be limited.

Q: I think you're quite right --

WENDT: Whereas at a consulate general in an area that was not part of the former American zone of occupation -- it was part of the British zone --

Q: That's opposed to Frankfurt, Munich and Stuttgart, which were in the American zone.

WENDT: Right. I thought my exposure would be deeper and that I would learn more at a constituent post than in Bonn. I think I was right. In retrospect, although the experience in an embassy would have been useful, I think it was a good decision. I made fairly rapid progress with the language.

Q: You were in Düsseldorf from when to when?

WENDT: From 1961 to 1963.

Q: What type of work were you doing?

WENDT: I was a visa and consular officer. That's all I ever did there. I handled non-immigrant visas because Düsseldorf could not issue immigrant visas. Applicants had to go to Frankfurt for that. I also handled protection and welfare of American citizens and notarial services, issuance of passports, all those things.

Q: Who was consul general when you were there?

WENDT: Edmund Kellogg was his name. He died fairly recently, a year or two ago, I think. It was not a big post, but it was a very active one. North Rhine Westphalia was the most populous "Land" (or state) in West Germany. There was a lot of business activity. There were also a lot of American citizens of German origin who had gone back there to retire. Remember, the dollar was very strong then, 4.20 marks to the dollar, compared to 1.50 marks today. So, the dollar went a long way.

Q: Can you think of any consular cases that particularly got you involved?

WENDT: Yes. At the time, we were still interviewing everybody who wanted a visitor visa for the U.S. One of the questions we had to ask was, "Were you ever a member of the Nazi Party?" I'm not sure why we asked that because, somewhat to my surprise, practically everybody said "Yes, we were all more or less in the Party." In any case, it was not grounds for denying a visa.

Q: Well, it did open up other questions, I think...like the question of "What else were you doing?"

WENDT: Yes. Then we might say "Were you ever a member of a criminal organization" by which was meant the SS. Every once in a while, somebody would turn up who actually admitted being a member of the SS. Then we'd look into the circumstances. Depending on how bad it was, we might grant a waiver and issue the visa. I can remember a request for a visa for Alfried Krupp, of the famous Krupp Iron and Steel Works. He had been judged a war criminal. I don't remember exactly why -- probably for employing slave labor in some of his factories. There was a bit of a fuss. Finally, it was decided to give him a visa. I never met the man in person. It was all done through intermediaries. That was one case.

I remember another case of a fellow applying for a visa who seemed awfully suspicious. It had nothing to do with his political activities, but I think he had been convicted of some kind of misdemeanor or worse. He was trying very hard to get a visa for the United States. We had some adverse information on him. I turned him down. The next thing I knew, he had rushed off to some other American consular post and got the visa. I suppose we didn't get the word around quickly enough that we had turned him down. I learned later he had a criminal record as a swindler and was called in German "Lügen Epke" (liar Epke—his last name).

There was an element of frustration to my job because we had to interview everybody. I wouldn't say it was a visa mill like Naples or Genoa or someplace like that, but we were working hard all day long. What I came to appreciate, though, was that I was conducting all this business in German. I really made rapid progress in German. I met all kinds of people and was able to talk to most of them, even if only briefly, because there were usually always visa applicants in the waiting room. I think, in a different kind of job, I wouldn't have had the exposure that I had as a young visa officer.

Q: Well, that's an excellent way to learn a language. Did you get involved in any protection and welfare problems?

WENDT: Yes, I did. There was a fellow, an American citizen of German origin, who kept writing us eccentric letters -- we thought maybe he was a bit crazy, claiming he had been unjustly imprisoned and he wanted to get out and he wasn't being well treated. We went and visited him, but the conclusion we came to after our visit was that he really was crazy.

I actually enjoyed the tour of duty in Düsseldorf. I found it a rather elegant, accessible city. I was there only a year and a half. But I thought I learned a lot. I'm not sure how well it prepared me to be on a fast track in the Foreign Service. Maybe I would have done better to go to the embassy in Bonn. I would have met more people in the Foreign Service. But at the time, I wasn't thinking so much about getting ahead in my career as I was about acquiring useful experiences. I did get to know the DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission) at our Embassy in Bonn, Brewster Morris and his wife Ellen. I was frequently invited to their residence for dinner. I would drive down from Düsseldorf to Bad Godesberg. I enjoyed that, too. I thought I had very good exposure. It was a useful tour, even though it lasted only a year and a half.

Q: Then you left there in 1963, I guess?

WENDT: I left there in '63. I came back to Washington and was assigned to the Operations Center—the State Department's around the clock watch office, which had just been created around that time.

EDWIN CRONK
Economic Counselor
Bonn (1961-1965)

Ambassador Edwin Cronk attended Deep Springs College in California and Cornell University before serving at the end of World War II in Japan. His Foreign Service career included positions in Seoul, Korea; Bonn, Germany; Canberra, Australia; and an ambassadorship to Singapore, Malaysia. Ambassador Cronk was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1988.

CRONK: By the time I got there Germany had made it -- commercially speaking. The AID program was zero; I don't even think we had remnants of an AID mission. We had a MAAG -- Military Assistance Advisory Committee -- but it was all commercial sales -- very sizeable. The Germans were back in the military business in a big way. So the problems were completely different; dealing with a developed country, and one that had just had the bit in their teeth going like crazy.

The Common Market had been established a few years before that, and one of our primary jobs then was to figure out the implications of that for the United States; and to try to make sure that the common market did not discriminate against American products. The famous case was the so-called "chicken war."

I am a veteran of the "chicken war!" We could, at that time, produce chicken through a massive scale production scheme, for example, in Georgia -- which was one of the centers for it; and we could land backs and necks, which were the favorite products of Germans. They liked to make chicken stew out of it, or chicken soup. As I recall, we could land backs and necks in Hamburg for about 35 cents a pound -- U.S., without any subsidy or any government involvement at all. The Germans, on the other hand, produced chicken on a very small scale, through a family farm; throwing the corn on the ground and they would scrounge around to eat it, as our farmers did 50 years ago. The best that they could do -- subsidizing the farmer, and all that -- was about 95 cents a pound.

And then they would tax the difference. An import duty was levied; I think they called it a differential tax or something like that -- maybe they had a nicer word for it, that hid the motive. But they more than taxed the difference, so that our backs and necks were a little more expensive than the German ones. Of course, this was sanctioned by the Common Market; it was a scheme that others participated in, but the Germans were the main offenders. We fought like the very

devil to get that tax removed, or reduced, pointing out that there was no long-term economic benefit to the Germans to produce things that worldwide were worth about 1/3 of what they were paying their farmers -- the farmers ought to do something else, or get off the farm, you know. But that was certainly an offense to any economic principles.

But we fought and we lost; they just would barely talk about it, because it was a political no-no to do anything that would be detrimental to the German farmers, who were -- although small in population, as our farmers -- they were important politically. But that was an example of the system that the Common Market had fostered..

We made loud noises, at all levels. It was a matter of persuading them; we had no AID program to threaten -- nothing that we were doing for them. No real thought was given to retaliation, such as increasing duty on Volkswagens. The Germans were our allies, and our friends. We had poured billions into the post-war development, and so on. Adenauer, who was then the chancellor, was well-liked -- a wonderful person -- and we were, for good reason I think, quite gentle with them because they meant so much to us. The Berlin Crisis had ended just a bit before I got there.

The Soviets didn't allow any service transport, so we had to haul coal and everything else in by air. That was a great triumph for the Germans, and for us. So we weren't about to hit them over the head on chicken! It was sort of chicken feed. But it got the attention of the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Agriculture, and a lot of congressmen -- particularly from the chicken states. So we spent a lot of time on things of that kind.

And the Common Market brought to the fore, a lot of rather discriminatory policies that we hammered away at. We were members of the GATT, as the Germans were; the GATT round must have been concluded about 1964. Mike Blumenthal, once Assistant Secretary of Treasury was the chief U.S. negotiator. Mike would come through about once a month. He thought the Germans were key to the negotiation, and I think to a large extent they were. They had more influence there than the French, and British,, and others. They were very central to the whole effort, so Mike paid a lot of attention to them. Plus the fact he spoke good German, so he kind of enjoyed coming.

So our economic section devoted a lot of time to the GATT negotiations, talking to the Germans about particular issues, and helping Mike understand the German position. I would say that was - for a couple of years -- 25% of our time.

We had a commercial section of two people. We had a trade development office in Frankfurt -- it was a trade center, I guess. We would have trade shows, in particular areas of trade, like computers and business machines; and then the next month it would be something else. That was very active; we supported it, but essentially it ran itself. It was out of the Commerce Department; State I don't think even had any employees in that operation. But in the Embassy we had regular commercial section.

At the Embassy we a commercial section, headed by a fellow out of the Department of Commerce. But we had Foreign Service officers assigned to that section. I think all together just

two professionals -- it might have been three. And then quite a few local folks.

I have always felt that the Department of Commerce did a poor job in commercial representation, say at a governmental level. That Frankfurt operation, which was essentially running the commercial show, they did a very good job at that; organizing the show, publicizing it in advance, and handling the visitors and so on. I couldn't fault them on that kind of promotional effort.

But for example, on the "chicken war" -- which is essentially a commercial problem -- their real understanding, and their contribution to that was negligible. And I just never felt that the Commerce Department should be completely in charge of our commercial interests abroad; I just didn't think they had the right kind of personnel, or leadership, or understanding in depth of these problems -- which often had a political element to them.

I suppose the State Department is often criticized for ignoring commercial problems, because there are overriding political considerations, but in fact that is true in many cases. You can't look at one particular problem -- say the "chicken war" -- in isolation of the environment in which it was happening. And our political relationships with the Germans, at that time, were very important -- and remain so.

We were also encouraging the Common Market, too. We thought the integration of Europe was a good thing, and we encouraged it, but we wanted to be careful it didn't become a completely sealed off market; we wanted it to expose itself, to open free trade as much as possible. And hence our keen interest in the GATT round, which was to reduce their barriers. The Common Market had uniform, internal barriers -- or worked down to that level -- and a common, external tariff. They worked toward that gradually over years, but that is the way it is now. And we wanted to make sure that that external tariff was gradually reduced; and the GATT was the mechanism for doing that.

So I think the formation of the Common Market got us more and more interested in the success of the GATT round, because that was the way to minimize the commercial impact of the Common Market. Because it had preferential treatments inside, no tariffs at all -- which affected a lot of our markets.

Let's say, there was a tariff between France and Germany on widgets, at one stage. We could perhaps compete in the market where there was a tariff -- say a German tariff -- against them. But when those tariffs were eliminated, of course, French-German trade would flow freely, without any kind of governmental barriers; whereas, we had to penetrate -- get over -- a tariff wall. So, the Common Market certainly hurt us in many ways, and we were trying to minimize that at the time; and also work towards a gradual reduction of tariffs so that the Common Market would not substantially impede our exports.

We had a Treasury Attaché, a fellow named Bob Bee, who went on to be senior vice-president of Wells Fargo Bank; and then he was chairman of a British bank -- I've forgotten the name of that. He was well thought of in banking circles. He was the Treasury Attaché, I think, during the whole time I was there. He was a team player, completely. He and I were very close friends, and

good professional colleagues. So anything that was happening -- all his reports went through me. Anything that was happening on the banking scene, Bob would tell me about them and we would make joint calls often.

But now the Treasury Department itself, at that time, was trying to break its ties with the Foreign Service. They wanted to do things -- what they conceived of as their things, vis-a-vis the central banks and the banking system -- with minimum State Department involvement or interference. Doug Dillon was Secretary of Treasury for a good bit of that time -- a wonderful man. No one ever faulted Doug Dillon for feeling this way, but he was a very strong personality, and wanted to have his department play an important role. We had George Ball on our side for a good bit of that same period. I don't know to what extent they overlapped in time, but George looked after our side of the equation very effectively.

But you did find the Treasury Department conducting some operations with a minimum of informational exchange with us. They would send over people, for example, on military sales. They were very much interested in it because it had balanced payments implications. And they, I thought, were doing some rather slight-of-hand things, like getting pre-payments on some orders, just so that it would go into the balance of payments figures earlier -- to make us look better. I thought that was kind of nonsense, but they played that kind of game, and didn't really bring us into it. We knew; Bob Bee knew, and would convey to me what had happened, but they did have this yen for doing it their way and not involving us.

You saw the same kind of bureaucratic competition with Commerce, and Treasury -- Agriculture to some extent. I always felt that Agriculture was pretty weak in its personnel. I think they got the leftovers when people applied for jobs; so they were never effective competition. I have always felt that Treasury had the best people, strongest staff of any department -- other than our department -- in the Foreign Service. I admired them all, because they were well-picked, and they always had strong leadership; knew what they were doing. So it is pretty hard to fault people who were doing their job and doing it well.

KARL F. MAUTNER
Berlin Task Force
Washington, DC (1961-1965)

Karl F. Mautner was born in Vienna, Austria in 1915. He attended school there and entered the Army in 1935. During the Nazi occupation of Austria, Mr. Mautner lived in Hungary with relatives until 1940, when he emigrated to the U.S. He applied for U.S. citizenship the day after he arrived, and was immediately drafted into the U.S. Army. He has also served in the Sudan and various other posts in the Department of State.

Q: Now you stayed with CU until you were summoned to work on the Berlin task force. Is that right?

MAUTNER: That's right.

Q: And that task force was formed in 1958 or '59?

MAUTNER: No. That was 1961. '58 and '59 was a very critical period in Berlin because it was the ultimatum Khrushchev made against Berlin that he'd turn over this whole business to the East Germans. It would be then only between the Western allies and the East Germans. I suspect our helicopter "cave-in" in early 1958 gave him ideas. There were all kinds of big conferences and some very weak positions on the part of the allies. John Foster Dulles died and the Eisenhower administration was more or less on the way out and I think that we were in many ways lucky that some of the suggestions that were made were not accepted by the Soviets. It could have gotten us into a lot of trouble.

Q: With the formation of the Berlin task force in 1961 you moved effectively out of the CU Affairs, Cultural Affairs. Tell me how the task force came about and what your tasks were.

MAUTNER: Well, the task force was created as a result of the growing tension around Berlin. The refugee flow was increasing rapidly. It was quite obvious that something was going to happen. This whole task force business became a part of the development of the Operation Center which at that time was an invention of Ted Achilles and John Stutesman. At first, the most important task forces were of course the Vietnam task force and the Congo task force. Then the Berlin task force was created. I was appointed just to collect the flow of information and establish a filing system which expanded rapidly. There were the events of June and July 1961; the earlier Kennedy confrontation with Khrushchev in Vienna was one of the very important factors which established the task force.

Q: In June 1961.

MAUTNER: Then in July 1961 there were speeches made by Senator Fulbright and Senator Mansfield which caused old Berliners a little concern when they talked about West Berlin and not about all of Berlin. We thought this was not the right thing to do. The task force became very active very shortly before the Wall became a fact.

Q: So, the task force was not caused by the Wall. It was in existence before the Wall...

MAUTNER: It was in existence before.

Q: The Wall came on 13th of August 1961?

MAUTNER: Yes. The task force then was effectively taken over by Foy Kohler who was Assistant Secretary, and Martin Hillenbrand who was in charge of GER. John Ausland had just come back from Australia and he was made the GER expert on Berlin. Jerry Holloway became sort of the task force manager. My own position was a little bit difficult because I worked for Achilles and Ray Thurston, his deputy. Both had different views from those of Foy Kohler -- in other words, from the ones who really ran the show.

Q: Did you feel that the task force was effective in what it was doing? Did it get high level attention from the Secretary and from the White House?

MAUTNER: That seemed to vary. In the beginning it was very effective because you had people like General Maxwell Taylor attending. Secretary Dean Rusk appeared quite often. The Secretary of the Treasury Fowler and all kinds of very high-powered people came. Paul Nitze played a good role, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff had their representatives. So you had a mighty powerful task force. That was after the Wall had gone up. But eventually I think the clout of the task force was reduced. It was more or less a discussion and debate club where people like myself were allowed to spout off occasionally and where my wife and the other persons represented the intelligence community. But where the actual decisions, the effective forces were, it was Martin Hillenbrand, John Ausland and Foy Kohler who had direct contact with the President. I remember in one case when John Ausland said at a task force meeting: "We decided that etc..." I asked: "Who are we?" The task force had never heard of the matter. My remark didn't go down too well, but it illustrates the situation.

Q: Were there many differences between the views of the State Department and those of the Defense Department in those days, or other departments?

MAUTNER: I would say yes. When the Wall went up 13th August, there was what I considered a good deal of misunderstandings in many quarters of the significance of it. I think it was on the 15th that there was a big meeting after which the White House decided to ask Vice President Johnson to go to Berlin accompanied by General Clay who still had a tremendous reputation, and to send a battle group into Berlin. There were all kinds of misunderstandings because I think the White House did not have a great deal of sympathy towards the plight of Berlin and the Germans. The German Ambassador Dr. Grewe did not have a very good relationship with the Kennedy administration. Kennedy I think distrusted Adenauer and Grewe. There was that kind of thing going on. Of course it was overcome eventually when people realized how the Berlin situation had changed. But on the task force we had an insider group of people, as I said Martin Hillenbrand and Foy Kohler and some others who worked with the White House. That was their job and they knew where the orders came from. Our complaints were sometimes that they did not fight hard enough for what would have been a little better course, but of course I can't really judge that. There on the task force you had people who saw things, let's say, more like us, cold warriorish. Paul Nitze was certainly one of them. The representatives of the Joint Chiefs of Staff too, such as General Taylor and his representative Larry Legere, myself, and a few others were strongly in favor of vigorous action and we liked the idea of General Clay going to Berlin and shaking up the situation. Flying helicopters into Steinstuecken was a good idea for example.

Q: Steinstuecken you might explain is an exclave of Berlin which was then separated...

MAUTNER: It was an exclave of Berlin just outside the border of Zehlendorf but part of Greater Berlin. It was really saved for the west by Ulrich Biel and myself, I would say. There was a moment in the early days of the Kommandatura when this issue came up and the Steinstueckeners couldn't get ration cards from West Berlin.

Q: They were a part of West Berlin but cut off from it?

MAUTNER: They had to walk a long stretch through East German territory to get to the city proper. Colonel Babcock, who was Howley's deputy, proposed to give Steinstuecken away. Biel wrote a letter, a memorandum, which went all the way up, stating that neither Babcock nor Howley nor General Clay could give Steinstuecken away because it was legally a part of West Berlin. That really prevailed. Then I followed up by pushing the city to giving them ration cards. We thus saved Steinstuecken until General Clay flew in helicopters and MPs and it became an official American sector enclave, supplied by a mini-airlift.

Q: Now, you went along with General Clay and the Vice President on this trip to Berlin after the Wall was put up?

MAUTNER: That is correct. On the 19th of August I was along. I think it was Frank Cash who made the suggestion that I should go along with them.

Q: Tell us about your experiences on that trip. How did the Berliners receive this? Were they heartened or...?

MAUTNER: The Berliners were very enthusiastic. We had a problem before: Willy Brandt had to make a speech on the 15th which was of course intended to hearten the Berliners, give them heart, but he was obviously concerned and he sent a telegram to Kennedy which was not received very favorably in Washington. It was pretty blunt. It was an important document, and showed considerable wisdom. I think it was first published in one of Eleanor Dulles's books "The Wall is Not Forever," which proved a good title for a book. The flight over was a rather hectic affair. Everybody was set to drafting a speech for Vice President Johnson. Everybody was dead tired when we arrived sometime in the evening around 6 or 7 at Tempelhof. We had a little cavalcade down the lanes to the Schöenberg Rathaus where there was an enormous crowd greeting the Vice President. All the streets were lined all the way to the Rathaus in the so-called Brandenburg Hall, a ceremonious hall. The Vice President made a speech where he made his famous, "We pledge our sacred honor" and all was very favorably received, after which, we all went to bed. Next day, it was announced that the convoy of a U.S. battle group was coming down the autobahn through the East zone, and there was great excitement. When it arrived it was greeted with great jubilation and joy. So I would say despite some of the peculiarities of the Vice President's activities in Berlin, the visit was a great success, a howling success. We took off around midnight and had a long flight back, stopped over in Gander because a duck had crashed into the windshield. The windshield had to be fixed, and we arrived during the day at Andrews Air Force Base. I was pretty pooped out but I reported to Maxwell Taylor right after my arrival on my impressions. I had met with people in Berlin who presented a rather alarmist view.

Q: Now you're back in Washington in the latter part of August 1961 having to deal with the problems presented by the Wall. First of all let me ask you, do you think we could have taken a realistic step to have prevented the Wall from being erected?

MAUTNER: I don't think we could have prevented it. We did not foresee it. We thought there would be a kind of wall around all of Berlin because the refugee flow had to be stemmed. The able manpower out of the GDR, that is the German Democratic Republic, was really draining

and they had to do something. But we expected, I think we all expected a wall around all of Berlin but not in Berlin. Could we have prevented it? No, I don't think we could have prevented it. We could have foreseen it a little bit earlier. We could have done something which I consider very important, and that is not let the Wall appear to be a job of the East Germans, it should have been a job of the Russians, the Soviets as fourth occupying power. We should not have allowed the East Germans to stare our generals down with guns. We could have moved our forces into the east sector until they met the Soviets, which is exactly what happened at the so-called "tank confrontation" in October where General Clay decided we were going to get the Soviets into the act and show that it was a Soviet and not an East German issue.

Q: I believe that was the fall of '61, yes October of '61. Well, now, what was your role after the Wall was erected on the task force? Did you continue the same or did the pace speed up?

MAUTNER: It continued the same, but I was a little bit a maverick in the problem. I discussed the matter with Martin Hillenbrand because I felt a little uncomfortable. He was the one who was going to write my efficiency report and I was still working for Achilles and Thurston. And he said: "Well, the best thing you can do is carry on as you do. You contribute something that way." I was maybe sometimes a little tactless in doing so, but had longer experience of details than most anybody. There were points where I still think we could have done better. First of all, as I said, we should have made it clear earlier that it was the Soviets and not the East Germans whom we confronted. We had of course some problems with our allies, especially the British who were very weak-kneed on that business. Then came problems created by the micro-management from the White House. There was for example a year later this terrible incident of Peter Fechter who was shot by the East German police and fell between the lines, between the Wall and the barbed wire.

Q: In no-man's land?

MAUTNER: In no-man's land and he was dying. Now a couple of weeks, maybe two weeks earlier, when an old West Berlin friend, Rudolph Kettlein, press secretary for Willy Brandt, talked to me and said: "Now look at it. What happens if they shoot somebody and he's outside..." He was talking actually outside not between the Wall, but outside the periphery in the zone. "Would you let him die there? Is there something you can do about that?" I reported that and I think it was absolutely applicable in the Peter Fechter business. We had a right to go into East Berlin. The general in charge of the U.S. sector could have done something but was under constraint to do nothing at all without first getting explicit approval. He could have moved in and rescued Peter Fechter. Peter Fechter would have died anyway probably, but we had a right to go into East Berlin. We did establish that right by having Americans of the occupation moving back and forth, going to the opera, by the tank confrontation, and our jeeps moving around in East Berlin. The general had about three quarters of an hour to make that decision. He couldn't make that decision, and I don't blame him, because the orders would have to come from Washington, and it was too late, Peter Fechter died. Fortunately I think we were forgiven. I don't think that anybody remembers that we could have done that.

Q: There were other incidents of course in later years, but that was the one that I think drew attention to the inhumanity of the Wall, shooting their own people.

MAUTNER: Yes, shooting their own people. People swimming across the Teltow canal and being shot at and there were a great many...I don't know how many people were killed on the Wall, but there were quite a few of them. That is of course what Honecker was being accused of, of having ordered the shooting of those people.

Q: Yes. Well, the Wall was a fact by this time. What happened to the Berlin task force? How long did it continue in existence and what did it do in this period?

MAUTNER: I went to Africa and I don't know when it really ceased being. I think it sort of petered out. I think Pete Smith was for a while the task force manager and then they still keep some of the files. But I think the longest lasting member of the original task force was Martha Mautner. But there's also one thing very interesting about which I don't know any details, but it was the relationship between Kennedy and Ambassador Grewe. There were all kinds of frictions and I'm not quite sure whether that didn't play a certain role. It would be interesting to look into that a little further.

Q: This would have to be to look at Ambassador Grewe's memoirs as well as those in the White House?

MAUTNER: Yes, exactly.

Q: The task force wound down and your role was completed there?

MAUTNER: Yes, a few months later.

AURELIUS FERNANDEZ
U.S. Army
Berlin (1962)

Aurelius Fernandez was born in 1931 in Niagara Falls, New York. He first attended a small teacher's college in Fredonia, NY but then went on to Bowling Green State University in Ohio where he completed his BA and graduated in 1953. That same year he started a master's degree in English Literature but was drafted in November 1953 served in the military for three years. Upon being discharged in 1956 he attended the Columbia school of international affairs and concentrated on German affairs. He joined the Foreign Service and his career took him to Chile, Germany, Romania, Austria, England, and France. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.

Q: During this '60-'62 period it was an interesting time. Kennedy was elected, you had the Berlin Wall, but when you're talking about that time, can you give me a feeling of what you were hearing from your working colleagues and others both in the Army and out as this crisis developed?

FERNANDEZ: Well, I was hearing a great deal, but I, of course, was at a very low level. One of the things that I did there was summarizing [events that were described in] the press. I was doing that on an almost daily basis back then. I felt we were really quite removed from everything that was going on. Now just to give you an example of an event during that period that was sort of a worm's eye view of what was going on is the Berlin Wall went up on August 13, 1961. I remember that. I was a GS-9, something like that, and was following all this.

The section in which I was working was really working with political affairs, and that was the attraction for me to go there in the first place. In the run up to the closing down of the border on Sunday August the 13, I can recall that Friday in our office, which was headed by an Army lieutenant colonel, a sort of GS-11 civilian, myself and a few others. We had information on that date. Though I didn't have personally have this information, one of the sources, as they're called, came in with the information that there was a tremendous amount of activity going on around the Berlin area. There was a lot of construction material being set up around and who knows what's happening. This is a worm's eye view from somebody who was working for the Department of the Army in Berlin at the time.

That Friday I can recall working late into the night putting reports together trying to interpret it. It seemed to me that it was a medical doctor who had provided the lead. He was the source who brought in this report. There was all the running around with Colonel Livingston going on over to CIA and to the Berlin mission offices and sharing all this information. As it turned out that Saturday night, they closed down the border, but the wall didn't go up instantly. The crisis [developed] and the killings on the border of people trying to escape and so forth, and then the border being closed and the walls, the buildings being bricked up that faced into West Berlin, and going up into the French sector. We were watching all this as part of our observations in the political section of the Army there to track what was going on.

It was a rather harrowing period and kind of scary. This was in August. I guess it was October when General Clay, who had already been brought over to bolster Berlin morale and such, directed armed military jeeps, armed soldiers, to enforce to drive through the border. That was a rather harrowing thing.

Q: What was the feeling that you were getting from your colleagues about the viability of West Berlin as this went on?

FERNANDEZ: At my level there was uncertainty. You couldn't really say. You'd hope against hope that it wouldn't happen. For example, when the Missile Crisis occurred. October 1962, when that occurred, of course, there was the incident, and I'll never forget the name of the ship, the Russian ship that was carrying what the U.S. said were missiles to Cuba going down in the North Atlantic. In addition to the quarantine, President John Kennedy announced that this ship better not go in there. This ship was sailing down the North Atlantic and I remember the little group we had put together, curiously, by USIA people, were young Germans and young Americans who'd get together and talk and we'd practice our German and they'd practice their English. We'd talk about political events.

We had a very, very political little group that got together once a month and have our *stamkisch* and talk about events. I remember wondering whether the [ship] was going to be stopped and let off or start World War III or whatever. There was considerable concern among the Germans I knew and among the Americans at my level who were looking at this, concern and uncertainty as to whether or not the Russians would turn around. Of course, they did, after all.

Q: I remember talking to somebody who was in our mission in Berlin at the time and there was a great deal, at least according to him, there was a great deal of unease about Kennedy. They felt that Kennedy...I mean we're talking about the Berlin Wall time and all this, that Kennedy wasn't going to be tough enough and stand up.

FERNANDEZ: It seems to me it's a little bit like conventional wisdom the feeling that [Chancellor] Adenauer had great mistrust of Kennedy. Here is this young man born in this century now leading the United States and all the old timers that were [former leaders] and so forth who had been so influential in getting Berlin on its feet, getting West Germany on its feet. These people were no longer involved there. There was a whole new team coming up. So the conventional wisdom was that Adenauer had great doubts about whether or not Kennedy would face up to this.

The fact that Kennedy did two things, I would say, which sort of illustrate his perception of the situation, that he needed to bolster things. The first thing he did is he sent [Vice President] Lyndon Johnson to Berlin. Johnson went there about a week or two weeks after the Wall went up. Then he sent General Clay there to be resident and to keep up this dialogue with Willy Brandt who was the mayor [of Berlin] at the time. It was all a rather uncertain period. Looking back I would say well, that just really sort of codifies the situation that existed between East and West. But it did, at any rate, close down the border.

Q: Were you all thinking about how the hell you were going to get out of there?

FERNANDEZ: They were worried, yes. But how seriously...I guess semi-seriously, because I can recall that there were all these plans of how to get out. There was always a roster for pulling you out in any event. We never had any practice drills or anything like that. Now that you mention it, I hadn't really even thought of that experience, explicitly. There wasn't any plan to get us out. I didn't have a train or plane assigned to me to get out of town.

Q: You mentioned this getting together with your people in the stamkisch, which was sort of the table that was reserved in a beer place where the same people always got together.

FERNANDEZ: Right, and they're usually men, well, they're always men.

Q: Maybe they've got women stamkishier. You mentioned this group you'd get together with of Germans. What was sort of the mood of the Berliners that you were seeing? You had two very difficult crises while you were there. One, the Wall, and two, was the Cuban Missile Crisis. Both were probably the closest we'd come in the entire Cold War, to war.

FERNANDEZ: I remember two people out of this group, [a man named] Dagobert, who was a

young lawyer. You know, we were all men in our late twenties. Another guy named Manfred, I can't recall his last name. Dagobert was a bit of an elitist and he was always holding back. He had studied in the United States, and he would not criticize the U.S. very directly. There were two other chaps both of whom were in the military at the time. We felt that Dagobert would never really explain, but Manfred never hesitated. He was a very, very emphatic and outspoken man. He constantly expressed great concerns that the United States would not go to the well with the Germans over Berlin. You know, "Well, then what would happen?" "Well, it would go off." "Well, well, then it's finished. Berlin blows away and the new world begins," and that's just one example I could give.

One finds in this sort of thing in that period, it seems to me, a considerable amount of reticence in the type of dialogue that I was involved in, at the level that I was involved in. There was also in the newspapers, in the *Tagespeil*, in all these papers, there were very often very explicit and emphatic reservations expressed about the United States. I could remember in one of the newspapers called the *Berliner Zeitung*, a tabloid, that on August the 14th had a front page headline, Berlin is going to be sold down the river." So it was in the press and it was affecting public opinion without question.

Q: You say you had contact with USIA while you were there. What about it appealed to you?

FERNANDEZ: I knew about USIA from my Columbia years, already. What appealed to me was this sort of thing. In addition to this little group there was another thing that USIA organized with young German and American civilians called a *Columbus Gesellschaft*, The Columbus Society. It used to have two or three, I don't know exactly what number, of banquets each year, we'd eat down at the Hardt House, and a Fulbrighter would play the piano, and you'd get to see everybody far and wide. That, and Bob Voth, who was an assistant cultural affairs officer at the time, was just becoming a greater and greater friend and I became interested in it.

I was not very pleased with my Department of Army job and I began to talk to Bob about it. Back in those days when we had OMs, operation memorandum, Bob had sent in a CV that I prepared an application to go to USIA. It was really not until the following March that I was finally paneled and joined USIA. That's where the interest came, from people like Bob, Al Hemsey, and Ed Alexander. I knew these chaps rather marginally at the time. Of course, years later we became great friends. Al just passed away a couple years ago and Ed I just saw a few months ago.

JAMES A. PLACKE
Consular Officer
Frankfurt (1962-1963)

Mr. Placke was born and raised in Nebraska and educated at the University of Nebraska. He entered the Foreign Service in 1958. An Arabic Language Officer and Economic specialist, Mr. Placke was posted to Baghdad, Frankfurt, Kuwait, Tripoli, Ottawa and in Jeddah, where he served as Deputy Chief of Mission. At

the State Department in Washington, Mr. Placke dealt primarily with Near East affairs. From 1982 to 1985 he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East. Mr. Placke was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2001.

Q: Well, let's talk a little. You were in Frankfurt from when to when?

PLACKE: We went out there in January of '62 and left in July of '63 so it was a relatively short tour.

Q: Who was consul general when you were there?

PLACKE: The consul general was Edmund J. Dorsz. The Ambassador was Walter Dowling. In those days there was still some trappings left over from the occupation. The Ambassador had his own train for example. Theoretically to come and go from Berlin, but actually he always went by air, had been wise to travel by train. Probably the only interesting thing to comment on out of that tour was that I did polish my German. Actually it became pretty good and I did visa interviews in German. There were two parts to the consular section, the nationality section (now called Citizens' Services) where we issued passports, reports of birth and so forth; and the visa section where we did immigrant and visitors visas. There was a slot called the visa security officer, which in fact interviewed potential political refugees or asylum, those seeking political asylum in the United States, and I was sort of the first line of defense in a sense. I did the initial interviews and wrote up probably about a half a dozen cases about one a month I guess. They were always complicated and always had some very complex history behind them, very low rate of acceptance, but I think I did get one of my cases accepted which was something of distinction. That was interesting talking to Hungarians and Poles.

GEORGE QUINCEY LUMSDEN
Economic Officer
Bonn (1962-1964)

George Quincy Lumsden was born in New Jersey in 1930 He graduated from Princeton University in 1952 and served overseas in the U.S. Navy as a lieutenant from 1952-1955. His postings abroad after entering the Foreign Service in 1957 include Izmir, Bonn, Amman, Beirut, Kuwait and Paris, with an ambassadorship to The United Arab Emirates.

Q: Oh, my God. You were in Germany from when to when?

LUMSDEN: We got to Germany in... It was Cuban Missile Crisis time. We got there in February 1962 and left in about November 1964 for home leave.

Q: The 14th man. You know, you look at these large embassies and you kind of wonder "What the hell are we doing with so many people?" More people don't make for better knowledge. You end up getting way down into the bowels of things and really probably waste our time.

LUMSDEN: You know what I was doing? I was the assistant export control officer. I was reading mail intercepts about what merchant in Vienna might be contacting what merchant in Germany with the idea that they were going to sell en masse to somebody in East Berlin. Piles of it just poured in. Ed Crank, the minister, did take pity on me and would take me around as a briefcase carrier at times. I could take a few notes. That was the time of the famous “chicken war,” one of the first great trade disputes that we had. So, I got to be a fly on the wall with a little bit of that. But mostly, it was, I will admit, drudgery. Every once in a while, you could go out and meet a German businessman you had contacted who came forward to tell you usually about some competitor of his and what he was doing that he knew would irritate the United States. But aside from that, it was pretty green eyeshade work.

But I had two children born there and had a wonderful time. Paul Cleveland, my classmate, was assigned there also. For the last year that we were there, he was staff aide to the ambassador. That was very good for him. I said, “What am I doing down here in the bottom on the economic section?” Although I had a great time and we were very fortunate in having two children born there, my mind flipped over completely. I said, “I’ve got to get back somewhere where I can have some kind of responsibility. Where with my experience can I be a section chief?” I became a consul in Amman, Jordan, back for a couple of more years of consular work.

Q: Coming up against something like Bonn really could be mind numbing, particularly in those sections. I was down in Frankfurt for my first post earlier. I had some of that, but then at least I was the baby birth officer and the protection and welfare officer, which had quite a bit of responsibility.

LUMSDEN: I don’t think most of the people in the embassy knew I existed. The most interesting thing by far that happened during the tour in Bonn was that I was assistant control officer for the Federal Republic portion of John F. Kennedy’s visit in 1963 - not the Berlin part. That was fascinating because you got to hobnob with Lee Radziwill and the President himself was there, as was Jackie and the whole entourage of people that suddenly descended. Some of them were invited; some were not. It was a real media event. That was quite an eye opener and quite thrilling to do.

Q: Granted you were in the depths of this thing, but in early fall of 1962 where you had the Cuban Missile Crisis, what was the general feeling that you were getting from your colleagues about what this might lead to?

LUMSDEN: I would say that it was not dissimilar from the recent flap over the Y2K problem.

Q: You might explain what “Y2K” is.

LUMSDEN: This would be the concern that the rollover of the yearly odometer from 1999 to 2000 was going to cause all sorts of problems, not just in computers, but the water supply, the sewers would back up, people wouldn’t get food, there would be riots, etc. The imagination started to expand as this crisis grew. Here we were in Bonn, my goodness, the Fulda Gap was only 115 miles away and do we know that there are 58 Russian armored divisions over there?

My goodness, what is going to happen? Of course, most of us didn't really have a clue as to what was going on. Walt Rostow was meeting the Russians at the Yenching Palace restaurant at Connecticut and Porter and defusing this thing. But there was a tremendous amount of anxiety at the staff level where I was, because of the lack of knowledge. We were getting most of our information from the newspapers and things like that. We weren't getting the cables that counted. They were all "NODIS" (no distribution). It would have been good if the ambassador and the station chief had let out a little more information to calm us down a bit. But they were extremely tight-lipped about it. This was before Paul Cleveland got there. A guy named Lee was the ambassador's staff aide.

Q: I was in Yugoslavia at the time. George Kennan was our ambassador.

LUMSDEN: He was a marvelous guy. Did you see his interview, "Age 95" in The New York Review of Books?

Q: No, I didn't.

LUMSDEN: Get it. It was taken at the time of our latest adventure in Kosovo. He's still got it.

Q: Did you get any feel for the embassy's interaction with the German government?

LUMSDEN: If you were the minister for economic affairs, you had access to top levels. I thought, "Well, if I'm ever really going to meet any Germans except some sleazy businessman who is trying to cut down his competition by telling me somebody was sending something to East Germany illegally, I have to do something." I noticed the university there had an effort out to make contact between students and diplomats in town. I met a young German diplomat at the Foreign Office and together we founded something called the Junior Kreis Bonnerdiplomat, which is the "Junior Circle of Bonn Diplomats." We were really junior people. We would have weekly meetings and we got university students involved in this. We'd talk about everything from capitalism, socialism, to movies to sports. Then we would go out and have picnics on Sunday and go climb the Siebengeberge and have a beer and stuff like that. That was a very rewarding experience for me. But it took my own initiative at my level to get out and meet people. I knew an awful lot of the staff in the embassy had no German contacts at all. It was a huge place.

CLARKE N. ELLIS
Junior Officer
Munich (1962-1964)

Clarke N. Ellis was born in Boston in 1939. He was raised in California and attended the University of Redlands in Redlands, California. He entered the Foreign Service in 1962 and was assigned as a Junior Officer to Munich. He later served in Italy, Eritrea, Austria, Switzerland, and Taiwan. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: Where did you go?

ELLIS: My first assignment was Munich.

Q: You were at Munich from when to when?

ELLIS: From October 1962 until, I guess, September of 1964, two years.

Q: Were you there at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis?

ELLIS: I was on a ship *en route* to Germany when the crisis erupted. In those days you got a little one-page newspaper sheet from the ship every day, which had the news. Of course, we very eagerly tried to read that and see what was happening.

Q: Did you expect to look up and see the missiles going both ways over your head?

ELLIS: We wondered what would await us when we reached Europe.

Q: During this time you were in Munich, how would you describe the situation in Germany?

ELLIS: The situation in Germany, I think, was rather optimistic. Economic growth in Germany was strong, inflation was low and, for a young American, the purchasing power of the dollar was still very strong. It was something like 4.23 marks to the dollar. Prices were very low. The Germans had come a long way, and they expected to go further. I would say there was general optimism in Germany.

Q: What type of work did you do?

ELLIS: I was assigned as a junior officer. Of the two years, I spent approximately a year and a half in consular work, as I recall. I first did immigrant visas, then non-immigrant visas [NIVs], and then citizenship and passport work. Then, I had brief stints in both the political and economic sections. I didn't particularly care for the time in the political section because it seemed all I was doing was cleaning up the drafts of the senior Foreign Service nationals [FSNs] or doing biographic reporting.

Q: On the consular side, was Munich a center for non-Germans who were trying to get to the United States?

ELLIS: No. It was mostly a large number of Germans. There was fairly heavy immigration because of all the soldiers marrying German girls and fairly heavy NIV volume as well. With regard to the immigrant visa side, I remember particular cases involving children of U.S. servicemen. At the time in order to transmit citizenship, an American parent, if there was one American and one foreign parent, had to have lived for five years in the U.S. after the 14th birthday. During the time I was there, we had at least a couple of cases of young soldiers who had enlisted, say, at 17 ½, been immediately assigned to Germany, married a local Fraulein, and

had a child, all before the father turned 19. In that case under the American law, the child was not entitled to an American passport. Under German law in the case of a legitimate birth - and here we are talking about a legitimate birth - the citizenship went only according to the father and not the mother. So, we had cases of children born to servicemen serving their country overseas in Germany whose children not only had to get an immigrant visa but an immigrant visa on a stateless refugee passport. Of course, there were congressional inquiries, "What in the world? This fellow is serving our country, and you are telling him that his children not only aren't American citizens, they aren't German citizens?" We said, in our replies, "This is the law that you guys passed."

Q: I know. I was baby birth officer in Frankfurt back in the 1950s. It was one of my first jobs, and we had the same problem.

ELLIS: I remember that. On the non-immigrant side, some of the more pleasant occasions were giving non-immigrant visas to the Kessler twins and Elke Sommer.

Q: These were movie stars of the time. Yes, that's always fun.

ELLIS: Right.

Q: Who was consul general while you were there?

ELLIS: The consul general was Walter Scott.

Q: Were you getting much indoctrination as a junior officer, or was it pretty much, "Here's your job, get out and do it?"

ELLIS: That was mostly it. "Here's your job, and you'll be rotated through the various sections."

Q: How about on the economic side?

ELLIS: That seemed a little more interesting. I was doing some of the substantive reports.

Q: Was there much political activity in Bavaria at this time, as distinct from elsewhere in West Germany?

ELLIS: Well, of course, Bavaria has always had its own sort of politics and own political party, the Christian Social Union. It was then under Franz Josef Strauss, who maintained his separate identity. Yes, local politics were of a good deal of interest, I think, at the time.

Q: What was the feeling in those days of the "Soviet menace?"

ELLIS: Well, that was certainly very much the case. Again, I was not directly involved in the more exciting parts of political reporting and analysis but certainly Munich was a center of people who had come in from Eastern Europe. It was a center of Germans who had contacts with Eastern Europe and, given the large presence of the U.S. military there, there was a good deal of

interest on the part of the military on what was happening not too far away behind the Iron Curtain. Yes, I would say it was an area of a great deal of interest from the intelligence point of view. In addition, of course, Munich was the headquarters of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. Again, there was a good deal of interchange from people coming through with connection to those two radios.

Q: Well, it was also during this period, or just prior to your arrival, that the Berlin Wall went up.

ELLIS: Yes. I visited Berlin when I was a student at Bologna. The Berlin Wall went up in August of 1961, and I visited Berlin in January of 1962.

Q: Was the situation in Berlin, as far as you could gather, within German circles of concern?

ELLIS: Certainly, the status of Berlin, the vulnerability militarily-speaking of Berlin was a constant source of interest.

Q: How about the Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty group, did they play a role? I mean, were people aware of what they were doing in Munich?

ELLIS: Oh, yes.

Q: Were there any Soviet threats you were aware of against that particular exercise?

ELLIS: I was not aware of any direct things. Certainly, anywhere in Western Europe but particularly in Germany and Austria at the time there were always questions of whether there was espionage going on and so forth.

PAUL M. CLEVELAND
Staff Assistant to Ambassador
Bonn (1962-1964)

Paul M. Cleveland was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1931 and raised in New York and Washington, DC. He received a bachelor's degree in English from Yale University in 1953. Afterward, he entered the U.S. Air Force. Mr. Cleveland's Foreign Service career included positions in Australia, Germany, Korea, New Zealand, and Malaysia. He was interviewed by Thomas Stern on October 20, 1995.

Q: Then in November 1962, you were assigned to Bonn. Was that perhaps because you had taken German language training?

CLEVELAND: I think that that might have had something to do with it. Also in the annual questionnaire, I had requested an assignment to a German post. My first planned assignment to Germany, actually, was to be a consular officer in Munich. Then that was changed to consular

officer in Hamburg. My DCM -- Belton -- in Canberra, together with John Ausland -- then the Consul in Auckland -- intervened and managed to get me assigned as staff assistant to our Ambassador in Germany. That assignment turned out to be just short of a disaster for my career.

The Ambassador when I first arrived was Walter "Red" Dowling. I didn't know him when the assignment was made, but I was in Washington for a brief period trying to learn something about Germany and met Dowling then, while he was in Washington for consultations. He sort of looked me over and allowed the assignment to stand. So I went to Bonn, replacing an A-100 classmate, Alan Lee, as Dowling's staff aide. The DCM was Brewster Morris, who left soon thereafter to be our Ambassador to the Chad. Then we had Martin Hillenbrand as DCM, who was a great person.

Coburn Kidd was the Political Counselor; the Economic Minister was Ed Cronk. Basil Capella was the Administrative Counselor. For about the first four months of my tour in Bonn, I was assigned to the Political Section because Lee had not yet left. I was a staff aide "in waiting".

The Embassy in Bonn was huge -- 900 Americans, 600 Germans. The Americans all lived in Plittersdorf -- the "Golden Ghetto." We liked that; the apartments were spacious and it was a great place for kids. It did cut us off from the German community, which disappointed me. I had hoped to become fluent in German and to become thoroughly acquainted with Germany. Living was easy -- an American school, a club, a commissary, a protected environment -- but it was not entirely satisfactory from a professional point of view. We did become acquainted with some Germans because my staff assistant job required some contacts with the Foreign Office and the Chancellor's Office primarily on administrative and protocol issues. That brought me into contact with a number of German officials, with whom we then socialized. There were also a few Germans who actually lived in Plittersdorf, with whom we became acquainted.

As was true in most European capitals, there was a circle of junior officers from all embassies who used to socialize together. In fact, a couple of them had been in Canberra during our time there. One of our acquaintances was David Cornwall, a junior officer in the British Embassy, who later became known as John LeCarre. Unbeknownst to me at least, he was then writing "The Spy Who Came in From the Cold". He was fascinating and a delightful dinner companion, who told brilliant stories in three languages.

But then the situation changed very rapidly. In early May, 1963, George McGhee arrived to succeed Dowling. He had been the Counselor and then the Under Secretary for Political Affairs in the Department. He apparently was fired by Kennedy, but Dean Rusk, who had been the Assistant Secretary for FE when McGhee was his counterpart for NEA, saved McGhee by sending him to Bonn as Ambassador. The story as I heard it told was that Rusk went to Kennedy and said that he would like to keep McGhee in the Department, to which the President agreed as long as it was not in Washington. So McGhee was given his choice of Ambassadorial assignments and chose Germany. At the time, Dowling was in a New York hospital undergoing surgery. He was told while laying in his hospital bed that he had been relieved of his duties as Ambassador to Germany. Dowling never came back to Bonn, so I never worked as his aide.

McGhee arrived in Bonn only a few months after I did. As I said, I was to replace Lee in the

Spring of 1963. But President Kennedy decided to make a trip to Germany -- the Germans at the time were somewhat depressed about their circumstances and we were worried about our relationships. The Berlin Wall had been put up and the Soviets were interfering with our access to Berlin. Essentially, Kennedy decided to go to Germany and run what we would characterize in the US as a "political campaign" to try to bolster German morale. McGhee knew of these plans when he arrived in May 1963 and decided almost immediately that Lee could not leave until after the Kennedy visit. Lee was put in charge of the "State Dinner." He spent several months just doing that -- every day, all day. It was unbelievable the amount of time that went into that dinner! I moved to the Ambassador's office about the same time that McGhee arrived and Alan and I shared that small office thereafter with me doing the staff aide work and he the dinner. I think Alan's efforts were a good illustration of the meticulousness and care that went into President Kennedy's trip. I believe that that Kennedy trip changed entirely the nature of Presidential trips and became the model for subsequent Presidential trips to all overseas locations. I am not sure it was a change for the better for anybody!

McGhee's and my relationship was a disaster from the beginning. I had never met him before he came to Bonn. The whole McGhee family came to Bonn -- Cecile and kids. My first real experience with the new Ambassador was on "Credential Presentation" Day. I arrived at the Residence with a batch of papers which Brewster Morris had told me to have ready for the Ambassador. McGhee took one look at them and said that they were not the right ones. In fact, they weren't. The party was to leave the Residence in about five minutes. I jumped in my little Volkswagen, dashed to the Embassy and back in six minutes. But George was already fuming, even though I got him the credentials in time for him to make his presentation. When I say "fuming" I should have said "exploded". That was the first explosion which was followed by many others in the succeeding 13 months I worked for him. He never threw objects at me or anyone else, at least in my presence. But he was mercurial. As a junior officer, I was just thunder-struck by this man. No one had even treated me as McGhee did. I well remember one time when McGhee literally was pulling his hair as he sat down at his desk. Once having taken his chair, he took four pencils which were on his desk and broke each, one by one. I don't remember the object of his outrage, but when he was mad -- which happened much too frequently -- he was really mad.

Many years later, at a wedding, I ran into Marty Hillenbrand. We talked about George a little bit; I admitted that I had not perhaps performed as well as I might have, but Marty told me that many had had the same experience. I said that I had tried to satisfy him as best as I could, but I never was able to please him. Marty then said: "You know, he was a megalomaniac." I told him that I hadn't known that, but that I could certainly testify that he behaved as one.

George was not happy with me, even though he kept me around for 13 months. My recollection of those unhappy days was that things were constantly going wrong. For example, at his request, I would arrange a trip to Munich for him that aborted. (That was one of my principal tasks; he went on 52 trips during the 13 months I worked for him). Of course, I could always count on weather being bad on the day he was scheduled to travel or some other equally uncontrollable event. No matter what we did, there were always glitches of one kind or another. I had two protocol assistants working for me and we still could barely keep up with McGhee's travel demands.

He also ran a hotel at the Residence; guests were continually coming and going which added to our work-load. McGhee's secretary was an old hand in the Foreign Service and very experienced in placing blame on someone else -- usually me. Of course, with the volume of activities that McGhee generated, the law of averages would suggest that something would go wrong. He never remembered all the things that were done right; he only raged at the mishaps. The trips to Berlin were always a peril; there was a constant debate whether whatever went wrong was Bill Ryerson's fault -- he was stationed in Berlin -- or mine. I would be the first to admit that we did make mistakes at times, but very often McGhee's fury was just unwarranted.

I remember one time when McGhee returned from a two week trip, during which all had gone remarkably smoothly. He had gone through the Mediterranean with his entire family. On his return, he exploded in my office because we had rented a Volkswagen bus; I guess that was not good enough for George McGhee although I don't know what else could have accommodated all the passengers that were with him. Usually, I did not go on the trips with him, for which I was eternally thankful. I did accompany him when he went to Berlin, but I could barely afford that much time away from the office. We were a busy group just keeping up with McGhee, keeping late hours every evening and weekends as well.

McGhee's son was picked up once for a drug violation. It ran as a story in the "Stars and Stripes" -- the Army newspaper. George was fit to be tied and called the CINC trying to get the editor fired. He was indeed a megalomaniac.

Toward the end of my 13 months' "survival course", Dan Shore and the New York Times correspondent Art Olsen, took me aside at a party we were all attending. They interviewed me for 20 minutes or more about George McGhee and my relationship with him. In essence, I told them how he terrorized the staff -- people like Coburn Kidd who was a very fine officer. George in fact ended Coburn's career. I remember Coburn coming into my office one day, accusing me of doing something. In fact, he had his facts entirely wrong and Coburn went away, somewhat mollified as far as I could see. But Coburn was lashing out at me because McGhee had lashed out at him. I was not the only one that McGhee would go after. He was unhappy with everybody, but since I was physically the closest to him, I took more than my share of George's eruptions. I was almost physically ill by the time the 13 months were up. I worried all the time; I did not do well. George wrote a devastating efficiency report on me that almost ended my career.

There are several lessons that I learned from my experiences with George. The first and most important was the absolute necessity to treat your staff as human beings. McGhee's ravings and rantings were not very effective communication and certainly he was not a leadership model. I told my wife that if I ever had anyone working for me, I prayed that I would never behave like McGhee did.

I did think that George was a "big time" operator -- after all he had been an Under Secretary of State which for a junior officer was rather awesome. He was a stickler for good writing. One day, Dick Vine, who was the deputy chief of the Political Section, delivered a draft message to McGhee. The Ambassador took it with him in his car and I happen to be along watching McGhee breaking his lead pencils as he worked furiously on the Vine draft, muttering all the

time, he couldn't understand how a senior foreign service officer could write so poorly. Years later, I told Vine of that experience; he was not very fond of McGhee anyway and that episode certainly did not bring forth any exclamations of approval.

As I said, McGhee traveled a lot and was highly visible in Germany. At Christmas time, he would send out hundreds of cards to German friends and acquaintances. He ran his ambassadorship as a public relations firm, which I think was probably quite impressive to those who were out of range of his daily outbursts. He did last for five years in Germany; I am not sure what the Germans thought of him after his departure, but he certainly was a highly visible and active ambassador while he was there. He only learned a few German phrases, but he was seen in every corner of West Germany and Berlin. He also had lots of visitors; Jean Monnet once came to see him -- they were, I believe, old friends. I don't know about his relationship with Adenauer or Erhardt. Frankly, I was so inundated with the minutiae of running McGhee's office that I didn't have time for many observations. But as I said there was no question that McGhee operated at the highest levels of the German and American governments.

In the background of our relationships with the Germans, was always the specter of Soviet interference in our linkages to West Berlin and in Germany in general. They were very unpredictable. Sometimes, for example, they would permit us to enter East Berlin on the subway. But I tried it once with Bill Ryerson and we were turned back. So I never got to East Berlin. The same unevenness of policy existed on the Autobahns; sometimes we would get through without any problems; on others, we would be harassed. There were constant disputes with the Soviets about minutiae of travel to Berlin across East Germany -- flags on trains, etc. The situation was certainly better than it was during the airlift, but we were always quite wary of the Soviets; we never knew whether they would try to shut us out of Berlin again. The Kennedy speech in 1963 in Berlin was in part intended to warn the Soviets about our resolution and it was quite effective; the picture of the President of the United States standing against the hated wall and pledging his solidarity with the citizens of that city must have made a deep impression on the Soviets.

The Kennedy visit took place in the summer, 1963. He stopped at Cologne first, where he visited the Cathedral. I remember that the head of the White House Communications detail -- an Army major -- had set up telephones in the Cathedral. I asked whether it was true that a phone had been placed in the pew behind the President. He told me that it was only half true; in fact, two phones had been placed there. In fact, all of Germany was wired with White House telephones. That was just further evidence of the major effort that was undertaken to support that Presidential trip. I don't believe that there were very many substantive issues to be discussed between the President and the Chancellor. The trip was primarily a campaign such as an American candidate engages in every four years in the US. Kennedy was there to win "the hearts and minds" of the German people and to boost their morale. So all the preparations were comparable to a campaign swing, only on a much larger and grandiose scale. It was just extraordinary. Every detail of Kennedy's appearances were discussed at great length; all the scenarios were elaborately worked out -- all intended to make the best possible impression that could be staged.

"Ich bin ein Berliner" -- the famous remark that Kennedy made in Berlin -- was the culmination of his visit to Germany and was so designed. A million Germans in the Rathaus Square heard him and it was certainly the pinnacle of a very successful public relations trip.

The advance work, as I said, was meticulous. The advance party and that group that came with Kennedy was large, and I think this was the first Presidential visit on that scale and that subsequent ones became increasingly demanding and refined. The Reagan visit to Korea, which I managed for the Embassy many years later, was on a grand scale, but the Kennedy trip to Germany became the model for subsequent Presidential forays. All of the Kennedy stops went through "dry runs" to insure a minimum potential for inadvertent mistakes. I understand the Kennedy political campaign became the model for subsequent domestic political campaigns; in the same way, his trip to Germany set the standards for subsequent Presidential foreign visits. I can remember Reagan's advance team members telling me in 1983(?) that Kennedy had redefined Presidential visits.

The guide for the press for the German trip was 250 pages long. It was very detailed, with each event described, second by second. I had a chance to personally observe Kennedy in action. I was in the anteroom for that dinner that Alan Lee spent so much time arranging. I saw Kennedy sitting in his special chair which was intended to ease his back problems. Unfortunately, I did not go to Berlin to hear his famous speech. I saw McGeorge Bundy, Richard Goodwin and other staff members. I got into the middle of a McGeorge Bundy-Goodwin spat because I happened to be the carrier of a speech draft that was being shuttled between the two. I delivered the speech to Goodwin, who took one brief glance at it and threw it into the wastepaper basket with an expletive.

We managed to see a good deal of Germany in our two years there. I had been there before in the Air Force. Quincy Lundsden, an A-100 classmate who was in the Economic Section, and his wife and the Clevelands used to spend most weekends castle-hopping and sightseeing.

The physical change between my two tours in Germany was obvious. During my first tour, there was still evidence in downtown Munich of air raids. (The German mark then (1956) was still at an exchange rate that enabled me as a first lieutenant to live better than all but a few Germans. We lived well even on our modest salary.) But by 1956-57, the Germans were already hard at work reconstructing their country. I remember traveling down to Munich on the train from Bremerhaven during the middle of the night and observing Germans rebuilding their houses under flashlight. They had worked all day and then returned home to fix their war torn houses. By the time I came to Germany the second time, there was very little war destruction still evident. The German standard of living was still modest, but their spirits were high. They were convivial and slowly but surely they were making progress. In the early 1960s, I was very interested in car racing and therefore saw the Nurburgring races.

As I have stated, the Germans were as concerned as we were about the Soviets. I don't remember that any of us thought that WW III was about to break out or that we experienced any major crisis as arose during the airlift or the construction of the Wall. But I think there was always an underlying concern about what the Soviets might do, accompanied by a determination to stand fast against any encroachments of the rights spelled out by international treaties. There was a lot of "steadfastness," and I think everybody was wary of possible "salami" tactics -- i.e. cutting back on treaty rights, however small, here and there. We and the Germans had the sense that we would stand together and be firm.

McGhee, as I said, spoke little if any German. But I did not interpret for him. He used either the interpreter of the official with whom he was speaking or someone from the Political Section, where we had some excellent German speaking officers. I myself continued to study German every day for an hour. I used it when I traveled through the country. I could go to an all-German party and socialize in German; I could certainly understand 75-80% even when the conversations went beyond the "small talk." If I had had an opportunity to use it in my official duties, I probably would have learned a lot more. For some reason or other, I could never read it as well as I could speak it; I used to read the "Frankfurter Allgemeine", one of Germany's leading newspapers. I read that more than others because I seemed to find it simpler in its writing style. This was all for my own benefit however, not for the Ambassador. I worked primarily on his trip schedules, visits, etc. and supervised the two protocol secretaries. That was enough!

I think it was less than a year after I arrived that Adenauer retired. My most vivid memory of the "Old Man" was one night when I tried to cross the Rhine on a ferry. Adenauer lived across the river from Bonn and had to cross it on a ferry. When he went back and forth, of course, he was always escorted by a police escort -- both motorcycles and cars. This entourage getting on one of those ferries was quite impressive. As I remember it, by the time the Chancellor and his escorts got on, there wasn't room for the rest of us; we had to wait for the next one. I thought: Well, he deserves all that. A great man, der Alte.

In closing, I should say that I enjoyed my two years in Germany, but it was a painful job experience in which I did not perform as well as I had hoped to, although circumstances were not quite propitious. I did not leave a very good impression on the Washington staff. Elwood Williams, who was the "father" of the "German club" was not very helpful when it came to helping me with my next assignment. I think by the end of my two years, Williams was anxious to have me replaced and found Peter Semler, a college classmate, to become McGhee's special assistant. Peter was the second of five officers who served as McGhee's aides in the five years he was Ambassador in Bonn.

Some years later, George McGhee hosted a party at his house in Georgetown to which he invited all of his former Embassy staffers. I felt rather badly because I accepted and actually went; I should have refused; but I was too polite, I guess. But I did see all my successors and many of my colleagues from the Bonn days.

EDWARD H. WILKINSON
Courier
Frankfurt (1962-1964)

Edward Wilkinson was born in Indiana in 1936. Mr. Wilkinson received his bachelor's degree at Purdue University and served in the army from 1957-1959. His career included positions in Philippines, Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina, Taiwan, Ecuador, Korea, Thailand, and Germany. Mr. Wilkinson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in April 2002.

Q: So you went to Frankfurt?

WILKINSON: I went to Frankfurt as a courier in August of '62. I might say that by that point I had taken – but had not passed – the FSO exam.

Q: So, by this time, you really had your sights set on the Department of State in an overseas capacity?

WILKINSON: Yes, with emphasis on the phrase, “overseas capacity.”

Q: It was a good way to get there...

WILKINSON: Yes.

Q: How long were you a courier?

WILKINSON: I was a courier for two tours, a little over four years. The first two years, I was stationed in Frankfurt. Because the Frankfurt courier office was a relatively large operation, and because they had much smaller operations in Panama and in Manila, generally persons assigned to Frankfurt ended up doing two back-to-back tours there. But in my case, for whatever reason, I only did one tour in Germany and then was sent to Manila for my second tour.

Q: Let's talk a bit about the system of couriers in the '60s.

WILKINSON: Because of international agreements, if you are certified by your country as being a professional courier, you are able to take diplomatic pouches through other countries' customs procedures without their being inspected. Of course, there is a distinction between your suitcase, your personal items, and the pouches, which are sealed. So you go from point A, to point B, to point C, carrying the diplomatic pouch with an official certificate designating you as an official diplomatic courier. These procedures are spelled out in the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic Relations. So the courier is responsible for moving official diplomatic mail from the U.S. to – and between – diplomatic and consular posts abroad.

As I said, in those days we had a large office in Frankfurt. There were about eighty couriers in total worldwide, and I would say about fifty were in Frankfurt in that time. As I indicated earlier, there was a much smaller office in Manila and a smaller one yet in Panama. Of course, many of the pouches originated in Washington, but most of those were carried by the U.S. military to our offices in Panama, Manila and Frankfurt. We professional State Department couriers rarely did go back to Washington in those days. Out of the Frankfurt office, we serviced all of Eastern and Western Europe, as far east as Moscow. We also traveled over most of Africa and the Middle East, as far east as Tehran, so you can see we covered a lot of territory.

You would be given a certain number of pouches on a trip route, then be met at the train station or at the airport by somebody from the embassy or consulate where you would make your pouch exchange. Let's say you were passing by Brussels and you had two bags for that embassy. The

person from the embassy would come to the airport or train station to meet you and would sign for them. And perhaps he had one pouch for London and one for Washington. You would accept them, after signing his receipt. All our routes were interconnected, so the bags would wend their way to the designated destination by the most efficient route.

Q: I would think that, yes, you're overseas, but when you're sitting on these canvas pouches, one, and two, you're hustling around, you're really not getting a chance to see many things.

WILKINSON: Well, true, but you did occasionally get a chance to be a tourist, though. One reason, of course, was that flights were virtually all on propeller planes in those days. You went from A to B much slower than people do today, and there were far fewer connecting flights. You could end up spending a night or two in this town or a night or so in that town, waiting for the next plane out. Therefore, you might have a chance to see things in the places where you were scheduled to stop. I felt very fortunate to have seen many, many things in many, many places that the average American simply had no chance to see.

Q: Were you looking towards anything beyond that?

WILKINSON: At that point, no. The couriers with whom I associated were mostly people very much like me. I found sort of a built-in group of friends, and I'm still in contact with many of them. I'm fond of saying, and I'll repeat here, that when I die and arrive at the Golden Gate and St. Peter asks, "Who are you," I'm going to tell him nothing more, nothing less than, "I'm a former U.S. diplomatic courier." This experience was a defining part of my life, in a certain sense. And I made a lot of good friends in those days. It was a wonderful life for a single 26-plus-year-old.

Q: What did you do on these trips? Did you read?

WILKINSON: Yes, I had a lot of chance to read. And, of course you have to do a certain amount of paperwork and planning. You really have to spend quite a bit of time paying attention to what you're doing. With large loads of pouches that were often carried in the hold of the plane, you often had to prepare a plan of action to get off the airplane to get down on the ground near the plane's hold to watch them. But, yes, there was plenty of time for reading.

And other things, too. I can remember one night in Vienna going to see the opera, Aida. I got a seat very close to the front of the Staatsoper. This was the sort of thing we also had an opportunity to do, occasionally.

Q: Who was looking after the pouches?

WILKINSON: Oh, the pouches were deposited at the embassy for the night. I might add that courier stopovers in Vienna in those days were very often, the beginning or the end of train trips behind the Iron Curtain.

Q: Did you ever have any real problems? I'm talking about the European thing.

WILKINSON: No. In the big scheme of things, no. I suppose one little problem – from a courier point of view – that sticks out in my mind is that during one trip a fellow courier and I were coming back from Bucharest by train. (We couriers always traveled in pairs behind the Iron Curtain.) The courier schedule had us stop in Budapest just for a couple minutes while the passengers got on and off the train. People from the embassy came to the station and made a pouch exchange. Then we couriers were to continue on with the train to Vienna. Well, coming from Bucharest we arrived at the border between Romania and Hungary, the towns were Curtici in Romania and Orosháza, Hungary. I can remember it like it was yesterday.

The Hungarian immigration official said (in German, the *Lingua Franca* behind the Curtain), “Your visas are no good.” And sure enough a mistake had been made. It was not our fault as it turns out, except that we hadn’t looked at the visas closely, which in any case were written in Hungarian. We had no choice but to get off the train. Now in a certain sense, this was a very interesting spot, at least it was in those days. The little train station at the Romanian-Hungarian border looked like something like a scene out of an old western movie. There was a covered, wooden sidewalk and windows in the old buildings with curtains over them. Well, it turns out this was all fake. You could open the one door that worked and go in behind. Behind there was virtually nothing, except the customs and immigration shack and some hovels.

We were stopped on the Hungarian side now, even though we hadn’t officially entered their country. I must say, they were really very nice to us. Finally, we were able to communicate by telephone with our embassy in Bucharest and the problem ultimately was straightened out.

We took a later train on to Budapest, which was wonderful because no courier in recent memory had stopped in Budapest. We went to the embassy to deliver and store the pouches, the first couriers to do that in years. There we were treated with an opportunity to see, although we didn’t talk to, Cardinal Mindszenty. As you may remember, he spent many years in that embassy as a political refugee. He had sort of a little patio affair inside the embassy next to his quarters. When we arrived, he was walking around out there. We waved “hello” to him, which he acknowledged.

The next day we went on to Vienna. Except for the Mindszenty part and the opportunity to see a little bit of the beautiful city of Budapest, this little contretemps didn’t turn out to be much. So I must say, in the four years I was a courier, I really didn’t have any problems to report.

I might add that I was in Moscow the night President Kennedy was shot. We took the train from Moscow Station at midnight that night to Helsinki. I still get a little bit choked up thinking about it. First of all, upon leaving the Soviet Union, the Russian border guard tried his best to explain what had happened from his standpoint. Unfortunately, his English was minimal, and as neither of us understood Russian, we didn’t glean much about the matter while there. We’d had word of the shooting, of course, but we didn’t have a lot of information. We had been able to listen to some sketchy reports on the BBC before leaving Moscow, but we had no way to listen after leaving Moscow.

When we got to the Finnish side, the border guard in charge there was a former Finnair pilot whose English was perfect. He told us everything that had happened that he had seen on television before coming to work. On the way to Helsinki from the border, you could see that

many buildings had Finnish flags at half-staff. The Finnish people we saw were clearly sorrowful. I must say, some forty years later it still chokes me up to remember the way these people demonstrated how they felt about the assassination. I spent the night – that is, the night after the President's murder – in Helsinki, then took a plane the next day down to Frankfurt. Because the pouches were in the hold of the plane, I got up to my seat on the Finnair flight to Frankfurt just before the plane's departure. When people realized I was an American (given away, I suppose, by my accent when speaking with the flight hostess), they came out of the woodwork, so to speak, to give me the English-language newspapers to read. Everybody on board was just as solicitous they could possibly have been. The International Herald-Tribune had a black border all around the front page. Once again, I was choked up.

GARY L. MATTHEWS
Junior Officer
Bonn (1962-1964)

Gary L. Matthews was born in Missouri in 1938. He graduated from Drury College in 1960, Oklahoma State University in 1961, and Columbia University in 1969. He served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1955-1958 and joined the Foreign Service in 1961. His career included positions in Germany, Poland, Vietnam, Malta, and Washington, DC. Mr. Matthews was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1996.

Q: You were in Bonn from when to when?

MATTHEWS: From July 1962 to July of 1964.

Q: Can you describe who was the ambassador, your impression of the ambassador? And of the embassy, and how it worked, and what you were doing?

MATTHEWS: The embassy was quite a large operation. The political section, by present day standards, was enormous, perhaps 25-30 Foreign Service officers, and all manner of other people. Other sections were comparably large. The administrative support operation was quite significant, and as today because of the administrative support it provided to other posts in Germany. The ambassador when I arrived was Ambassador Dowling, Red Dowling, a very distinguished gentleman. He wasn't there too long after I arrived but long enough that I was invited to join him on one of the trips to Berlin. That was back when the American ambassador to Germany had his own train, not a bad perk to have. I recall going up on the Ambassador's train to Berlin, and the East German border guards looking meanly through the train windows as we held up our glass, so to speak. Then he finished his tour and was replaced by Ambassador George C. McGhee who had already served prominently as an Assistant Secretary and in other high positions in Washington, and whom I have seen even recently. He's aged very well. So Ambassador McGhee was the ambassador for the remainder of my tour there, and I acted as a substitute back-up ambassador's aide at some point during my tour there. That was when we had this program of rotating new Foreign Service officers on their first posting abroad among the

various sections. So I did a stint in consular, economic-commercial, administrative and political, which I've always thought was simply great. In fact it gave me much more of a grounding in all of those functions, and I could see that each was important in its own right, you didn't immediately become a pointy-headed political officer by any means. By just utter luck of the draw, there was a big chiefs of mission conference which Ambassador McGhee hosted in 1963, and as you can imagine with illustrious ones coming in from all over Europe, both career ambassadors and some very prominent politically appointed ambassadors, it was a major logistics operation for those of us assigned to Embassy Bonn, and I was made control officer, among others, for one of the chiefs of mission attending from Romania. We hit it off, and he asked me what my thoughts were about what I might do after Bonn. Well, I had always had an interest in Eastern Europe. So he subsequently mentioned this to Personnel in Washington, and that eventually in a very strange way, led to my first posting to Eastern Europe.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

MATTHEWS: It was William Crawford.

Q: While you were in Germany, how did Ambassador McGhee from whatever perspective you had, work with the Germans at that time? Had we moved away from the pro-consul period do you think?

MATTHEWS: I think we had. There were some difficult issues, the multilateral nuclear force issue, and other prominent policy initiatives and problems. But I do recall that Ambassador McGhee certainly had very direct access to Chancellor Adenauer, and all the other members of the government there. I recall, for example, when I was serving my stint in the economic section once taking something over to the Vice Chancellor's office, who was Erhard, there was no security, no nothing, walked in and said I was from the American embassy. Here's this package of whatever it was that I was handing over. Those were simpler times. I always had the sense that Ambassador McGhee was very much in the loop between what Washington wanted, and was doing, and what the German government wanted and was doing. He really was used in the classic sense as the nexus in terms of the diplomatic dialogue between the two countries, and all the more in view of the security issues. We had at that time a number of incidents and near crises with the Soviets over access to Berlin, our use of the land and air corridors. And during my time in the political section I worked on a number of those problems, and specifically we had an eastern affairs unit in the political section in Bonn which was very active and among other things there was a so-called Bonn group of fairly senior officers from the other NATO embassies and we did a lot of things all the time on a continuing basis related to the Soviet threat, if you will, and activities.

Q: Can you describe the attitude towards the Soviet threat was at that time.?

MATTHEWS: It was perceived to be very, very direct. This, of course, is not too long after the erection of the Berlin wall, and there were indeed nasty incidents quite regularly. Refusal by the East German border guards, sometimes with Soviet officers observing, refusal to let convoys pass in the manner in which they thought they should be able to pass, restrictions in the air corridors height -- altitude type restriction, buzzing of our aircraft and things like that. So there

was a lot going on in that vein, and that was the period when the threat was perceived as being quite acute.

Q: Obviously you were sort of at the bottom of the food chain...

MATTHEWS: Oh, yes, very much, let there be no mistake here.

Q: But did you, as pressure was being heated up on Berlin particularly...I've interviewed some people who were in Berlin around the time, and there was concern there among them that they hoped we all were, as a national policy, we weren't going to give way on Berlin in some way. Did you sense any of this?

MATTHEWS: No, in fact I never had any sense that...I was never privy to any discussions that might have taken place. Martin Hillenbrand was the Minister Counselor, the DCM, Deputy Chief of Mission, a very fine man of course, who went back subsequently to be the ambassador to Bonn. Coburn Kidd was the political counselor...they were Foreign Service legends already, and extremely able, and wide, broad thinkers.

Q: As the sort of new kid on the block, often you can catch moods more than you do when you're more experienced and your own attitudes take over. What were you catching from people dealing with the heart of our relationship with Germany at that time about whither Germany? We're really talking about West Germany at this time. Was there concern that it might revert to its old ways? Or was it a feeling it was really a new Germany?

MATTHEWS: No, no. I never ran into anything except the expectation that Germany had passed through the veil, and was very much a solid partner within the western alliance. That was, of course, during the heyday, the height of the Hallstein Doctrine which required...

Q: You might explain.

Matthew: I'll explain briefly, and then correct me please if my memory of it is...but the doctrine provided that any government establishing relations with the so-called German Democratic Republic, East Germany, would be sanctioned by having its relations either broken off with, or negatively affected by not just the Federal Republic of Germany, but US and other allies.

Q: I think Germany would not have relations.

MATTHEWS: Germany would not have relations.

Q: And the United States would look with disfavor. Hallstein was the foreign minister at the time, and this is the doctrine that went on until the '70s, wasn't it?

MATTHEWS: I think officially it was still on the books up through the...I'm trying to think when the Berlin Quadripartite Agreement and all of that got ginned up. It was certainly through the late '60s.

Q: Then you left Bonn in '64. Sometimes as one of the traumatic things, how did the assassination of President Kennedy hit the...

MATTHEWS: It was just devastating. It was totally devastating, and all the more so because President Kennedy had his wonderful, and highly successful visit to Germany shortly before that.

Q: This is when he said "Ich bin ein Berliner."

MATTHEWS: That's right. So all of us, and particularly a junior officer like myself, had worked very hard on his visit when he was in Bonn, of course, his visit is better known for Ich bin ein Berliner right there in Berlin, but it was a tremendous turnout, and a wonderful visit in Bonn itself. But when the assassination occurred, it was just totally devastating. And as I recall, any activity worthy of the name, came to a complete halt in the embassy, and in the rather large American community. I lived in the official housing enclave, the so-called Golden Ghetto at that time, the main street of which then was named Frankengraben, and not too long after the assassination that was renamed Kennedy Avenue, which it has remained today.

THOMAS J. DUNNIGAN
Political Officer
Bonn (1962-1965)

Thomas J. Dunnigan was born in Ohio in 1921. He served in the U.S. Army from 1943-1946. He received a bachelor's degree from John Carroll University in 1943, and a master's degree from Harvard University in 1946. In 1946, Mr. Dunnigan entered the Foreign Service. His career included positions in Germany, Great Britain, the Philippines, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Denmark, Israel, and the Organization of the American States. Mr. Dunnigan was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

DUNNIGAN: I had two very interesting jobs in Bonn. I was in the Political Section my whole time there. And the Political Section had three main sections. I had one of them, and that was the political-military section, which dealt with all our relations with German military, our liaison with the American forces in Europe, on the military side; on the political side, we handled such things as the MLF -- the multilateral force which in part would allow us to put missiles on board merchant ships in the Atlantic. We also dealt with NATO affairs, on the political side, and a number of other things. I did that for a little over a year, and then, because of a change in the office, I was moved into another section, the internal political section, dealing with the German political parties, their structure, the Bundestag, and so forth. I found that fascinating, too. So they were two very worthwhile assignments that I enjoyed.

The third section in the political section was known as Berlin and Eastern affairs, and they dealt entirely with that.

We saw the Soviet threat in military terms. There was no question they had large forces in

Eastern Europe, and they had also built-up the East German army to where it was a rather sizable and, we thought, fairly potent force. So there was no question in our minds that it was there. Now those were days when we still had the backlash of Stalin. I mean, that whole era. We were not going to take any chances was the feeling. There was little dialogue. Kennedy did start it and did get the nuclear non-proliferation agreement signed and the limits on underground testing treaty finally signed, which were real breakthroughs in those days.

But the relations with the Soviets were cold. Our ambassadors would call on the Soviet ambassador in East Germany when they were there, in their capacity not as ambassador to East Germany, which we didn't recognize, but in their capacity as the representative to the Control Commission for Germany, since the ambassadors were given those titles. But, aside from that, there was little dialogue back and forth, and that didn't happen until much later when Willy Brandt became prime minister and launched his Eastern policy.

By this time, NATO was a fairly solid organization. One of the major crises we had when I was doing political-military affairs, and it was a big one, was a fear in Washington, not shared by our Embassy in Bonn, I must say, but I sensed it before I left, that if we did not do something to provide the Germans with nuclear weapons, they were going to get them on their own. Franz Joseph Strauss was defense minister, and, while he was a brilliant man, we didn't entirely trust his instincts that he was a nationalist. So this is why we came up with ideas like the multilateral force, which our navy abhorred in part because it was have required international crews, mixed-man crews on merchant ships. And some talk of having it on submarines, too, but that proved almost impossible. Merchant ships which would just cruise around aimlessly until needed and then launch their missiles.

I well remember, we were trying to sell this in NATO and were having a difficult time. We knew we had to get the big ones on our side. Harold MacMillan, as I recall, went along because he wanted other things from us. The French were not playing. So we needed the Germans. And George Ball, who by this time was under secretary, was sent over to persuade the Germans. It was in January of 1963. We had a day-long meeting with Adenauer; I was along on that. At the end, the Chancellor said, in translation, "Mr Secretary, my military people tell me this is not a good idea. But if your President wants it, we will go along," Which is all we could hope for. We put that in the bank, in a sense, went back to the Ambassador's residence, and there, which was now about five-thirty or quarter to six at night, Mr. Ball received a message containing the speech that de Gaulle had made that day in which he had blackballed Britain from the Economic Community. Well, Ball reddened and just about went through the roof. He was the supreme Europeanist, and this was a direct slap at him. And there were reporters present; the Ambassador had invited a group of people over for a drink to meet Ball. He said, as I recall, pretty much on the record, what he thought about de Gaulle for doing that. He was livid about it. So, on the one hand, you had the good news from Adenauer and, on the other, the bad news from de Gaulle at the same time.

I was quite hopeful about democratic development in Germany. Most of those we dealt with at that stage were veterans of World War II. They remembered it vividly. They had had much more combat experience than almost all of our people. They certainly didn't want another war. They had no sympathy for the Soviets and no truck with them. Maybe some sympathy, yes, but not for

their system of life and certainly not to have it imposed on Germany.

Now Adenauer was a democrat in an authoritarian way. I mean, yes, he had elections and they were free elections, and he had a Parliament and it was a free Parliament, but he had been raised in a strict authoritarian tradition himself, and he was already in his early eighties, I guess, at that time, so he could see no other way than, you know, when father decides, the children should behave.

But that is not out of keeping, I don't think, with German tradition in many ways. It has nothing to do with political democracy the way we understand it. Their behavior patterns at times are different.

We were constantly getting reports about, running into, hearing about, and seeing little splinter neo-Nazi group coming up, which on certain issues in certain regions would gain some thousands of votes. And we knew that there were unreconstructed and unrepentant Nazis there. They were largely not in positions of political power. Now it is true, they were getting into positions of economic power in the business world, where they were not forbidden, and things of that nature. There were a few of them in the Parliament, but very few basically of what we would call the "wrong" types. All in all, I would mark it as hopeful.

I was there under two ambassadors: Walter Dowling and George McGhee. One year with Dowling and two with McGhee. They were quite different. Dowling was the consummate traditional diplomat. McGhee was boisterous, almost rambunctious, at times, brilliant at others. Hard working, dedicated. A man of a thousand ideas. Loyal to his staff. Quite effective, I think, with the Germans. A man who spoke all over Germany all the time, touched every issue, dodged none. Put forth the American view quite, quite well. He couldn't stand a situation of quiet when nothing was going on. Something had to be going on. I don't know if I could explain that very well, but that was the feeling: "What's the old man up to now? What's he doing now?"

"Well, he's cooking up something."

For instance, for a long time, he had behind him in his office a speaker going all the time reciting German grammar. He thought, you know, subliminally he could pick it up even though he was talking to you. He would say, "Now, Kennedy, what are we going to do about this? Hadn't we better go see so and so? Maybe I ought to write a letter to the President about this." Meanwhile, the German grammar played in the background. But that eventually stopped.

The German bureaucracy I dealt with was competent, in almost all cases. I saw two different sides of them. The first year and a half, when I was in dealing in political-military affairs, I dealt a good with the *beamte*, the civil servant side, because we were dealing with problems relating to American forces.

I will never forget the first day I arrived in Bonn. I was told by my staff that morning, "You've got to chair a meeting this afternoon."

I said, "Chair a meeting? I am just here."

"Oh, no, this meeting has been set up for a long time."

I said, "What is the subject?"

And they said, "The subject is Sewer Duties in Kaisersbaumen."

I said, "What do I know about that?"

And they said, "Well, we will help you."

The question was: How much should the American forces (which were very large in that area) have to pay for use of the sewer system?

So I found myself that afternoon chairing a meeting; I was flanked by our legal advisor, and my advisor on German affairs on these subjects, and a couple of other people, but I sweat through an afternoon...

But the German *beamte* you met in that sort of situation were very much the old- style, almost Prussian, type, you know. Correct. They knew their dossiers. They had answers for most of your arguments -- not all, but most of them. Humor was not their long suit by any means.

Now it was different when I would go to the Foreign Office to talk about issues. There, you would meet types that I would say were a bit suave or equally well educated, but who had been abroad in many cases and had a broader prospect. They saw things from a little different angle. They were very anxious, it seemed, to be friendly with American and British diplomats and others, to show that they were good partners in the Western world. This was quite important to them.

GERALD J. MONROE
Commercial Officer
Dusseldorf (1962-1965)

Gerald J. Monroe was born on October 13, 1933 in New York State. He attended City College in New York where he received his BA in 1955. Mr. Monroe served in the US Army as a 2nd lieutenant from 1955-1956. His career has included positions in Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Germany, China, Switzerland, and Italy. Mr. Monroe was interviewed by Raymond Ewing on March 22, 1999.

Q: Now this would have been about 196---

MONROE: '63. We arrived in March of '63 at Dusseldorf. Beyond giving me a sense of what Germany was all about then, I can't say that it was terribly stimulating being there, the opportunities for travel. The work was commercial work. I worked for an older but very creative

commercial officer, someone who had been appointed from the Commerce Department. He looked very much like General Eisenhower. He was Dutch and he really did look like General Eisenhower. In any case, we traveled from one trade fair to the next throughout our region of Germany which was Westphalia and the north Rhineland. We enjoyed ourselves a lot. I did have my first experience in East Germany as a result of going to the Leipzig fair which was an interesting experience. But mostly it was an opportunity to build my German which subsequently became a lifelong interest, a language I did learn exceptionally well. It prepared me for my next posting in Germany some years later. I think one interesting element was that the war was very fresh in the minds of many of the people we met. Indeed some of the damaged buildings were still there. The fairgrounds, for example, where I spent a lot of time, had been very badly damaged by shells. Much of them were still pockmarked, although these buildings were built like bunkers. I don't think there was any way that they were going to be knocked down. I think the reason why the damage hung on for so long was no one could figure out how to knock them down. I think eventually they just built around them. In any case, it did give us a chance to learn about Germany, learn about German attitudes of that immediate postwar generation who remembered the war but were not necessarily involved in it although some were. I think just about all the clichés one has read about or heard about with respect to Germany in the early '60s were true. Pretty much that sort of place. We did go to Berlin shortly after the wall was built, or at least started. That was quite thrilling, quite interesting. There was a sense of beleaguerment and a sense of defiance. As you entered, we took the train the duty train from Frankfurt, and as we entered the station there was a loudspeaker playing Lilli Marlene, Auf Wiedersein and so forth as the next train pulled out. We were bringing in many troops at that point. Of course, our train was just filled with young GIs, none of whom could keep their window shades down or the window closed as we were all supposed to. But of course, as we passed through Potsdam, there was this view, I think train curve, unforgettable view really indelibly imprinted on my mind where these Russian soldiers lined up along the railway every few yards as far as you could see as we pulled through the outskirts of Berlin. That was the part that was East Germany in those days. So that was an interesting sort of third man kind of experience. The atmosphere could have been cut with a knife. We were told to test the Russians at the Friedrichstrasse subway station. So we did leave the subway station in East Berlin and get off, show our passports. They were armed to the teeth. We were told not to give the passport to a German official but wait for a Russian official. The problem we encountered was we couldn't tell the difference. Their uniforms, whether it was intentional or not, we tried to do it by speaking German. We tried to discern whether the person was a native speaker of German and we had someone who was good enough in German to do that. So we assured ourselves we were dealing with the Russians. To this day, I don't know. In we went. We walked along the streets. It was routinely snowing slightly and people came up and spoke to us. They knew we were Americans immediately. We asked them how they knew and they said, "Well you are wearing Russian boots." Ladies were wearing Russian style boots that year, it was the style.

Q: Russian boots, they could tell.

MONROE: They could tell we were Americans. Yes, well, the women were wearing them. It was sad and it was exciting, a little bit of everything.

Q: Let's talk about the post a little bit more in Dusseldorf. Was this headed by a consul general?

MONROE: Headed by a consul general. His name was Edmund Kellogg. Edmund Kellogg was the scion of I believe it was the Kellogg Tool Company, not the cereal company, but a rather large company that made specialized tools for the oil industry. He came from New England. He was greatly distressed to find that he could not send his children to any school he could afford. He had been appointed late in the game. He was part of what was called the Wriston program. I think he was hyperactive. I think today they might have given him that ritalin, the drug they give hyperactive children. I think he tended to feel that the we were at the navel of the universe and the department was waiting desperately for the next dispatch from Dusseldorf, which, of course, was not true at all.

Q: That rarely is the case. Dusseldorf is how far from Bonn?

MONROE: Dusseldorf is by train no more than two hours. It was kept open all those many years. It is now closed I believe. It was kept open all those many years because the consul general had an opportunity to deal with the Ruhr barons as they were called. The Krupps and the Thyssens and so forth who were held to be important. I think shortly after arrival, many of us concluded that they no longer were. Their time had passed even then. Krupp Works was closed to bankruptcy. Coal mining as an industry was in deep trouble. I think that the largest industry was the Opel automobile at this point.

Q: This was the early period of the coal and steel community.

MONROE: The early period of the coal and steel community. I think the Ruhr was rapidly becoming the German rust belt. I think it was their capacity over the decades to work that out, that led to that fabulous period of growth during the '70s. When we were there again and Germany was probably as well off as it ever had been in its history.

Q: At the time you were there Dusseldorf was a first assignment in Germany the economic revival, boom wasn't really apparent.

MONROE: No. The boom was not apparent. They were comfortable, but they were not, you know, people were not talking about a six week vacation to Spain and so forth. Although, that sort of thing was beginning. People were taking short vacations. Of course, to German middle class, a suntan is an absolute necessity, even if they were gathered on their roofs during the summer. They would have to return to their office with suntans. I also learned a lot about dealing and working in German society which stood me in good stead the next time I was there when I was dealing with important persons, at least to me.

Q: At this time you were doing commercial work, visiting trade fairs and so on. Was the commercial work that you did just within your consular area or did you have some kind of wide, countrywide perhaps possibilities as well?

MONROE: We had countrywide responsibilities oddly enough, because the Commerce Department was experimenting with the notion of the trade center which was Frankfurt. So theoretically we could be brought, well, for example, we were chosen to cover the Leipzig fair

one year, which was a great thrill, but also we were doing it for the entire commercial operation in Germany. Now the reason for this rather curious move was because Bonn was the least important commercial post in the system. I think there was one commercial officer there at that time. There was a real question whether we should have a commercial operation in Bonn at all or whether we should transfer it all to Dusseldorf. Subsequently they transferred it all to Cologne actually and they closed the post in Dusseldorf, but Dusseldorf remained open over the years primarily because of its importance as a commercial center and also as a cultural center. The USIA had a major operation there in Dusseldorf.

Q: Was there at that time a consulate also in Cologne?

MONROE: No. That had been closed and had been replaced. As post war Germany took shape, I think it was clear that Dusseldorf was going to be one of the major western cities. It was not as well placed as Frankfurt geographically, but on the other hand it being the headquarters for so many huge corporations, because Dusseldorf, it is really a lovely city. It is not rural like at all. It is right at the confluence of the Rhine and the Ruhr rivers. They were busily cleaning up the Ruhr at that time which was made possible by the demise of many heavy industries. The interesting thing was that Dusseldorf is a garden city, and so many of these corporations had their headquarters in Dusseldorf and spent weeks at a time in Dusseldorf and not in Essen and Bochum and other less pleasant towns where there were coal mines on the main street and so forth. We might possibly join with some other place like Stuttgart and go handle a major trade fair in Berlin. Perhaps there would be officers from all over Germany at a major [fair]. I know the Hannover fair, which was a major effort in West Germany, was handled by people from all over Germany.

Q: When you say "handled," whether it was Hannover or Leipzig or one of the others, did you mean assist American exhibitors, the American pavilion, the U.S. export oriented exhibits, or was it more that you were interested in what was happening in terms of German industry and commercial sector for reporting purposes?

MONROE: All of those things. If we could, if the fair was industry or sector specific, the Commerce Department would try to interest a number of prospective American exporters in a U.S. pavilion which would be partially subsidized by the Commerce Department. We would always have a U.S. information center which would address the broader questions if we didn't have a pavilion. If we did have a pavilion, it would be part of the pavilion, but if we didn't, then we would have an information center which would address the broader scope of American activity in that particular industrial sector be it machine tools or fixers or whatever or furniture.

Q: Again with the emphasis on U.S. exports.

MONROE: Yes, we had just switched from trying to encourage Europeans to export to the United States to the reverse. I think the first sting on the balance of payments policy was being felt in Washington. I think at that point in its history the program was as innovative as I had seen it throughout my career. I think our commercial program in Germany was one of the more creative and one of the more aggressive export programs.

Q: Creative and aggressive because it was trying to involve more firms in our exporting, firms that were new to exporting?

MONROE: Well, yes. Obviously we weren't worried about General Motors or TRW or the equivalent thereof in those days. United Technologies which didn't exist then or something like it. We were interested in furniture producers, clothing producers, medium sized companies that if it could be shown that exporting was not all the horror that they had learned it had been during the war and right after the war and so forth. They would profit from a European approach, that is to say a protective setting where we would do the administrative work, taking the space, hiring the decorators and engineers to prepare the space and they would just have to come along and slip into it. They were very successful. Very few of them complained. As a matter of fact, I have no recollection of a serious complaint about the space they were given. Of course we tried to keep it as consistent as possible from sector to sector and company to company.

Q: And they felt it was worthwhile and useful.

MONROE: I think as a rule they felt it worthwhile. Another approach was mission. We tried very hard, my boss was well schooled in this sort of thing, tried very hard to make certain that there was a trade fair going on in each particular sector within Germany before we would have a trade mission come over such as a furniture trade mission so...

Q: The trade mission would be tied to...

MONROE: As I said the furniture fair at Cologne which was an important event in the worldwide furniture industry. And this notion of a trade center such as we had in Frankfurt was relatively new. It was not brand new. Frankfurt may have been one of the first if not the first.

Q: So you would go there quite often and work with them.

MONROE: We would go quite often.

Q: Encourage importers from Dusseldorf and the surrounding area to go to a trade fair show, a trade center show somewhere.

MONROE: Yes, a trade center show or somewhere else in Germany whether it was [in our] consular district or not, Stuttgart or Munich if we felt there were Americans that were exhibiting who could service north Rhine Westphalia, which was the area we were in. That happened to be the biggest consular district in the country and by far the richest.

Q: Biggest in terms of population and riches.

MONROE: Biggest in terms of population and, oh, yes, riches. This is no longer the case, but at that point it was almost three-quarters of German GNP. That is how concentrated post war Germany had become as a result of, I suppose, strategic bombing, but also because of the migratory movement. So much of it went into North Rhineland zone.

Q: U.S. army, U.S. forces were not.

MONROE: Were not. We were guests of the British there. British forces were stationed in and around Dusseldorf.

Q: Now you were there from what '63 to '65?

MONROE: '65.

Q: How important at that time was the European common market as far as commercial work?

MONROE: Not terribly.

Q: Not yet.

MONROE: No not terribly. In fact, one could compete openly with the French for example. The French always had creative ideas; it was execution that seemed to be their problem. They had, for example, French restaurants that were bringing a whole new cuisine to Dusseldorf. Contrary to most of Germany, Dusseldorf did have an interesting cuisine, part Dutch and part French. As a matter of fact the city was called Eine Kleine Paris. There was a certain je ne sais quois about the city. It was a city of boulevards and parks and palaces which were in the process of being rebuilt. The old city was being rebuilt, the city along the river. Dusseldorf had been the best place to demonstrate something, I am not sure what I am demonstrating. Before the war or before the Nazi period, one of the main streets in town had been Heinestrasse. From '33 on it had been named Alleestrasse which literally means boulevard street. There was a bit of agony to change the name back. It didn't happen easily, but it happened. An old bust of Heinrich Heine was brought out.

Q: Put back out front.

MONROE: Put back up in the city hall. Yes. I am assuming that our listeners will know that Heinrich Heine was Jewish, and therefore a non-person. His vast array of German literature was completely stricken from the record during that Nazi period. Of course any student of German at college in those days we read Heinrich Heine. Of course I learned to recite these poems to my German teacher Felix Dandelion. She whispered in my ear that Heinrich Heine died of syphilis. I don't think that is an historic fact. But that is what she said.

Q: How close is Dusseldorf to the border to what, Holland?

MONROE: Well, it is close to the Belgian, I would say an hour if that long. As a matter of fact, we who always thought that Henry Minuet, I think it was Heinrich Minuet, the founder of New York City, the founder of New York City, I think I have the name right, had his 400th anniversary or something. We thought, we had always been taught he was Dutch. Indeed when he was born, that town where he was born was in Holland. As it turned out, It was about 10 kilometers inside Germany when the consul general and I showed up for the ceremonies. So yes, we were quite close, perhaps an hour perhaps even less than an hour from the Dutch border and

the Belgian border which came together there. France was not all that far although there was no such things as auto routes. If one wanted to drive to Paris which we did frequently, one had to go overland through the Ardennes and still see some of the tanks.

Q: Let me ask you a couple of more commercial related questions. Was there any talk in this period of facilitating, encouraging, or promoting German investment in the United States?

MONROE: Very much less. The States were beginning to take an interest in that. We were at the beginning stages of trying to figure out how to deal with that situation, because frequently we encountered competitive situations between New York State and New Jersey and what was the U.S. government, what was a federal facility to do about that? We didn't favor either state, we just favored the United States.

Q: Were some of those states already represented?

MONROE: They were already beginning to be represented. New York was among the pioneers including the New York Port Authority opened an office in, I believe, Dusseldorf, which was fascinating.

Q: Help me with my geography. Did your consular district go up to the coast?

MONROE: No, it did not go up to the coast, but it would go to the border, and it would go to Aachen. Aachen was included. One would find that you could go pretty far out into France actually in our consular district. I am a little unclear as to how far south it went. I don't know whether Trier was in our district or Frankfurt. I think it was closer to us.

Q: I guess my question had to do with the shipping and ports.

MONROE: No we didn't do shipping. The only port we had was a river port.

Q: Anything else we should say about Dusseldorf?

MONROE: No, I don't think so. I think Dusseldorf was very much a training post if one can call it that. Things were beginning to come together for me there. It was the first time I was out of a visa section and was working generally with the post. Of course, it being a small post, I think in those days perhaps six officers total.

Q: Of which two or three were doing commercial work?

MONROE: Two were doing commercial work and two were doing economic and political work. There was some political work to be done actually.

Q: And the economic reporting would be on what, the coal and steel industry?

MONROE: On the industry and in those days, we had a lot of [required] reporting concerning the company reporting program as I am sure you very well remember. So there were a lot of

reports that had to be done on exports. They were split up pretty evenly among the staff whether they were commercial or not. It didn't include the two consular officers, but...

Q: So you did some of that.

MONROE: I did some of that kind of reporting, yes. Oh, and I also did economic defense which is perhaps the most interesting. It got me to several conferences. It also got me around town calling on people that I normally wouldn't have called upon. It got me into banking circles. Dusseldorf, although not one of the banking capitals per se of which there were two or three. No I want to correct that. I believe it was. What happened with Berlin out of the question then, they chose Munich, Frankfurt, and Dusseldorf to serve as banking centers for the country. Now I later learned that the United States occupation forces had had its bank in Frankfurt, and indeed it was through that bank that the gold captured by the allied forces was redistributed to the allied government. So the Frankfurt banking center probably led the Germans to choose Frankfurt as a major banking center. Dusseldorf was the commercial center and a banking center, and Munich was to the south. It was really political. CSU.

Q: Well, to share among those elements, and also to perhaps not lead to one city being...

MONROE: Becoming the headquarters of the Bundesbank.

Q: The substitute for Berlin.

MONROE: That's right. The Bundesbank had three branches. Now this doesn't seem odd to us with a Federal Reserve System, this decentralized Federal Reserve System, but it was very odd for the Germans, very confusing for the Germans.

Q: Okay, what else should we say about Dusseldorf?

MONROE: Well, I don't think much else.

Q: Did you have any children born there?

MONROE: No, we didn't.

Q: Was Evangeline working there?

MONROE: No, I don't think she was. She learned German very well. She became an excellent speaker of German. In fact, she studied German; she even went to the university to study German. She took part in many activities, and had a wide circle of women friends and learned a lot about Germany herself. Indeed, as is not uncommon, you know she was then enjoying and she enjoyed being a traditional Foreign Service wife. It was through her that I made many contacts and met many young families that I would not have normally met in the course of my business and so forth. So no, she was very much learning about Germany and learning about the culture. Of course, because of her interest in languages, she was picking up German and studying it. To this day, her German has certain idiomatic expressions that come much easier to her than

they do to me. She doesn't know as much German as I do, but certainly that which she knows, she knows extremely well.

EMMERSON M. BROWN
Economic Officer
Bonn (1962-1966)

Emmerson M. Brown was born and raised in Michigan. He attended Olivet College and received a teaching certificate. During World War II, Mr. Brown worked on crypto-analysis. He then worked for the Office of Foreign Relief in Africa and the Middle East. He joined the Foreign Service in 1950, serving in Bonn, Germany; Bombay, India; the Hague, the Netherlands, Ottawa; Canada; and Washington, DC. Mr. Brown was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

BROWN: I went back to Bonn, this time as the second man in the economic section. It was the transition from Adenauer. But of course, the Germans were going great guns economically and politically they were doing all right too. You know were the German constitution -- it is called a basic law -- which they adopted with tutelage from the Americans, particularly; it incorporates the ingenious idea of a constructive vote of non-confidence. You can't upset the West German government simply by voting it down. You have to come up with an alternative government to take its place. That and other factors have given the German parliamentary system a stability that for example Italy sadly lacks.

Again everything was really going very well, economically and politically. Adenauer was a giant. Then Erhard took over; you can't say it was a disaster but it was clear that he was an economist and that he just didn't have the required guile. Well, nobody had Adenauer's guile, but Erhard didn't even come close. And then it was Kissinger who took over after that. Walter Dowling was our Ambassador -- very low profile, vis-a-vis the Germans. He was succeeded by George McGhee, who was very high profile vis-a-vis everybody. He was the Ambassador when I left.

By this time, economic work had become a kind of case work. I remember a little scandal on diversion of PL 480 grain. I made a trip up to Hamburg to find out what happened. A little scandal there.

In the big picture, the main thing we wanted from Germany was financial cooperation. We had a very good Treasury Attaché; he would do the technical work but we had to be informed about it. Dillon would come over when he was Secretary of the Treasury. There was another man who gave the country its money's worth.

I can still remember a dinner by Ambassador McGhee where Dillon got up and gave a 5 minute after-dinner speech. At the time I said, "Well, that is worth a quarter of a billion dollars on the balance of payments" -- back in the days when a quarter of a billion dollars was a lot of money.

And of course in those days with fixed exchange rates, reserves were the things you worried about. There was an awful lot of cooperation required in order to protect our reserves.

I was involved in the "chicken war." In one of the German waiver negotiations, back in the GATT days when the Germans were continuing to maintain quotas, we required them to get a waiver, which brought them on a par with us, because we had a waiver for our import restrictions. But we had to report and justify them each year. So we got the Germans to get a waiver so that we could tackle them each year on the review. And in hammering them one year we got two little concessions. One of them was on chickens. The idea that chickens would be sent over to Germany seemed ludicrous. We got another concession on hay. Nobody in his right mind would think that hay would ever cross the Atlantic Ocean.

The catch is that a few years later they learned how to pelletize alfalfa -- rabbit pellets. Those were just like shipping grain. And technically the trade argued, successfully for a while, that that was hay. So it came in floods, and in such quantities that the Germans had to shut off the imports. Rabbit pellets. Wonderful feed.

Well, on chickens. The American chicken factories started turning out chickens for 16 cents a pound; they were frozen and you could ship them anywhere in the world. They started turning up in Germany at a prodigious rate. Business soared and the German farmers hollered. And so all sorts of tricks started being employed to restrict our chicken exports -- and by this time the Common Market was going and so the Germans were able to use the Common Market as a kind of shield, too. It was really chaotic. A group from Delmarva, in Virginia visited the White House. Somehow they got into the White House and dear Jack Kennedy -- you know, he wanted to show he was on top of everything -- he said, "Well, do you have any problems?" and they said, "Yes." So the chicken war had presidential attention. So the poor old Department of State and Department of Agriculture were under the gun. They were sending telegrams to us all of the time. I can remember handling aide memoires -- a memoire to the German who was catching the train to go to Brussels to consult on chickens. I handed it to him as he was going down the hall to catch the train. It was very hectic and very undiplomatic and stupid.

You heard the Adenauer remark, "I met the president of the United States and all he wanted to do was talk about chickens. What is he a president, or a chicken farmer?"

One interesting sidelight on that. I went over and talked with a fellow in the German Department of Agriculture, their top man, by the name of Schlebitz. He picked out a letter to the German Ambassador in Washington from an American farmer who had been put out of business by these big chicken factories. He wrote, "Don't let them do it to the German farmer." It was interesting to see that. Those were interesting times. But that was typical. You would get a specific problem and you would hammer the Germans about it.

Financial matters. One of the litanies was we wanted the Germans to reduce their interest rates. Now of course, every time a top economic guy would talk to the top German guy, part of the brief would be, "Oh, we want you to lower your interest rates." Ha. Ha. Now it is completely reversed.

ARTHUR R. DAY
Chief, Political Section
Berlin (1962-1966)

Arthur R. Day was born and raised in New Jersey. He served in the U.S. Naval Air Corps during World War II. Upon completion of his military service, Mr. Day received a master's degree from Chicago University. His Foreign Service career included positions at the Palestine Desk, the National War College, United Nations Affairs, and in Japan. Mr. Day was interviewed by John A. McKesson in 1990.

DAY: It was an interesting assignment because of the number of headquarters, both diplomatic and military, that were involved in handling Berlin. Just to list them because it is interesting how complicated a crisis like that can be. On the diplomatic side, of course, the political side, there was the State Department and the White House in Washington at very high levels, the Secretary of State and President were very actively involved. I went once with Secretary Rusk over to the White House to meet with President Kennedy, and the discussion at times came down to very minor things; i.e. how did truck drivers get through on the autobahn from West Germany and return?, did they need visas and how did they get visas? -- things like that. So you had those two levels in Washington. You had the Embassy in Bonn, which was very actively involved and you had the State Department mission in Berlin. On the military side, of course the Pentagon in Washington and our task force people, then you had two major headquarters in Europe, very important and very much involved. You had the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, SACEUR, in Paris, who was General Norstad at that time and his headquarters, the army headquarters for Europe in Heidelberg, EUSAREUR, and then the commandant in Berlin, who was a military man. These headquarters were really actively involved -- it was in no sense a monitoring game. They were very directly involved and interposed themselves in decision-making. We found that the higher up you went, all the way up to the White House, through both the military and political chains, the more conservative and cautious the advice became and the inclinations were. The lower down, on the contrary, down to the Berlin mission and the Berlin military brigade, that were involved, the more emotional and dramatic side of the problem and in some cases the less cautious one became. This was especially true on the military side.

I had an interesting experience myself in that having been in Washington for a year dealing with problem from there and having been closely connected with the Washington scene and also with Norstad's headquarters in Paris, which was especially interested with the air travel in and out of Berlin. I was very much aware of, and for myself convinced of, the conservative approach. I certainly realized that if the people in Berlin got us out on any limbs by their aggressive or adventurous behavior it was not going to be supported on high.

I went then to Berlin myself, to become head of the political section, fully aware of this set of facts. I found the people there on the ground were not sufficiently aware of them. I was in an awkward spot in a way as the voice of headquarters down on the front lines, which was not always appreciated initially. In the end, I think they learned the hard way it was very costly to get

yourself out on a limb in Berlin because you would not be backed up on high. The credibility of the people on the ground became very important. If people in Washington can say when a message in from a field post, "Oh well, those guys are always semi-hysterical out there; we don't need to pay any attention to what they are saying", it just really reduces the value of the people on the front line very considerably. We had a couple of experiences like that which were quite costly and resulted in one case I can think of, from another characteristic of the military -- I must say that the military in Berlin were really excellent people; they picked good officers, first class people, the troops in general were well disciplined -- but there were some characteristics inherent, I guess, in military organizations, that were a problem. On one occasion I recall a Berlin brigade patrol, a jeep patrol, which during all those years was still allowed to go into East Berlin by the Soviets to patrol around and come back out. After one of these patrols we had a very severe protest by the Soviets which said that one of our patrols had badly misbehaved, that it had chased one of their patrols in East Berlin, that it had gone up on sidewalks, that it had seriously jeopardized the lives of civilians in the streets and so on. Our military swore up and down that nothing like that had happened, that "They were just a bunch of Communist liars, and who could trust the Soviets" and so on. But it got very serious because Gromyko eventually took it up with Rusk at the Secretarial level. We got rockets from Washington wanting to know what in hell happened? It became unhappily clear, once it had reached the higher levels in Washington, that the Soviets were 100 percent right and that this detail had done exactly what they said it had done and then it had come back and at some level in the military a lid had been put on, and I like to think that the higher officers did not know that this happened. But it led us on the political side and I know it led Washington, to feel that the word of our own people could not be trusted and we could trust the Soviets more, which was a very unhappy thing to have happen. But it can easily happen.

I would like to mention one other kind of thing. The military is a little overzealous at times again I think without realizing the consequences. Shortly after I arrived in Berlin I was given one of my routine chores, to approve fairly regular helicopter flights over East Berlin. I approved a flight. There were certain ground rules, so to speak, which they were to follow. They were to keep out of trouble. This flight, under instructions I assume, from some military intelligence people, went over East Berlin and having located a shed in which they suspected there were Soviet tanks, they flew down at almost rooftop level to look under the lip of the shed to see if there were tanks in there. This was over a Soviet military establishment and showed no common sense at all, and when they got back we got another rocket from the Soviets saying this time no more helicopter flights over East Berlin. We on the scene were furious over this. The Soviets were cutting down on one of our few rights left in East Berlin but in the end they prevailed because our senior officials in Europe and Washington were so upset by the stupidity of this action on our part, by our military, that they had very little sympathy for our concerns and simply would not push the Soviets on it. That was, again, all too typical of the kind of problem that we on the political side had to fight constantly with the military side -- they feeling, for their part, that sometimes we were too wishy-washy about being tough and standing tall and facing the Soviets,

Crisis management in Berlin was well handled on the whole. It was very complicated for not only did we have on the American side all of these headquarters, but of course we had the British and French to coordinate with on almost everything of note in Berlin. After I arrived we

established a group at my level -- I was a deputy political advisor in my first two years in Berlin - and we established a group of political advisors of all three nationalities and we met regularly and became, in a sense, institutionalized and we just fed most of the crises that required tripartite coordination into that group. All of my colleagues were very competent officers and so it worked quite well. The haphazard way of doing things in previous years was much improved. On the military side, the U.S. side, I think it was also much improved during my time, not by virtue of anything I did. The military established an emergency operations center in the basement of the headquarters building. They kept a staff there twenty-four hours a day -- quite knowledgeable people who were always the same; it was not the in-and-out plague of military organizations. I remember many, many times in my first year and a half there being called in the middle of the night by the sergeant in charge of the operations center, telling me I had to come in, there was another crisis within Berlin on the access routes. It provided a core from which it was easy to deal with whatever arose. We had communications, scrambled voice communications, throughout Europe and with Washington, we had teletype communications with Heidelberg, so it worked very smoothly -- and much too often for my taste -- but that was the way Berlin was at the time.

The one crisis that comes to mind involves just a brief recounting of another event. Shortly after I got there, almost a year after the wall went up, a young man named Peter Fechter, an East German, was shot down by the East German guards as he was trying to escape from East Germany, very near checkpoint Charlie, coming into the American sector. There was a great outcry. He was shot down very brutally and allowed to bleed to death right at the foot of the wall, right in the sight and hearing of people on the western side. The western public in West Berlin was outraged and there began a series of riots which primarily targeted the Soviet troops that come over into West Berlin every day to mount guard at the Soviet war memorial, which was located in West Berlin. As a result in their attacks on the buses that brought these soldiers over, the Soviets began bringing their soldiers over in armored personnel carriers, which we took to be a breach of their rights in West Berlin by sending armored military vehicles into West Berlin. Without going into great detail about it, it resulted in a major confrontation between the Americans, primarily because it was our sector in which they were coming through Checkpoint Charlie, and the Soviets. At one point in this confrontation we had denied them to come in through any access point with their armored personnel carriers and we set up patrols of all the possible access points to be sure they didn't.

One morning I remember I was over visiting with the military liaison mission in Berlin -- which was assigned to the Soviet headquarters and went out into East Germany -- and I was talking with their chief and was called on the phone by the operations officer from the U.S. Army brigade. He said that on one these access points, which was a bridge, between West Berlin and the East, our patrol, which normally stayed at the western end of the bridge, had been advanced out into the middle of the bridge, I suppose to be in a better position to deal with the Soviets if they tried to come across with the armored personnel carriers. The Soviets felt that this was a breach of our agreement with them about where to maintain these patrols -- which it was -- and they had protested vigorously and threatened retaliation and to raise difficulties if we did not pull the patrol back. The US military wanted me to tell them what to do. I had to tell them, "Pull the patrol back" because it was a perfect case where once you got out ahead of what would be tolerated by American policy makers -- and that certainly was a breach of procedures in Berlin

(those procedures were all that kept us from serious trouble) you simply had to pull in your horns, and I did tell them that and they did pull it back, although there was some grumbling that here was some State Department officer who did not have the guts to toughen their stance in the face of the Soviets, but they realized I was right in the end and wished they had not done it. It was the kind of thing that came up not infrequently in Berlin.

There was one other case that came up at the time that I might mention because it relates to the air. One of my particular jobs was to be the political officer advising the American controller on the Berlin air safety center which monitored the access routes through the air from West Berlin to West Germany and back. We had had a nasty incident in East Germany in which an American Air Force plane had been shot down by a Soviet air plane, the pilots killed, and everyone's nerves were quite edgy about that. One Saturday afternoon we suddenly had word from our controller in the Air Safety Center that a U.S. Army airplane -- a very rare type of airplane, not Air Force but Army -- had filed a flight plan from West Germany to West Berlin and was about to enter the corridors and the Soviets were protesting, saying that we did not have any right to fly military aircraft through the corridors, only commercial aircraft. What should we do? Our commandant at the time, aware of all the trouble there had been about this other airplane, wanted us to turn the American plane back, but we felt that we did have a right to have him fly through the corridors and to turn him back once the Soviets realized he was coming would have meant, to some extent, knuckling under to the Soviets and surrendering some of our rights. We said, "No, he comes through." I was running the little operation since it was on the weekend and my superiors were elsewhere. I simply did not tell the commandant what we were doing and brought the pilot through; he was visited by Soviet fighter planes on the way through, and things were very, very tense, and we made a mistake in the process. It was not costly, but it was a mistake. We were concerned enough about the other incident that we told this pilot of the military aircraft, that if the Soviets ordered him to land, he could land to avoid being shot down. They did not so threaten him and the thing did not arise, but immediately afterwards the British and the French both protested to us that we had violated our rights in the corridors by authorizing the pilot to land if threatened. They were right, though I still think I had some reasons for doing it, but that is typical of the kinds of pressures you find yourself under in a situation like that.

The building of the Wall had a very important effect on German policy on the part of Willy Brandt in particular who at that time was the governing mayor in Berlin and had himself been a symbol of the toughest response to the Soviets and a symbol of the hope for reunification of Berlin and all of Germany. He read the American response to the building of the Wall quite correctly as being an abandonment really of the concept of reunification, at least for the foreseeable future, and a willingness to abide by a *de facto* division of Germany which would be maintained by the Soviets on one side and the allies on the other peacefully and not challenged by either side. Brandt felt that if this was the way the Allies were going to play the game it was time to stop entertaining hopes for reunification and to begin to think about improving the lives of people of the two sides of the Wall, but especially on the East side, in what was likely to be a long reality of separation. So he began his *Ostpolitik*. The goal was to put aside the ideological refusals to have any dealings with the East and to begin talking with East Berlin and East Germany to the effect and hope that this would improve the lot of the people behind the curtain and enable the people on the West and on the East to move back and forth to some extent. This policy had been articulated initially for Brandt by Egon Bahr who was his press chief, but also

his policy planner, I guess I would say. He is still active in German affairs. Brandt begin to put it into effect while he was still mayor.

We in the mission, I certainly myself and I think this was true of my superiors, generally favored this approach. It seemed a logical way to react to the change in position that had changed so with the building of the Wall. While we were not called upon by Brandt to give him active support we certainly would have been in a position to frustrate what he was doing, but we chose not to. We encountered by that the hostility of the American press corps in West Berlin, which I think was a very unfortunate group of journalists, not first class -- they tended to be wire service reporters and others, some who had been there since the glory days of the Berlin blockade when everyone knew whose side he was on. They could not tolerate any kind of concessions to the East. They formed a chorus of cold war disappointment with this tendency of the Berlin mission to go along with Brandt's policy. We always had to put up with their carping from the sidelines that we were giving up West Berlin. We even had some people in the mission who were very unhappy with this approach -- not the more senior people. There was one man whose name I will not mention, who on one occasion when I was down in the operations center dealing with this question of the Soviet armored cars coming into West Berlin, came down there and harangued me right in front of all the military staff and others, how wrong this was to let the Soviets get away with this. I simply had to take him outside and tell him this was the way it was and to forget about it. He was one of those people who could not forget about it and he began to leak to the press and put his own twist to it from his own point of view. Ultimately he was undone because he did not leak to all the press and one of the people he did not include protested to our ambassador in Bonn that this guy was briefing everybody in Berlin but himself. The Ambassador gave him 36 hours to get out of town, and we had him out, and it was good riddance. I mention this only to show that there was a real rending and tearing process going on at the time that Brandt begin to steer a new course, which later became thoroughly accepted as the best thing to do, and now, many years later, we see the culmination of that whole process.

It was a fascinating time to be in Berlin. We got to see quite a bit of Brandt, I got to know him moderately well. I admired him very much and thought that he was a very large man and a very broad-scale man and saw the larger picture much sooner than many of his compatriots and much sooner than many of my compatriots, I am afraid.

I think some of us were trapped a little bit by the contacts we had with a certain element of Berlin, particularly the Berlin press people who tended to still be rather Cold War enthusiasts dating from the blockade period. The deaths of people jumping over the Wall and jumping out of buildings after the Wall was built became to us the symbol of Berlin and the horror of the Wall. We tended to feel that all of West Berlin looked with equal horror on what was going on and were prepared to take risks to resist. We found, I think, from time to time that we were somewhat out ahead of the man in the street. I remember one time I wrote a tough, almost fiery, statement for the commandants to issue after a particularly bad incident at the Wall in which an East German was killed, to bring it close to home, and I think it was representative in a sense. It was published in all the papers and I was quite proud of it, thinking that "here the West Berliners will think we are really going to stick up for them". A woman who worked for us at home, who lived in West Berlin but had come from East Berlin and had family there still, came in one day. She had no idea that I had written the thing, and she had read it and was terrified. She thought that

sounded as though there was going to be war, that there was going to be a conflict. The last thing she wanted was any more trouble and I suspect that she spoke for a lot of West Berliners whom we never got to know because they had no outlet for their views. But it sobered me and I felt from then on we should not count on thinking that we were standing up for the Berliners if we were over violent or over aggressive.

I would like to comment on overall Allied cooperation. It was really excellent I think. The commandants were first class, by and large, on the three sides and their political staffs were very good. I think fortunately on the British and French sides the military had very much less to say on their own national policies about what should be done than was the case on the American side. Since I think their military were, by and large, less sophisticated politically than ours were I think that was a blessing so we dealt mainly with their political people. There were some amusing differences in attitudes. The French could never understand our concern with public opinion at all. The Americans were very sensitive to public opinion in Berlin and elsewhere. Over and over again in our meetings at my level with the French we would put forward some concern with this and the French would say, "Well it is none of the public's business, this is right to do and we should do it." The British were somewhere in between; they understood our point but were a little less concerned about public opinion. But in the end the French would go along; they realized that we felt strongly about some of these things. They had a very fine diplomat named DeNazelle, Count DeNazelle, a very cooperative chap. We got along so well at the personal level with the British and French that policy was no problem.

HAVEN N. WEBB
Consular Officer
Hamburg (1962-1966)

Mr. Webb was born and raised in Tennessee. A Naval Academy graduate, Mr. Webb served with the US Navy overseas before joining the Foreign Service in 1961. A Political and Consular Officer, he served abroad in Guadalajara, Hamburg, Helsinki, Panama City and Tromso, Norway, where he was Officer in Charge. His Washington assignments concerned Political/Military Affairs, as well as International Organizations. Mr. Webb was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2002.

Q: Well you were assigned where? Did you go to Hamburg?

WEBB: I took German language training, and I must say I am very proud of myself, because in those days, it was in Arlington Towers. Arlington Towers was a commercial building. We got an efficiency in Arlington Towers. We left our 40 pound wolf up in Vermont to chase the deer while we settled in Arlington Towers. I was like 55 seconds from my door to the classroom and about the same to the language labs. For the first time, I really hit those tapes, and I worked and I was letter perfect on the tapes. When we started German I was a star student. Plus there was an older fellow there, and he was equally good, I would say. We both obviously worked hard. The other three or four were lazy bums who never knew the tapes. But then towards the end of the 16

weeks they kept getting better; they kept gaining on me. Maybe they just had natural ability that I didn't have. By the time we left I was still 1 or 2 I suppose, but I no longer had the lead I started out with. It was very useful and I learned that the Foreign Service Institute knew what it was talking about, because of course that is the system that at least the Army developed in WWII, which was immersion. We are into biculturalism, and bilingualism, which originally was under the excuse that the only way Mexican immigrants were ever going to learn English was to teach them all their courses in Spanish, which is utterly insane. I am the living proof of that. Of course if you could have FSI language training in the country you would be much better.

Q: Yeah, we are working on it. You have some language instruction but haven't mastered it.

WEBB: Immersion was in France I know. Nice, I think, had it.

Q: Nice had it. Then did you go off to Hamburg?

WEBB: Yes, we served two years in Hamburg, '64 to '66.

Q: What were you doing there?

WEBB: I started out doing visas and ended up the last year heading up our protection-welfare unit. That was very interesting. Again linguistically, I had come out of Guadalajara, I don't know three plus, four I suppose, something like that. In visa Spanish I think I was almost native fluent, but once you got away from visas my efficiency dropped off tremendously. Yet, one day we had some Spanish seamen in for a visa question, wanting a visa. I was the only one who spoke Spanish so I got them. I couldn't say anything although I could understand everything. After about 20 minutes a lot of the Spanish started coming back.

Q: The visa load, was this basically just Germans? Was there much of a problem with Germans?

WEBB: Actually something that in a way was more pertinent to Mexico. After the War of course, I guess all European posts were just swamped with people who were trying to get to the United States. And with DPs (Displaced Persons) they were all mixed up. Somebody came up with an idea, very clever I suppose at the time, since you couldn't expect Americans to know 20 different European languages, that you would simply hand the guy a card and on one side you would have English, and the other side you would have Hungarian, Slovak, whatever. It would say stand up, turn around, tell me your name, and pat your head three times and sit down or something like that.

When I was in Mexico I made the discovery that there were no campesinos who were literate, and yet the visa laws said that you had to be literate in some language. You had to be able to read a language. I found the immigrants swore that this four page form that they just filled out theoretically, in which they were asked questions about are you a homosexual, are you a member of the communist party. The first thing they did is say, "Yes, I understand everything that I have sworn to and I told the truth." One day I just asked somebody what about question 12 and showed him the paper in Spanish. He hadn't the faintest idea what it was all about. Eventually I would just walk away and take a break for 10 minutes. I would come back in 10 or 15 minutes to

find that the answer was always the same. If they were sophisticated, they would say, when I go to the United States I promise to obey the laws. That is all it meant to them. The unsophisticated, "When I go to the United States I promise to be good." We were giving these people visas. A Mexican local would hand the applicant some officialese, probably the same form that I was using, and say can you read this. They would look at it and say, "Si senorita." And that was the test. Occasionally you would get an older fellow who had never spent a day in school and didn't know the alphabet. He would say, "No senorita, no posso." She would say, "Well you have to learn to read before you come back." He would learn the alphabet and come back. They only learned the alphabet. If you gave them one of these "decreed forms" it would take them 15 minutes, but eventually by sounding out the words, they would stand up and do everything that the little card required you to do, looking at you like you don't really mean this do you. I went to my boss, Otto Wagner, who was out of INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service).

Q: He was in immigration. I know Otto. I worked with him.

WEBB: He said, "No, the courts have decreed if they can figure out those cards." But this is not reading. To this day I am thoroughly ashamed of myself. I should have gone on strike and refused to sign one of those things on the basis that it was a fraud. Nobody could possibly not say that the intent of Congress was that every immigrant, with a few exceptions for close relatives, had to be able to read, as far as I know it is still true, had to be able to read some sort of language. That was an absolutely fraudulent test. But I was new and I thought who am I to say what the courts have decreed. And I suppose they would have just tossed me out on my ear if I stuck to it.

Q: When you got to Hamburg, was this a problem?

WEBB: By the time we got there, Germany was wealthy. The German economic miracle had long been booming. Actually it was interesting because I had in my second job there, citizenship. I had a very able assistant, a local employee who in fact was a German countess, who had lost everything in East Prussia and was presumably penniless. She was very lucky to get a job with the American Consulate General in Hamburg. She was a marvel, other than the fact she was very bossy. They had no need for me to be there really except to sign papers. I did what I always did. I always told the truth when it came to evaluation reports, which if you will pardon my saying so I seemed to be one of the very few people in the foreign service who really did that. With her report I praised her highly. I said that she was marvelous, but I also said she could be rude. I had the woman crying. I didn't think she was the crying type. But my experience was with one very drastic exception in Norway, the local employees that I dealt with tended to be very good, at least the head of the section or whatever it was. I never had much contact with any American secretary that I thought was very competent, with a couple of exceptions.

Q: Did you have any particular problem with citizenship cases in Germany in Hamburg?

WEBB: This was a very unique situation. I supposed it has changed with the immigration law. We had a consular district of six million Germans I think it was. Half of all our citizenship cases pertained to one tiny island off of Schleswig-Holstein, one of the north Frisian Islands. I can't remember the name now. Somehow a century and a half ago before this, a pattern had been set

up by which all the young men of the island would emigrate to the United States, stay there for 20 years, make their fortunes. When their parents were ready to retire, they would come back to the island and take over the farm. They had American citizenship. This had gone on for decades. There was also an absolutely unique situation in that on the west side of the island Föhr they spoke Frisian, which is the nearest thing there is supposedly to English, even more so than Dutch. You could just see how the language changed from Friesian all the way up to the Swiss border where it became something completely different. On the west coast they spoke Frisian, on the east coast they spoke Plattdeutsch. Everybody went to German language school and learned Hochdeutsch, and apparently everyone from Föhr knew English anyway. Half of our business was with these people. I have never heard of anybody remarking about this. It is one tiny island, but other than that, it was just the usual embassy situations, the usual citizenship problems.

This struck me very strangely in a way, but a very attractive young woman came in, and she had an eight year old boy which seemed a little incongruous, and she was from St Louis, and was divorced or separated and had come to Europe and was penniless and wanted to go home. Well eventually it became clear that she had emotional and mental problems. I think we eventually got her back. What surprised me, I was 31 at the time, I saw her passport and she was 30. I was absolutely horrified. I couldn't believe that a 30 year old woman could be so good looking.

That very night, I was giving a ride to a very attractive German woman who worked upstairs from us for a Britisher named Neville Hostelry. I told her the story, and she looked at me very strange and said, "How old do you think I am?" I said, "I don't know, 23 or 24." She said, "I am 32."

But basically protection and welfare was a very routine exercise in many ways. Like I said, it was very enjoyable in many respects. I never rushed things. I used to discuss things with people, and I learned a lot about Germans. I know the one thing that surprised me when I went to Germany was all the Slavic names. One day, I think it was a German immigrant applicant, I said, "Now what about your Slavic or Polish ancestry?" He looked at me like that guy must be crazy. I thought he was going to slug me at first. I said, "But your name is obviously Slavic. He eventually understood that I wasn't trying to insult him. It amazed me. Apparently the Nazis made no attempt, that I am aware of, to force people to Germanicize their names, which they did with the language, and particularly with the grammar. They bowdlerized much of the German language which created an abysmal chasm between elementary school kids who joined the working class who didn't know what [inaudible] was and who only heard of [inaudible] or something like that, activity word which is the Nazi version of the German version of Das Verb or whatever one would call it. I also saw something of German arrogance. I was utterly amazed. The British did their job too well almost. Of course they had Hamburg and everything except Bremen and Bremerhaven, I guess, which we kept because they were used for ports. They had totally convinced everybody that Oxford English or BBC English was the only proper English. Germans are the only people I have ever known who would correct my English at the drop of a hat.

Q: So by '66 you are off again. Whither?

WEBB: Yes. I had been promoted out of Guadalajara I guess. I think your first promotion was

like the Navy, from ensign to Lt. Junior grade; it was pretty much automatic. Then I got a second promotion coming out of Hamburg I guess. That is when I started going bad. I don't even remember. I think I had convinced myself that I was about ready to take off for Finland. I was going to go native and write a book which would start this new politics fiction. I had all kinds of ideas. I think at that point I was given an assignment. I had two consular assignments. I always applied for a political assignment, and I got the strange assignment to be something, I think they called it science attaché. Now obviously they were looking at my record. My record was one of a BS, Naval Academy, science and math. It made perfect sense except that wasn't my interest any more. Who knows if I had done that, maybe I would have made admiral or whatever. If not ambassador, maybe I would have gotten a few more promotions. But I was sick and fed up with the way I had been handled. I went to our Consul General.

Q: Who was that?

WEBB: He was very much a gentleman of the old school. He was a little forbidding. As far as I know he spoke German and did excellent work. Of course, being a junior officer in Hamburg, a city of two million meant that you didn't meet anybody and you were nobody, and you didn't go to any really official functions except those at the Embassy. Whereas in Guadalajara you met the governor, the mayor. I almost gave English language instruction to the daughter of the governor. Whereas in Hamburg it was a big city. It had 109 official consulates. You are an absolute nobody. This gentleman whose name I forget, seemed to be somewhat stiff, but he seemed to be an honest fellow, and presumably competent, although I really have nothing to go on there. His wife was a little strange to be a senior foreign service officer's wife. She had a phobia about shaking hands. She wouldn't shake hands with anybody. And of course what Mexico and Germany have in common is that when two Mexicans or two Germans meet on the street they shake hands. After a couple of minutes they shake hands again.

Q: I used to think that German couples when they woke up in the morning would reach across and shake each other's hand.

WEBB: Well I was raised in the south, and I had never shaken a woman's hand in my life that I can remember. Even in high school when we were introduced to somebody you had never met before, if it was a male you shook his hand at that time and never again. If it was a female you sort of nodded politely and all, but you never shook a female hand. After two years in Mexico I came back. My mother had a party with all of these elderly women who were personal friends. Before I could stop myself I grabbed one of their hands and started shaking it vigorously. She must have thought I was crazy, but I got out of that quickly enough. But in Germany and in Mexico you shook hands every time you met somebody, before you left, as you were leaving. It was a great shaking hands culture. I don't remember so much about Norwegians or Finns shaking hands, but maybe I was used to it by then.

I just didn't drink. Ken Skoug when he learned that said, "You have no business in the foreign service," particularly when he knew I was going to Germany. He said, "You will not be able to conduct business if you don't drink in Germany." I found it was absolutely no problem in Germany, particularly because they had all these wonderful substitutes. They look like wine and God knows what else but they were non-alcoholic. I remember something, I almost got addicted

to it. I can't remember the name of it. It is a marvelous substitute because the one thing about fruit juices and Coca Cola and things of that sort, eventually you do get tired of them. I thought my problem was solved when I got to Helsinki. All they had was Pepsi Cola. Coca Cola I don't think was in Finland at that time, and the same in Norway. But in Germany there was no problem at all. I never found it a problem. In Helsinki I met with my Soviet counterpart supposedly once a week, really about once a month. We were supposed to alternate between Russian, which I didn't speak, and English, which he spoke badly, at least he presumably spoke it badly. The first meeting he ordered something alcoholic, and I ordered Pepsi Cola. He immediately changed to a soft drink. I explained that I didn't drink. So by then Nehru had done his work and apparently even the Soviets offered fruit juices at their functions.

Q: Well back to when you left Hamburg what did you do?

WEBB: Anyway I went to the consul general and I said I wanted to go to Finland.

JOHN TODD STEWART
Rotation Officer
Munich (1963-1965)

Ambassador Stewart was born in New Jersey and raised in New York City and San Francisco. He attended Stanford University and the Fletcher School and entered the Foreign Service in 1962. His first post in Munich was followed by posts in Venezuela, Geneva, Moscow, Jamaica, Costa Rica, Canada, and an ambassadorship to the Republic of Moldova. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: You went to Munich from '62 to...?

STEWART: '63 to '65.

Q: Who was Consul General at the time?

STEWART: Paul Taylor was the Consul General during most of that time. The Consul General when I arrived was Walter K. Scott, who had been a DAS in the Bureau of Administration.

Q: How big was the Consulate General?

STEWART: We had, including the attached agencies, probably about 25 officers.

Q: What were you doing when you arrived?

STEWART: We had a rotation system, but there were too many officers and the rotation couldn't start until somebody was transferred out to open up a slot for me. My first month was spent helping two FSNs inventory typewriters. I got to see a lot of Munich since the government

had loaned typewriters to refugee organizations all around town. The three of us visited each office to verify that the typewriters were still there. In retrospect, it was probably as cost inefficient a way to spend time as you can possibly imagine. But this is how it was done. After a month of typewriter counting I moved into the visa section to do immigrant visas and then non-immigrant visas. NIVs were sort of fun because that was a one-officer operation in those days. I recoil with horror every time I see the bullet-proof interview windows and the long lines today because back then the number of applicants was sufficiently limited that you could usher each one into your office and have a nice ten-minute chat.

Q: And meet some very interesting professional people.

STEWART: Absolutely. Extraordinarily valuable. I met this one gentleman in a visa interview, and that relationship paid off quite handsomely. He was a Jew who had fought in the First World War and received the Iron Cross. During the Weimar period he owned a chain of department stores. When Hitler came to power, he had the good sense to get out while he could, went along to the States, spent the war, and then came back. He considered himself a German, as opposed to someone who'd want to go to Israel or stay in the States. He had no problem coming back to Germany. In the *Wiedergutmachung* he was awarded a considerable settlement, and as he was well past retirement age, he bought a lovely house out by the Nymphenburg Palace. He was an art collector with wonderful paintings and oriental rugs, and he was on the art gallery circuit, which was just opening up again in Munich at the time. He would get me invitations to gallery openings. We would go together to these openings, a great thrill for a 24-year old kid as this gentleman had enough money to buy, and would buy, Picassos and what not. It was a unique experience.

Q: Munich had a reputation for being an art center. Their Kunst houses are major attractions. How did your German work?

STEWART: My German worked quite well. I'd had four months at FSI, and I was almost at a three-three level when I left for Germany. Within a couple of months I was able to get off language probation. Then I made a lot of German friends. My former wife and I went out of our way to have a social life with German students who were our age.

Q: You were married at that time?

STEWART: I got married when I was at Fletcher to a Stanford student who had just graduated. We had quite a nice social life, and actually some of those people remain friends of mine today.

Q: Did you get involved at all in observing the political life, the economic life?

STEWART: Very much so. Because first of all, the junior officer rotation program included stints in the economic and political sections after the visa and American citizen services sections. The idea was that before you started "substantive" work you would attend political meetings. There were a lot of those in Munich, and going to listen to somebody speak was good for your language, good for your understanding of Germany, and good for your political reporting.

Q: At the time, what was the Bavarian branch of the CDU?

STEWART: CSU.

Q: That was Joseph Strauss?

STEWART: Franz-Josef Strauss.

Q: Franz-Josef Strauss.

STEWART: This was after the *Spiegel* affair, when Strauss was forced out of the federal government. So he was back in Bavaria with no government position. However, he chaired the CSU and, in effect, ran Bavaria. He was a very powerful man.

Q: Were we still looking under rocks to find resurgent Nazis and all that, or was that pretty much over?

STEWART: Not to any great degree. I recall that one Bavarian Minister of Education was forced out at that time. Somebody had checked into his activities during the Third Reich and found out that he had written some claptrap legal analysis concluding that the Fuhrer's will was the highest law. The Bavarians rightly decided that they could find someone with stronger moral fiber to educate their children.

Q: How about the U.S. military when you were there?

STEWART: A very large presence. The army still occupied a big building downtown that was the PX, and they had numerous installations around Munich. But even then the shrinkage was apparent. It was clear what direction things were going.

Q: How was the situation in Berlin? Were we thinking that things were pretty much on a hair trigger between the East and the West?

STEWART: It wasn't really a tense time. I visited Berlin. I remember taking a walk along the Wall--one could in certain sectors--and going into East Berlin with my diplomatic passport. You got a first-hand appreciation of what this was all about.

Q: Did the Embassy in Bonn intrude at all or did you feel you were doing you own thing and that was way off beyond the horizon?

STEWART: Communications at that time were not nearly as good as they are now, and most of our reporting was done by air gram. We traded air grams and cables with all the other German posts and with the embassy. And how much guidance the CG and the head of the political section, who was Jim Relph at the time, were getting out of the embassy, I don't know. It's an interesting question. But the reporting targets were reasonably obvious. The main thing they cared about was what Strauss was up to.

Q: Did you pick up any indication, what was the feeling that you were getting from the political section when you were assigned there, about Strauss?

STEWART: I only met Strauss once, but I spent a fair amount of time before I went to the political section and during my stint there reading about Strauss or reading the stuff that he'd written. My own appreciation of the man was that he was a decent person. Obviously very competent. An excellent politician who understood Bavaria. He'd never been a member of the Party--exactly why was never clear--but he never joined.

Q: When you talk about the party, you mean the Nazi party?

STEWART: Yes, when one talked about *Die Partei*, there was only one *Partei*.

Strauss continued on being not just *a* force in Bavaria but *the* force in Bavaria until the day he died. And the fact that he was the force in Bavaria made him always a player in national politics even though he didn't hold a national office. It was interesting that when something terrible happened, like the massacre of the Israeli athletes during the 1972 Olympics in Munich, it was actually Strauss that took charge, despite the fact that he had no actual position in the government. Everybody understood who ran things. The boss of bosses.

Q: In many places in 1963 the reaction to the assassination of Kennedy was rather profound. How did that go in Munich?

STEWART: That was certainly the most memorable event during my tour there. I was at a cocktail party after work at a colleague's apartment with other members of the Consulate community. The waiters had AFN on in the kitchen. These were German waiters, but there they listened to AFN because of its cool programming with a lot of American pop music. One of them came running out and said, "The President has been shot." We heard the announcement and then went running back to our own apartments to listen to further bulletins on our own radios. I was duty officer so I hurried down to the Consulate when the confirmation came that the President had died. We certainly were in touch with the Embassy at that time, and the people there were getting instructions and passing them on to us as to what to do following the death of a president. Some steps were printing up stationery with a black border on it, putting black streamers on the American flag inside the building, and setting up a condolence book, which was in the lobby of the Consulate. We had a Marine guard stand watch next to it. A long, long line of mourners waiting to sign the book went out the front door and up the block. It's amazing the number of important people we saw in that line. We had some junior officers there to catch luminaries and take them to the Consul General. But we missed King Umberto, the last king of Italy, who waited in line to sign the book without signaling his presence. The last day before the funeral students at the university asked if they could march down *en masse* in the evening to express their condolences. In one of the most memorable events of my career, they organized a parade, in which everyone carried a torch. They gathered in front of the Consulate, where the head of the student association spoke and the Consul General made a formal reply. It was a very moving experience. And the interesting thing, again in retrospect, was that six or seven years later, the students at the university would be throwing rocks through the windows at the Consulate to protest the Vietnam War.

Q: Was Vietnam at all intrusive at this point?

STEWART: Yes, it was. We had one Vietnam demonstration at the Consulate, but that was organized by a bunch of foreign students in support of US policy. The leader was actually a Vietnamese, a pro-government Vietnamese--at least that's what he said. One can't be too sure, I'm afraid.

RICHARD B. FINN
Deputy for German Affairs
Berlin (1963-1966)

Richard B. Finn was born in 1917 and grew up around Niagara Falls, New York. He attended Harvard College and Law School before he joined the U.S. Navy as a Japanese language Officer. His Foreign Service career included positions in Tokyo, Washington, DC, and Paris. Mr. Finn was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.

FINN: I knew Bob Creel, the Director of German Affairs, quite well. He didn't necessarily want a German hand; he wanted someone with a variety of experience, so he asked me to be number two. I took it and liked it. It was a very interesting job. Germany was a very key nation in Europe, and we had Berlin also as part of the responsibility of the German desk. I made a lot of trips to Germany to talk about all kinds of problems with the Germans. I don't remember offhand any crisis type of problem. I know Khrushchev was replaced during that period but this didn't echo or make waves at my level when it happened.

German unification was a constant subject, but nothing ever emerged in any realistic way that would appear to make it likely.

I can't believe that our Vietnam policy had much affect on our relations with Germany or with NATO. With the French, of course, it was totally different. Dienbienphu happened in 1954 just after I left Japan. By then we are talking about 1963. I remember the Tonkin Gulf resolution was debated in the Congress at that time, and like other desks in the Department we had to keep our German colleagues informed and win their support. We weren't doing very well in Southeast Asia, but on the other hand there was no impression we were going to be forced out of Vietnam.

Kennedy started building up the commitment. That is what got us in pretty deep. I remember I was in his office as Deputy for German Affairs when the Test Ban Treaty was concluded in 1963. I was there with Gerhart Schroeder, the German Foreign Minister. A secretary brought a note to Kennedy which told him that the Senate had approved the Test Ban Treaty. He told Schroeder about it. This was only about a month, I think, before he was assassinated. When he was assassinated Willy Brandt came over to attend the funeral along with the Chancellor.

My tour on the desk was not with great turmoil. One likes to think that one went through more

tension, more trouble. But I don't honestly recall too much in a way of concern about Germany, about a Soviet attack, or the course of the NATO Alliance.

WILLIAM E. RYERSON
Staff Aide
Berlin (1963-1966)

William E. Ryerson was born in New Jersey in 1936. He graduated from Cornell University in 1960 and entered the Foreign Service in 1961. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Albania, Barbados, and Yugoslavia. Mr. Ryerson was interviewed by William D. Morgan on June 26, 1992.

RYERSON: Oh, to Berlin, and the job was staff aide to the minister at the U.S. mission in Berlin. But, you will be amused, but I had to explain to some relatives that no, this was not a religious mission and the minister was not a man who wore his collar backward. But this was a peculiar place because of Berlin's status. Berlin became then a very special kind of place. My wife was a Foreign Service officer and had been assigned in Berlin previously. Three of our four kids were born there. I served subsequently as Berlin desk officer in the Department of State many years later. So Berlin is had a kind of special place. I'm one of those people who built a career on the esoteric rules and regulations of Berlin access, and the Clay-Sokolovski agreements in 1946, regulating coaxial cable usage and all those good things.

Q: And even maybe...what do they call them on trucks? They go up and down...and we almost went to war over them.

RYERSON: Access into trucks!

Q: Tailgates! Tailgates!

RYERSON: Tailgates. The incident to which you refer happened because we changed truck models. It had nothing to do with Berlin, the truck beds were a bit higher, the tailgates were a bit higher, and the Soviets, ever clever, sent one of their shortest officers around to sort of inspect trucks. We didn't admit that they inspected, that they sort of looked in. Well this little beggar couldn't see over the back of the truck! And a great big sergeant, American army sergeant, said, "That's O.K. son." And picked up this Soviet lieutenant and held him up. (laughs) That nearly caused certain hairs to fall and eyebrows to raise, and so on. But...

Q: One more example of the real world of diplomacy; and international politics.

RYERSON: Yes, right. It's metal grip by sergeants who don't know any better, which is...

Q: Or are too short!

RYERSON: Well the sergeant was tall!

Q: *The other one...*

RYERSON: It was the Russian lieutenant who was too short.

KENNETH P.T. SULLIVAN
Assistant Labor Attaché
Bonn (1963-1966)

Kenneth P.T. Sullivan was born in Massachusetts in 1918. He served in the U.S. Army. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, the Sudan, Austria, and Washington, DC. Mr. Sullivan was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on October 25, 1994.

Q: *Following that you were sent to Bonn where we linked up again in 1963 and you came as assistant labor attaché.*

SULLIVAN: That is right.

Q: *That certainly is one of the most important labor assignments in the world I would think.*

SULLIVAN: That was a very nice assignment for me and for my boss. My boss was, again, a long term trade unionist, although he was somewhat on the academic side. He was an immigrant from Norway as a child and started to speak English when he was nine years old. He educated himself, worked his way through college where I believe he took a degree in chemistry. He then got a masters in teaching and finally a Ph.D. in labor, at three different institutions. He had come from a tour as the labor attaché

In Sweden at a time in which not only was the Socialist party of Sweden running the entire country, but most of the people who were running the party were the laborists, the Swedish labor unions. So he knew both politics and unionism tied together in a socialist form of government. He was a great personality. He was a friendly personality. He spoke inaccurate, but fluent German and could get along quite well with most of the people. He was a great contact man. I was more or less the intelligence research section in back of him doing some of the substance that required more knowledge of the German background, more knowledge of the legal structure and German politics, etc. So, I think we had a good team together. And we, of course, at that time had local staff that had been working together in this field and selected and reselected ever since the post war years in Germany. So it was pretty much a crack team not yet debilitated by age.

Q: *Did he and you feel that what you were producing and doing there was appreciated by other elements of the embassy?*

SULLIVAN: This unfortunately applied as much to Bonn as anywhere else and often was a

discussion among labor attachés. It depended largely on the background of the other officers. The tendency among Foreign Service officers is to look down on labor for whatever reason. And the tendency for them if they have to pay attention is to give it grudging attention. There are exceptions and when the exceptions wish to exploit labor, since labor can't exploit the embassy, they get very good joint results out of this.

Q: I know, I have personal experience with that. I needn't explain that to you.

SULLIVAN: In part this is because they are call labor attachés. If they were called social attachés, it would be a different matter perhaps.

Q: Did the feedback you got on your reporting come mainly from State or from Labor?

SULLIVAN: Oh, the feedback was almost exclusively from Labor. I must modify that because the feedback you got from State was from the Labor man in State, but the International Labor Affairs Bureau is a first rate operation in its field and even the least contributions are welcomed. And you often get welcome information from them, too, usually informally, which is quicker and better. Those interested in the material were not interested in making marks.

GEORGE F. BOGARDUS
Consul
Stuttgart (1963-1967)

George F. Bogardus was born in Iowa in 1917 and graduated from Harvard University in 1939. He served in the U.S. Army in 1941 and joined the Foreign Service in 1941. His career included positions in Canada, Kenya, Czechoslovakia, Algeria, Germany, and Vietnam. Mr. Bogardus was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on April 10th 1996.

BOGARDUS: Later on, when I was in Stuttgart, the line of where I'm bending had become so keen on ending the American government subservience to Israel and the Jewish lobby. In the late autumn of 1966, it became evident that the headquarters of USAFE (United States Armed Force in Europe) was to be moved to Patch Barracks from Paris. Patch Barracks is just outside Stuttgart about nine miles. The French government was insisting that it leave France. From then until March 1967, the number of American generals and admirals in Patch and Stuttgart, rose from four generals to 20 generals and admirals. The generals were both Army and Air Force, including one at the "Siedlung", which is where a lot of us lived in groups of bungalows.

Q: "Siedlung" being German for "settlement."

BOGARDUS: That's right. On March 15, 1967, Consul General Sweet and I, like Ambassador George McGhee, attended the installation ceremonies effecting the transfer of USAFE from Paris to Patch with USAFE General David Birchinal (four-star) in command. That was the only time I've ever seen an American ambassador in protocol place second to a military officer or

anyone else. But McGhee did because this was an overall command comprehending everything from the North Cape to Basra and Casablanca.

Simultaneously, the Consulate General was tasked with storing and coordinating emergency and evacuation plans (E and E) for Americans outside the Iron Curtain in Europe and North Africa. We received no increase in staff, although the embassy in Paris had two persons performing these duties and nothing else. Consul General Sweet retired on March 31 and I was in charge until the arrival of his successor, Bruce Lancaster, late on June 6, 1967. On June 5, the Israelis attacked Egypt successfully and Americans in the entire Arab world were at risk because of our government's perceived identification with Israel.

Q: This was the 1967 war.

BOGARDUS: That's right. Almost at once, our two code clerks were swamped. Before this we had only three or four cipher telegrams in a week, and went to thirty a week. Then we went up to twenty or twenty five or thirty a day for about ten days. They were swamped with flash messages, which means instantly, highly classified telegrams, secret and top secret, owing to our proximity to headquarters USAFE and our responsibility for emergency plans. Posts ranging from Rabat to Algiers, Cairo, Jeddah, Abu Dhabi, Dhahran and Basra were urgently asking for instructions and pleading for evacuation. Since we have no secure means to communicate with Patch, Consul General Lancaster and I had to direct courier trips by car for ten days. Under such pressure, we occasionally did something that made the code cipher a little risky, talking on the phone, for about ten days. It took six or seven days for the White House and the Pentagon to decide how to meet the situation. Thereafter, they did act magnificently and carried out the largest evacuation of Americans ever: some 35,000, which was more than from Korea in 1950. The Consulate General was able to render significant assistance in the planning and coordination of operations. In addition to the courier deliveries, from June 6th to probably the eleventh, I attended the eight o'clock briefings of General Birchinal, together with the generals and admirals. On the morning of the ninth, the general politely suggested that things truly military were to be discussed. I, the only civilian, left. During that day, the world learned of the perfidious Israeli assault on the slightly armed U.S.S. Liberty flying the largest stars and stripes the day before, later determined to be two and a half hours of bombing, strafing and torpedoing. The military didn't know the exact situation at that point. The Israelis failed to sink the ship, but killed 34 U.S. Navy and wounded 171, for a total of 205 casualties. This is what really got me. I clearly recall, it must have been on the morning of the 10th or the 11th while we were waiting for General Birchinal to appear that his aide, a major, said, "You know what happened the other night? At 3 a.m., we got a flash message from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which had been sent before the Liberty attack and had been delayed. (That came out later.) It said, "Take precautions against enemy action. In other words, if Pearl Harbor happens, it's not our, the Joint Chiefs', fault." General Birchinal thought a bit and answered, "Who, repeat, who are the enemy?" The joint Chiefs did not answer that for about 30 hours. Another Pearl Harbor had happened.

Q: The Liberty is, of course, a blot on our...

BOGARDUS: A few years later, I joined the U.S.S. Liberty Association as a volunteer. They accepted me and I kept it up. They had a convention.

Q: I want to catch it at the time, not to follow through on the Liberty when you were not on duty. What was the reaction of the military at the Air Force headquarters after it became known that the attack on the Liberty had happened?

BOGARDUS: I got there in September. I was really shocked when, about the middle of September, one of the first things that I saw was an announcement that 31 Israeli military pilots had arrived at McDill Air Force base in Tampa for advanced training at our expense. That's like training the Japanese to be kamikaze against us. That's what was coming down to us from above, from Secretary McNamara.

Q: Your job in Stuttgart was what, deputy chief of the consulate?

BOGARDUS: Yes. All together, I was temporarily in charge for over a year -- several months at a time and so forth. But I was never given any real recognition for it.

OWEN B. LEE
Analyst, Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Washington, DC (1963-1967)

Owen B. Lee served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He graduated from Harvard University in 1949 and studied in Paris, France at Institut d'Etudes Politiques. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Bolivia, Romania, and Spain. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on December 4, 1996.

Q: When you were working at INR did you find that you got a lot of cooperation from the geographic bureaus? Did they find your material useful and want it? Or did they feel you were competing with them for the attention of the Secretary?

LEE: This was always the issue between INR and the geographical bureaus, but it never concerned me that much. There were times that some of the things that I had on Romania were helpful to the bureau, but I can't say there was that much. There was more interest in East Germany because it was wrapped up in the bigger issue of Germany. We had the situation there where, although it was open in some ways, there was not that much knowledge about the way East Germany was functioning. There also was an overarching feeling, which was incorrect, that somehow East Germany was being supported by the Soviet Union. In my time in INR I was able to show them that the opposite was true. Everyone felt the Soviet Union was supporting East Germany economically but this "feeling" had no basis in facts.

This issue of East Germany's economy was one of the major battles I have had in my whole Foreign Service career, basically with the CIA. Sometime in 1966, possibly 1967, there was a requirement for an intelligence estimate of East Germany. I worked on it and the CIA worked on it. We did initial reports. The CIA came up with the conclusion that East Germany would

collapse by 1975. I looked at this and thought they were crazy. I spent some time doing a report to refute this conclusion. My superiors in INR thought I was right and said, "Owen, you take it up with the CIA." I went to a meeting in Langley alone and met in a room with maybe 25 people, a panel headed by a former ambassador. They started with the report on East Germany. When they got to the picture of the economic outlook, for which the CIA was supposed to be responsible but which I had worked on, I said that I couldn't agree with their conclusion and was prepared to tell them why. So, I went into the whole explanation.

One point is East Germany had never nationalized all of industry. Two, many of the smaller industrial firms in East Germany were connected very closely with West German firms. There was a division of labor. The West German firms exported to the Free World, the East German firms, under the Interzonal trade arrangements, exported to West Germany second-rate products made in East Germany. Three, you had the only place of contact between the West and the East with hard currency flowing for non-commercial purposes into East Germany...the church, a whole host of sources. Four, you had certain industrial standards that were commonly followed in East Germany and West Germany. But there were a number of other economic features like this.

Then I pointed to the trade between the Soviet Union and East Germany where you had a bastard sort of situation. You have to think of it in colonial terms. One part furnishes raw materials and the other part manufactured goods. I said that was what was going on, but not the way people assumed. It was East Germany that was furnishing completed industrial plants to the Soviet Union for raw materials. The Russians were not paying commercial prices for those things. That is where you had your political implication and political price, the guarantee given the East German regime. It was the East Germans that were exporting capital goods to the USSR at below market prices. Then I pointed out the element of a certain sign of East German independence in economic matters. I mentioned the opening of a pipeline from Rostak to import oil from the Arab world rather than exclusively with the pipeline coming from Russia. There were a number of other things.

That meeting ended in a shambles and everyone was sent back to the drafting board. They accepted my statements and we eventually came out with an NIE that was more rational and based on the facts. I was guided by a friend's rhetorical question: has anyone ever seen a German fail in an industrial enterprise?

Q: Not that I can remember.

LEE: That is the question that had to be answered and no one asked that question. Even under the communist system they did very well compared to the other communist countries. Now, the problem was that we compared them to West Germany with which East Germany was no match.

ALBERT STOFFEL
Civil Air Attaché
Bonn (1963-1967)

Albert Stoffel was born in 1915 and raised in Rochester, New York. He graduated from the University of Rochester in 1938 with a degree in economics. In 1941, In 1941, he entered the Royal Air Force Civilian Technical Corps in England. After several months, he decided to return to the U.S. and join the Air Force as an aviation cadet. Mr. Stoffel's Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Canada, Vietnam, and France. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on May 9, 1994.

Q: You finally arrived in Bonn in early '63 to handle Transport and Communications. What were your big problems there?

STOFFEL: One of the biggest was access to Berlin. Remember, that was the time when the Soviets were making threats about Berlin. Eventually it came to troops armed and facing one another. It was fairly hairy.

I think we had 2 military airplanes shot down while I was there. One we think was a result of a defective compass that allowed this airplane to feel that he was going straight. Actually he was curving right over the Soviet zone.

Part of my job involved several committees in Berlin. For example the Stock Pile committee. I was the American member on that as well as on the Air Safety Committee. We had meetings in Berlin and I'd coordinate with the air force officers who were going up. I'd say, why don't you guys pick me up here. They said, because we'd have to pay a landing fee at Bonn, and they wouldn't do it.

Eventually there was a twin-jet. I forget which number it was, sort of a business class jet that the air force was using. Very often the Soviets in the Air Safety Center would ask what kind of an airplane is this?

Unfortunately, in connection with this particular airplane that flew into Tempelhof, the Soviet had looked it up in Jane's "All the World's Aircraft" which was available in the Safety Center and found out that there was an armed version of this aircraft. The manufacturer, I think it was the North American, was trying to promote an armed version of this twin-jet business airplane. I don't think they were ever built or sold.

Nevertheless, that made the Soviet rep say, this is an armed aircraft and we're going to shoot it down. It was in Tempelhof and it was sitting there and they called me. The Air Safety Center, American Element, reported to me and I said, you tell the airplane to go. We can't let them tell us what aircraft we can and cannot use, so we've got to take our chances.

A couple of hours later, I got a call from one of my air force officer friends on one of these committees. He said, "Al, you know that airplane that just left Tempelhof?" I said, yes. He says, "Guess who was on it." I said, don't tell me you were on it. He said, "Yes. What are you trying to do, get me killed!"

So the next meeting we had, he said, "Al, how are you going to Berlin?" I said, I'll take the regular Pan Am flight. He said, "Why don't we pick you up." I said, you always refused to pick me up. He said, "This time we'll pick you up."

Because he was going to take that airplane and this was the first time that it was going to go in after the Soviets had said they'd shoot it down if it came in again. So I said, okay. He told me later that they said they were going to pay the landing fee out of their own pockets if they had to.

So they picked me up and I got on the airplane. I said, where are the parachutes? They told me where they were. I said, where is the escape hatch? And they laughed. I said, look, I'll go along with this scheme of yours but by God if there's any shooting I'm not going to spend time fitting a parachute or looking for the escape hatch.

Q: I'm out of here!

STOFFEL: And actually it went in, no problems.

Q: Well, I was in Bonn with you at that time. The third time we were together. I remember the highlight was the Kennedy visit, that kept us all active. Did you have anything to do with that or not? Clearing planes?

STOFFEL: No. I remember sitting on the platform with Kennedy when he spoke to the embassy. I don't recall that we had any problem in my area. I later had a problem in connection with President Kennedy's funeral.

I was at a party one night and I got a call from Lufthansa in great distress. Because Erhard was going to fly to the funeral on a Lufthansa airplane and they, of course, wanted to land at Dulles International airport. Some U.S. official said Lufthansa airplanes don't have any landing rights at Dulles, and they can't land there.

I said to the Lufthansa representative: you have permission to land. That's a state aircraft. When a government charters a private airplane, that plane becomes a state aircraft. So I called the Department of State from the party. I said I want to talk to somebody in the economic/business affairs division, and I don't care if it's the Assistant Secretary or any secretary on duty but I want to talk to somebody right now. Eventually someone came on the line.

I said, I have cleared this airplane to land and as a state aircraft and don't let anybody tell you that it can't land. It would be a disaster to tell Chancellor Erhard that he couldn't go to that funeral in a state airplane.

Q: Apparently he got there all right and you were safe.

STOFFEL: It was one of the few times that I took something into my own hands. But I was sure that I was right or I wouldn't have done it.

Q: Having written the papers yourself.

It was during this period that Pan American inaugurated their New York to Berlin flights.

STOFFEL: Not New York to Berlin, West Germany to Berlin -- Frankfurt and the other German cities. I flew in the first 727 that landed at Tempelhof, just as an experiment. I was on the flight with a PanAm Vice President by the name of Sam Miller.

My previous experience with Sam Miller had been on one occasion when I was flying to Newfoundland in connection with my PanAm training program. I was on the airplane; Vivian Leigh and Laurence Olivier were sitting in front of me and the airplane caught fire. The number 4 engine burned right out of the wing and the airplane came down in Connecticut and landed on the belly. Sam Miller was the pilot, about 29 years old. That airplane was so close to blowing up, you wouldn't believe it. We were lucky to get out alive.

Q: What a coincidence that you'd run into him again. Then a Vice President?

STOFFEL: Yes, he was a Vice President.

Q: Did the Soviets growl about this PanAm service into Berlin?

STOFFEL: Yes. As you remember that was typical of Soviets; no matter what the subject was, they made difficulties. For example, one big problem in connection with the jets were that there was a de facto 10,000 foot ceiling on the airplanes from West Germany to West Berlin. Sam Miller raised the subject with me on this flight in, he said, these airplanes don't perform well below 10,000 feet. Can't we get that raised? I told him no, there's not a chance. It would cause so much trouble, it just isn't worth it. And it's only a short flight.

Q: Did you find that our allies were cooperative in these air matters with you regarding Berlin?

STOFFEL: Yes. There was a little commercial competition among Pan American, British Airways, and Air France. The companies would make a complaint -- PanAm is doing this or that. But in general we got along pretty well.

Q: Now in regards to your communications duties, did we still maintain censorship in any form in Germany at that time?

STOFFEL: I don't think so.

Two subjects did come up in the communications area. One was the agreement on COMSAT, the satellite communications system. The other was standards for color television. There was a French system and an American system and whatnot. We did get involved in that but we never settled on a common system.

There were some interesting things. For example, the German PTT was so defensive as a government agency that they didn't want any outsiders in communications. In one instance, just a little thing, there was an answering system in D.C. run by an organist at St. John's Church near

the White House. He decided, when he was studying to be an organist, that he wasn't going to make a very good living at it. So somehow or other he got into the answering service business and set up a successful answering service. He also was trying to sell it to the Germans. The Germans weren't interested of course. They had their own answering service. His was different because you had an actual secretary, a person who would answer the phone and say, this is such and such company.

Well, it didn't look plausible that Germany would ever allow that. We had one go-around one year and it didn't work. The next year he came back.

In the meantime I had found out that the Deputy Minister of Communications was a viola player, I believe it was, and played in a chamber group. Of course the American was an organist. We got another German friend who was also a musician and was Vice President of the big Siemens company.

The day before we were going to meet at the Ministry for this meeting, I had these three people who had in common, that they were musicians on the side and were all in the communications business to a friendly dinner at our apartment. The American visitor and I had agreed on a fallback position that would be acceptable. I forget how it was going to work but it involved a less intrusive U.S. participation.

We went into the meeting in the German Ministry of Telecommunications. They caved in and gave us the whole thing. Not speaking German the American sitting next to me didn't understand what was happening. He wanted to raise the fallback position. I just quietly shut him up. We'd won the whole thing and no fallback was necessary.

You know he never pursued that German offer and I later found out that he made two trips a year. He made a winter trip through the Caribbean and visited a number of countries there. He made a summer trip to Europe ending up at Castel Gondolfo in Italy. I think he had all these things going so that he could write those trips off as a business expense, and he never really wanted to set the damn thing up.

Q: Any other comments about your period in Bonn?

STOFFEL: I thought that was one of the most interesting jobs I had, certainly in the aviation part of the Foreign Service. I couldn't see any aviation job in State that I would want to have after that. That was one reason why I took early retirement.

Q: So you took the 50/20 provision.

STOFFEL: The other reason was that was an FSO-2 job and I couldn't get promoted to FSO-2. I don't know why, to this day, but I was in that job for almost 5 years. I was a little irked. When Boeing offered me a job as Director of International Affairs, I jumped at it, and never regretted the move.

Q: Well, looking back on it, what are your views of the Foreign Service as a career for a young

man/woman?

STOFFEL: I don't know really, what the Foreign Service is like now. I have a feeling that when you and I were in it was really the best of all possible worlds. I think we had some great people. The way those of us in Berlin stuck together is one example of the spirit of the Service at that time.

I actually still recommend the Foreign Service to a number of people. In the first place, I recommend to anybody who is interested in the international field -- take the Foreign Service Officer examination. Then they don't necessarily have to go in but it'll help them get another international job. Probably it's a good cachet to have on your record.

MARTEN VAN HEUVEN
Legal Advisor
Berlin (1963-1967)

Marten Van Heuven was born in the Netherlands in 1932. He received his BA and LLB from Yale University and his MIA from Columbia University. His positions abroad included Berlin, Brussels, The Hague, Bonn and Geneva. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed him on January 31, 2003.

Q: You were in Berlin from '63 to when?

VAN HEUVEN: '67.

Q: What was the political situation when you arrived in '63? What was American presence and how were we dealing with it?

VAN HEUVEN: The political situation was that everybody still vividly remembered the recent blockade and the airlift, and also the visit of President Kennedy.

Q: '48.

VAN HEUVEN: Everybody remembered the "Ich bin ein Berliner" phrase spoken by Kennedy at the Rathaus. Two-thirds of Berlin was under western allied administration and the remaining one-third under Soviet administration. The western part was surrounded by the wall, not just dividing the city, but around the whole city.

Q: And the wall was a new phenomenon.

VAN HEUVEN: Yes. It had gone up in '61. But it extended entirely around West Berlin. We were sitting in the middle of a large number of well-trained and -equipped Soviet divisions, 100 miles from Helmstedt and the border with West Germany; we were exposed. Even though there was an American, French, and British military presence in Berlin, the total allied garrison was

less than 10,000. Our part of it was probably 6,000. We had four battalions and a tank unit. We were basically there as hostages. But you could also look at us as guarantors of Berlin's freedom. That's how the Berliners saw us. The threat was a Soviet threat. The East Germans were a nuisance factor. It could be considerable. It was not a threat to us. But the Soviets were. The city was cut off from western Germany. Berliners could not get in or out except with permission. They could fly in and out on one of the allied airlines. With a lot of hassle some of them could go on the ground. But it meant submission to all sorts of controls. So for all practical purposes, most Berliners were trapped in the town. The saying at the time was that one out of every third Berliner was a widow over 65. Berlin continued to exist because of heavy financial support by Bonn. So Bonn paid for Berlin and the allies defended it. That was how Berlin lived.

In a strategic sense, Berlin was the crucible of the Cold War. It was the point where the Soviets exercised pressure. They had done it with the blockade. They did it on more than one occasion later on. I went through several mini blockades. Within months after my arrival, an American military column was denied entry into Berlin at Babelsberg. The U.S. Army Berlin command sent a support column out. The Soviets permitted it to go through but we held the column in place. I have aerial photographs, taken by an Army helicopter, of these two allied columns, and of Soviet APCs blocking the way. Meanwhile, the U.S. command and the rest of us were down in a bunker. We were in direct contact with the White House. A Berlin crisis in those days meant potential war. Everybody was conscious of that. That's probably one of the reasons it never happened. But you could never be sure. The Soviets had imposed the notorious Berlin blockade. Something like that could happen again. You really felt that you were in the eye of the storm. It created strong bonds of kinship among the officers who were assigned to the U.S. Mission. That is particularly true for the State personnel who were my colleagues. When you have an external enemy you depend on each other. And we had the interesting challenge of administering an occupied city. We ran the American sector. The French and British ran theirs. Obviously, we weren't staffing every administrative position with allied personnel. In that sense the city was really run by Germans. But it ran under allied authority. So the public safety officer, a mid-level Foreign Service officer, directed the police in the U.S. sector. The Senator for Justice was subject to my direction. It was an exotic situation, but it worked.

Q: I've talked to somebody who was in Berlin in '61 when the Kennedy administration came in. They were very nervous because people on the Kennedy staff were talking about, "Well, maybe we can work something out here" and the feeling was they might give away more than was justified trying to make a deal with this. But I think their spine got stiffened after a while. Did you pick up any of that initial concern about the Kennedy administration?

VAN HEUVEN: No, I did not. I arrived after the "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech. With that, the President squarely put himself behind the freedom of the city. Every Berliner understood it that way. The whole world had heard it. The issue of unconditional American support for the city was settled in as black and white as you can settle anything. For any of us to have done anything to undercut this understanding would have affected our strategic position in the world.

Q: From what I gather, the legal side of things was extremely important because you had the Soviets trying to change the rules and get us to give away a little here. How far do you let down the back of your truck? All sorts of things. All of this was based on a legal code or at least a code

of practice. It was almost a theology.

VAN HEUVEN: These issues were my day-to-day bread and butter. It wasn't just tailgates. Every procedure had been worked out and agreed, either tacitly or through accepted custom. The Quadripartite Agreements of 1944 provided the basic legal framework. They were embellished later on by other agreements. When the Soviets took East Berlin out of the Quadripartite administration machinery run by the Kommandatura, the Kommandatura remained as just a western operation. But everything - crossing into East Berlin and letting the Russian soldiers into West Berlin, the process of running the military trains, the procedures for road access through Helmstedt, the administration of air access through the air corridors, the operation of Spandau prison - was governed by an intricate system of habits that had solidified into accepted practice. Any change, no matter how small, always raised the question "What is the other side up to?"

Q: What were you doing? Were you screening everything? Was this your responsibility?

VAN HEUVEN: My responsibility ran in a different direction from that of my political colleagues. One of them dealt full time with the group of issues relating to the air corridors. They were our lifeline. There were notification procedures for each flight. Permission would be granted for each flight, but with conditions. One had to do with the altitude at which we could fly. These flights were bumpy because we couldn't go over 10,000 feet. The weather in northern Germany below 10,000 feet is often lousy, with much wind and no visibility. The Soviets wouldn't guarantee flight safety above 10,000 feet. Another political officer handled Autobahn access issues and military train issues. My role had to do with the fact that we were in authority, and that anything that the Berlin authorities did had to have our imprimatur. This involved several activities. First of all, in the most routine way, the Berliners liked to think of themselves as part of the Federal Republic. That was not part of the allied legal way of thinking. To us Berlin was occupied territory, and whatever transpired in the Federal Republic did not apply to Berlin. Thus, Berliners wanted legislation identical to what was valid in the Federal Republic. What they would do, and what we allowed them to do, was to adopt by a Berlin law verbatim whatever the federal law was. But before that could go into effect in Berlin the allies had to give their approval by formal letter or order. The legal advisers of three western missions exercised that authority. We reviewed every piece of legislation of the Berlin House of Representatives that was taking over federal legislation. And when we did not like parts of that, we excluded those parts from application in Berlin. For instance, we allowed Berlin to take over only a small part of the federal air traffic law, because only the allies had air traffic rights in Berlin, and the Germans had none. We were not about to let them have any authority in an area that touched security. So Berliners could not fly helicopters in Berlin, nor fixed wing aircraft. That would have been too dicey anyway. The allied lawyers had staffs that went over proposed legislation, each in our own missions. I had two German lawyers working for me. But I was the person who would then caucus with my two allied colleagues, and we would agree on the text of a Berlin Kommandatura letter or a Berlin Kommandatura order that would approve or disapprove the adoption of legislation equivalent to the federal legislation. In addition, the allies could and did issue their own legislation, Berlin Kommandatura Orders or BKO's, thus exercising legislative authority. I also had to sign off on every request by the Berlin judiciary to handle any case involving allied property or personnel. That was about 30 a day. I would sign my name that often every working day, giving the Senator of Justice permission for the German authorities to

proceed or not. So the lawyers administered a whole routine administration. I worked very closely with two British and two French legal colleagues in the course of my four years. Going through an intensive process like that made us close. There was another role that legal advisers in each mission had, although I can't speak for the British and French. This was the role of advising the minister, who was the top State Department officer, and the Commandant as to the limits of their authority in the U.S. sector. On occasion, I had to remind them that the Constitution applied, that there were certain things that they could not do, such as taking people into custody without representation, or closing off areas, or exercising allied authority on the Reichsbahn railway tracks in the U.S. sector. That was a dicey role. Here I was, an FSR-4, equivalent to lieutenant colonel, and I was basically telling two-star superiors that they could not legally take action they wanted to take for political reasons. To exercise the function of legal advice initially required an enormous amount of work to understand in detail the entire allied legal structure and content. It required a fair amount of political judgment as to what laws to apply and not. The French, British, and U.S. legal activities had a large degree of autonomy. I cannot recall any case where the minister or the commandant overrode me on a major matter on which I had given advice.

Q: A tricky place. I think all of us felt if World War III was going to start, it was going to start there. Who were the ministers, American civilians, and the commandants?

VAN HEUVEN: The top U.S. representative in Berlin was George McGhee. He was the ambassador in the Federal Republic of Germany. He resided in Bonn, though there was a residence for his use in Berlin. You remember, John McCloy went out with the title of High Commissioner, not as ambassador.

Q: I was in Frankfurt and we had the HICOG building there.

VAN HEUVEN: Precisely. I remember the building. The second in command in Berlin was a U.S. major general. In my time there were two - Major General James Polk and Major General Franklin. Each sector had its general. Third in line was the deputy commandant, who was also the resident top diplomat. That was the minister in each sector. In my time, the post was held by Arch Calhoun and Brewster Morris. I don't remember all the names of the French and British sides, but I do recall the British commandant, Major General Peel Yates, who was always accompanied by his cocker spaniel. Some of the generals would tend to read into politics a lot. Others stuck to military matters. There were different styles in which the three sectors were run. The French maintained by far the most reserved and hostile attitude toward the Germans. We probably were at the other end of the spectrum. The British were somewhere in between, but the British took no nonsense from the Germans. We had a slot in the political section occupied by an officer whose job it was to do the liaison at the Rathaus, where the elected representatives of Berlin were located, and which was headquarters of the mayor, Willy Brandt. In my time, the slot was filled, first, by Lucian Heichler and then, by Brandon Grove. That is how we interfaced with the German political process in Berlin. When I came to Berlin in '63, the sense of allied dominance was still pervasive. In our minds, we still lived in the wake of the world war. We were there because we defeated the Germans and occupied Berlin. In my role that was the kernel of the situation. We had occupation rights. They were pretty absolute. But 20 years later, the balance had swung and we were no longer exercising those rights the way we had before. We

were letting the Germans do far more than we did in the early '60s or in the late '50s. But when I was there in the '60s I was, unlike Lucian and Brandon, who were part of the vanguard of officers who were already learning to do the political interface with the German democratic process.

Just recently I became aware of the fact that, in the classified part of his efficiency report, which the rated officer could not see at the time, a colleague of mine, who was the labor officer in Berlin and who therefore had to deal with the labor unions, found that his supervisor had put in there as a criticism that he had too much contact with the Germans. In retrospect, this was an astonishing comment to make. But this is illustrative of the fact that the mindset in the U.S. Mission was that you had to keep your reserve with the Germans and keep them in check. When I returned to Germany 15 years later, this attitude had wholly changed.

Q: Who was the mayor when you arrived in '63?

VAN HEUVEN: It was Willy Brandt, who was even then already well known, though he had not yet made an international mark in terms of his efforts to reach across the line that divided Germany and to build bridges.

Q: Ostpolitik.

VAN HEUVEN: Brandt started a process of what was called "Passierscheine." He worked out with the East German authorities a process whereby West Berlin citizens could make Christmas visits across the wall. My memory is not good on the details. We didn't recognize the East German authorities in East Berlin and stuck to the theory that the Soviets were responsible for their Sector. So if anything happened to us or our personnel in East Berlin, we would talk only to the Soviets. We would cross Checkpoint Charlie and refuse to show our documents to East German guards. We kept the windows of our cars up. Eventually, we would just open the passport and show the East Germans the title page, but we would not hand them any document. We would absolutely refuse to have them touch our documents or put any markings in it. Of course, they tried very hard to do so because that would then be represented as constituting legitimization of their regime. Our view was that the Soviets were responsible for the Soviet Sector of Berlin, just as we were responsible for our part of it.

We could go to East Berlin under the Quadripartite Agreements and we were never denied access to do so. We had to run this gauntlet of administrative obstacles and basically keep a stiff upper lip and stick to our procedures. Every time the East Germans did something to us, a complaint would go to the Soviets. Conversely, the Soviets had the right to come into West Berlin and they did so. They drove their vehicles and their soldiers around West Berlin. Of course, they had to come to West Berlin because of their role at Spandau, which was in the British Sector. Spandau is another story because that was another one of my responsibilities.

Q: Talk about it. What was Spandau and who was there? What were our problems?

VAN HEUVEN: Spandau was a huge prison complex built in the mid-nineteenth century that housed three prisoners: Speer, von Schirach, and Hess. It was one of the two remaining

Quadripartite operations after the Soviets walked out of the Kommandatura. One was the allied air control system. The other was the prison. There were four governors of the prison. They ran the place, each with their set of wardens who pulled duty the way wardens do in a prison. The exterior guard was mounted each month by allied and Russian troops in a determined succession. The U.S. always had December. We always took it from the Russians, who had it in November. We handed it over to the British, who always had it in January. They had to devote pretty much of a company of soldiers to man all the watchtowers and the exterior guard. They basically stood guard. In a way there wasn't much to do about these prisoners because there was a certain routine. But on occasion there were issues. One was when von Schirach developed eye problems and needed surgery which could not be performed in the prison. So he had to be taken out of prison. That required Moscow's approval, which eventually was forthcoming. There were repeated allied attempts, in my days and subsequently, by the allies to close the place and let Hess out after the other two were released. That always ran into a Soviet roadblock. But the whole business of running that prison and agreeing on the regime had plenty of administrative angles that did require the attention of the U.S. prison governor, who was a lieutenant colonel and who reported to me. My role was not to get involved in those details, but to be aware of them. But I did get involved directly as the action officer whenever something unusual had to happen, like taking von Schirach out, or when the time came to release the other two and leaving Hess in there. It was a midnight operation. It was sort of eerie.

Q: Could you talk about that? Why was it done in that manner?

VAN HEUVEN: Well, the expiration of the sentence was at midnight. I believe on September 30, 1966. It became a major press event. Spandau prison was in the British sector, so the British had the chore of maintaining the law and order there. They kept tight control. The Soviets refused to let the two prisoners out a minute earlier. But there was the whole issue of how do you let these men walk out? Hand them their stuff back, put them in transportation, and get them out of Berlin. When Hess was there, his uniform and other artifacts were kept in the prison. There was also still an old guillotine in the prison, from the Nazi days. There was always the risk that wardens or somebody would make off with stuff in the prison and sell it as souvenirs. In my time, I dealt with two U.S. prison directors there, Lieutenant Colonel Blake and another lieutenant colonel who later sold his story for publication, against the rules. The Army never went after him for that. His name was Eugene Bird. It was on Gene Bird's watch, in American month, that Hess committed suicide, something that should never have been allowed to happen. There was always a risk that someone would make private gain out of this very odd relic of the war. I would go into the prison every American month to go along with the American doctor. We had that responsibility for our month. I would not talk with the prisoners but I would know where they were, see their condition, inspect their cell. I was never tempted to conduct conversations with any of them. Hess was pretty much of a recluse and probably wouldn't have talked anyway. Von Schirach was a cantankerous man. Speer, on the other hand, was a nice person, but I didn't see it as my role to engage Speer in historical discussion. He was a prisoner. My role was to see that the prison was run right. There was an officers mess in the building next to the prison. The directors, who met daily, ate there. Once a week, they would invite guests. I think it was on Thursdays. I could always come out and have lunch. But it was the prison director's prerogative and mine to invite guests to come out on Thursdays. So in American months we would have chicken or steak. In Russian months we would have the Russian food and in the French months

the French would come up with French food. It was all cooked by the same German cooks. It was not haute cuisine but it was pretty different from month to month. It was also the only place where allied personnel could meet with live Russians in Berlin. Outside of Berlin, on the other side of the Glienecke Bridge in Karlshorst, was located the headquarters of a Group Soviet Forces in Germany. The allied military missions had their headquarters there. That was the other place where we had a military interface with the Russians. We had contact also at the air control center, but this was basically an air controller operation. But there was always the possibility that someone could use Spandau as a place to have a political discussion with the Soviets. Typically, they would bring out uniformed folks from Karlshorst. On occasion there would be a civilian and then the puzzle was, who is he, why is he here, what does he want? Most of the time guests would just come out and meet 20 or so people at lunch and for some quadripartite conviviality in a rather forced atmosphere. There was always plenty to drink on those occasions. I guess nearly 10% of my time in my four Berlin years went into the issues related to the administration of Spandau.

Q: You say toward the end we were trying to close it down. What was the Soviet attitude and why?

VAN HEUVEN: Ours was very simple. We thought that a lifelong sentence for Hess was no longer realistic given the way the world had moved.

I have to guess at why the Soviets would never agree to release Hess. What they said was that they suffered so many casualties during World War II at the hand of the Germans that this type of action was simply out of the question. Moscow stuck to this position right until the end. We tried to revive this issue from time to time, but it never got anywhere. It was not going to be a major point on any Soviet-western agenda such as it was in those days. If there was an agenda, it had more important issues than that. No U.S. administration was going to spend political capital on it. But it seemed the right thing to do, so there was never any opposition in London, Paris, or Washington. We did not consult the Germans in Bonn beforehand, though we kept them informed.. So they were aware of what was going on. But the German government was not in a position to even express an opinion about what the allies did with Hess.

Q: You were there when Kennedy was assassinated?

VAN HEUVEN: Yes.

Q: How did that play?

VAN HEUVEN: I remember it vividly. The Berlin Bar Association had their annual dinner. I was an honored guest. It was an idiosyncratic situation, because here were all these senior lawyers, judges, magistrates, and prosecutors, and here I was, the U.S. legal adviser half the age of most of them, but still in a way for them the key person in the room. We had just started. There was music and it was going to be a nice evening, although I have to say that even nice evenings in Berlin in those days could be pretty dour and heavy. This was a town that was still pockmarked by the war. A lot of destroyed buildings had not been reconstructed. Berlin suffered from a fairly heavy climate, both physical climate and a psychological climate. Levity was not

part of the Berlin life in those days at all. It was mostly serious stuff all around. But a good party meant at least adequate food, although it was not by today's standards very good, and plenty to drink if you wanted. Well, the news came. The music stopped. The dinner did not take place. Then there was an eerie silence that night when the candles appeared all through town. It was a horrible weekend - because then there was Oswald and his assassination. It was a surreal thing. And then came the burial, and it was just at Thanksgiving time. It was an awful period for everybody.

Q: I was on leave in Graz when it happened and I went rushing back with my wife to Belgrade. It was the same. For a communist country, it was something none of us will forget.

What were you getting about the atmosphere and the spirit of the people? A third of them were widows over 65. This meant that young people were getting the hell out, weren't they?

VAN HEUVEN: They were, and businesses had left already. No major company had its headquarters in Berlin. It was just too hard to get to Berlin and out. Moreover, it wasn't all that safe to do so. So Berlin consisted of a lot of people who in their business activities were appendages to things going on in the Federal Republic. The Berlin official apparatus was totally dependent on financial influx from the treasury in Bonn. It couldn't do anything for Berlin security. Of course there was the police, but the police were under allied and not German command.

Q: Did you get involved in the spy-counterspy type thing in Berlin? Did Berlin being a spy center play any role in what you were doing?

VAN HEUVEN: Only peripherally. Of course, there was a station and I knew some of the officers. I was only vaguely acquainted with most of those folks. They kept very much to themselves. But they were probably outnumbered by military intelligence because the Army must have been there in huge force. Until the day when we relinquished our wartime powers in Germany, this remained a problem. There was a stable of Army contacts that existed alongside the Agency contacts. This situation didn't always work synchronously or even in harmony. I became particularly aware of this later, when we were engaged in efforts to secure the release of some of these German citizens who had been working for the Army. Many were just poor devils caught up in the web of intrigue that was not of their making. But in those days, there was the Teufelsberg, the heap of rubble, on top of which was a large electronic facility that could do a great many things. In my work I didn't need intelligence. I went by my daily in-box of telegrams from all the posts around us that were repeated to Berlin. I didn't need to know, with occasional exceptions, if an individual case in which the Germans wanted jurisdiction and U.S. authorities might not want to grant it. Then somebody would come and talk to me. I also had to deal with the Berlin Judge Advocate on some of those issues. But I don't remember any major incidents or set-tos and it certainly was not part of my daily routing to get involved in intelligence, somewhat unlike my later experience in Bonn.

Q: How did you meet your wife?

VAN HEUVEN: There are two answers: hers and mine. Hers is that we met in Washington.

Mine is that we met in Rome. Both happened in the course of 1963. We did go to the same party in Washington just before my departure. She was on her way to Rome as vice consul. In December of '64, I had been in Berlin for a little over a half year. I went to visit a Foreign Service colleague, Frazier Draper, and his wife. He was an ambassador's staff aide in Rome. Their oldest daughter, Sallie, was my godchild. My wife, Ruth, had a dinner arranged. Someone dropped out and the Drapers said, "But we have an extra man at home. Can we bring him?" So I was taken along to this small dinner party on the Piazza Navona and met my wife there. Not quite a year later, we were married in New York.

Q: How did this work for her? Did she have to resign?

VAN HEUVEN: She did. The rules were clear about that. Or I could resign, although that was never really part of our discussion. She did resign. At that point she was on her way to Laos. It was the summer of '64. She told me later that she had looked into possibilities not just of working in Berlin but for me working in Laos. But the fact of the matter is that she did resign. Later, just to run that story out, the rules changed. Meanwhile, our children were born and it became possible for people who had had to resign for reasons of marriage to apply for reentry. In the '70s, when I was in The Hague, she sought that reentry and was asked to take the oral exam again in Washington at her expense, which we thought was somewhat unfair. But she was readmitted. It wasn't until my next assignment in Bonn as Political Counselor that there was a position for her as well, as head of the consular section of the embassy. From that time on, we worked alongside and, later on, separately on occasion.

Q: During this '63-'67 period, were there any major occurrences that you'd like to mention?

VAN HEUVEN: For me, getting married was a big change. Rather than being a bachelor in Berlin with a pretty intense job, having a wife facilitated and broadened my existence, because most of my colleagues were also married and we were very much part of each other's familiar. There were the Nagys and the Gleysteens, the Days, the Polanskys, the Brogans, the Woessners, the Meehans, and the Ryersons. We also had a few other bachelors: George Jaeger, Dick Smyser, and Bill Allen. We were all a pretty close group.

Q: Which Gleysteens?

VAN HEUVEN: Dirk Gleysteen and Oobi Gleysteen. Also Lucien and Muriel Heichler. The strange thing is that even today this group of old Berlin hands is as tight a clan as you can imagine, as we were at that time. We really got to know each other. We were all under the same pressures. We all lived the same life. We were dependent upon each other. Generally, the tougher the hardship post, the better the friends you make. Berlin certainly made that true for us. Ruth came out to join me. She did some teaching at the Kennedy School. Our first child was born in Berlin.

Q: Obviously the ambassador was number one in your hierarchy. Did the hand of Bonn, the legal adviser in Bonn, do much with you?

VAN HEUVEN: The legal adviser in Bonn was an exceptional man named Joachim von Elbe.

Joe, who of course was originally German, had come to the United States in the '30s, obtained a graduate degree at Yale, and then went back with military government after the war, and ended up as legal adviser to the embassy. He was a courtly, learned, wise presence in Bonn, a man very much of the old school and the opposite of a slam-bang operator. I was far more operational in Berlin than he was in Bonn. He belonged to the generation of Bill Tyler. At the time that I got to know him, he worked on strictly legal things, consulting and advising on all sorts of issues. There were always plenty of them, because of the presence of our forces in the Federal Republic and the fact that we still had the special status in the Federal Republic. But he was not an operational part of the political show in the embassy. While Joe could give me a lot of wisdom, he never sought to give me direction. I welcomed his wisdom, but on operational things in Berlin he could not. Because of the distance and the different milieu, he was not in a position to be of much use to me. He later wrote a book in German with the title translated "Under the Prussian Eagle and the American Stars and Stripes." I have an inscribed copy at home. It is a conventional but fascinating account of his career as a German civil servant and later as an American civil servant.

Did Bonn sit on me in other ways? There were too many layers that insulated me. I generally operated in a realm away from the political counselor in Bonn. The higher level in Bonn was above my pay grade. My direct experience with ambassadorial visits to Berlin was also limited. I was the control officer for the Ambassador once or twice, but I don't think that I ever briefed Ambassador McGhee or had much to do with him substantively. It was always a hassle handling the McGhees. They were demanding visitors. It usually threw the front office in a tizzy when they came. Of course, the ambassador had a residence in Berlin as he had his residence in Bonn. But he didn't spend much time there.

WILLIAM M. WOESSNER
Eastern Affairs Section
Berlin (1963-1967)

William Woessner was born in 1931 in Queens, New York. He attended Queens College. He later received a Fulbright Scholarship which took him to Glasgow University. He then returned to the United States and attended Northwestern University. He served in the Korean War and then entered the Foreign Service in 1956. His career took him to Germany, Austria, and London. Mr. Woessner was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: Your posting to Berlin, how did this come about?

WOESSNER: I don't know. It was my understanding that after two overseas tours, I would go to Washington when I finished at Columbia. I got a call from Personnel, who said they wanted to assign me to Berlin. I was stunned. I took some soundings then from people who knew and everybody said what a wonderful, exciting, and interesting city Berlin was and how good the housing there was, which was important for a family person. On the other hand, I was warned against the man I would be working for. I weighed the pros and cons and said, "I would really

like to go.” It was to the Eastern Affairs Section. That is where the Eastern European studies came into play. But what that Eastern Affairs Section really did had little to do with Eastern Europe, as such. It had to do with the GDR. You followed what was going on on the other side of the wall. In the exercise of Four Power rights, you had free access to circulate in East Berlin.

Q: You were doing that from 1963-

WOESSNER: I arrived in June of 1963, ten days before Kennedy came. My tour was extended twice. It was a three-year tour, but I was there until November 1967.

Q: Let's talk about the atmosphere of Berlin when you arrived there.

WOESSNER: Mind blowing. We sailed to Bremerhaven. We picked up our car there and drove up the autobahn into Berlin. That was our introduction to the city. We experienced all of the red tape that goes with that, the excitement of traveling on the autobahn, and then arriving in this great metropolis surrounded by a wall.

Q: The wall had been put up when?

WOESSNER: Two years earlier, in August of 1961. In those days, you were housed at Harnack House, the military officers club. The Army ran so much because the city was still occupied. I reported for duty and “Oh, Woessner, hi. Welcome. Go away and do something for ten days. We’ve got the President coming.” They could in no way be bothered. The place was in a stir. So, we were there when Kennedy appeared at the Rathaus and gave his famous “Ich bin ein Berliner” speech and all the rest.

The atmosphere was pretty heady. As you know, there was this incredible turnout of Berliners that far exceeded the White House’s expectation. The President was not particularly sympathetic to the Germans or to the Berliners. He didn’t have a good relationship with Adenauer. His closest advisors generally tended to favor a deal with the Russians. That is what really counted. Berlin was a stone around the neck. It was a place where anytime the Russians wanted to apply pressure on us, they could. It was more liability. That was the mentality leading up to this. That trip more than any single event turned John F. Kennedy around. He didn’t plan to say the things he said. It was a momentous day.

Q: Someone I interviewed who was there before that time and maybe including that time was saying that when the Kennedy administration came in, they were very nervous. They felt that the group around Kennedy and Kennedy himself weren’t sound on Berlin.

WOESSNER: Oh, they certainly were not.

Q: The feeling was that “We have reached stability. These Kennedy types may sell us out.”

WOESSNER: Had the Soviets played it more shrewdly or not overplayed their hand, there were times when a deal could have been struck at the expense of Berlin. After June 1961, the American commitment to Berlin was rock solid.

Q: What were you doing while you were waiting? Were you able to get out and see Berlin?

WOESSNER: A little bit of that. You get settled in. I don't remember too much except that I was anxious to get in the office and get started.

Q: Your job was what?

WOESSNER: It was political reporting. There was a Political Section there that dealt with access questions to Berlin and the politics of West Berlin, the relationship with the mayor and Bonn. The Eastern Affairs was supposed to concentrate on the politics and economics of the GDR. We were pursuing a policy at that time of denial of recognition to the GDR. Together with the British and the French we maintained something called the Allied Travel Office. Any East German citizens wanting to go to any NATO countries had to have a special pass from the Allied Travel Office. It was in support of the West German policy, the Hallstein Doctrine, which denied diplomatic recognition to any nations who gave recognition to the GDR. This was still a period of great rivalry between East and West. My first summer there was the summer that Egon Bahr made the speech at Tutzing Academy entitled "Coming Closer Together through Rapprochement." He enunciated a policy of small steps. This became Willy Brandt's policy and gradually changed the relationship between the two German states. There was still a lot of jockeying for position but it was the beginning of the change.

I also was aware of and sometimes involved in the trade in human beings. This was followed primarily by intelligence agencies and CIA, but the Evangelical Church was one of the main conduits for the money. The West German government paid money to the East German government through the church and then the East German government would release the prisoners. One of the things that I took on that nobody had done before was the role of the church in Berlin. My boss, the head of the section, had me to lunch the second day I was there. He asked what I had done at Columbia and I told him about the paper I had done on the Polish church. He said, "Oh, you're just the person. How would you like to follow the role of the church here?" I said, "Oh, I'm not exactly an ecclesiastical attaché type." He said, "Never mind." I'm so glad he did because it was one of the most fascinating aspects of my time there. The church was highly political. It was very much attuned to what was going on both East and West. I went and visited churchmen in East Berlin and talked to them and got a lot of useful information.

Q: When you say "church," what are you talking about?

WOESSNER: The Evangelical Lutheran Church. Before the war, Berlin was probably 90% Lutheran. There was a Catholic Church, St. Hedwig's Cathedral in East Berlin. A very courageous cardinal was in charge over there. But politically, they never had the heft that the Evangelical Church did. They were not really involved in such things as the prisoner release program.

A particularly exciting event was the visit of Martin Luther King to Berlin. He preached in the West and then he went to the East to preach. By this time, I had very good contacts in the church and elsewhere. He got to Checkpoint Charlie and he had forgotten his passport and they let him go through anyway. He went to the church in the center of Berlin that had been the main church

of the bishop, who had been banned by the East Germans from coming over to hold services there. The church was overflowing. They were crowded outside. As he was fighting his way through the crowd, I managed to say to him, “Dr. King, you see the size of this crowd. There is another church about six blocks from here and that is also filling up because word has gone out that you’re going to go over there. Is there some way you could do that?” He did. He gave a sermon and they smuggled me in the back so I was hiding behind the altar. There was no room in the church. He used biblical allusions, walls coming down, walls separate people. It was a powerful service and was well received.

Q: It was translated?

WOESSNER: Yes. The choir sang Negro spirituals. Then sure enough, when he left the church there, he went on across town and spoke at the other church. The regime didn’t dare try to stop him. They had even let him come through Checkpoint Charlie when they had perfectly good grounds for stopping him. That was one of the highlights of my tour in Berlin.

Q: What was your impression of the East German church?

WOESSNER: First a sidebar on Lutheran theology—on the concept of *Obrigkeit*—on the church’s attitude toward civil authority. From the time of Martin Luther, the church subscribed to the view that it had its own responsibilities which were spiritual, but that on political matters it did not defy the civil authorities. This led to a great crisis of conscience during the Nazi period when some pastors did defy the Nazis and went to concentration camps, even death, while others were silent and went along. Something similar recurred in the GDR, although the regime was certainly nowhere as totalitarian or as criminal as the Nazi regime. Pastors were not hauled off, tortured, and killed. Still, it took a fair bit of political courage to stand up to the regime. The church encompassed the whole gamut from those who stood up to the regime to those who were active collaborators. The church in the early years was still the only unified organization left in greater Germany. The Evangelical Lutheran Church was both West and East and the political and ecclesiastical boundaries overlapped. Then the DDR split it finally and irrevocably so that the church in the East became self-governing and had its own governing council. That was a tough one to counter. Church membership went way down. Unlike the Catholics in Berlin, the Lutherans were much more nominally Christian. When the pressure was put on, they fell away from the church in droves so that attendance at service went way down. But then again, those who stayed were probably more committed than any had been before the war. The churches became vehicles for inner resistance. For those Lutherans who rediscovered their faith, it became a very deep, meaningful experience. I would estimate that maybe 10% of Lutherans were active in the church during these years.

Q: What was your impression of compare and contrast between the GDR and Poland?

WOESSNER: In Poland there was this tremendous national unity, a great, deep patriotism which was also bound up in the church. Being Polish was being Catholic; being Catholic was being Polish. There was an intense resistance to alien rule because there was no doubt in the minds of the people that their government was propped up by a foreign power that they found odious. In the GDR, the regime was also propped up by an odious foreign power, but its military presence

was very real. Red Army divisions were stationed throughout the country. Furthermore, the sense of national identity was very confused by the existence of a more powerful, more prosperous West Germany whose cultural influences being felt all the time. 85% of the GDR could pick up Western broadcasts. That made for a very different dynamic. There was the yearning for reunification. Over time, and even after the wall came down, a certain subset identity developed that was a GDR thing – “We East Germans did what we did despite the fact that the Soviets carted off all our productive capacity. We lived with these reparations for year and years. We had an oppressive alien regime. And yet we survived and we’re proud of what we did.” So, in that sense, it was a mixture of wanting to be reunited with the fellow Germans in the West and also resenting the prosperity of the West. The full impact of this didn’t really manifest itself until after the wall came down and the discrepancy appeared.

Q: Who was the head of East Germany during this period?

WOESSNER: Walter Ulbricht the whole time I was there. What I didn’t realize then (I don’t think any of us did, but it came out subsequently), was the extent to which he influenced Soviet policy in ways that the Kremlin didn’t really want. Ulbricht always put his own power and the stability of his regime before everything else. He almost had the Soviets as hostage to that. Ulbricht was the unquestioned leader. I remember going over to a big rally one summer in Karl Marx Platz. Ulbricht would give five-hour speeches with a high, squeaky voice, and a Saxon accent that other Germans found so amusing. That particular day because of the heat, soldiers were keeling over and he had to cut the speech short. But the next day, the party newspaper carried the full text of the speech and some sections that he had never delivered carried the parenthetical notation “long tumultuous applause.”

Q: After your experience in Poland, were you looking for manifestations within the people you would talk to in East Germany as far as rolling their eyes as far as the standard communist line was or was it a different world?

WOESSNER: Somewhat different in that the Germans were not as subtle or as clever in making fun of their rulers. There was some of it. There was a cabaret in East Berlin that went pretty far, but it wasn’t a particularly German phenomenon in the way it was a universal Polish phenomenon. For instance, I remember walking on the streets in East Berlin. I was in a section that wasn’t very crowded and out of nowhere a woman came up to me. Clearly, from the way I was dressed, she knew I was from the West. She just said, “Don’t forget us,” and scurried off. And when I would find myself in a small, intimate group with church leaders or intellectuals, or young students, yes, they knew they were in a tight situation and looked to the West. It was terribly important that we were in West Berlin, almost as important to them as it was to the West Berliners.

Q: Were there constant incidents at the wall, escaping?

WOESSNER: Oh, yes, this whole period was one of ever tightening restrictions, more minefields, more barbed wire. Every escape would lead to further tightening up until finally it became very difficult for anybody to get out. Prior to my arrival, you had the infamous case of the young man who was shot down at the Wall and lay bleeding to death in the death strip and

the West didn't do nothing and he bled to death there.

Q: Who was the head of our mission in Berlin?

WOESSNER: When I got there, it was Arch Calhoun. He was the minister. The minister reported to the ambassador in Bonn and then through the ambassador to Washington. We also had a two-star commandant who was technically the supreme authority in West Berlin but the minister had a determining role in the politics of it all. So, you also had two chains of command, one that went to the Pentagon and one that went to the State Department. You also had some rivalry between the leadership in Berlin and the leadership in Bonn. Arch Calhoun had been an ambassador and would be ambassador again. He was a career officer with a lot of self-esteem and strong leadership qualities. There was no question in his mind who called the tune in Berlin or who made the recommendations to Washington. The ambassador in Bonn was George McGhee at that time.

Those power relationships evolved over time. Years later, I had a chance to view it all from the embassy. There was a rivalry between the embassy and the mission and whose recommendations would prevail. There was absolutely nothing that happened in Berlin that was not subjected to intense scrutiny in both capitals, Washington and Moscow. The idea that Berlin was somehow a tinderbox couldn't have been further from the truth. The chances of an accidental conflagration there were nil. Everything was controlled. There was also the whole business of Berlinery, for example, the British, the French, the Americans all had different rules as to how high the tailgates should be on the trucks going in and out and who submitted to which inspection when. The East Germans were always probing, looking for ways to expose differences among the allies. The way in which the allies would go their own ways on small things and then come together on big things was fascinating. So, you had this constant interplay. On the broad scheme, it would be Moscow and Washington and then Moscow and the three Allies and then below that you had the two German states and their relationship or no relationship to one another and their relationship to their respective patrons.

Q: In so many other international things, the French seem to be odd man out. How about here?

WOESSNER: I think that was also true in Berlin. I never served in France. My experience has always been in the Four-Power context. But yes, the French were generally the odd man out. Their relationship towards Germany was quite clear. They certainly never wanted to see a unified Germany, make no mistake about that. They wanted a Germany that was as closely allied to France as could be. Thanks to Schuman and Adenauer, great things were achieved in Western Europe. Adenauer was determined that West Germany would be so intricately enmeshed in a Western alliance that it could never break loose again even if it wanted to. That was his lasting contribution. By the time Germany was reunified, which nobody expected then, you wouldn't be able to play the Bismarck game of going East and going West. French attitudes showed up in such things as occupation costs. We were scrupulous about what we asked the Germans to pay for and what we paid for. The French made no bones about making the Germans pay for absolutely everything.

Q: I was just interviewing John Buche yesterday and he was saying how the French would run

their troops through Berlin in order to get them reequipped. We had a pretty good deal with cars, where we would have cars that supposedly the Germans would get for Berlin but they would show up (and the Germans knew about it) at all our posts.

WOESSNER: But in the Federal Republic?

Q: Yes.

WOESSNER: That's something I didn't know about. And charged to the occupation?

Q: Yes. Somehow or another, they would originate in Berlin and end up down in_

WOESSNER: You would have to say that on the really big issues (Kennedy and Cuba), when the chips were down, the French were first and foremost standing with us. But on so many other things, De Gaulle was getting even for all those years of humiliation by Churchill and Roosevelt.

Q: During the Berlin airlift, there was a tower that everybody was afraid to touch because it was difficult for our airplanes and the French went in and blew it up. As Churchill said, "Of all the crosses I had to bear, the cross of Lorraine was the heaviest." Was there concern at this time that something could happen, that one of the powers might do something which would give the East Germans and thereby the Soviets – weaken our position in Berlin or were things pretty solid?

WOESSNER: If I had to characterize these years, the years of greatest uncertainty were behind us and things did start to stabilize and the East-West equation stabilized. The activity moved much more to the German-German sphere. The West Germans were ingenious in finding ways to get money to the East Germans. There were some misgivings in the West at the time. It was more than just paying for prisoners, but all kinds of things. There were so-called "interzonal trade" and swing credits. They allowed the East Germans to build up an ever bigger deficit. There was a willingness to carry them. It was ultimately successful because it did undermine the East. For instance, opening up the Wall prior to the Four Power Agreement and the GDR-FRG treaty made it a lot easier for West Germans and West Berliners to go to East Germany and every one of them had to pay, so huge sums of money went into the coffers. But that constant exposure to the West, not just via TV and radio, but by visits from relatives and also building up this big trade deficit, in the end, all of those things came together and so weakened the GDR that it became a liability to Gorbachev and one of the factors leading to the dissolution of the empire.

Q: One of the concerns was that something could happen and all of a sudden there would be real mass uprising of the people in East Germany and that would not be tolerable as far as West Germans would be concerned and there might be a flowing in which would cause the Soviet army to massively intervene and that's World War III.

WOESSNER: I don't think so. Yes, there was that shadow because of what happened in 1953 when the workers took to the streets, that that could happen again. So, the mood in the East was monitored, but I don't recall at any point that we thought that sort of instability or uprising was imminent. Again, the West German policy of pumping money into the East ameliorated an awful

lot. Also, letting the most seriously discontented people out, letting them be bought out, so many thousands of prisoners every year, that combination of letting off steam that way and ameliorating the circumstances in which people lived. I would say there was a general discontent and a general alienation but it was never acute and never brought us to the brink of war. Also, all the interactions were so minutely monitored in both the Kremlin and the West that there was little chance for a mistake or something small that could escalate to something big. There were tense moments when the West German Bundestag convened in plenary session in Berlin, Soviet MIGs roared over the city with sonic booms as a way of expressing their displeasure. But eventually as part of the bigger German-German accord, those plenary sessions were discontinued. There was tension over the air cargoes. When the Soviets wanted to apply pressure, they would order us to cease and desist from flying above a certain altitude. The MIGs would buzz our planes coming up the corridor. It could have led to something nasty, but it never did. Both sides refrained from anything that could have been dangerous. In the end, again, as part of the Four-Power Agreement, we agreed to a 10,000- foot ceiling so that if you were flying from Munich or Frankfurt, you'd enter the corridor and drop down to 10,000 feet. Part of that related to intelligence gathering.

Q: The higher you are, the more you can see.

WOESSNER: Nobody thought for a minute that we weren't taking advantage of that.

Q: Were you able to go outside of East Berlin?

WOESSNER: No. Our access was throughout greater Berlin. I traveled frequently and extensively in East Berlin, met with people over there. One of the things I most enjoyed doing was taking visitors over. I gave historical tours and ecclesiastical tours and political tours. I even had a 1901 Baedeker that I could refer to from time to time. It was great fun.

Q: How about the East German opera?

WOESSNER: Yes, we went to that frequently, to the operetta even more, which was a higher quality. Felsenstein was recognized as a real genius. He lived in the West but was heavily subsidized in the East. There were American opera stars who sang at the Comic Opera and at the National Opera.

Q: It was a time when any American with aspirations had to go almost to Germany, East or West, because there weren't opera houses in the U.S.

WOESSNER: Yes, there was a lot of that.

Q: Did you get a feel while you were in East Germany and looking at the goods that were coming out_ Having been in Poland, there was a great deal of playing up, "Well, the East Germans are still Germans and they really can produce stuff." After Germany got united, most of the East German stuff was third rate.

WOESSNER: There was no question that the appearance of prosperity in East Berlin and for

people who went to the Leipzig Fair was much greater. The standard of living, what people ate and what they had, was much higher in the GDR than in Poland. The extent to which bad management of manufacturing processes, pollution, and all the rest had really eviscerated the German economy, that was largely missed by Western experts. We constantly were reading intelligence evaluations that this was the 10th manufacturing country in the world. The truth is that their goods were inferior and vulnerable to competition from the West. After the Wall came down, the real weakness of the economy showed through. But they were very successful in the propaganda they generated. It was that very weakness that persuaded Gorbachev, given the Soviet Union's own weakness, that he could no longer sustain this country.

Q: Did you get any feel for the Soviet military in East Berlin and East Germany or was that beyond your scope?

WOESSNER: That was beyond my scope since they were not in East Berlin. There was a deliberate withdrawal beyond the city, by which they tried to substantiate the notion that this was the capital of the GDR. During those years at least, the Soviets were kept very close to barracks. That eased up somewhat later on. Then when the Wall came down and before they withdrew, there was a total lack of discipline. There was chaos and all kinds of bad things. One of Lucius Clay's great achievements had been to force the Russians to show their hands at Checkpoint Charlie and when the tanks rolled up and we rolled ours up, it was clear they couldn't trust the East Germans. But that was all before my time.

Q: Were there any incidents of American soldiers taking a tank and heading off somewhere, getting drunk or disaffected?

WOESSNER: No. There were some spectacular escapes and some defections, but these were all isolated. One of the most interesting escapes, by the way, involved the future columnist George Will. One Sunday afternoon, I got a call at home. I was the duty officer for that weekend. A man said he'd like to come by and talk to me, that he needed some advice. He introduced himself. He was George Will, relatively young and not yet well known. He said he was planning to go into East Berlin and bring somebody out and what did I think of the idea? I said, "Well, it is becoming increasingly hazardous." I had to warn him in all seriousness that he should not do it. But I realized I didn't have the authority to stop him either. We chatted for a while and he listened. He said, "I tell you what I'll do. I'll at least let you know what I decide to do." A couple of days later, I got a phone call from Templehof Airport where he was getting ready to fly out. He said, "I just want you to know that I went in and got her out." A couple of years later, while I was at an FSI retreat here in Washington, I got a phone call. A voice said, "You won't remember me, but this is George Will." I said, "Of course I remember you." He said, "I'm thinking of going back to visit Berlin and what do you think if I went to the East? I'm not planning to bring anybody out. I know I didn't follow your advice last time, but I would value what you think." I said, "Look, they didn't stop you last time. They didn't catch you. But I can't believe they don't know that you did it. Their intelligence is very good and everything leaks like a sieve. They keep lists and depending upon the overall political climate, they could or could not arrest you and make an example of you. It could be unpleasant. Unless you have some compelling reason to go, I think it's too risky." He said, "You know, I think you're right. I won't go." That was George F. Will.

Q: Why don't we stop at this point? We'll pick it up next time. Where did you go next?

WOESSNER: I came home. I had been lined up for a job a year and a half in advance. When I got home, there was no job.

Q: It was 1967. We'll pick it up with your coming home to no job.

THOMAS L. HUGHES
Director, Intelligence & Research
Washington, DC (1963-1969)

Mr. Hughes was born and raised in Minnesota and was educated at Carleton College, Oxford University and Yale University. After service with the US Air Force he worked on Capitol Hill and became active in Democratic Party politics. He later joined the Department of State, first as Assistant to Under Secretary Chester Bowles and subsequently as Deputy Director, then as Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, where he served during the event filled period 1961 to 1969. His assignments brought him in close contact with the major political figures of that era. His final government assignment was to Embassy London as Deputy Chief of Mission. Mr. Hughes was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: Was there concern on the part of the State Department about the purchasing of intelligence? This is a two edged sword. Particularly if you go after officials. This is dangerous because intelligence becomes sort of suspect that you get and the knowledge thereof, and it may have long term effects. Were we getting any reports from the field saying "I understand that some CIA officers are sent out and they have to recruit X number of people and they really want to hire agents." Was this an issue?

HUGHES: Yes, it was an issue. Again, consider the German scene in the '60's. Adenauer, who himself was a somewhat tyrannical democrat, thought of his opposition, the Social Democrats, more or less as communists. He didn't want to countenance any official American diplomatic connection with his opposition. This automatically opened the door for the CIA to have covert connections with the Social Democrats. The CIA could say with some justification: "One of these days der Alte is going to go and there will be a new government, formed by the opposition. He has effectively forbidden foreign service access to the opposition. Somebody has to build this relationship and we in CIA are obviously the ones."

So the path was opened for CIA to be in touch covertly with Willy Brandt. Some day he was going to be important, and eventually he was. And of course eventually there was also a public disclosure of the CIA connection with Brandt, to everyone's embarrassment.

Years later, after the Berlin wall fell, and the former East German spymaster, Marcus Wolf, was free to travel, I told Bill Colby that the two of them would be perfect as a team for the American

lecture circuit. They could command high prices. The kids would all come to their dog and pony show. They could exchange anecdotes about who tapped the most phones in West Germany and who had the most West Germans on the payroll.

Q: The first of September 1999. Tom, two of the topics that we have not covered are Germany and Israel. We might start there.

HUGHES: All right. Of course the two topics are related in many ways, but we might treat them separately starting with Germany. Curiously, today, September 1, 1999 is the 60th anniversary of Hitler's invasion of Poland.

Q: You never could start a war in August because everybody is on vacation.

HUGHES: Berlin was the first big crisis after the Bay of Pigs, and one that lasted through the Kennedy Administration. In the wake of the Bay of Pigs, Khrushchev was emboldened to brace Kennedy in their summit meeting in June, 1961, knowing that he was on the defensive. He was also trying to take the measure of the new young president. Even so, there is no doubt that Kennedy was taken aback by the brusqueness of Khrushchev's performance at Vienna. He was quite stunned by it. This early warning that Berlin was going to be a serious and looming crisis was both unexpected and unwelcomed by Kennedy. It forced him to become prematurely engaged with the German question when he would much rather have had other priorities.

Kennedy had been in Nazi Germany briefly before the war when his father was ambassador in London. Indeed because of his father's notoriety as an appeaser, Jack was aware he had to compensate. But, initially he had no positive interest in postwar Germany, and certainly no special sympathy for the Germans. As a Democratic politician there was nothing in the American political universe that made a German interest attractive or rewarding. Most of the domestic political pressures worked in the opposite direction from the foreign policy grand strategists for whom a focus on Germany was central.

As far as that focus was concerned, Kennedy fell heir to the legacy of a strong Truman-Acheson and Eisenhower-Dulles commitment to Bonn. Indeed the Dulles-Adenauer ascendancy in the '50s had grown into a close relationship. Kennedy inherited what he inherited. The Dulles family were all identified with Germany in a big way. John Foster's legal connections went back to the 1920's and '30's at Sullivan and Cromwell. If you go to his archives at Princeton and get on the computer and punch in the index list for Hjalmar Schacht, you will get the Dulles correspondence with Hitler's financial wizard. The cartel associations, the chemical firm connections, the Chamber of Commerce links, Tom Watson and the IBM role, were all part of it.

Allen Dulles, one of JFK's first announced appointments (retentions), also had a soft spot in his heart for the "good Germans", expansively defined. As CIA director in the 1950's he had moved quickly to rehabilitate General Reinhold Gehlen, Hitler's Eastern intelligence chief, in return for his wartime records and his supposed expertise on the Soviet Union. One of my first social events in the Kennedy administration's intelligence community was a dinner given by Allen Dulles one night at the Chevy Chase Club in honor of Gehlen who was visiting from his Munich headquarters. Gehlen led the discussion advising us how to deal with "the Bear", his term for the

Soviet menace. J. Edgar Hoover, sitting next to me, kept murmuring “the bear, the bear. That’s it. The bear.”

It is curious, today, in the context of our current ubiquitous holocaust awareness, how absent this factor was in both official and unofficial thinking at the time. This awareness became much more acute three or four decades after the event. In the ‘50’s and ‘60’s there was no push for holocaust museums. Indeed that catastrophe was rarely even a subject of conversation in the Kennedy administration. On the contrary, the speedy transfer of American animosity from the Germans to the Russians had been remarkable. The political constellations that had been anti-fascist in this country during the war had quickly been succeeded by anti-communist ones. Americans were busy, literally and psychologically, converting bad Germans into good Germans. Anti-communism became a happy meeting ground between the two societies. Moreover many GIs had by now returned with highly positive personal impressions of occupied Germany and the Germans. The re-educators in the occupation were pleased with their success. In the late ‘40’s and throughout the ‘50’s, there was a friendly and growing bilateral relationship built on the experience of countless servicemen and occupation personnel.

Q: I think almost a third of our foreign service was in Germany at one point. The USIA (U.S. Information Agency) effort was tremendous.

HUGHES: Very much so. But at the official level there were new negative elements during the first year of the Kennedy administration. Jack personally had a falling out with the rather pedantic West German ambassador Grewe, whose legalistic view of life contrasted strongly with the bonhomie of Jack’s ambassadorial favorite from London, David Ormsby-Gore. The fact that Adenauer himself had made no secret of his preference for the Republican ticket before the 1960 election did not help. These negative factors were already in place in 1961 before the June summit in Vienna and the August crisis over the Berlin wall.

Meanwhile the third Dulles sibling, sister Eleanor, who had worked on Berlin in the State Department, was now in INR. One of my first phone calls after joining INR in April, 1961, was from her brother Allen who was still CIA director at the time. “Tom, I know my sister is working for you over there”, he said, “and if this ever becomes embarrassing for you in any way, just let me know and I’ll put her someplace else.” It was news to me that he had assigned her to us in the first place. This wasn’t quite the way appointments were supposed to occur in the Kennedy administration, although she was a carry-over, of course, from the days her brother was secretary. Eleanor was indeed very active. She continued to carry the torch for both of her brothers after Foster’s death and Allen’s retirement. She also carried the torch for German-American relations in general and for Berlin in particular. On the weekend that the Berlin wall went up, Kennedy unfortunately was sailing at Hyannis Port. Eleanor immediately leaped to Berlin’s defense and was harsh in her criticism of the new president for his absence and inaction.

Q: I’d like to put something in. I did an interview with Kempton Jenkins who was in Berlin at that time.. He was talking about the real disquiet that was felt at our mission in Berlin. He said they were picking up comments from within the Kennedy administration I don’t know who, but people were saying that maybe we could give in a little here or a little there or make some compromises. In Berlin they felt the Kennedy administration was going to be soft. Of course

these people had been dealing with the Berlin problem for years and were consumed with how much everything depended on whether you raised or lowered tail gates. There had been very set procedures. To have some new people come in and talk about compromising was scary to them.

HUGHES: Yes, it was scary to all the old hands who had been working on Berlin for years. Martin Hillenbrand's recent memoirs, for instance, cover this point very thoroughly. He basically presents a view that was commonly held at that time and not inaccurate: the Kennedy administration was staffed with academic amateurs, many of whom were engaged in frolics of their own. Some of the axes that were being ground included the possible neutralization of Germany and a consequent pull-back of troops. This was a time, of course, when the Mansfield resolution for troop reductions was introduced at every session of Congress, always ringing alarm bells in Bonn. Walter Lippmann played with the idea. Naturally Adenauer was agitated over reports of such tendencies in Washington. He wanted no change in the certainties and rigidities of the Dulles period, and he was made very nervous by every German reporter who filed stories after an interview in Washington that suggested anything new. All this began to be matched by a bureaucratic fascination in Washington with what was tormenting the Germans. There was a mutual suspicion of political trends in both capitals.

There was also nervousness in Washington about the Adenauer succession, coupled with a growing Presidential interest in the German Social-Democratic left. JFK was always fascinated with other people's politics, and it was clear that the aged German chancellor couldn't last much longer. Kennedy enjoyed speculating about the succession. When Ambassador Grewe displayed a distinct lack of humor about the whole situation, he was effectively declared persona non grata. Adenauer made matters worse by selectively releasing documents in Bonn that offended the Washington administration. The press would go back and forth between the two capitals exciting both places with the latest rumors, and in both capitals people were dining out on the rumors. Gone were the quiet certitudes of the Eisenhower-Dulles period in German-American relations.

The more intense the discussion became, the more it soured relationships. The Kennedy-Adenauer relationship, such as it was, wore thin. The Adenauer-de Gaulle collaboration created more strains in Washington. Kennedy, when he finally went to Berlin in 1963, wanted to speak to a labor union among other things. Adenauer couldn't understand that at all. It was totally off his wave length. Unions were part of his opposition. Why would an American president want to curry favor with his opposition?

Hence for two years or more, German-American relations were off to a bad start under Kennedy for all these reasons. When Khrushchev made Berlin his top priority at the Vienna summit and threatened war if the issue was not resolved, he clearly intended to exploit JFK's vulnerabilities. Against his inclinations, Kennedy was forced to become seriously interested in Germany. He began to see Berlin as his central foreign policy problem with surrogate issues elsewhere. If you read the Kennedy tapes on the Cuban missile crises in 1962, you will find JFK making this view explicit. Behind Cuba lay Berlin. The hawks might think that in Cuba we had all the advantages of proximity and troop strength, but this was shortsighted because the Soviets could retaliate in Berlin and take it any time they wished. The view of the Cuba Missile Crisis as basically a Berlin crisis comes through strongly in Kennedy's thinking.

In May, 1962, I accompanied Rusk on his first visit to Germany as Secretary. We had dinner with Adenauer at the Palais Schaumborg in Bonn. Afterwards, while Rusk and Adenauer were still talking, I was taken for a long walk in the garden by Baron von und zu Gutenberg, a Bavarian CSU leader close to Franz Joseph Strauss. Gutenberg was very much a part of the Abendland, Catholic, small Europe, Gaullist, German-French circle. He was at pains to tell me that the CDU-CSU coalition would soon have to confront the departure of the nearly indispensable Adenauer. Gutenberg was going to do everything possible to make sure that the successor would be a strong believer in the German-French relationship and not be tempted by “those foolish visions from Hamburg”—of a larger Northern Europe, international trade, and the Anglo-Saxon (American) NATO orientation. Later Hamburg won out, of course, with Erhard.

German officialdom knew that I would be reporting on the succession issue. Their interest was only whetted by a speculative story in the New York Times about my visit which lasted two weeks after Rusk returned to Washington. I had several fascinating conversations across the political spectrum at a pivotal point in postwar German-American relations.

After my return, I gave a two-hour debriefing in the State Department on the Adenauer succession problem and the future of German politics. A crowd of celebrities attended because Germany was by then becoming a more magnetic subject, and also, I suppose, because I was the rare New Frontiersman with an extensive German background. Among the attendees were Dean Rusk, George Ball, and George McGhee from State, Mac Bundy, Carl Kaysen, Arthur Schlesinger, and Fred Holborn from the White House, and Dick Helms from CIA. John McNaughton was there from the Pentagon—significantly, because McNamara was already further antagonizing the Bonn government with public demands for offset payments for US troops. Since Germans were the beneficiaries, he thought they should be defraying the costs. This offset question hung over US-German relations for much of the 1960's. It was a problem for the Erhard government all the way through, and ultimately helped lead to his downfall.

In 1963 the most fascinating development to watch was Kennedy's personal change on Berlin. Confronted with the fact he was probably going to have to deal with Berlin as the major crises of his administration, and also aware that a younger generation would be taking over politically there, Kennedy began to pay attention to aspirant leaders like the young mayor of Berlin, Willy Brandt, who in fact was trying to model himself on Kennedy. Brother Bobby was sent over to check out the Berlin scene, and JFK's interest grew when Bobby reported that Berlin was a potential venue for an historic Presidential speech. In due course came the famous visit to Berlin in June, 1963. For the President it was full circle on the German question. He had the largest mass audience of his entire career hearing him declare “Ich bin ein Berliner”. At the end of the day, he thought it was the most memorable twenty four hours of his political life. He had endeared himself to the Germans in a way that was quite amazing, as was obvious to those of us there at the time. Later that year after Kennedy's assassination, I received grief-stricken letters from Germans who a few months earlier had been in his audience in Berlin. One was from a grandson of the former Kaiser.

Kennedy's public success in Berlin, like his diplomatic triumph in the Cuba missile crisis, was a foreign policy high point of his presidency. He became a kind of folkloric figure in German as well as American history. Had Kennedy survived, his triumph in Berlin would have constituted a

major building block in German-American relations. CDU heirs-apparent like Ludwig Erhard and Gerhard Schroeder were friendly. Kennedy's nascent relationship with Willy Brandt also augured well for a contingent unfolding of a modernized social democratic affinity between the two men. With Kennedy leading, the Democratic party in the US would also have moved into a more favorable posture on things German. American labor leaders like Walter and Victor Reuther, for instance, had German connections that Kennedy thought would be productive in the overall relationship.

Ironically, of course, after the assassination, the fact that Kennedy had enjoyed such an enormous personal triumph in Germany turned Lyndon Johnson off. He actively avoided comparisons with his predecessor, and would never go to Berlin himself after he became president. The only time LBJ visited Germany as President was for Adenauer's funeral in Cologne. His subsequent effort to entertain Erhard in Texas was not regarded as a great success. Humphrey made a few efforts as Vice President, but on the whole something of a cloud reemerged over German-American relations for the rest of the Johnson presidency. The spectacular opportunities opened up by Kennedy were never fully exploited.

Q: During these early years, 1961, the Vienna-Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting, what was INR doing regarding Germany? Was there concern in your bureau about what these Kennedy people were up to, including maybe you too? Did you feel you were being tested to see whether, to put it in diplomatic terms - to see whether you had balls or not?

HUGHES: I suppose I could have been one factor among many others. Perhaps in some quarters it might have been hoped that I would deflect some of the adventurous viewpoints held elsewhere, including in the White House. I wouldn't make too much of that, however.

What was INR doing? We did have considerable continuity from the 1950's in research and analysis on Germany. We benefited from veteran analysts like Martha Mautner, who knew postwar Germany well. INR analysts, of course, were aware that the policymaker's attitudes towards Germany were often a function of their attitudes towards the Soviet Union. A committed interest in arms control, for instance, automatically involved certain assumptions about the potential for negotiations with the Soviet Union. By the same token, arms reduction proposals immediately involved policy toward Germany. The whole question of trade-offs and the consequences on the ground in Europe became problems for the analysts and the estimators. These issues were very much on the table, and they affected the lineup of forces in Washington, including those of the intelligence community, in the positions taken regarding Germany.

Q: During your three weeks in Germany, did you find that the people you were talking to were sounding you out and being nervous about what the Kennedyites were up to?

HUGHES: I talked mostly with sub-cabinet people, politicians, civil servants, and journalists. There is no doubt that my interest in talking to them crossed their interest in talking to me. There had been a parade of people coming in and out of Germany, dropping tidbits of this and that, many of them inconsistent with one another, fed and amplified by press reports. The head of USIA, the legendary Edward R. Murrow, had just been to Germany. He had reported to Kennedy that there really was a very big backlash in German opinion over his alleged non-response to the

Berlin wall. Murrow had encouraged JFK to pay more attention to the sourness there that was growing up around this issue. Walter Lippmann's columns were endlessly examined and cross-examined in the German press. Marguerite Higgins would come back and feed the rumor-mill some more. Official Americans in Germany were sending back conflicting reports. The succession struggle was a wild card. Erhard was the most probable successor, but he himself was very apprehensive toward the end of the Adenauer regime because Adenauer kept undermining him at every possible opportunity.

The most interesting transformation was the one I mentioned—the migration Kennedy made from his early disinterest, even antagonism, to a kind of infatuation with Germany as an extension of his personal political reach. He clearly intended to use his enormous success in Germany to his own advantage in domestic politics in the United States. This was worth its weight in gold for Kennedy because Germany, historically speaking, was an object more of Republican than Democratic affection. He had made a big inroad in the Dulles heritage. Kennedy was conscious of all of these aspects and thrilled with his reception in Berlin. He regarded his visit as a really solid plus, a most rewarding day's work.

Q: In those early days when you came back how did Kennedy, being Democratic, associate with the SPD (German Social Democratic Party)? You know Democrats are more left than Republicans and the SPD was to the left.

HUGHES: As I said earlier, these were tendencies built into the historic situation. Kennedy was intrigued with social democracy as a movement. Others, like Hubert Humphrey, also played into the German Social Democratic scene. Brandt was emerging as a popular leader in Berlin and JFK was intrigued when people told him that Willy was consciously modeling his own career on Kennedy. New elements were at work in German politics. People were moving away from the conservative heritage of the Adenauer-Dulles period. Brandt provided an unusual extra ingredient to the political scene. He was the mayor of beleaguered Berlin and Berlin was now Kennedy's "outpost of freedom". The rapidity with which the city moved from being Hitler's redoubt into being the city of the liberty bell was really quite an astonishing story of psychological transformation both in Germany and the US.

Q: Thanks to the benevolence of the Soviet Union.

HUGHES: Yes, of course. The Germans were the Cold War's chief beneficiaries. The Berlin airlift had glamorized the city, and now Brandt was playing a catalytic and broadening role. Lacking the taint of a Nazi past, he had affiliations with the social democrats of Scandinavia and benefited from his own wartime experiences in the Norwegian underground. In addition to labor ties, there were other shared interests between the Kennedy Administration and the SPD like anti-nuclear issues and third world development.

Q: How about the labor business? What's his name Brown? There was very strong support for labor in Europe from CIA.

HUGHES: Irving Brown.

Q: Irving Brown and his labor ties to the AFL-CIO with CIA support in the background. Were you looking at our ties to labor?

HUGHES: Many of us were well aware of those trans-national labor ties. But the covert connections were discreetly glossed over when intelligence analysts wrote about the scene. One of the theological bug-a-boos of American intelligence was the so-called American factor, which was supposed to be off limits in our commentaries. In a curiously antiseptic view, US intelligence analysts were not supposed to consider or refer to the covert American role in situations they were analyzing. I am not sure how deleterious the consequences of this self-censorship actually were. Almost everyone knew, or assumed, that CIA money was behind the AFL-CIO-German labor connection.

Elusive semantics were used to avoid the American factor in obedience to this orthodox requirement. Dean Rusk used to say "When the great government of the United States puts its shoulder to the wheel something gives." But analysts weren't supposed to be aware of covert things. Policymakers didn't want to be crowded by intelligence people telling them they were succeeding or failing.

Q: What about Bobby Kennedy who was so important. Did he fix on Germany?

HUGHES: No, I don't think he fixed on Germany at all except for his scouting trip in advance of JFK's famous visit. Bobby's own German visit had its ups and downs. Thus there were reports that he went into the KPM porcelain outlet on the Kurfurstendamm in Berlin, selected various things, and reportedly took them away without paying, saying "We won the war, didn't we?" That didn't get the Kennedy image off to a good start, but his report to Washington was very favorable.

Q: The ultimate effect was the Germans won the war via porcelain.

HUGHES: Of course, in the Cuba missile crisis a few months earlier, Bobby had played a constructive personal role in his contact with the Soviet ambassador.

Q: Let's stick to the developments in Germany and American resolves on Germany.

HUGHES: Well, those developments also involved a Soviet angle. The Kennedy administration was interested in what tendencies were at work on the German political scene favoring bilateral connections with Russia. Dean Rusk was very concerned about Berlin and hoped that he could "hand over to my successor the same Berlin problem that I inherited." He didn't have a solution for Berlin, but he didn't want the situation there to deteriorate. Khrushchev put Berlin on the agenda and Rusk was trying to get it off the agenda, because he couldn't see any positive solution for it.

During the Kennedy years there was already nervousness in Washington about the Germans eventually taking matters into their own hands and negotiating with the Russians. Later on this actually happened during the Johnson administration when Brandt became German foreign minister and Ostpolitik emerged, thawing relations with both the East German regime and with

Moscow. From 1961 on, the Russians were seen as persisting in their efforts to drive a wedge between the German government and the American government. The “Gaullist temptation” was regarded as a serious problem. Adenauer and de Gaulle had signed the Franco-German Friendship Treaty, which some in Washington regarded as unsettling-- an affront deliberately designed in Paris to undermine NATO and the German-American relationship. It played into Adenauer’s Rhineland view of the world—a small Germany in a small Europe.

I think at their first official meeting de Gaulle told Erhard that his statement supporting the US in Vietnam was a violation of his friendship treaty with Adenauer. Of course by 1964-5 we were always asking for support on Vietnam from our allies including Germany. This fed back into the controversy over offset payments with the US threatening to take troops out of Germany for use in Vietnam unless the Germans would pay to keep them. You can imagine with what enthusiasm some circles in Washington received the news from de Gaulle that Bonn’s support for the US in Vietnam was inconsistent with Franco-German friendship. That was just about all the ammunition George Ball needed to press his multi-front war against de Gaulle.

Where were we before I started on this digression?

Q: Well, we talked about Bobby Kennedy’s role and before that we were talking about the changing policy.

HUGHES: Oh yes, you had asked what we were focusing on. We were focusing on what changes in German policy there might be under a new German government. In the event, Erhard pleased the United States. He was an economist. He was interested in trade. He was interested in a larger Europe. He was interested in Britain. Erhard was part of the larger world, and came from the Protestant wing of his party. Many in Washington considered him a plausible partner.

Q: I think of him with his cherubic face and a big cigar and a ten gallon hat.

HUGHES: He was the veritable embodiment of the Wirtschaftswunder, the miraculous economic recovery of Germany which he had been instrumental in engineering before he became chancellor. But the Wirtschaftswunder declined a bit thereafter. In a way LBJ delivered the coup de grace to Erhard in 1966, by allowing McNamara to set the terms for the US relationship with Germany. Offset agreements or troop withdrawals was his summary of the situation.

McNamara would brace the German defense minister, Kai Uwe von Hassel, who would leave his presence quite shattered by the ultimatums. Some of the telephone tapes between Johnson and McNamara on the German offset issue have McNamara saying “Well, the Germans really want us to reduce our forces over there.” “Yes,” LBJ would say, “I think maybe that’s what they are aiming for,” “Well, I’m just going to tell them they are going to have to pay for it or they can invite us to reduce our troops”. Never mind that this was a vulgarization of what the actual German attitude was. It was a curious irony. In Vietnam, our most dubious ally, we were pouring in financial support partly to keep them from asking us to leave, while in Germany, our most important ally, we were prepared to promote our own departure.

Q: Were analysts in the military or in INR looking to see if we took troops out of Germany this

might precipitate a war? I come from the Korean experience when the Carter administration came in. We knew if we withdrew a significant number of our troops from there we would increase the possibility of war with North Korea.

HUGHES: That was certainly part of the argument for retaining troops in Europe and paying for them. Of course, nobody quite believed that the United States was either so poor or so incapable of figuring its own priorities. It was folly to think that there would be no significant psychological effects in Germany of a persistent troop withdrawal discussion.

Q: Was McNamara just counting beans rather than thinking about what this really meant?

HUGHES: He certainly came through as a bean counter. Very often McNamara projected a metallic, mathematical approach to complicated issues. The decisiveness of his often arbitrary decisions made many matters clearer than the truth. Johnson himself might normally have been more involved in German questions, and more sympathetic to them. But he tended to neglect Germany personally because he didn't want to be compared unfavorably with Kennedy. Johnson took Erhard around the little German Texas towns like Frederick and New Braunfels, introducing him in his funny German to the local inhabitants who couldn't understand either LBJ or his visitor. But before long Erhard saw his hopeful beginning with the new administration in Washington end in economic arguments and disappointment.

Erhard was eased out only to be succeeded by a grand coalition still headed by a Christian Democratic chancellor. Now, however, it was a reversion to a Catholic Christian Democrat who had once been a Nazi and in charge of public relations at the German Foreign Office. When the news first came in that Kiesinger had become chancellor, Rusk said sourly, "You might have thought they could find somebody without that background." When we flew to Berlin together in May, 1962, Rusk reminisced about his life in Berlin where he had studied for a few months in the mid-1930's. In 1962 there was a popular song called "I Left a Suitcase in Berlin," and I suggested that he use the phrase in his arrival remarks. He did. But as the plane was descending to land at Tempelhof, Rusk was in a reflective mood. When he looked out of the window and saw the crowd that had gathered to welcome him, he said "I wonder how many of them were here cheering Hitler the last time I was in Berlin?"

Later on when Rusk's friend George McGhee was ambassador in Bonn, McGhee told him "The Germans really want you to take an initiative on reunification." Rusk asked him what reunification meant, and McGhee answered "the borders of 1937". Rusk replied. "You know perfectly well, George, there is no country in the world that will support German reunification with the borders of 1937." Rusk always kept a certain distance from the German problem. He didn't let it get in the way, for instance, of his hopes for an improvement in US-Soviet relations.

I remember another incident from the McGhee ambassadorship. It was typical of the way much of official Washington reacted to the Nazi problem in the 1960's. One day McGhee was invited to go over to Essen to visit the newly revived Krupp industries. The head of the Krupp dynasty had been convicted as a war criminal at Nuremberg but had recently been released. After hosting a nice lunch, Krupp broached the subject of his forthcoming visit to America. Did he really have to have his US visa stamped with a statement that waived his guilty verdict from Nuremberg?

McGhee explained that it was just a bureaucratic matter, and nobody would pay any attention to it. The press probably wouldn't even find out about it. "Just don't go to New York where it could be a problem. It's no problem in Washington where people are looking forward to having you come."

Q: Did you sense that after we learned to live with the Berlin wall and the Johnson administration came in and focus was on Vietnam, that the activity of your office diminished as far as Germany and Berlin were concerned?

HUGHES: Well, the Berlin crisis itself receded with the withdrawal of Khrushchev's ultimatum. The Johnson administration later did its best to improve relations with Moscow via the Glassboro summit, only to be set back in 1968 with the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Meanwhile the German question took on a new aspect since Brandt was now foreign minister in Kiesinger's grand coalition. There was intense concern in Washington over Brandt's Ostpolitik and his overtures to the East. Conservatives worried about what Brandt advisors like Egon Bahr were doing. The SPD leadership was no longer in opposition, but was now officially in charge of foreign affairs.

Q: Egon Bahr being?

HUGHES: Brandt's behind-the-scenes advisor on German-German relations. Hal Sonnenfeldt in INR and his mentor Henry Kissinger, still outside the government, worried that Brandt would go too far in his overtures to the east. They were suspicious about Egon Bahr's secret visits with members of the Honecker regime in East Berlin or, even worse, inside the Kremlin itself. They worried that Brandt & Company would settle for less than the US would settle for on the German question. Kissinger used to talk about the race to Moscow on which he felt naïve Westerners were engaged. Of course this is Professor Henry Kissinger in the 1960's, not yet in office, complaining from the sidelines, and preparing for his own ascendancy. Mind you, we are now in the last years of the Johnson administration when there is a real effort to have a peace policy with Moscow to balance the increasingly desperate war policy in Vietnam. A nuclear non-proliferation agreement with the Soviet Union had become a prime objective. We were trying to do business with Moscow and at the same time let them off the hook on Vietnam. The Washington-Moscow relationship was a major concern of Dean Rusk. He was personally deeply worried about the nuclear issue and the prospects for arms control --which in a way takes us back to the Israeli issue that we were going to talk about.

Q: Before we get to that, during this time was the Hallstein doctrine in full bloom and how did we feel about that?

HUGHES: It was in full bloom. The Hallstein Doctrine was adopted by the Germans under Adenauer in the '50s to discourage the rest of the world from recognizing the East German regime. The doctrine provided that Bonn itself would deny recognition to any government that formally recognized East Germany. You had to choose. This had become an issue because various middle and third world countries were tempted to try to recognize both Germanys. The east Germans naturally wanted to be recognized and tried to create incentives for it. Ultimately, in the Nixon years ironically, the two Germanys themselves recognized each other and were both

admitted to the U.N.

Q: Were a lot of the third world countries doing this because of bribes from the Soviet Union or were they trying to show they were part of the active third world?

HUGHES: Both elements were in the picture. After all, the Hallstein Doctrine was one of the fixtures of the Cold War. The division of Germany was enshrined in the Hallstein Doctrine. Washington certainly wasn't in the forefront encouraging Bonn to change it. If the Cold War was to be moderated, we wanted to be in charge of the moderation. On the other hand many realists in Washington thought that the doctrine had outlived its usefulness and was no longer in the Federal Republic's own interest. Many assumed that Bonn was going to have to change its policy, as indeed it did.

Before we leave the subject, let me also say that the Kiesinger-Brandt coalition was a useful political contrivance for both men—a model marriage of convenience. The ex-Nazi CDU chancellor legitimized the anti-Nazi SPD foreign minister. Each of the coalition leaders thus had constituencies that were mollified by the combination. The joke was that Kiesinger wanted to be foreign minister and Brandt wanted to be chancellor, but they ended up occupying the other's preferred office. Kiesinger was certainly interested in foreign policy. He developed a good working relationship with Johnson, although he regularly complained about the "quality," as he put it, of the German-American connection. He wanted to develop it, but it remained more formal than he would have liked. He was perhaps more successful in restoring the German-French relationship which had been neglected a bit by Erhard. Kiesinger turned out to be a smoother of waters, and had a creditable record as chancellor.

Q: While we are still talking about the Johnson administration, did you find INR was playing a different role and Rusk was playing a different role in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations?

HUGHES: It's hard to say. Johnson certainly read some of our products and from time-to-time would refer to them. In the Kennedy administration there were many more direct requests to INR from the White House. Kennedy himself was a speed reader and would read papers himself. Undoubtedly Bundy, under both Kennedy and Johnson, sent more INR material into the Oval Office than Rostow did subsequently under Johnson. Whether the National Security Adviser was putting our papers in the President's reading file or keeping them out was always a subject of speculation in INR. All of our papers were sent over to the White House. But who got them, who wished to read them, and who actually read them, were persistent questions. Certainly the intellectual thirst that Kennedy had for new and different insights declined under Johnson, and Johnson's own open-mindedness declined during his years in office.

On the other hand I certainly couldn't say that there was any effort by the Johnson administration to impede INR in any way. Johnson left the State Department to Rusk. LBJ rarely interfered with the State Department's hierarchical protocol the way Kennedy did. Kennedy would call INR directly, just as he called the desk officers in the geographic bureaus. Johnson rarely did that, although some of his subordinates didn't hesitate to call and ask for quite preposterous things. So it's hard to generalize about the difference. Rusk remained very supportive of INR throughout

his eight years. We briefed him the same way under Johnson as we did under Kennedy. I guess it is probably fair to say that the differences were minor.

Q: You said there was a connection between the German thing and Israel.

HUGHES: I don't mean the obvious connection. German reparations for the Nazi period were already set in motion. Adenauer had worked out his own arrangements with Israel. Nahum Goldmann had already been instrumental in negotiating the initial commitments for financial compensation. The German and Israeli constituencies in the United States were, of course, quite different—troubled and defensive on the German side and antagonistic and suspicious on the Israeli side. Naturally enough, the Israelis could not be expected to be leaders in the effort to improve German-American relations. On the other hand, the Germans were wary about attitudes in the American-Jewish community and what effect they might have on US presidents and US policies toward Germany.

What I had in mind was something else. From the outset the Kennedy administration tormented itself with the issue of nuclear weapons, particularly as this issue pertained to Germany and Israel. A State Department group played the dominant role on the German nuclear issue. The group centered on Undersecretary George Ball, his close collaborator Robert Schaezel, Policy Planning Staff member Henry Owen, and a distinguished carryover from the Dulles days, Robert Bowie. This group conjured up a hypothetical German nuclear menace. They assumed an eventual German determination to obtain nuclear weapons and set about heading off this calamity. Their answer was the famous MLF—a multi-lateral seaborne force composed of NATO mix-manned, multi-national crews. The idea was that this would embed the Germans inextricably in a NATO controlled nuclear project and avert the prospect of a unilateral German finger on the nuclear trigger.

After great American pressure, the MLF proposal was widely agreed to within NATO, the Germans themselves awkwardly being brought aboard. It became the official policy of the Kennedy Administration. Its practicality was ridiculed from the beginning, however, and some of the leading players in the Kennedy administration were only half-heartedly supportive. I remember being summoned to the White House one day by Mac Bundy who was one of Ball's competitors for influence in the Kennedy Administration and potentially a rival for future appointment as secretary of state. "George just insists on being the piano player on this one (the MLF), doesn't he?"

Mac Bundy's thinly-veiled skepticism about Ball's MLF proposal quickly asserted itself after Kennedy's assassination. Johnson turned out to be skeptical as well, and with Presidential support withdrawn, the MLF collapsed before takeoff. Incidentally, throughout the MLF controversy INR's coverage of European attitudes in general and of De Gaulle's role in particular was seen by the MLF proponents as unhelpful. Here was a cameo insight into the plusses and minuses—the ups and downs-- of bureaucratic coalitions. George Ball was already engaged in giving voice to his celebrated skepticism about Vietnam and he often used INR material. Ball therefore found INR simultaneously indispensable in the mornings on Vietnam and retrograde in the afternoons on the MLF, both enhancing and obstructing his own two driving interests.

But there was another counterpart to the MLF saga, one that also was predicated on the Kennedy administration's determination to avoid nuclear proliferation. Just as the MLF was contrived to obstruct a possible German nuclear weapon, so the entire Kennedy administration "set its face like flint toward Jerusalem" in trying to forestall an Israeli nuclear weapon.

I was reminded of this lately when I was reading a new book about Israel and the nuclear weapon by Avner Cohen, who has been working here at the U.S. Institute of Peace. It turns out that the Israelis started work on their Dimona nuclear reactor, excavating for it, in the late '50s. There were U-2 overflights of Dimona and subsequent briefings of President Eisenhower. Art Lundahl was already then the chief photo-interpreter at NPIC (National Photographic Interpretation Center), and he continued in that capacity under Kennedy.

According to Lundahl's account to Cohen, he briefed Eisenhower about Dimona in 1958 in the company of Admiral Strauss. The briefing elicited no reaction, leaving Lundahl with the impression that the White House accepted the development. After the photos were presented, Strauss had asked: "What conclusion do you draw from these pictures?" Lundahl had replied: "The only conclusion you can draw is that Israel is embarking on a nuclear weapons program. That is the only interpretation possible." To Lundahl's surprise, there was no Presidential response whatever to this statement. Eisenhower left the meeting without saying a word. Lundahl's conclusion at the time was clear: "I had the impression that he either knew about, or was acquiescent in, or wasn't particularly concerned about, what seemed to us to be a rather dramatic new development."

Hence the Israeli nuclear issue was another of the hot potatoes bequeathed by Eisenhower to Kennedy, in addition to the more familiar ones of Laos and Vietnam. In fact there was a national intelligence estimate the first week of December 1960, issued by then-DCI Allen Dulles, which concluded that Israel was building a nuclear weapon. Two days later on Meet the Press John McCone, still director of the Atomic Energy Commission, publicly leaked the conclusion of this classified NIE, by announcing on TV that Israel was building a nuclear weapon. Nasser reacted on the 23rd of December, 1960, stating that an Israeli nuclear weapon would inflame the Middle East and might well require Egypt to engage in a preventive war. That same month the possibility of the allegedly anti-Israeli Senator Fulbright becoming Kennedy's secretary of state was shot down by an organized lobbying effort.

In other words the subject of Israel and nuclear weapons was smack on the agenda during the Eisenhower-Kennedy transition December 1960 and January 1961. McCone's opposition to an Israeli nuclear weapon was public knowledge. Moreover, he was no particular friend of Israel to begin with. He was a prominent Catholic (indeed a Knight of Malta), an Eisenhower Republican, and still head of the Atomic Energy Commission. These attributes were well known to Kennedy four months later when he was casting around for a successor to Allen Dulles after the latter's firing. The Israeli nuclear issue itself had to be one of the factors in Kennedy's mind when he selected McCone as his Director of Central Intelligence. (McCone's unhappiness with Israeli nuclear developments also was a factor in his own resignation under LBJ in 1965.)

We then embarked on a tortuous saga in which Israel and the friends of Israel in two American

administrations succeeded in outwitting and outlasting the combined forces of the president, secretary of state, secretary of defense, the National Security Advisor, the head of the arms control disarmament agency, and the CIA. For three years in the Kennedy administration all of these gentlemen were united on non-proliferation. They were determined to prevent an Israeli nuclear weapon. Kennedy told Rusk that his highest priority for US-Israeli relations was to curtail the nuclear program at Dimona. Rusk himself kept telling the Israelis that the chief threat to US-Israeli relations was the Dimona reactor. “ You are not playing fair and square with us.” McNamara was saying we are not going to allow the Israelis to get the bomb. “We are going down the road to a non-proliferation treaty, and we can’t permit Israel, which the rest of the world regards as the 51st American state, to engage in this frolic on its own.” And during their visits to Washington there were warning sessions at the White House with Ben Gurion and Eshkol about Israel’s nuclear intentions.

Throughout the Kennedy administration, and later for years under Johnson, this sorry saga involved constant foot dragging on the Israeli side and repeated efforts in circles inside and outside the United States government to postpone and delay. Inside the Kennedy White House, Mac Bundy’s assistant, Mike Feldman, handled relations with the Jewish community. Kennedy put Mike in charge of this issue. He ultimately convinced the Israelis that American inspections of Dimona had to be accepted. Then came the handicapping of the inspections—the arguments about appropriate dates and frequency, the severe time limits, the restrictions on numbers and equipment, and ultimately, at the end of each visit, the suspect results. The inspectors were hobbled and unhappy. McCone was equally unhappy with the inspectors. “Of course the Israelis are developing the bomb. Why do we keep putting out these tepid statements saying that we can’t be sure?” INR’s Granville Austin thought the benefit of the doubt should be on the US side. “We should assume that the Israelis are developing nuclear weapons, and it is up to them to disprove it, not on us to prove it.” But that formulation was never operative.

MAURICE E. LEE
Information Officer, USIS
Bonn (1964-1965)

Maurice E. Lee was born in Erie, Pennsylvania in 1925. He served with the European Theater during World War II. He received a master's degree from George Washington University and went to Paris, France to learn French. Mr. Lee's career with USIS included positions in Germany, Japan, Vietnam, South Asia, Washington, DC, the Philippines, Korea, and Israel. He was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt on February 9, 1989

LEE: I was then assigned as Information Officer in Bonn. This was my second trip back to Germany. And of course I saw a lot of contrast to what I'd seen when I went there back in the early '50s.

Q: Had the German attitudes towards the Americans changed very much by that time? Or were your changes in other areas?

LEE: There was a much more mature relationship. And I think there was a healthy respect. We had an alliance going. And we were -- our relations were quite good. Konrad Adenauer was the Chancellor at that time.

And I remember another little anecdote that gives you an idea of the feelings there at the time. One night right after work I got home and was just getting ready to have a drink before dinner. I got a phone call from my wireless file operator saying, he's shot. He's shot. Now he's dead. Come, come at once. I said, what are you talking about? And he said, your President's been killed.

So I got right in my car and rushed down to the office. After the President's death had been confirmed by two different wire services I called Ambassador McGhee, who as I recall was giving a white tie dinner that night for Chancellor Adenauer. He was taking a nap and his butler said, should I wake him up? I said, I think you'd better. When I told him -- he was a personal friend of the President's -- he was absolutely shocked of course and came immediately to the office. We worked through the night.

First we had to call everybody and cancel the dinner. The German custom at that time was to send out black bordered cards announcing a death. So the printing press had to be activated to accomplish this.

The next morning I left the building at about six o'clock. When I walked out of the Embassy there must have been several hundred Germans just standing staring at the building. They had brought flowers and candles which they placed on the steps. Later on I commented to my German teacher who was sort of a middle aged woman who was brought to tears at the mention of Kennedy's name, I said, I could understand why the Americans are so upset and shocked by the death of our President. But I can't understand the wave of grief here in Germany. And she said, well, it's very easy, Mr. Lee. To my generation, he was our Siegfried. This has been a country of old men.

We still have a large program in Germany. I am surprised that it is still as big. I served in two countries that were at one time occupied by us, Japan and Germany. I believe it was just difficult as heck to get these programs down to normalcy. Eventually they were reduced when we ran out of foreign currency and had budget restrictions. We maintained a very large program while I was there. It wasn't anything of an unusual nature that we took on. We had the traditional USIS program. And of course Germany was still re-building.

Q: They were still very receptive to our program?

LEE: Yes, yes. We had information centers in all the major cities. I think we still do. And we had even German American cultural centers where the Germans put in funds. Some would be located in other cities where we couldn't afford to be there on our own. And it was usually an American that headed them. But the Germans funded most of them. So I think that gives you an indication of the interest of the German government. They wanted us there.

Q: At one point as I recall while we were cutting back somewhat on our budget the Germans agreed to put a certain amount of money themselves into the program in order to retain the cultural centers without cutting down on any of them. I think it was probably at that point that some of the centers turned into German American cultural centers. Because they were partly funded by the --

LEE: Right. I remember when we were cutting back and the rumor would get around. For instance Bremen was going to be closed -- the Lord Mayor of Bremen sent cables to Congress, and to the President. He was very upset that he was going to lose that center. A similar thing happened in several other German cities.

PETER B. SWIERS
Rotation Officer
Frankfurt (1964-1966)

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

Q: So you went to Frankfurt where I've got you serving from 1964 to 1966. What were you doing then?

SWIERS: I was actually call that an almost normal Foreign Service assignment. The junior officer rotation system had come in by that time, in contrast to my assignment to Athens. I guess the class after me, which would have been 1961, was one of the last classes whose graduates had to be assigned to a job. The new system - the rotation of junior officers on their first tour - had begun by the time I went to Frankfurt. Since I had gotten married and wasn't going to be Ford's permanent aide, I ended up in the junior officer rotational program which meant that started with 2-3 months in the consular doing immigrant visa work.

I might mention briefly that the man who had been in the job before me was a Foreign Service Officer by the name of Steve Miller and frankly his career was not going too well and a few years later he had himself assigned to Vietnam. He was caught in the provinces and was executed by the VC; they found his body in a shallow grave after we retook the area. It was very sad; he was a man with a large family. After the consular section, I think I was then assigned to the trade section. We had a trade center in Frankfurt and I'd like to talk about that. I think it was a real mistake that trade centers were reduced later. This one was located in downtown Frankfurt and I was there for about 5 months. I think after that I was finally rotated into being a staff aide to Ford and I was there at the time that Ford was killed.

Q: In an automobile accident.

SWIERS:.. My last nine months were spent as the assistant GSO - in fact, as acting GSO in Frankfurt which meant that I was located in the complex itself and was responsible for about 70

Germans most of whom didn't speak English. It was one of the most interesting sagas I think a junior officer could have. I really got into German culture and German psychology. I said "acting" because the GSO at that time, Frank Jackson, contracted pneumonia and was actually out of work for several months. He came back a few weeks before it was time for me to leave.

So I had a normal rotational assignment. I don't have many tales to tell from my perspective. Interestingly enough, one of the people I met in Frankfurt was General George Segnesious whom I met again with at the Paris Peace Talks in 1968. He was the president of the Atlantic Council - he recruited me later to join the Council

It was an interesting period. It was the very height of the Cold War. The dollar had not yet started its decline; we were still a force with the dollar. We lived in the Carl Schwartz compound which was also referred to as the "Golden Ghetto". We had Germans living next to us. We lived there, my wife and I; we felt much more comfortable going out on the economy than a lot of the colleagues who liked to remain in the American compound. Most of the personnel of the consulate general were act GAO and FAA employees. Their regional headquarters were in Frankfurt. Their families lived in the compound while they traveled; they had very little interchange with the Germans.

I can remember one thing in the consular section at the time. I was in the immigrant visa section. A colleague of mine, Andy Thoms, who has just retired as consul general in Munich, was also working in the section. We had just lifted the rules on Nazi travel to the United States; in other words, people who had been Nazis during the war could enter the U.S. unless it could be proven that they had actually committed a crime. I remember that Andy, who was from New Jersey, was fairly conservative in his politics. He came to me one day, terribly upset because two ex-SS officers had applied for visas and had in effect demanded the visas so that they could visit the United States and he couldn't do anything but issue them. There was nothing on them and they knew it; they were smiling; they had us. It was an interesting comment on how things were beginning to change. The reason I mention that is because my wife is Danish and her father had to go into hiding for eight months during the war. One of her uncle's was a Jew and they had to smuggle him to Sweden; his wife and the children followed as quickly as possible thereafter.

We actually did feel comfortable living on the economy. There was an excellent German butcher just outside of the compound. My wife was a blond, green-eyed Dane, very obviously Danish and pregnant at the time. The first time we went, the butcher looked at her and in German asked "Are you by chance Danish?" My wife answered "yes" and he said, "What a wonderful time I had in Denmark during the war. I remember all of the breads, and the wonderful cream and pastries." I looked at my wife and I knew there was going to be an explosion. I quickly said "How very, very interesting and how much do we owe you?" We cleared out of there and she calmed down once we got outside.

Q: You don't want to get a butcher upset.

SWIERS: Right. Actually the next time we went in, I think, he realized that it had been clumsy and he was polite; we obviously went back.

We were in Frankfurt at the time when the Dutch Princess Beatrix was to marry the German Count Claus VonBund - he changed it to VanAnsberg. We were all told that if anybody visited Holland who did not have U.S. forces plates, that they had to have an American flag because the Dutch were slashing the tires of the Germans as they came in. It was quite violent. It was also the time that the Germans were invited to Denmark for maneuvers. The Dutch arranged it very carefully so that the Germans would bypass towns and villages to the maximum extent possible. We saw a famous picture of two young Germans on one of those German motorcycles with sidecars. It brought back images of World War II. It's one of those images that one always thinks of: the Germans in the motorcycles with a sidecar. These Germans got lost and drove into a Danish town. I frankly don't know whether it was the part of town that had been occupied by the Germans until 1944, but it was awful. The two boys weren't any older than 19 or 20; they were spit upon and had stones thrown at them. The two boys started to cry; they broke down and cried and the Danes suddenly took pity on them. There was a change in attitude, to the extent possible. After that, things went much more smoothly.

The trade center, when I went there, it was quite experimental. Trade centers are really best for small and medium size businessmen who need an evaluation of the market. I really thought that the trade centers would change the attitude of the American business community towards government assistance. Unfortunately, a few years later the trade centers were dramatically cut back. I don't even know if the Frankfurt trade center is still in existence. We could hold exhibits there quite inexpensively. It was a good training ground for me. I think it is really important for young Foreign Service officers to have training in other than in theoretical political and economic issue. They should have experience of the real world. It was a very useful learning assignment. After that, as I have said, I was assigned to act as staff aide to Ford and his deputy principal officer, Everett Melby. A wonderful man - he was the brother of John Melby.

Q: John Melby who was one of the China hands. Even more importantly, he had a world known affair with Lillian Helman. He's now dead, not very long ago, but I have an interview with him.

SWIERS: His brother was equally gifted. Everett Melby is still alive and he lives in Canada. His wife just died.

Q: John Melby lived in Canada also.

SWIERS: Yes, somewhere near Quebec. His last post was as consul general in Quebec. He was terribly cynical. It affected him to that extent.

Q: Did this have an effect on you? Looking at the Foreign Service particularly in the aftermath of the McCarthy period, did you have any feel for the support system of the Foreign Service?

SWIERS: I have to say that I was a little concerned because my father's family had come from the Soviet Union and my father was always worried about that. A sister, who has since died, had in fact gone back to Leningrad and my father always considered that she was responsible for his mother's death. His mother just broke down after that and she died in the early 1930s. So I did have those concerns; there was no question about it. Of course, I was in a totally different environment but one had to be effected by it. Interestingly, as I have said, my first boss indeed

should be Bob Cartwright who was Scott McLeod's top aide and very conservative. I remember in a picture somewhere of him wearing a Japanese helmet and holding a Samurai sword that he had found in one of the Japanese houses that he and the FBI had entered to move the people to the concentration camps in the U.S. I wouldn't say that it effected anyone in any great sense. My mother's family very avidly watched the McCarthy hearings. My mother was the liberal in the group. She was repelled by it and the rest of the family saw it as the country subjected to subversion. When you saw people like Everett Melby who was so cynical, you understood the tragedy of wrongly accusing people - people who had done well.

Q: Just to get the spirit of the times, how did we view the Soviet threat?

SWIERS: That's a very good question. It had become part of life. It is interesting in retrospect to think that our generation sort of lived with the bomb and the threat of war. Life went on normally, even though we were conscious of it. There was no question that we had the military around, but there was a certain security with the military around. I remember that as one of my responsibilities in Frankfurt was to redraft the emergency evacuation plan. The one that they had for Frankfurt was somewhere in the neighborhood of at least four inches thick with appendices. By the time we figured out what to do, the post would have been overrun. On the other hand, the ENE office was located in Frankfurt and we had to have a plan I remember that I rewrote the thing shortening it to maybe a half inch thick. The original plan called for a massive evacuation plan which would begin by bringing everybody to the consulate general, putting American flags on the cars and then we would all go west on the autobahn in a convoy. My view was that this was ridiculous. The Fulda Gap was about 65 miles from Frankfurt; if the war started we would be to reach that. My view was that we should attempt to evacuate as many people by aircraft as we could and the rest would move on by land as best they could - or could stay in place. The problem was - which is a contradiction in Frankfurt - that you had State Department people who understood the risk to be part of their careers, but the GAO and the FAA people and their families were not at all happy about that. But I thought that it would dangerous to put our people out on highways when we were 65 miles from the Fulda Gap where they could be strayed. First of all, the highways would probably be jammed anyway with Germans going one way and troops going to other with total confusion reigning. We somehow envisioned these great convoys that would sail away. I had been the ENE Officer for Crete when I was in Greece and I was supposed to go out and try to help the Americans on the island evacuate, but what were you going to do on an island that was completely surrounded by water? Maybe we could find a ship and put them on that, which would be promptly sunk. There was a certain romance, I think, in looking at this.

Q: I was the Vice Counsel in Frankfurt in 1955- 1958 and I remember that I was supposed to put a card table up out in the parking lot and check people. All of us knew that it wasn't going to happen;; in fact in those days they even had signs on the Autobahn "This way for evacuation". The feeling was if there is any line that's going to be drawn, it's not going to be drawn in front of Frankfurt; it's going to be drawn way back and you're not going to make it. There certainly was the feeling that the Soviet Union was a threat.

SWIERS: There was a feeling of threat, but I think there was a confidence also in Frankfurt because we were totally surrounded by American forces. You didn't have that same sense of isolation that you would perhaps have elsewhere. Life went on. Frankfurt was still being

reconstructed - lots of ditches and holes, buildings were still damaged. I think this is a compliment to the Americans; the deterrence was there and the rebuilding in Europe went on behind that American shield. You did not have a sense of the Soviets coming across the border at any given moment. Perhaps it was a threat, but it was a threat that had been effectively contained.

Q: Before we leave here, you might just mention about Consul General Ford.

SWIERS: I should mention that it was a tragedy. I was in the office when it happened; I remember the secretary thought that I was somehow too young to get involved in this, but ultimately Melby involved me. Ford had gone to a principal officers' conference in Bonn. I remember people asking him why he didn't take the train or fly; he said that he wanted his driver along with him. His driver was Heinrich Gold, and frankly I think Ford worked him too hard. He wanted him there all of the time. You have the problem of how you tell the consul general that Gold was not substituted for enough. I mention this because I think he was probably quite tired. On the way back from Bonn - they were about midway back - Gold pulled out to pass a red car just as that red car pulled out to pass a truck and there was a crash. Ford was hurled from the car on one side and killed. His wife was hurled from the car on the other side and survived. The reason was that the car spun around and faced the other direction, so I guess Ford also hit the guardrail. But he was already dead, as we know now. His wife survived and was taken to a hospital. Gold survived, but was no longer a driver; he actually became the top gardener at the consulate general. When I moved over to the GSO, he was there; the grounds of the compound were beautifully maintained and I still to this day remember the rose bushes which had grown terribly scraggly over the years which Gold, to the shock of many people, cut them right down to the base and they grew up again. He was a gifted gardener and this was his hobby. He was a very nice man. I hope he somehow recovered, because of the responsibility of being the consul general's driver when Ford was killed. I should mention, (since you asked how one felt about things in terms of cynicism) that somebody in the State Department decided that the Department was no longer responsible for Mrs. Ford's medical care because she had private insurance. You have to remember that Henry Ford one of the old administrative officers. His wife was in a hospital somewhere north of Frankfurt, and in the consul general's residence was her mother who was in her late 70s and was living with them and their adopted daughter. Beyond that, when we entered the Service, all of your medical needs were taken care of. Clearly Mrs. Ford had suffered her injuries after Ford had been killed so that the Department might have been technically correct - he was killed instantly and she was thrown from the car. I can tell you that I have never forgotten this and what I have never forgotten was George McGhee who was our ambassador, sent a zinger to Washington and needless to say that decision was reversed. I found it absolutely insulting that somebody in the State Department could think that they could save some money on this tragedy. For several years afterward, the Ford car was maintained in the motor pool of the embassy in Bonn. I saw it several months later when I went up to Bonn as the assistant GSO. I think it was kept that way just to remind everybody about driving. It is amazing to me that Heinrich or Mrs. Ford ever looked at it. It was a terrible thing that happened. What happened later was there was a funeral and the Fords went home.

So Ford passed from the scene and Jimmy Johnstone came in. Another old administrative officer. The Frankfurt political and economic sections were quite small. Angela Clay who was the

political officer. Most of the analysis was done in Bonn; we were primarily a consular post and an administrative servicing post. Frank Meloy, who I mentioned previously came through sometime toward the end of my tour. It turned out that Frank had recommend me for the Operations Center after the Frankfurt assignment and that's where I ended up going after Frankfurt.

Q: When you went to the Operations Center in 1966, how did the Operations Center operate in those days?

SWIERS: Actually, before we get into this, I would like to briefly mention something about the GSO side because I think it's worthwhile. As I mentioned earlier, most of the Americans stayed within the Frankfurt compounds, including unfortunately the people attached to the consulate general. I say unfortunately, yet I almost correct myself because what was striking about Frankfurt was that in spite of the enormous military presence around it, one saw very little military presence in the city itself. In retrospect I think this was a wise policy, although sometimes this is criticized. If all our troops in effect had been unleashed on Frankfurt, I think the goodwill would have disappeared very quickly. Basically the troops', except on various occasions, needs were all provided for in their compounds and around their compounds and that was in fact a good idea.

Q: Oh absolutely.

SWIERS: You hear so many people criticizing it; I think it was actually a wise policy.

CHARLES LAHIGUERA
Rotation Officer
Munich (1964-1966)

Mr. Lahiguera was born and raised in New York. After graduating from Georgetown University and serving in the US Navy, he entered the Foreign Service in 1963. Though he served outside the South East Asia, his primary duties concerned the Vietnam War and its aftermath, particularly refugees. His overseas posts include Germany, Curacao, Vietnam, France, Hong Kong, Thailand and Swaziland, where he served as Deputy Chief of Mission. Mr. Lahiguera was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2000.

Q: As consular officer, what were you doing [in Germany]?

LAHIGUERA: Well, in those days we rotated which I actually thought was a very good idea. The idea was you would spend six months in each of the cones. That was the concept, but it didn't always work. They needed you most in the consular section, so I was first assigned to non-immigrant visas and issued tourist visas. Which actually in Munich is a very pleasant duty because you have enormous records and the local authorities are very cooperative and the Germans absolutely don't like to say anything improper to an official. So, when you interview

them they pour their heart out generally. They are very easy compared to other cultures that I've dealt with like New Delhi. That was very nice. I spent six months as a visa officer and then I expected to go to the commercial economic section or the administrative section. They decided that I had to go to the passport section and so I spent six months there. Then I was assigned to the political section, which was great. The political officer, a fellow named Andy Stalder decided to go on home leave so I became the political officer of the post, which was nice. I listened to some of Franz Josef Strauss's very long and I must say boring speeches on agricultural policy and things like that and I attended rallies. I remember writing a report on May Day in Bavaria and I'm sure that must have put somebody to sleep. We had both the right wing nationalist parties and the pro-communist parties active. I attended meetings of both of them, rallies of both of them and their speeches, which were at least more entertaining. I can remember I used to talk to the military intelligence people at the post. They did a lot of photographing in those days. I can remember being in one pro-communist party meeting and having somebody with a camera in the crowd and focusing on me. I'm going to be some DIA and they're going to try and figure who in the world I am. Anyhow it was interesting. We had an upcoming election and I wrote a report saying that I expected the nationalist party to be seated.

Q: Particularly in Bavaria I imagine we were paying very close attention to particularly the nationalists, weren't we? This is where Hitler had started and was a theme that lasted for a long, long time. I think in news today the Germans turn right sometimes.

LAHIGUERA: Yes. Well, I had predicted that they were going to gain enough votes to be seated. I felt that their election was really as the result of a protest. Many people voted for the left or right simply because they were dissatisfied with the principal parties. I didn't think there was a serious move in that direction. When I said that to the desk they suddenly lost interest in my predictions.

Q: How did you find as a political officer there were you able to go around and talk to the people from the various parties and all that?

LAHIGUERA: Yes, all the parties. I attended as many of the functions as I could. I felt we were very warmly received by the socialists and by the Christian democrats. We had great access, the majority were extremely pro-American at the time. Although there was a vocal anti-Americanism over Vietnam and they had made me also the assistant security officer.

Q: Who was the consul general at the time?

LAHIGUERA: A fellow named Bob Keel.

Q: Was there a significant amount of students going to the United States at this time?

LAHIGUERA: In fact I had to stay on the Fulbright committee to help select students to go. USIS got me into that.

Q: You know, having gone to the University of Munich and sort of being of the age and all, so many students at the university, particularly the European ones locate in the United States, go

through a Marxist stage. I mean was there a significant number who were sort of going through that phase?

LAHIGUERA: I can't say that I found that. I had a lot of German friends.

Q: What were you getting, you personally, but also other people in the embassy who were dealing with this. What was the estimate of Franz Josef Strauss there? He was a pretty dominant figure of Bavarian politics at the time? Did you feel that he was a loose canon?

LAHIGUERA: Well, I would say he probably had aspirations of becoming the prime minister. I can remember we had a lot of focus on the offset agreement. That experience led me away from Europe because I felt things moved glacially there. I didn't find it very interesting. It's hard. I mean working on this the politics of Germany are interesting, but they really don't change very much. They didn't change their relationship with us very much. We didn't have any great differences. So, I really decided that this was not the area that I wanted.

JOHN BRAYTON REDECKER
Rotation Officer
West Berlin (1964-1966)

Mr. Redecker was born in Germany of American Foreign Service parents and spent his early years with his parents abroad. He was educated at Williams College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After serving in the US Navy and with the Aluminum Company of America, he joined the Foreign Service in 1964. Mr. Redecker served in Washington, dealing with trade and management issues, and Foreign Service posts abroad, where his assignments concerned economic, trade and a variety of other matters. His foreign postings include West Berlin, Brussels, Rabat, Madrid and Frankfurt. He also served as Diplomat-in-Residence at his alma mater, Williams College. Mr. Redecker was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.

Q: What were you doing?

REDECKER: I was a rotational officer at the time. I don't know if they still do it. We rotated the incoming JO's through the various sections, and I had a two year assignment with six-month assignments to different sections. The eastern affairs section, Frank Meyon was in charge of that at the time. He looked at me with curiosity and tried to make use of some of the things I knew something about. Then to the economics section, the political section, and the front office. At the time I also inherited the rotating job of aide to Ambassador McGhee.

He was with my father in South Africa. He was such a towering individual! My wife called him the "big pussycat" which I thought of as excellent. Other people learned about that. A perfect description. He had the ego of 20 men packed into one. He came to Berlin from Bonn about once

every four to six weeks. The entire establishment stood on its head when he came. He always had an agenda to see Willie Brandt or to see this or that. He was certainly a larger than life individual when one got to know him. The junior officer in the mission was assigned for six months to this very, very stressful task.

In Berlin there is a residence for the ambassador that is only lived in by the ambassador when he is there. I was in charge of that house in the capacity of the ambassador's aide. I acquired great, great knowledge of how to be an aide very quickly but, fortunately, only once every six weeks. The three to four days he was there was jumping through hoops most of the time in a circus performance because he was very demanding, very expensive, very elegant, and his wife, I'm afraid, something of a tippler. That created problems because I had to take care of her as well, and things got difficult in the evening. He would go all over the city and take me with him and found me useful because of the language, and also he knew that I was the son of Sidney Redecker whom he had visited when he made that great big trip to southern Africa over a dozen years earlier.

Q: You were there from '64 to '66. You're back in Berlin; the wall is built up. How did you find Berlin at that time?

REDECKER: It was somewhat less romantic, somewhat less lurid than in my first period, but I for the first time was able to go to East Berlin in my new capacity. I could go with a diplomatic passport and was encouraged to do this. I went to East Berlin regularly. The contrasts were what they were, what everybody knows them to have been.

Berlin was already beginning to decline from the rude effervescence and dramatically lurid conditions that it was in when I was there as a naval officer and where I was out with attractive women in bars. One could live far above one's means because of the exchange rate at the time. Those things were changing already. Life was more expensive. The time of the '50s was gone. The time of the '50s was active. Berlin was a very special place with people living and behaving in very special ways. Later it all became much more bureaucratic. My business was very internalized. I was contributing a little bit where I could contribute. In eastern affairs I was given the assignment of looking into industrial development, planning, in different sectors of the East German economy, and I did a little reporting.

Q: Did you get to the East?

REDECKER: No. One could only get inside the Berlin sector, reclaimed access, unrestricted access to all the sectors, but not into East Germany itself. It was a sectoral arrangement, and we allowed reciprocity with the Russians to come rolling through the western zones so that we could assure our own access to the East.

Q: Were there any particular crises while you were there?

REDECKER: There was such a sequence of them. There was always a crisis. I would have to research it.

Q: Nothing particularly stands out right now that engaged you. Did you feel that there was a real threat of the Soviets moving in or had things reached pretty much a stalemate?

REDECKER: A stalemate, I would say, once that wall was up. The rush of people leaving the GDR or the Soviet Zone, however you wish to call it, had stopped. That stabilized their situation. Then it became a matter of principle of having this cancer of West Berlin inside the territorial boundary of what would be the constituted national East German state. There was always the tension with the border.

We had a public safety officer in the mission. The public safety officer was in charge of all of the police, the State Department public safety officer was in charge. That was a special organization like a quasi-military organization. They would be always going here and there for one reason or another. It was stabilized but, actually, in its stabilization, there were always tensions going on at one part of the border and people trying to escape, people trying to go over the wall, all kinds of arguments and fights about rail access with trains being held up here, being held up there, and our insistence that nothing could be held up. It was a continuing thing as I recall. I don't have any recollection of a particular crisis as I do from the 1959 period.

Q: Can you characterize the impression you had and then your fellow officers and the situations, the dilemmas of western lives?

REDECKER: My own feeling was that the Berliners were actually doing quite well. There were rent controls. Life was not bad for the German population in West Berlin. It was always the frustration about isolation and getting out of there, but entertainment was as it always had been: excellent. Berlin is a natural place for theater, orchestras, night clubs, restaurants. I feel that there was a certain stability, as well as that they could get out.

Q: You were serving in this peculiar position when you were technically a junior officer, but you've been around the block a number of times, particularly Germany. Did you have a feeling that there was very much the German hands within the foreign service?

REDECKER: There were the German hands.

Q: Did it make you feel that you were one of them?

REDECKER: No. I was never accepted into that at all. I had never been accepted by any group in the State Department. It was one of the causes of my career having less than stellar performance, as one would say. I had never been a member of any grouping, and I was certainly not a member of any EUR group.

Q: I would think that your German credentials were strong? Being in Berlin as a junior officer, you didn't get sucked into that group?

REDECKER: I have difficulty answering your question. I was never taken into anything.

Q: Did you get along well with Ambassador McGhee?

REDECKER: In a very strange and tense way. He would make unbelievable demands on people. He would call for dinner parties in two days in his residence with senior officials in the German Government or the allied occupied powers. I was the one who had to orchestrate this and produce the dinner or the lunch and invite the people, an almost impossible task unless you could really get into the Germans and explain how strange your own boss was but to please go along with it and come and get a free meal if you would be so kind to do that. They said, "Yes, we'll go along with it." It was difficult for me.

I had to write so many letters. He was going everywhere. He would go to regularly to this porcelain factory of the 18th Century, from Frederick the Great's time.

Q: Not Meissen or anything.

REDECKER: No. He would go there regularly to buy the most outrageous quantities of porcelain artifacts: figurines, bowls, great things in porcelain and have them all shipped to the United States and sometimes to the residence in Bonn.

But he went to all kinds of extraordinary places. He was an indefatigable proactive presence driven diplomat, you might say also driven by tremendous ego. To get across him was very difficult. He just put you off. Very fast speed. I had to organize all these social events for him. He would, in fact, from Bonn call me, interrupt me, where I might have been in a staff meeting, call me and say, "I want to give a dinner party for such-and-such people. Please arrange it for this date when I am there. Send me a proposed guest list." I'd always do that. "Here's what I would like generally. Send me a guest list. As soon as I approve it, invite the people and make sure they come."

Q: How would describe the ambassador's relationship and, as you saw, the relationship where officers in Berlin with American military.

REDECKER: It was an excellent relationship. It was General Franklin at the time. He had very good relations with everybody of a certain level.

At a somewhat lower level, he was very, very intolerant and very dismissive, one could almost say of people who were not at his level. He was a tremendously present individual. He would go to operas and reserve seats for different officials that he wanted to have entertained. His parties were very, very good. To show you how dismissive he could be with Brayton Redecker. I was organizing. He said, "Put your black tie on, get over here for the cocktail period, talk to the people here with things you should talk about with these different ones. When we move to dinner, you can go home." I thought that was quite remarkable.

Q: Who was the ____?

REDECKER: The minister was Arch Calhoun. He had to suffer through these visits. He said, "He's a great man, but just keep him away from me. Keep him away from me! I can't get anything done. I know you can't do it. I know you won't be able to." The ambassador would

want a big staff meeting where he would want performances from all the sections on a set agenda. This would take two to three hours. Arch Calhoun would say, "Holy moly." Pete Day was his political advisor who said it's just utterly impossible to deal with this man and get anything done. We were all servants of His Majesty or we'd take off when he was here. You take off and you're permanently eliminated, so you couldn't do that.

Q: After two years of this...

REDECKER: The final episode was charming. He knew I was leaving. He would call me all the time from Bonn. I delivered all his thank-you notes. I spent more time doing thank-you notes than reporting. I was given little tasks to report and keep my pen on paper. He would have this mound of notes. Every time you'd see him, he'd have 25 to 30 or more thank-you notes to write. Who wrote them? Of course I had to. They all had to go down by cable to Bonn to be approved and came back often changed. Even though I knew his style, he changed them again, changed them yet again, and then they'd go out with my forgery: his signature which he approved. He said, "As long as you have that cable to me and I'm approved, I don't care about the signature on the letter."

At the end he said, "Bray, I want young uniformed Berliners. I want a party that all the commandants -- British, French, American, myself -- where political people ____ organized ____ different from others," -- because we had a real diplomatic mission in Berlin -- all beautiful people. Find a lot of beautiful women. Invite them all. I will let you. Try and get me the names so I can check them with security, but otherwise, they must be beautiful, and the gentlemen must be beautiful, too. Handsome and presentable. I want the party of parties at the residence."

I was on my way out. I said, "Oh, my goodness! I have to find 50 beautiful Berliners." My wife said, "Now we have to go and find 50 beautiful Berliners. You know Berlin. Find them! Invite them!" We did that. My wife desperately called some girlfriends she went to school with and said, "How can we find attractive, intelligent, beautiful women?" We finally stuck something together, but I left the room before the party took place. It was orchestras and off to the dreamland. That was George C. McGhee's way of doing things. The childhood girlfriend of my wife who helped significantly to identify people met them and said, "You're invited to this party." Can you imagine getting an invitation from the American ambassador to a black tie party under the stars with several orchestras? Cinderella was small time compared to this! She said actually it was a very successful party.

Q: I imagine it would be.

REDECKER: It was a sensational party that commandants of the other sectors... The ambassador said, "I'm so sick of all the bureaucrats and politicians. I want beautiful people." He had them, according to my wife. It was a sensational party. It went into the press. It was something that Berlin long remembered, but I had already gone back three or four weeks before it happened.

ALBERT E. HEMSING

**Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Bonn (1964-1967)**

Albert E. Hemsing was born in 1921 in the Ruhr area near Wuppertal, Germany and emigrated to the United States at the age of two. He attended the City College of New York. He worked for the Office of War Information Film Division, and for the Marshall Plan Film Division. Mr. Hemsing's career with USIS included positions in the United Kingdom (England), India, and Germany. He was Director of Radio Free Europe, Director of the Amerika Haus, and Assistant Director for Europe. This interview was conducted by Robert Anderson in 1989.

HEMSING: As I said, the USIS Germany program was one of the largest in the world, what with our six Branch Posts and some 15 America Houses -- our libraries and cultural centers. We were blessed with a very able German staff, most of whom had been recruited soon after the war. I greatly enjoyed running this well-oiled machine, shaking things up just enough to get some of the routine and complacency out of the operation.

Bob Lincoln became the Area Director, and felt he had the mandate from Director Marks to cut the German program in order to generate funds for new Agency needs in the Third World.

In a carefully-guarded plan, on a given day, we notified six German-American Institutes, and the mayors in those cities, and, this actually had to be August, 1964, the Minister-Presidents of the states in which they were located, and the Cultural Office of the Bonn government, that these centers would have to go out of business; that we needed to withdraw our support and would no longer be able to supply USIS officers to direct them.

All but one, Koblenz, refused to "die." The others, all located in university towns, fought back. City fathers pledged their support, money was found in city and state budgets. I negotiated an agreement with the Foreign Office's Cultural Section for their financial support. Altogether, until this day, the Germans spend over a half-million dollars each year to maintain these institutions.

To understand all this, just picture the Goethe House in New York living off the American taxpayers' dollar through city, state and federal subvention!

For me it was a period where I got deeply involved in the nitty-gritty of American foreign policy and in the day-to-day work of an embassy. Three times a week I participated in the Ambassador's Country-Team meetings.

George McGhee was an activist Ambassador. He looked to USIS to help him on every bilateral or U.S.-European issue -- from the annual offset-agreement with the Germans -- to compensate us in part for the cost of stationing our troops in Germany; to trade issues, like the "chicken war"; to promoting the multilateral force idea -- until President Johnson suddenly dropped that concept without warning in a Christmas-time meeting with Chancellor Erhard.

The broad question on this is to what extent can USIS facilities shore up hard foreign-policy objectives. In greater or lesser degree that is part of what we have been assigned to do, but it

doesn't always work as well with chicken backs and necks as it does with the world of ideas.

The worst was Vietnam. McGhee had the idea, I am using his words, "that USIS must do something to support our policy in Vietnam every day, 365 days of the year."

Mostly that meant supplying Embassy or USIS officers to discuss Vietnam, on request from German organizations.

This soon became counter-productive. I wanted to limit our response to cooperation in more controlled situations -- say where a professor asked for someone to participate in his seminar -- not where students would run an open-to-all meeting to have an American to throw bricks at.

The Ambassador only relented when he himself experienced what we were up against. At a Cologne University ceremony the Rector had to sneak him out the back door when a well-organized band of students used the occasion to stage a riot about U.S. involvement in Vietnam.

I have one observation on the atmosphere of German-American relations as I left Bonn. The story has to do with President Johnson's attendance at Adenauer's funeral in 1967, in April, as I recall. I have a purpose in telling this story.

A funeral is, perforce, a solemn and yet impromptu affair. The moment "Der Alte" died, the Bonn government put a hold on all hotel rooms in the Bonn-Cologne area, in order to accommodate the expected dignitaries. The funeral services were to be held at Cologne Cathedral.

De Gaulle's party required three limousines on its way to the Cathedral. Johnson's party required fourteen.

Even on such an occasion, our Secret Service advance men took over DCM Marty Hillenbrand's residence, and boarded over the bookshelves in the master bedroom, ("The President doesn't like books in his bedroom"). They installed an outside pump to boost the water pressure. ("The President likes a strong shower.") Incidentally, the pressure burst the old water pipes which we all suffered from in the "American Golden Ghetto," and, according to reports, Johnson was left soapy the morning of the funeral.

The President had arrived, believe it or not, with seven houseboys, and his plane carried a full supply of Texas beef -- for a dinner and luncheon he expected to give. (I must say I enjoyed the steak, the only time a President invited me to lunch.)

The hotel rooms in Cologne for which John Cline had so savagely negotiated with the German government's press office -- rooms for the White House press, were just as savagely dismissed as inadequate by the Washington advance men -- "advance" by one day only.

Nothing would do but that the White House press be housed in the Petersberg, the splendid hilltop castle-hotel on the other side of the Rhine from the Embassy.

A small detail. There was no access from there to the Embassy, nor to the press filing facilities in Bonn, both being cut off by the Rhine. Not to worry. Put on two (hire) 24-hour motor pools on both sides of the Rhine, and hired one of the ferries to shuttle back and forth. Somehow, we managed to do as told. I appointed Gene Kramer on my staff Commodore, and put him in charge of the 24-hour ferry.

What I had not anticipated was that the White House press gang would fall in love with the ferry. No thirty-minute train ride for them, from Bonn to the Cologne funeral, like the rest of the world's reporters. They would sail to Cologne! Our Embassy's Administrative Counselor nearly had a fit when I asked him to lay on docking support, and to have the police clear a path from the Rhine to the Cathedral to accommodate the White House Press Office's wishes.

But sail they did, with a keg of beer and a supply of sausages, down the Rhine, to the funeral, a few singing along to a deck-hand's accordion.

Well, Der Spiegel got hold of that story, and the story of the President's beef, and seven Filipino boys. Their Bonn correspondent (it was not his story) warned me. With the help of Guenter Diehl, the head of the German Press and Information Office, we managed to keep the most damaging story (with photo) of the ferry carnival out of the magazine; and Spiegel mentioned the houseboys only in passing. In a way I was sorry.

My point is this. Johnson may indeed have been "larger than life," but to a greater or lesser degree this is how America's power is often projected abroad. You and I have worked on these visits. Why in God's name does our populist democracy tolerate such behavior?

And how can we expect objective coverage on our Presidents from a White House press that is so cosseted by him and his men? Or (as in my experience with Bobby Kennedy and President Nixon) so co-opted by the mutually-desired "theater" staged for their TV cameras? I will leave it at that.

A sad note in my Bonn tour was the Administration's, the Embassy's and, especially, the Ambassador's inability to cope with the changing climate in Bonn. You will recall that Erhard's term as Chancellor, 1963-66, was really an extension of the Adenauer era of warm U.S.-German relations. Then came the "Big Coalition," Chancellor Kiesinger (CDU) and Willy Brandt (SPD) as Foreign Minister. It was a period when they sought to distance themselves from the American embrace. This was met on our side by suspicion and dismay, especially suspicion about Brandt's "Ostpolitik."

The Ambassador could not understand what was happening. Rumors floated that it might be time for a new U.S. Ambassador to come. He sought to knock these down. I advised that this could only be done by the German principals -- the Chancellor or Foreign Minister. That never happened. Their behavior was foolish, but so was ours. America is slow in adjusting its foreign policy posture to changing climates. We pay too much mind to the comfort of dealing with old "friends." That hurts us time and time again in a rapidly-changing world.

Unfortunately, it was in this climate that I left Bonn in August 1967, to accept nomination to the

Department's Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy. I got the impression that the Ambassador thought I was deserting a sinking ship. I had hoped that he understood. He himself left about a year later. I had certainly been more loyal to him, and dealt with him more honestly, than some of the State Department colleagues I was leaving behind.

BRUCE A. FLATIN
Public Safety Section
Berlin (1964-1969)

Bruce A. Flatin was born in Minnesota in 1930. He received degrees from the University of Minnesota and from Boston University. After serving in the U.S. Army, mr. Flatin entered the Foreign Service in 1956. His Foreign Service career included positions in Afghanistan, Germany, Australia, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1993.

Q: It really is. Then you left there and you came back to sort of a place that you had been preparing for a long time.

FLATIN: Berlin.

Q: You were there from '64 to '69.

FLATIN: That's right. My assignment to Berlin was directly associated with what I told before. A certain man in GER, Elwood Williams, kept a card file of German-speaking officers in the Foreign Service, and when positions were opening he would be consulted and they would actually pick people from this roster of people he had who knew about Germany, and who could speak German. Therefore I was plucked out of my...I was in Sydney for two years and could have stayed there for another two years, but was offered this Berlin job, and of course went there, and enjoyed it very much.

Incidentally, on leaving Australia we came back by sea and in San Francisco we got the bad news of President Kennedy's assassination. I still remember that. One of the stewards came up to me and he said that the Captain wanted to see me up in the radio room. So I wondered what on earth that was about. I went up there and he said, "You're the only federal official we have on this ship, and I want you to listen to these radio broadcasts we're getting about the shooting." And then finally we got the broadcast that he had died, and the Captain asked me then to give him some advice on what we should do to commemorate this. We discussed putting up black crepe, and arranging memorial services, etc. Then the day we arrived in San Francisco was the day that Oswald was murdered. It was a very dismal time to come back to the United States.

So when I got to Berlin, if you recall, Kennedy had just been in Berlin. I got there in the beginning of '64, and he had been there for the building of the wall, and made his speech. And indeed the square where he made his speech shortly thereafter it was named after him, John F. Kennedy Plaza. Bobby Kennedy as a matter of fact came over with his family shortly after I got

there to commemorate this to him.

This created that atmosphere of the beginning of our tour in Berlin of the fact that we had lost this one president, we had this new president, and we were under very great strain with the situation with the wall.

At that time the US Mission Berlin had two additional sections more than an ordinary US diplomatic post. My section was the Public Safety section which deals with police and internal security. And that's because we still had an occupation relationship in Berlin, and we actually controlled the police. We didn't advertise this but everything in the police was controlled by us from promotions and assignments, down to buying bullets for the police.

Q: You're saying, we controlled. Who is we?

FLATIN: We Allies. Each ally in his own sector controlled the police of his sector. The police in our sector were called the police from the south, in the British sector police from the west, and the French sector police from the north, and we jokingly called the people's police in East Berlin, the police group east. Then as allies, we were members of the Allied Command structure, which was designed to rule all of Berlin. We controlled the entire police system from there, the central police system as three allies with the cooperation of the British and the French.

You have to remember how Germany was set up. Germany was divided into zones, and they were designed to be kept together under the control of the Allied Control Authority in Berlin, ACA. Then within the city of Berlin itself, it was divided into sectors. There's a difference between sector and zone, and this is a distinction. The sectors were to be controlled by the Allied force for Berlin. The Allied Control Authority still existed even though there was a split when I got there because the Berlin Air Safety Center, for instance, was a residual part of that, and indeed met in the building that was the Allied Control Authority building.

The police function was extremely important from the political viewpoint. When we first took over Berlin we had regular military police officers handling this function, about 50 officers handling this oversight function because the Russians had conquered the city. They completed the conquest in late April, early May of '45, and we Americans and the allies did not come in until early July. This gave the Russians enough time to salt their own people throughout the system. And indeed one of our main concerns was, where are they? We kept looking for them. Then when the city split in 1948, the main police presidium was in the Soviet sector with all the personnel records, etc. We had to start from scratch on our side in 1948. Each of the allies, of course, had some of their own records which they kept to themselves and from time to time make them available should the police need them. But it was a disadvantage in getting started.

The Allied Control Authority should have been running all of Germany but that was no longer possible once the Soviets treated their part of Germany as separate and it became the German Democratic Republic. But you have to remember that in the days I served in Berlin, this is before we recognized the GDR, it was always called the so-called GDR, and we kept calling it the Soviet Occupied Zone. And when you traveled we had to use the Autobahn that went through Helmstedt because that was the only one where the Soviets were present both in their Berlin and

in the Helmstedt end to process us.

We'd lost the use of the Autobahn that went from Berlin south to Bavaria which was really intended to link the Americans to their own zone in Germany.

Q: We had the southern zone.

FLATIN: That's right. And that was lost through the carelessness of an American officer who early in the occupation accepted the assurances of a Soviet that maneuvers in that area would require the Soviets standing down their Autobahn controls for a few days and asked the American if he understood this and the Soviets never reappeared to take over these controls. Which meant that were we to want to go from Berlin to Hulf, we'd have to submit to East German controls and that, of course, was politically unacceptable. We only could go to places where the Soviets performed the transit controls for us. That shows how you had to be very careful in Berlin. You could lose something in Berlin if you were not careful about what was being said...

Q: It was a very exquisite game.

FLATIN: That's right. You had to be very, very politically acute to what was being said, and offered, etc. It had to be looked at very carefully. And in those days too, when I was there, De Gaulle was in charge in France and De Gaulle personally kept a very close eye on Berlin. And indeed, De Gaulle would pass upon real important decisions being made there. The French in Berlin would ship the whole thing back to Paris and get his orders on what to do, and not to do.

Q: What was the attitude first, about the Berlin wall when you got there? It had been up about two years, or something like that.

FLATIN: That's right.

Q: I'm talking about both the Germans, and our people who were experts in the area, that we had sort of fouled up, and Kennedy had not responded correctly?

FLATIN: There were people who said that, but you have to remember that the Berlin wall was constructed largely upon their own territory. In fact, some meters back in many places. So in order to confront them over this, it meant that we would have to actually get American forces involved in stopping East German troops who were covered by tanks and machine guns, from building a structure on their own territory. It wasn't as if they were building it on our side. And they continued to permit us access, we allies that is, access to the Soviet sector. Our insistence was that this is one city and we should have free access to the Soviet sector. This goes back, incidentally, to what I said about the difference between sector and zone. We could go freely into the Soviet sector of greater Berlin, but we could not go freely into the Soviet zone that surrounded us. And indeed there was a difference even in their minds. People who lived in the Soviet sector of Berlin had a different type of ID card in those days from the ones who lived in GDR proper. And indeed the members of the Fulks from east Berlin had a more limited voting rate in the Fulks of the GDR than the other people say from Leipzig would have. Just as people

who went from Berlin down to Bonn, didn't have full voting rights either. We allies did not regard the western sectors of Berlin as a state of the Federal Republic of Germany, as the Germans themselves believed it to be.

Going back to your question, to have confronted them over this important act of deciding to build the bearers, could have conceivably brought about some type of hostilities that I don't think Kennedy wanted to buy. It's something that was tough for Kennedy to bear, but I don't see in a prudent way that he could have gotten around it. If we had been denied access into the Soviet sector, if American jeeps were not permitted to go in there, then we would have had more of constant friction than we had with their putting up barriers which in essence were to keep Germans from getting out of their own...

Q: Was there also a feeling that maybe it's not a bad thing to have this? It means that the German population needs this. I mean somebody looking at it from a real politic way it sort of left us stew there.

FLATIN: Well, the obvious reason was to keep their own population prisoner. They were losing huge numbers of East Germans. It was like a hemorrhage. And indeed the ones they were losing were the very valuable people, the doctors, and the engineers, and the young people. And therefore had they not put up the wall, they'd been bled dry of population. You could say that stabilized the Cold War situation there, but it was an unpleasant type of situation with the wall. And Berlin was also matched by a barrier going down through Germany between the two Germanys. And this was a very cruel type of boundary, and it created a sort of prison for the people on the eastern side. It divided families, it divided nephews and nieces from the uncles and aunts, it divided mothers from their sons. You just can't cut through Germany like that and not have blood relatives on both sides of the line. And when Germany became united it was a hard thing for a lot of westerners to accept the expense and trouble it involved. But in my opinion, after 40 years the East Germans deserved a break too. They after all benefitted from the fact that they had through a streak of luck were on the right side of that line, and they really owed it to their East German brethren, and literally brethren, to bring them along. It may be expensive, and it may be a lot of trouble, but its...

Q: I've seen Germany. I saw Germany in '54 as a GI.

FLATIN: I served from '53 to '55 there as a GI. Where were you?

Q: I was in Darmstadt in the Air Force security service.

FLATIN: I was in Siebruchen.

Q: You were sitting right there, how was the Soviet threat viewed? I mean as far as realistically, what did we think the Soviets might do?

FLATIN: To begin with, the Soviets with whom we dealt in Berlin were really sharp, intelligent, prudent people. They obviously hand-picked the people who had that duty. I think the Soviets very seriously took our own position on Berlin. Were you ever in our headquarters in Berlin?

Q: I never got there.

FLATIN: We had a big conference room there in the main building and on the walls in big iron letters were sayings by President Eisenhower, President Kennedy, about our determination to stand in Berlin. In essence, all these statements by our presidents made this the bottom line. This was the frontier of our own defense system. And I think the Soviets took that very seriously. We would make trouble if anybody pushed us in our position there. In Berlin you had an interesting operation. You had eight different government entities operating together. You had the four western allies, you had East Germans, and East Berliners, and West Germans, and West Berliners, all different entities. And somehow these eight entities for half a century were able to keep things calm, and not let anything get out of hand. That's a great commentary on the...

Q: Well, it is. I think for all of us during this Cold War period, when one analyzed it, the one place it might blow up and cause World War III, was really Berlin.

FLATIN: Yes.

Q: And once there was a strict calculation we're going to fight, we're going to invade or something like that, but other than that a place in a way beyond sort of the control...if Berlin got out of control, there just without any desire on anybody's part, we could have gotten into it.

FLATIN: And for that reason I on many occasions saw the Soviets stand down on matters rather than to rouse us to a point where it were to be unpredictable what we'd do. We're rather unpredictable, you know. They are rather predictable, but we are very unpredictable, and how we would bounce like a football in a field, was something that nobody wanted to take a risk with. And we saw occasions the Soviets would pull the lease of the East Germans too. Do you want me to tell you about...

Q: Would you please, because I'd like to hear.

FLATIN: I'll give you an instance that happened. The West Berliners wanted to build a major autobahn cutting diagonally through the American sector from the southwest to the northeast. And this was going to be an expensive autobahn, and in certain places it was to be elevated. And as the autobahn construction came down from the north, and up from the south, in the American borough of Stagliitz, they ran into an obstacle. There was a three-story high brick building which is part of the crane system. This is something very complicated about Berlin. In Berlin the regular interzonal train system and the elevated train system, called the S-bahn, remained under the control of the East German Ministry of Transport, even though the tracks were in our sectors. They even had their own police, that's another story. This is how complicated the situation was. This particular station, Station Bahnhof, was both an elevated station and also a station on one of the main interzonal trains leaving Berlin to go out to elsewhere in Germany. These stations were usually headed by people who were high officials in the West Berlin communist party. Now, although West Germany in those days did not permit the communist party to operate in West Germany, we permitted it to operate in West Berlin as it was in East Berlin. So the head of these stations, and the other officials, were communists who actually resided in West Berlin. Well,

they may reside in East Berlin, there's nothing to keep them from coming to East Berlin. Be that as it may, the point was that this building was a very important building. It was the main headquarters for them, and it was also a big switching relay center for the railroad system. The Berlin government had for years tried to get the communists to move out. They built a nice new building the other side of the station at West Berlin expense, and just asked the communists if they'd move the whole operation over there. They finished the building to look nice, nicer than this building, but the East Germans were using this particular desire to move them out to jack the thing up politically to a higher level. They were trying to get the West Berliners to negotiate with a higher level of the East German government. And we allies did not want that for political reasons. We wanted it only to handle this as a technical matter, and we did not want to have any high level dealings between the West Berlin authorities and the East German authorities.

We from time to time complained to the Soviets about this who just ignored it. But the moment came when the autobahn approached just a few meters short of the building on their side, and here's this expensive elevated autobahn, and this building standing in the middle that prevented the German taxpayer from realizing the investment. Well, the thing finally got to the point where it was clear that the West Berlin government could not deal any further with the East Germans for all of these reasons I've given you, and therefore because they were acceding to our direction in this thing it was agreed then that the American Commandant would issue an order that they would move.

We saw to it that everybody was suitably informed about this informally. When you dealt with the Russians you always had to make certain that you had an absolutely solid legal case, and we did in this case. This was a legal matter of importance to us, and indeed the American commandant had residual responsibility for the tracks and the buildings, etc., even though the East Germans had operational control, there's a difference between the two. So we made certain that all the legal points were clear to the Russians. You made it clear that you were going to move from point A to point B, to point C. You never wavered on that once you started. And you also left some way for them to back out through the door so they weren't painted in a corner.

So once that was all lined up, the night of the operation came and I went down with, I think, over 80 police and we surrounded the station with police. And our goal was to pull off this change as peacefully as possible, and if possible not even to interrupt the train traffic going through the station. That was something we could handle. We had the police check ID cards of people entering and leaving the station on the platform to ensure that local people could get on and off the elevated trains.

But a more serious problem faced us in the actual building, communication equipment. We had zillion engineers standing by just in case we couldn't get the communist engineers to do this. And about midnight we started having police cars go to various houses in West Berlin, and I'd sit in the police communications vehicle and we'd have code letters like 18, or 23, or whatever, and that would mean that they had stopped at the house of the station manager, and they're going to the door, and they're reading the communist order. The communist order said, "You are directed to appear at Station Bahnhof immediately, and be prepared to move operations to another building, by order of the American commandant." This is a major general.

Then the most important code word was, is he coming or not? And everyone of these guys came, being good Germans, and they showed up on the scene looking very angry and they stiffly protested against being moved from their homes by this imperialistic American power, whatever. But we said we have noted your protest, now would you please get to work on this. Anyway when we saw what the cables looked like, and so forth, we were thankful that they showed up because I think it was probably more than the engineers we had ready from Siemens. It looked like you opened up organs full technicolor spaghetti.

At any rate this process went on during the evening. We had police actually helping to move things, dumping furniture in the other building, and they were upset because the files weren't moved correctly and we said, "If you'd had more people doing this...the place has to be empty by such and such a time by order of the American commandant.

Well, at a certain point in the evening about 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning, a special train came roaring in from East Berlin. It came to a screeching halt. This, incidentally, was a snowy February night -- snow was another problem and I'll tell you later. Off the train got these very high ranking officials of the Ministry, etc., with shoulder boards like Soviet marshals. They came trudging up the snow on the tracks, and they walked toward the old building. The group commander and myself were standing on the platform looking down at them. In Germany, you know, you really dislike having someone over you. In this case they put themselves in that position. And they walked toward this building and there was an office that had German word "beroe" on it, a sign that said "beroe", and one of our police raised his weapon at port arms to block them. They said they wanted to go into your office, and then our group commander said, "Tell them to speak to your superior officers." So then they turned around and said, "This is our office." And we said, "No, it is not your office. Your office is over here." And then that's when our group commander said, "Take care of that sign," and our policemen then butted it off the door, and the sign went into a snow drift. That was the symbolic end of that building as a communist installation.

Were you aware that trade unions in Germany? We did not permit the East German organization, the GDB, to operate in West Germany? And as that bulletin board was carried by me I was surprised to see FGDB on it, and that of course was an illegal organization in our sector, and that ended up on the slush of the platform. But at any rate this earned us a lot of credit with the Germans. The building was demolished the next day. The highway was completed, and it showed that the Americans had some muscle, and when German interests were involved and allied rights were being infringed upon, that indeed the Americans would take action. And its interesting, it took about three days for the official newspaper in East Berlin to come up with some bleat about the fact that somehow we had willfully impeded rail traffic. I was rather proud. In fact I think at the most delayed traffic only about eight minutes, not any more than that.

Q: But this must have been meticulously planned, including very strict instructions from Washington.

FLATIN: Oh, yes indeed. And De Gaulle personally had to pass on it. It took a lot of clearance. And indeed we ensured that the Soviets knew that this was going to happen. We didn't want to surprise them. You never had something like this drop on them out of the sky. The Soviets

obviously told the East Germans to take their losses, and that was it.

Q: Well, what were you doing? Here you were the Public Safety Officer, what...

FLATIN: I was the US Public Safety Adviser in the US Mission Berlin, and additionally I was the American Public Safety Adviser at the Allied Command in Berlin. And in the latter capacity we shifted the chairmanship every month, and therefore all American officers became chairman for the month of their particular committees, economic committee, or the public safety committee, or whatever, the chairman commandant, etc. That's how we ran the city. And this is an important point. Our basic policy was to use as much German law and Berlin law, and German regulations, as possible. Even using laws from the 19th century. This railroad problem, incidentally, we dealt with under the law, that's of 1928.

However, there were problems that were not covered by that, and we actually had to issue our own laws. We had what we called Berlin orders, EK, or Berlin letters, EK/Ls, and these were written missives from the Allied Command that directed the governing mayor of Berlin to do such and such, or not to do such and such. And therefore we were in the position of actually creating law for this occupied population. And these laws that we issued had all the force of law in any court, and presumably are still on the books. Now we don't occupy anymore, but in a case which would go back to that would certainly be cited as why a decision was reached.

Q: What was the government situation in West Berlin?

FLATIN: Well, we had a governing mayor, famous ones like Ernst Reuter, and Billy Brandt. And then each burrow of the city had a mayor and its own burrow authorities. In our sector we had six burrows, and each had its own mayor, and its own government. We tried as much as possible to govern through democratic institutions on the scene.

Q: How did that government fit in? I mean its sort of unusual. Here were Americans, French, and British running the police force.

FLATIN: Not just the police, but in other parts of the city too. I mean wherever it was necessary for us to become involved to preserve the allied ability to carry out its function of preserving the independence of Berlin and its freedom as we allies saw it. In other words, it would be possible for a short-sighted Berlin politician maybe to take a stand which if he thought more about it he could see that it was not one that would help Berlin in the long run. And that's why it was necessary that the allies would sometimes have to discuss with the mayor a certain problem. The rule was to permit maximum possible democratic freedom on the part of the Germans to do whatever they wanted democratically, but it was just simply in those issues where we allies thought it in some way limit our ability to carry out our responsibilities for the city.

Our responsibilities for the city were that we had conquered Germany, and this city was our conquered responsibility. When you conquer someone, you're responsible then for their safety, and their defense, etc. We had all these responsibilities which were to be held until the day when Germany has been freely united.

I'll give you an example. Remember I told you the commandant was responsible for his railroad yards? If the rail system wanted to move a pile of 36 railroad ties from a yard in the American sector to one in the British sector, they had to apply to the economic committee, the Allied Command, which had approved the transfer of the 36 ties. And we actually had bookkeeping...these are ties which were the responsibility of the American sector, and we'd get a copy of that at the Public Safety, and I'd have my police ensure that they left properly and then my British colleague would assure the British police that they'd arrived properly at the British location, and we could actually account for that. But we allies were extremely scrupulous on our responsibility for their city.

Q: What about your relations with professional police officers. Here you are an American, and police officers have a difficult job, a proud job wherever they are. Was there an understanding?

FLATIN: I had started to tell you that when we first started the occupation we had military police officers handling this relationship. And indeed this section consisted of about 50 officers. Then in a second phase we had professional American police officials come over to be public safety advisers for Germany. And their rule was to help train the German police to be more democratic, to follow democratic police measures, etc. And then I was involved in the third phase where we had political officers -- I'm a political cone officer. We had political officers come over because of the obvious political ramifications of what the police are doing, or not doing. I suppose in many ways you could say my job was that of a peer political commissar in a certain sense of the word.

Now, let's say that you are dealing then with a professional police force of a high quality. Some of these men had been police officials since the days of the Weimar Republic. We were sharing with the Germans an interest in the ongoing independence and safety of their city. And indeed, if you recall, at a certain point in the occupation the name of the occupation powers changed to protective powers. And it was that shift in terminology that tells you what the relationship was, that we were working together for a joint goal.

Q: How did the various allies operate.

FLATIN: Different allies of course had different ways. We Americans tried to avoid excessive direction and micromanaging. A certain other ally I won't name, got involved in an incredible amount of micromanagement.

Q: Why don't you name them?

FLATIN: Well, the ally just to our north...even to the point of determining schedules for when our personnel carriers could go across streets in that sector. We found that a little bit much. I personally, were I a German police official, would have found it difficult to have aliens breathing down my shoulder, and passing about every bullet they got. I mean, every weapon they had we had to approve, every bullet they bought for those weapons we had to approve. I must say to their credit, that they took it with a great deal of patience, and professional skill, and have won the battle. Now today they are independent, in charge of themselves, they have an independent republic, because of the fact that they did that. In fact if you were to write the history of the

occupation of Germany, you shouldn't forget the credit the Germans themselves get for in a sense, taking their occupation and turning it to their advantage. Adenauer being the best example. If there ever was an example of a man who snatched victory out of the jaws of defeat, it's Konrad Adenauer.

Q: He was the first chancellor.

FLATIN: That's right. In fact one of the great advantages we had is that we had magnificent leaders like Erhardt and Adenauer, and the Russians had nincompoops over there, and nowhere near the caliber of the people we had. So I must say that I marveled that we maintained the relationship on as friendly a basis as possible. I still correspond with the police I knew over there. In fact when we are done I'll show you something downstairs that's a memorial from them that thanks me, "For friendly, cooperative efforts for the security of our city." And that after all was my job, to bring about the security of their city.

Q: Talking about a sort of difficult thing. We both are ex-military GIs, sort of reluctantly, but we did our thing so we know what the military is like. And to have a large military garrison running around in a political tinderbox, this must have been kind of difficult.

FLATIN: That's another interesting thing about US Mission Berlin. The US Mission Berlin was an integrated Department of State-US Army operation. The chief of US Mission Berlin was the man who was the American ambassador down in Bonn when he came up to Berlin. When the American ambassador from Bonn came to Berlin he came in his capacity as the old US High Commissioner. And we ensured his office said "Chief US Mission Berlin." It didn't say ambassador. And when he was in the city we treated him in a different way from Bonn. We didn't regard ourselves as being under Bonn per se. It just so happened that Bonn and Berlin had the same boss, but with different hats. A very important distinction.

The next man under him was then called the Deputy Chief of US Mission Berlin, and that was the man who was also City Commandant, a 2-star general. And he then was Deputy US Mission Berlin under the US High Commissioner who was American ambassador, but he was the senior military officer in the city, and he was also the senior person on a day-to-day basis in Berlin. He was certainly the man we regarded as our boss. I certainly would, and when I took actions I usually cited him as being the person in whose name I was making an order.

The third ranking person in the US Mission Berlin, a man with the title Assistant Chief of US Mission Berlin, was a senior State Department man on the scene on a daily basis, and he was usually a minister rank officer, Arch Calhoun when I first got there, and then Bruce Demorris later. Therefore, you had the top leadership interfacing of Army and State Department. Now, there was a 1-star general there who was the commander of the Berlin Brigade. That would be the troops. We still worked together with them. The political section had interest in the autobahn operation and so forth, and therefore our political officers who were concerned with the autobahn operation, or the military train, etc. worked with the military officers who also were responsible for that.

I had extensive contact with the Provost Marshal, who was certainly interested in the military

police interfacing with the Berlin police, as well as various intelligence agencies. It was clear to us that the Army hand picked the men they put in there. They had men who worked well with our people with very few exceptions. If a person did not seem to be able to work well with the other side, he was transferred out. And I must say that on our side we had a few cases, not very many thankfully, where people found it difficult to work with the Army side, and they were not productive enough to...

Q: What about the helicopter pilot who starts playing around, or the tank driver?

FLATIN: I had problems with that. I had problems with tank drivers who came in from Vietnam, and some young tank officer who would run his tanks across some newly planted tree planting in the Guenwald and then when he was told that he had destroyed a very important tree seeding -- "I'll run my tanks where I want." Occasionally you had these kinds of persons who said, "Well, they're occupied. We beat these people, didn't we?" And here's a kid that wasn't even alive at the time the war ended talking like this. Well, that's the type of person who usually they tried to weed out for Berlin because they didn't see the political big picture. Most Army officers who were there were sharp enough to see the big political picture, and to see what we were trying to accomplish in the overall. After all, the Germans with whom we were dealing in Berlin, or certainly associated with the Germans who are rich and powerful, and an important ally down in West Germany, and people had to be practical about how we took action in the city.

Q: Did you get involved in things like suppression of prostitution, drug trade?

FLATIN: Yes. It would be peripheral to my other duties. I would go out with the vice squad chief to look at his problems in the city. It was no direct responsibility of mine per se other than to see what kind of problems he had to deal with. Prostitution associated with espionage was sometimes of interest. We had a very interesting case of a pension fund which had been used by the Nazis and gestapo for certain types of intelligence purposes, and oddly enough the East Germans had been able to take over the very same institution and were using it in the very same way.

I was more interested quite frankly in the defense capability of the police. The Berlin police were paramilitary, and were armed with 81 millimeter mortars, heavy machine guns, grenade launchers, 3.5 inch rocket launchers.

And we were interested in being on the guard against efforts from the East to create problems for our security. Quite frankly, espionage, etc., we were interested in just being tight, running a tight ship.

Q: There must have been a lot of problems with infiltration of the police force.

FLATIN: Yes, if you recall I said that the Russians had control of the whole city to begin with. And indeed we were finding these people all the time, not a lot, but enough to keep us alert. And therefore a person like that could create a lot of damage. In one case a disloyal police officer was found to have issued ID cards to spies going through to West Germany. You can just imagine how many East German spies were in West Germany.

Q: Then you left Berlin. Is there anything else we should cover?

FLATIN: I really think that more work should be done on our occupation of not just Berlin, but of Germany, and our relationship with Germany until the unification came. Because I think it is a very positive story of going back to the Marshall Plan, and everything we did to bringing in the unification in a peaceful fashion with the administration working with Gorbachev. I think its a very positive accomplishment on the part of the US government, and the allied governments. In Berlin on a day-to-day basis we were among the last Americans who dealt with this kind of thing. It was highly satisfying. And I can't tell you how satisfied I was when I saw the unification come about.

NELSON C. LEDSKY
Political Officer
Bonn, Germany (1964-1969)

Ambassador Ledsky was born in Cleveland, Ohio and was educated at Case Western Reserve University and Columbia University. After serving in the US Army, he joined the Foreign Service in 1957, serving in Georgetown, Guyana; Enugu, Nigeria; Bonn and Berlin, Germany and in the State Department in Washington. In his various assignments he was closely involved in matters concerning the status of Berlin and West Germany as well as on the persistent Greece-Turkey conflict over Cyprus. Among his other assignments, the Ambassador served on the Department's Policy Planning Staff. Ambassador Ledsky was interviewed by Thomas Stern in 2003.

Q: We are now in 1964. Did you have a preference for a next assignment?

LEDSKY: I don't really remember. I don't know how or why I was assigned to Germany, but I was. We left Nigeria in August. I took home leave and prepared myself for the assignment to Bonn. I had earlier asked for an assignment to Germany, but I don't know whether that played any role. German was the language with which I had some familiarity; I think I tested something in at 2/3. When I returned to Washington, I was told that I needed to have a tour where I could become more language proficient, after two English speaking posts.

I had no background in German affairs and did not get any area or language training before leaving for Bonn. I was assigned as the junior member of the political section, a third secretary, of the embassy.

Q: Who was your boss? Who was the ambassador? What do you remember about these people?

LEDSKY: George McGhee was the ambassador. Martin Hillenbrand was the DCM, Coburn Kidd was the chief of the political section and Jim Sutterlin was the deputy political counselor.

McGhee was a memorable character. I remember him well. As I said, I was a third secretary in a huge embassy. I wasn't even senior enough to attend the weekly staff meeting, which were huge meetings. Later, I was allowed to attend, but had to sit in the back row in a corner. The meetings were held in a huge room and I could barely see or hear the ambassador or anybody else. However, because of my job, I had an opportunity to meet with McGhee many times.

I never traveled with him, but I would have to take draft cables to him for his approval and sometimes I would be included in meetings with a German political figure as the note-taker. I was also a note-taker at a chiefs-of-mission conference that was held in Bonn sometime during my first year there. I was invited to his house on a couple of occasions, where I met Mrs. McGhee and the children. Occasionally, I was invited to official lunches or dinners at the house. I think I got to know who he was quite well, but I am not sure that he ever knew fully who I was. He often used to mangle my last name; I don't think he ever got my name right. He also had trouble with my first name, sometimes calling me "Norman" or "Mel," sometimes he said McGhee was a sort of tyrannical figure: very smart and able, interested in everything, versatile, and always wanted to deal with the big picture, never the minutiae.

My second ambassador was Henry Cabot Lodge. I remember him quite vividly, even though his tour in Bonn was quite brief. His attention to German matters was rather superficial; I suspect that he had other fish to fry. He was still engaged in Vietnam and he was also working diligently on his own political future. He was running for president and was seeking the Republican nomination in 1968. He knew nothing about the Berlin and East German issues that were engaging me. He knew how embassies worked, having gone through a couple of years in Saigon.

Lodge had a number of personal quirks. He didn't like to eat with other people. He resisted dining in public. He didn't like to host business lunches or dinners. He was quite friendly in a reserved New England manner. There was an aloofness that was quite evident. He really didn't master the German portfolio; I don't think he ever really tried since he knew that this would be a short-term assignment. He did know a little German, having had, I believe, a German tutor in his childhood days. He didn't ever understand our role in Berlin or our purpose in being there. He did have a very marked anti-military prejudice; he distrusted the U.S. military and its leadership, probably stemming from his Vietnam experiences. I can still remember with some amusement the hard time he used to give the military brass in Heidelberg and Stuttgart. He was not impressed by stars and eagles on people's shoulders. At the same time, he certainly made sure that his position was given due respect. He was intrigued by his own authority in places such as Berlin.

He delegated much authority on political matters to Jock Dean and also to Russ Fessenden, his DCM. Fortunately, as I have said, both were superb officers, well-schooled in German matters and therefore fully capable of conducting business with the West German government. Lodge would listen to these two members of his staff and act according to their recommendations. Since he was clearly in Bonn on a short term assignment, Lodge was adequate, but did not leave much of a mark on U.S.-German relations. I am not sure what he thought about his Bonn assignment before he arrived. He may have thought that he would be there longer than actually turned out. Regardless, I am not sure that he ever really felt obliged to become a German "expert". He was not a workaholic; he liked a short day, at least on German matters.

My job was to handle issues arising from the U.S. role in Berlin and to follow West-East German relations. I had no idea how these functions fell to me. In fact, I didn't even know who my predecessor was. We arrived in Bad Godesberg by train and were met by Jim Sutterlin. I had never met Jim before. He took us from the train station to an apartment in the Plittersdorf area. That is where the American housing complex had been built some years earlier. The next day, I reported to his office and was told that I would be the junior officer working on Berlin matters. I had never been to Berlin; I knew nothing about Berlin and its complicated after-the-war situation. My immediate boss was Bob Davis, who headed a three or four officer section.

Monthly ambassadorial meetings, French, British, Germans and us, were held to deal with Berlin issues. McGhee would normally visit Berlin every month. He did not like to become involved in the details of issues, which meant that I did not have much to say because I spent most of my time on details. But there was no question that McGhee was a good ambassador.

The DCM, Martin Hillenbrand, was an entirely different persona. He was the grand fatherly professorial type. He was much friendlier and personable than George McGhee. He was also very smart and was probably the most senior State Department expert on Germany. I spent a lot of time with Hillenbrand, both in Bonn and during his other assignments, such as assistant secretary for EUR. I regard him as my true mentor. He was interested in all political matters and became involved in many issues, including Berlin, although it was McGhee who would meet with the Foreign Office and his French and British counterparts on Berlin issues. It was the ambassador who traveled to Berlin, sometimes, to meet the Soviet ambassador. So, on the substance of my assignment, I dealt much more frequently with the ambassador, although both Hillenbrand and his successor, Russ Fessenden, were the "German experts" in the State Department.

Q: Tell us a little about Jim Sutterlin.

LEDSKY: As I said, it was Jim who met us at the train station when we first arrived. That started a life-long friendship that endures even today. He was very kind to me, Cecile and my family. He shielded me from Coburn Kidd, who I think was not pleased with my assignment from the start because I had no background in German affairs and my language skills were not well honed. He also was not pleased by my writing skills, which I admit needed development. He even had reason to get rid of me and probably only took me because he was so instructed.

In any case, Jim shielded me first by making me the note taker of the "Bonn Group" and other venues. Jim would take me with him and I would be the note taker. He then worked with me day in and day out until I had mastered the material and became steeped in the Berlin "lore". He sent me to Berlin on several occasions early in my Bonn tour. I would stay for extended periods so that I could learn all the minutiae and the myths of the Berlin saga. He was a mentor and a protector; he brought me along slowly and guided me all the way. We used to have almost daily staff meetings with Kidd and Jim would brief me ahead of time on what I was to say – or not to say. He always warned me to be careful in these staff meetings; it would not do to keep silent, nor was it wise to say too much.

Kidd was a formidable boss – an old line Foreign Service officer with little sense of humor and very proper. I remember that a couple of weeks after my arrival, he gave me a manual on the use of proper English; he asked me to take it home and study it thoroughly. Fortunately, it was a thin book which is still in use by language stylists. In any case, my assignment was to master the material and then exhibit “lessons learned” in my memoranda. Eventually, Kidd and I also became friends and by the time he left, I think we were quite close and I believe that he thought quite highly of me by that time. We continued our friendship until his death a few years ago.

But Jim was the support system that I needed to survive particularly in the first year or so while I was learning the ropes. I worked with Jim every day. He had been stationed in Berlin in the late 1940s and again in the 1960s. He knew everyone in our mission in Berlin, starting with Arch Calhoun, who was in charge of the State contingent there. They were personal friends. Jim shielded me from other members of the political section, some of whom were old “German hands” suspicious in some ways of completely unschooled newcomers. They knew a lot more of every aspect of the work I was doing and it took me a long time to catch up with them – if I ever did, in fact. But day by day, I learned more and more and became increasingly useful to the political section and the embassy. Some of my colleagues were people with whom I stayed in touch even after leaving Germany: Bob Davis, Pete Semler, George Jaeger, Jerry Livingstone, etc. As you can see, the embassy’s political section was quite large, larger than one any one might run into today.

Q: Now talk a little about Jock Dean, who became the political counselor toward the end of your tour in Bonn.

LEDSKY: He was a workaholic. He was and is very intelligent. He had spent a lot of time on German matters before his Bonn tour. He had spent a lot of time worrying about security issues. He knew little about the Berlin and East German issues with which I was involved. He ran the political section in a rather authoritarian manner, thereby annoying a lot of people. His style was the direct opposite of Jim Sutterlin and even Coburn Kidd. But he was very smart with quick insight; it didn’t take him very long to get to the meat of an issue. I learned a tremendous amount from him and with him. At the beginning, he was very much of a “hands on” manager; no issue was too small for him to dwell into. He wanted to take over the work of the “Bonn group,” which I and others had been doing. He wanted to be the spokesman for the U.S. in the “Bonn group.” He wanted to be the intermediary with the embassy’s “second floor,” where the ambassador and the DCM had their offices. That annoyed a number of people in the political section; it didn’t bother me particularly since I was at the bottom of the totem pole and I didn’t aspire to have a leading role in any embassy matters. So I was happy to work under Jock’s guidance. In fact, this new arrangement was useful to my development because Jock didn’t like some of my superiors and so he would sometime bypass them and come to me directly. I remember that he and Jack Shaw never saw eye-to-eye; he didn’t get along very well with Jerry Livingstone or Peter Semler or George Jaeger. So, as time passed, I was given ever increasing responsibilities by Jock. By the end of the tour, Jock and I became good friends and he allowed me to take on issues that probably no other political counselor would have left to such a low level officer – all related to Berlin, of course. Jock let me travel to Brussels to represent the embassy at the “Live Oak” exercises (code name of a planning group for development of military contingency plans). He interceded with the ambassador on my behalf on a number of occasions; he made sure that I was

invited to a number of social events that, because of my rank in the embassy, would not have normally included me. So he was very kind to me.

I remember with great fondness one occurrence. It was a Saturday, which for several of us was just another working day. I came in the morning; I knew I had to leave by 3 p.m. because we needed cash and the banks closed then. At about 2 p.m., I took my leave from the embassy and drove to the bank. Then I went home, where Jock Dean found me soon after my arrival. Jock asked Cecile why I thought it had been appropriate to suddenly leave the embassy and disappear even though it was just 2 p.m. Cecile pointed out that it was a Saturday to which Jock replied that it was just one of the seven work days in a week. I had to go back to the embassy late that Saturday afternoon. That was typical Dean; his comments were covered with light heartedness, but underneath one knew that this was a serious issue with him. I have always viewed Jock Dean as a unique gem in the Foreign Service.

He was a prolific writer, but not a stylist. I think he was rather verbose on paper. I did not try to emulate him. His philosophy was that the longer the message to Washington, the less likely anybody in headquarters was likely to read all, thereby keeping the decision making authority in the field. The length of the message would both bore people in Washington while exuding at the same time an aura of “being on top” of the issue. So Jock wrote a lot – much more than necessary or desired. The quality of his work was not necessarily superior – sentences might go on for 12 lines. – Germanic perhaps but not to be emulated. Jock saw messages as a device to keep decision-making in his own hands. He did that with a gusto unparalleled in the Foreign Service.

I must admit that in retrospect, Jock Dean was enormously effective in Bonn. He was a superb talent – insightful, determined and quite brave. Those are qualities that I do admire, which is one of the main reasons why we have maintained our friendships for 40 years.

Q: I assume you encountered a culture shock after your experiences in Guyana and Nigeria.

LEDSKY: It was a wonderful culture shock. We were placed in a relatively modern and well maintained government-owned apartment, complete with government-issued furniture. All our neighbors complained about the living conditions in Plittersdorf, about the embassy, about the cafeteria, about the secretarial help, about the transportation. There wasn't any aspect of working or living in Bonn that was not subject to one criticism or another. For us, being assigned to Bonn was like going to heaven. Except for the fact that I felt things were way over my head at the office, we were enormously comfortable in Bonn. Our apartment was on the third floor, which meant daily climbs, often carrying groceries or other loads. Of course, not all worked well in the apartment all the time, but for us, we were far ahead of where we had been. We enjoyed it. In fact, soon after our arrival, we were moved to a second floor apartment, making daily climbs easier. This apartment was also closer to the shopping area. The couple of weeks we spent in temporary quarters may have been a little unpleasant, but all in all it was far superior to anything we had ever experienced elsewhere. I didn't have a car during our initial period which made life a little confining, but those were really very minor irritants in a very pleasant environment.

Not only were the living conditions far, far better than what we were accustomed to, but my

work was also much more satisfactory because it met my expectations of what I might do as a Foreign Service officer. I had been a jack-of-all-trades, but felt much more comfortable focusing on political issues, although I must admit that periodically I would look back on my Guyana and Nigeria assignments with some fondness since there I was pretty much on my own and master of my own fate. Bonn was a huge hierarchy with every single word that you committed to paper having to be blessed by what seemed to be dozens of people. In Bonn, I was the low man on the totem pole, entirely different from Georgetown and Enugu. Again, though, the Bonn job was also a challenging one, although entirely different from my previous assignments. In any case, we found the American community in Plittersdorf terrific. All of our kids had a wonderful time in school; Karen went to a nursery school, which was set up in the middle of the housing development and Rebecca and Johnny went to the DoD elementary school, which was right by the housing development. The kids just loved Plittersdorf.

Q: Let's now start on substance. First of all, what was the status of Berlin in the middle 1960s?

LEDSKY: In 1964, Berlin was a divided city and also a closed city. It was divided roughly down the middle by a wall that had been erected in 1961. The city was closed because the road network that had tied Berlin to West Germany was almost impenetrable. There had been a series of serious incidents on the autobahns (highways) in 1962 and 1963. In those years, there were palpable anxieties about the potential of WW III which were highlighted by the Kennedy visit to Berlin. By 1964, when I arrived in Bonn, those anxieties had abated, followed by a period of what I would describe as a stalemate, which lasted from that period to the fall of the Wall in 1989. By October 1964, a major crisis had just been overcome, or at least we thought we had overcome such a crisis.

Berlin was physically separated from West Germany. It was an island in the middle of East Germany. It had been administered separately since 1945, when it was divided into four sectors – Soviet, British, French and American. For the first few years, these wartime allies worked together in a body called the “Kommandatura.” The Soviets left that body in 1948-49, during the Berlin blockade. That left the western allies to operate the “Kommandatura,” which managed the non-Soviet part of Berlin, about 2/3 of the city. The three western sectors were really isolated by the Wall on the east and by East Germany on the other sides. By agreement reached in the late 1940s, the only access to West Berlin was through a single road corridor which went from Helmstedt to Berlin and three air corridors – from Hamburg, Frankfurt and Stuttgart – or other airports in southern Germany. The three corridors were very narrow and the planes could not exceed a 10,000 foot ceiling imposed by the Soviets, one never recognized by the western allies. There was a rail net to Berlin, which also started in Helmstedt. There were Soviet checkpoints at Helmstedt for both the roads and the rail system. There was the possibility of using waterways to get to Berlin, but that also had to go through East German and Soviet checkpoints. So, Berlin was essentially isolated from the West and the East with West Berlin being administered by the three western allies. Starting in 1949, limited authority began to be shifted to a German municipal authority, which was headed by locally elected officials.

Much of the work by the embassy's Berlin section was devoted to contingency planning, in case another crisis arose. We were in fact planning for the crisis that had just passed. When I arrived in Bonn, the section – Bob Davis and a couple of colonels from U.S. military headquarters – was

working overtime on these plans together with representatives of the British and French embassies. These were relatively detailed plans, which coverage all foreseeable contingencies from convoys being stopped on the autobahn or an airplane being harassed or worse in an air corridor. Much of the planning was based on the assumption that the allies could not add to the forces already in Berlin. So, I would describe 1964 as a period of reduced, but ever-present tensions.

Q: Tell us about the structure of the American presence in Berlin – the role of the ambassador and the military commander.

LEDSKY: The administration of the Berlin American sector was peculiar. The chief administrator was a two-star general, the “Kommandant.” His deputy, the “minister,” was a State Department official. State’s representatives in Berlin were under the authority of the general and worked in the military headquarters. The American presence in Berlin was funded by the West German government from an “occupation budget,” which had been started at the end of WW II to pay for allied occupation. The budget request and the general supervision of U.S. spending were supervised by the ambassador and the embassy’s administrative section.

Both the military and the civilian components of the U.S. Berlin administration reported to the U.S. ambassador, who was the chief of mission in Berlin, as he was in West Germany. As I said earlier, our embassy in Bonn had a section devoted exclusively to Berlin and East Germany matters. It was part of the political section. We worked on a daily basis with our mission in Berlin, both on Berlin-related and East Germany issues. This somewhat unorthodox arrangement continued until Germany reunified.

In Berlin itself, the State contingent worked on a daily basis with their French and British counterparts, as we did in Bonn through an “ambassadorial” group. As a result, we had close liaison with the British and French, both in Berlin and in Bonn. The ambassadors from the three countries usually met on a monthly basis to discuss exclusively Berlin matters. In the early 1960, this group was enlarged to include a leading official from the West German foreign ministry, usually the second or third ranking official in that ministry. So, the Bonn group became a quadripartite group.

Just to add another bureaucratic twist, the arrangements in Bonn were replicated in Washington. There was a Washington ambassadorial group, consisting of the secretary of state and the British, French and German ambassadors. They met quarterly to discuss Berlin matters, as well as issues related to “Germany as a whole” – a euphemism for the eventually unified German nation.

As you can see, there were a lot of fingers in the pie. It made it very hard to develop and administer any new policies.

Q: Your time was usually taken up by what kind of issues?

LEDSKY: I think it was a myriad of issues. Every other week, there was a “Bonn group” meeting, attended by representatives, usually the political, or deputy counselors from the British, French and American embassies and the German foreign ministry. Jim Sutterlin was our

representative, although when he moved up to being the political counselor we were represented by Jack Shaw. The agenda for these meetings was agreed upon ahead of time. It was that agenda which took much of my attention during a working day.

The first item on the agenda was usually what was called “temporary travel documents.” I spent a lot of time on these documents. This was another term for passports, issued by the three western allies to an East German who wanted to travel to the West. Since we did not recognize East Germany as a sovereign state, we could not recognize passports issued by it as valid documents. There were several reasons for this non-recognition, not the least of which was the strong objections of the West German government. So, the three western powers set up an office in West Berlin to issue temporary travel documents, or TTDs, to East Germans, who could cross the Wall to pick up these documents. On these TTDs, visas to specific western European countries and as far as we were concerned, anywhere in the world, were stamped. The allies, including the Soviets, had established criteria for the issuance of these TTDs; they were administered by the three western representatives in West Berlin.

The embassies in Bonn were the “appeal courts” which heard appeals from East Germans who were denied a TTD by one of the Berlin missions. So, every day on my desk, I would find TTD applications that had been turned down by one or another of the three western missions in Berlin. I and my counterparts would review these appeals and make our recommendations to our representative on the “Berlin group,” which had the final authority. Most of the TTD applications were adjudicated by our Berlin missions; we usually got the very difficult cases which might involve a prominent East German political figure or some other prominent personage. Those would usually come to Bonn and therefore became the first item on the agenda of the “Bonn group.” We would discuss each appeal case and reach some conclusion about the TTD application before us. I must say that some of the applications we reviewed and acted upon had international ramifications. For example, one application might come from an East German cabinet officer who wanted to travel to India on a trade mission. The West Germans would object and we might go along, eliciting a outburst from the Indian embassy. Sometimes, we would approve the application and the West German government would let us know that it was not very happy with our decision. So, we would periodically run into political firestorms. When such outbursts occurred – or were anticipated – we would consult with the ambassador, who then might take the issue up in the monthly ambassadorial meeting.

I remember that at one time, we had an application from the East German minister for culture, Klaus Gysi, who wanted to visit his mother in France. The French were ready to admit him, but the West Germans objected. That one reached the ambassadorial level. I might just mention that the minister’s son was the leader of the communist party in West Germany. The French finally let him in – with or without a TTD. But there was a furious reaction by the West German government. We were also very unhappy because the French had by-passed the accepted procedures. So, some of these cases took up a lot of time and became serious bones of contention – although in retrospect, I can now wonder: why all the fuss? This system was still being used when I left Bonn in 1970; it was abolished soon thereafter, when West German attitudes changed and it began to recognize the validity of East German passports and stopped interfering with the use of those documents.

The second item on the agenda of the “Bonn group” had to do with transportation. This included questions of road convoys, railroad and airline travel. We had established a procedure whereby each of the three western powers would notify the other two when they were to dispatch a military convoy or use of the American special train. Those issues took up a lot of time.

Then there were intra-Berlin issues such as shootings at the Wall, travel between East and West Berlin or problems on the S-Bahn (the subway that ran between East and West). As I said, we exchanged information with our allies on travel plans from West German through East Germany to Berlin. This was intended to put us on notice should any of the travel be interrupted by East Germans or Soviets.

The last item on the agenda was a long-forgotten issue: the prison in Spandau. The four powers, Soviet, British, French and us, operated a prison in Berlin, which at the time of my arrival in Bonn, held three prisoners, but which went down to one, Rudolph Hess by the time I left. This was a huge complex, guarded on a rotating basis by troops from the four powers. The chairman rotated on a monthly basis; we held monthly lunches and even more frequent discussions on the health and safety and visiting rights of the prisoners. We had to confront continuous appeals to parole the prisoners. The West Germans, for reasons that I never understood, were very solicitous of the prisoners’ health. So, Spandau showed up on the “Bonn group” agenda every meeting.

Periodically we also used to discuss the issue of contingency planning, which I discussed earlier. When I first got to Bonn, the section was very busy writing these contingency plans for the defense of Berlin and for overcoming any blockades by land, water and air of our access to Berlin from West Germany. It was essentially a tripartite effort with the help of the West Germans. A series of contingency plans were drafted and sent to the “Live Oak” section of NATO, which was only the keeper of the plans, but also the key planner for any military action that a contingency might require. Sometimes, this issue was a matter of daily discussion within our embassy.

The “Bonn group” periodically also used its meetings to exchange information about the situation and events in East Germany. I should mention that East German matters were the responsibility of the Berlin section of the political section; we had one officer who spent his full time on East Germany. That was Peter Semler when I first got to Bonn, then it was Jerry Livingstone. I often got involved in these issues as well because they often spilled over into our responsibilities for West Berlin.

We also discussed the issue of responsibilities assigned to the allies and which were to be turned over to the West Berlin authorities. This was a complicated issue and involved our legal advisor, Joe Von Elbe. Each embassy had a lawyer who devoted his time to Berlin issues. The West German government entered into a series of international agreements; in as many of these as possible, the West Germans sought to include Berlin. But in fact, Berlin could only be covered by these agreements with the approval of the three western powers who had ultimate sovereignty over West Berlin. So, we had to discuss the applicability of these agreements to Berlin and this became a continuing subject of discussion for the “Bonn group.” There seemed to have been at least one – and sometimes several – agreements at each meeting which needed allied approval.

We had criteria which guided the three allies and which sometimes forced us to deny the West Germans' requests. The issues were usually legal, having to do with who controlled certain aspects of the administration of the city.

Q: Were there tensions between the three allies and the West Germans on the status of Berlin?

LEDSKY: Yes. I wouldn't call them tensions necessarily, but we did have our disagreements, usually on legal interpretations. The Federal Republic viewed Berlin as an integral part of its country. The city of Berlin was represented in the Bundesrat and the Bundestag as well, although they had limited voting rights in the latter. The three western allies never agreed that West Berlin was part of the Federal Republic. As far as we were concerned, it was part of Germany, but a distinct and separate entity. This difference in views gave rise to legal disagreements. The three allies tried as much as they could to down-play the legal disagreements. We were willing to agree that Berlin should be part of German society and administered as much as possible to conform with West German law. But, obviously, the fundamental difference on the legal status of Berlin gave rise to occasional disagreements. We had to maintain our legal position to protect our interests in Berlin and our international standing.

Q: Did we foresee the day when Berlin would be integrated with West Germany?

LEDSKY: I think the three western powers felt that as long as they had to maintain a presence in Berlin, they had to uphold the fiction that Berlin was a separate entity from West Germany and that the occupation regime had to continue. I think it is fair to say that the "occupation" became increasingly a "fig leaf" as more and more of the governing authority was being turned over to the West Berlin government. We did try to copy for Berlin as much of the West German legal system as was feasible, but at the same time we had to continue to maintain the position that there had to be some degree of separation between the two entities in order to make our presence in Berlin tenable and defensible. It was our position that we would have to stay in Berlin until German and Berlin unifications were achieved. We felt that these events would occur within the next twenty years; we were much more sanguine on that score than the West Germans were. Our position was based in part on protecting and perhaps even enhancing the possibility of German reunification.

Q: We were more optimistic about the chances of reunification than the Germans were?

LEDSKY: Certainly the Americans were. I don't want to speak for the French or the British. I can say – to repeat what I said before – that we on our part felt that we had to continue the occupation of West Berlin to protect the possibility of reunification. All of the detail work that I and others undertook was essentially based on that concept. These mundane activities were part of a grander strategy, which would eventually lead to the reunification of Berlin and West and East Germany. Everything we did had that goal in mind. If you view our actions within that context, I think we were on the side of the angels, even if not perceived that way at the time when these actions were taken. I think our goal and the policies that flowed from it were well conceived, even though there were times during my tour in Bonn and the later tour in Berlin, when I felt that the goal appeared grandiose and perhaps not achievable. But, at the end of the day, it turned out to be the right goal and the policies intended to support the achievement of the

goal were correct and on the mark.

Q: During your Bonn tour, was there any discussion of giving up on that goal?

LEDSKY: Yes. There were some people in the embassy and in Washington, as well as in the British, French and German governments, who felt that unification was too much “pie in the sky” and not worth the cost involved in reaching it. They did not believe that unification – certainly of Berlin – was achievable and believed that the policy of differentiating West Berlin from West Germany was counter-productive and should be changed. The Germans were in the forefront in this push for revision of goals. During my tour in Bonn, the Germans gave up the Holstein doctrine, the refusal to recognize the existence of East Germany. They eventually came up with a policy of reconciliation with East Germany which was just short of acceding to its sovereignty and continued existence, which by the end of the 1980s came full circle with the West Germans recognizing East Germany as an independent and sovereign nation. In the late 1960s, this new West German attitude was shown by their new attitude toward “Passierschien” or other documents that allowed traffic through “Checkpoint Charlie” and other passes between East and West Berlin. Egon Bahr, one of West Germany’s new leaders, insisted that the separation policy made no sense, so the West Germans took the leadership in the reconciliation process.

I think that the Kennedy administration began to show some subtle support for the policy of reconciliation. But after the death of President Kennedy, the Johnson administration retreated from any new initiative and took a firmer stand against any reaching out to the East Germans.

Q: What were the attitudes within the embassy?

LEDSKY: I don’t think the U.S. policy toward East Germany was open to debate. There were some, who did not have any Berlin-related work, who never understood what we were trying to achieve in Berlin, or why. While they might have had some questions about our East Germany and Berlin policies, no one who worked on Berlin and East Germany affairs expressed any reservations about what we were doing, or why.

Q: You mentioned that you visited Berlin periodically. Did you get a chance to travel to other parts of West Germany?

LEDSKY: I think I have seen almost every corner of West Germany, mostly on my own and with the family. We visited Munich, Frankfurt, Stuttgart – most of the major cities. We did travel extensively.

Q: Who was the minister in Berlin during your tour?

LEDSKY: The first one was Arch Calhoun, who was succeeded by David Klein.

Q: Did run into any problems with either of them on “turf” issues?

LEDSKY: I think the answer has to be “yes.” There were always some tensions between the

embassy in Bonn and the mission in Berlin, as there was between the comparable British and French organizations. People in Berlin wanted to be as independent from their embassies as possible. They wanted to make as many decisions locally as possible. I think that should not come as any surprise. The major problem was that the Berlin staffs had very limited contact with West Germany and West Germans. They were quite isolated in a military occupation environment, which was shielding them from the Bonn realities, which nonetheless had to take into account the sensitivities of the West German government – its views, needs and desires. The embassies brought that element into the decision making process; it was absolutely essential. It was this difference in perspectives that raised some tensions, a situation which lasted until the status of Berlin changed. I ran into the same tensions when I was the minister in Berlin later on. The Berlin missions always sought to be as independent as possible while the embassies felt they needed to be in control, always cognizant of what was going on in Berlin.

There were also some tensions generated by the budget process. As I mentioned, the cost of our presence in Berlin was covered by an “occupation budget,” requested and supervised by the embassy’s administrative staff. Ambassador McGhee in particular wanted to make sure that the American expenditures could be fully justified. While that process was the source of some tensions, I think that there were some differences in perspectives between Berlin and Bonn on every subject.

Q: Did you have the opportunity to interact with the Soviets during this tour in Bonn?

LEDSKY: I did. It was not regular contact, but there were occasions that required some contact with the Soviets. Occasionally, my visits to Berlin coincided with U.S.-Soviet bilateral ambassadorial meetings. I acted then as note-taker, which gave me the opportunity to meet the Soviet ambassador and some of his staff. Also, on a couple of occasions, I did visit East Berlin with representatives of the East German affairs section of our Berlin mission. We did then meet some Soviets and East German officials. These guys were scary. I had never run into a Soviet official or soldier before. They seemed very strange to me – no smiles, all seriousness – scary! I think I took my first trip into East Berlin with Bill Woessner, it was a pretty scary event. We went by U-Bahn; we walked around like tourists. We didn’t have any East German currency. We saw a lot of rubble and ruins; it was not a cheery sight except for the Soviet embassy which occupied a brand new building – ornate and ugly – on the *Unter den Linden*. I was glad to get back to West Berlin.

Q: Did you detect any changes in Soviet attitudes or policies during your tour?

LEDSKY: I certainly did not detect any change. I saw no evidence of any change in Soviet posture.

Q: Did West German attitudes and policies change after the death of Konrad Adenauer?

LEDSKY: Definitely, it was Adenauer’s death that allowed the policies to change, even if ever so slowly. There certainly were noticeable changes when Willy Brandt became foreign minister in the Schroeder government, and subsequently, when he became chancellor.

Q: Did you ever have an opportunity to meet Adenauer or any of the other chancellors?

LEDSKY: I met Schroeder once.

Q: While you were in Bonn, Adenauer died and President Johnson went to the funeral. Do you have any recollections of that visit?

LEDSKY: I was barely involved. I had one little assignment, but otherwise I was not involved.

Q: Were there any particular Soviet threats during your tour?

LEDSKY: There were a number of incidents. We had some problems with Autobahn convoys, and we had some problems with air access. There were a number of shootings along both the Wall and the inter-German border. We received a number of threats from the Soviets. There were periods of heightened tensions all during my tour, as there were before and after.

The tensest period that I remember most vividly occurred in 1969, just before our transfer from Bonn. The West Germans had scheduled a presidential election (in Germany, that is done by parliament) to be held in Berlin. The Soviets told us that this would not be allowed and threatened to shoot down any planes carrying parliamentarians. We, in fact, flew every member of the *Bundesversammlung* (Federal Convention) to Berlin despite the threats. Nothing ever happened. A few planes were buzzed by Soviet fighters, but there were no shootings.

We had a lot of incidents like that during my five years in Bonn. In retrospect, they don't seem as serious as we perceived them to be at the time. I think that since there were no actualities, they don't seem so serious today. We did face down the Soviets several times in the 1960s as we did in the example I mentioned. The Soviets would tell us not to do something, but we would proceed anyway after extended consultations among the three allies and the West Germans. Convoys were held up – some for extended periods. We did discuss whether to affect some contingency plans to probe Soviet and East German intentions. There were incidents that were considered to be quite serious in the 1960s. We delivered many protests. Despite the seriousness of the incidents, I didn't foresee a return to the situation of the late 1940s, i.e., the Berlin airlift. We had contingency plans for an airlift if it was needed, but I didn't really foresee a need to return to some extraordinary measures, even though some of the incidents were very, very serious.

During the Soviet invasion in 1968 of what now is known as the Czech Republic, there was discussion as to whether the overthrow of Dubcek might bring East and West back to the bad old days of the heights of the Cold War. In fact, Jim Sutterlin suggested that I visit Czechoslovakia in 1969, before my return to Washington, just so I could have a feel for a country back under Soviet-style dictatorship – Gustav Husák. I went to Prague for four or five days; it was scary. I think that 1969 was a very tense period in East-West relations. It was not clear to me that we would not have another serious confrontation with the Soviets. It seemed to me quite possible, and it almost came to that on a couple of occasions – at least on the diplomatic front.

Q: Did you see an evolution in West Germany's perception of itself in the world?

LEDSKY: Yes. I think as time passed, it became clear that the West Germans were beginning to “feel their oats.” They saw themselves increasingly as an independent power with some strength. They increasingly asserted their independence from the western allies. More and more of the foreign office officials took an increasingly nationalistic line. This evolution was perceptible; I think I could chart this West German movement during the 1964-69 period.

Interestingly enough, this feeling of greater independence and assertiveness did not move them forward on the question of reunification. I don’t think you can say that as the West Germans increasingly “felt their oats” their hopes for reunification increased. I don’t think they thought it would ever happen, until the late 1980s, when it did happen. It was a curious contradiction. The West German assertiveness extended only to the West; it did not increase toward the East Germans or the Soviets. They, in fact, became more conciliatory toward their Eastern “brothers” and, by extension, toward the Soviets. They much preferred to be conciliatory than confrontational with the East, while they took the exact opposite tack toward their friends: the Americans, the French and the British.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add about your five years in Bonn?

LEDSKY: I could talk about many issues. I do want the record to show that I believe that the years 1964-69 were a very unique period in German history and in German-American relations. I do not believe that the period has been adequately covered by historians and is, as far as I am concerned, less than fully understood. It is perceived to be a period during which German policy was changing, moving from the conservative, stubborn Adenauer to the more flexible, more conciliatory “Ostpolitik” practiced by Willy Brandt and the socialists. The view is also that the American government resisted this transition, in part because we did not understand the change the Germans were undertaking. Furthermore, the period is seen as one of relative calm and absent of tensions, with both the Soviets and West Germans. I think this is an erroneous view. I think we were cognizant of the attitude changes in the Federal Republic and the country; we did not resist that evolution. Furthermore, there were severe stresses between the U.S. and the Soviets, as well as between the West Germans and ourselves. I think these stresses were consciously downplayed by the U.S. government.

As I said, it is a period which I do not believe has been adequately studied by historians. Not much has been written about the international relations of the 1960s as it touches the West Germans. There have been volumes written about Bitburg, the missile crisis of the 1980s, etc., but the period of the 1960s has been sadly neglected. The 1960s in Germany was a strange period; I am not sure that I fully comprehend what went on, even though I was a witness to much of it. It is not clear to me that anyone else has captured the full flavor of that period. We know that major changes were underway, but I don’t know that the participants fully understood how seismic these changes really were. The change came, but not as a consequence of any deliberate West German planning or as an intended consequence. Even now, as I look back on the period, I find it very confusing, especially since the words of the statesmen do not match up with events; the evolution proceeded without design or human directions. There were, of course, people in various governments who tried to steer policies in one direction or another to meet their own goals. However, but the consequences of their policies were unintended. I think that even now in

the early 21st Century, the full story of East-West German relations, of Soviet-German or Soviet-allies relations, and of West German-allies relations has not been told. Something is missing. One only has to read Henry Kissinger or Egon Bahr to realize that the evolution of policy did not follow their visions or even their predictions of the future. Unfortunately, the participants in this process have not described their perceptions or their view of events.

Q: Do you have an explanation as to why this period has been neglected by historians and even the participants?

LEDSKY: I think people view the 1960s in Germany as uneventful and of little historical significance. I think they are wrong. It was a period of major policy changes which built a base for subsequent events of major significance. Let me give a further example. I mentioned the *Bundesversammlung* of 1969. That has never really been fully recorded or analyzed. It must be noted that that was the last *Bundesversammlung* ever held in Berlin. The Germans continued to talk tough about their rights in Berlin, but in fact capitulated to Soviet pressure. They never even tried to hold another session. Instead, they re-wrote their election laws so that the issue would not need to arise again. The allies, although mouthing their positive view of “detente,” insisted that the *Bundesversammlung* be held in Berlin despite Soviet objections and flew all the delegates into Berlin on planes belonging to American or British airlines. The West has often been accused of being “soft” on the East; however, few mention that 1969 episode and the way the west stood up to the Soviets as some risk. I am not aware that this event in East-West relations has been written up.

After 1969, came “Ostpolitik,” with its steady trend towards the recognition of East Germany and other tension-easing measures. In fact, these policy shifts go back to decisions made and actions taken in the 1960s, even though, as I mentioned earlier, each individual action seems minor now in retrospect. It really doesn’t seem very important now whether Rudolf Hess was treated adequately or whether he should remain in Spandau prison, but the cumulative effect of each of these minor decisions became trend setters. It is also true that we know little about Soviet actions on transportation disruptions. Were they dictated by Moscow? Were they the actions of a local commander? Were they demanded by the East Germans? We know very little about that as well.

Q: Did you have anything special to do with the Nixon visit of 1969?

LEDSKY: I was still in Bonn when that took place, but I don’t remember having had any special duties. I continued to conduct my own business and was not bothered very much by the president’s visit. I must say that being the Berlin and East German officer saved me from a lot of involvement in these VIP visits; I wasn’t given any special assignments and was able to observe the visits without becoming involved, as so many embassy officers and staff did. I may have had some small assignments, but nothing that bogged me down on these visits for days and weeks before and after. I give much credit to Jock Dean, who tried very hard when these visits took place to shield his officers from being drawn into the morass that one of these visits created. Jock had a philosophy which relegated junior officer to “spear carrier” duties: behind the scenes – to be seen, if must, but never to be heard. That was just fine with me and most of my junior colleagues in the political section. The more senior officers may have been somewhat offended

by being barred from having any major role in these visits, but it didn't bother me; I was not offended by being protected from doing petty chores.

ALFRED PUHAN
Head of Office of German Affairs
Washington, DC (1964-1969)

Ambassador Alfred Puhan was born in Marianburg, Germany, (now Poland) of an American father raised primarily in Illinois. He was educated at Oberlin College, the University of Cincinnati and Columbia University. During World War II he was employed in radio broadcasting, first by the British Broadcasting Company and later by the Voice of America. In 1953 he joined the Foreign Service, serving in Vienna and in Washington, where he served as Executive Director of the European Bureau and Head of the Office of German Affairs. In 1969 he became US Ambassador to Hungary and served there until 1973. Ambassador Puhan was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1990.

Q: He was still there when I came in. He was succeeded by Leonard Unger. So from Bangkok then you went where?

PUHAN: From Bangkok I went back to the Department of State to head the Office of German Affairs which I did for four years and then really five because the fifth year John Leddy made me an Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State.

Q: What would you say were the principal problems that you faced at the time of your incumbency there?

PUHAN: Well, first of all when I got there the Berlin Task Force which had been formed in 1961—I got there in 1964 in Washington—the Berlin Task Force had virtually taken over the power that should belong to the Office of German Affairs. By the time I got there in 1964 it was the tail that wagged the dog. And I said to Bill Tyler, after looking at this, I said, I don't think this makes any sense. You can't expect me to recommend policies for Germany if the men and women in the Berlin Task Force who have nothing to do now since there aren't many crises anymore are beginning to assume more and more of the powers of the Office of German Affairs.

Bob Creel, my predecessor, I think was most reluctant to do that job. I told him, I said, I thought this ought to be our organization. In fact, the Berlin Task Force was turned over to me. And after this I chaired the Berlin Task Force when it met.

Well, the problems of course were many. As you know, our policy towards Germany has always been a very complicated one. On the one hand we were interested ever since 1947, '48, in containing the Russians. This required in time a strong Germany in NATO and the planting of nuclear weapons in Germany. It called for subsidization of our troops by the Germans and by us too of course. And also there was a conflict because Adenauer was interested in developing a

close relationship with de Gaulle and did. This, however, put the Germans in conflict with us because, as you know, in the days of Lyndon B. Johnson, you couldn't mention de Gaulle's name in his presence. And this caused a rather tricky situation. Then the question of German reunification. Yes, we're for reunification, but thought that it probably wouldn't take place.

So it was a very complex situation, for me probably the most interesting of my entire career. Because for one thing having the language and having the knowledge of Germany and having the knowledge of their literature and their background, I had access to anybody. I knew every chancellor from Adenauer through Helmut Schmidt. And I was able to see them in Bonn. I was able to talk to Theo Sommer, Editor of Die Zeit in Hamburg. I knew these people. I saw a German delegation almost every week in my office. Their backs had to be stroked or they had to be assured that what Mansfield was trying to do, reducing our troops in Germany, wasn't going to happen. Of course, I had a big advantage over my colleague who ran Soviet affairs. As you know, usually there has been a senior, very senior officer on the seventh floor close to the Secretary who is a Soviet expert. It was either Foy Kohler or George Kennan or Llewellyn Thompson, or Chip Bohlen.

In my case in German affairs there was no German expert between Dean Rusk and myself. Dean Rusk frequently called me directly on the phone and asked me to come up, especially on matters pertaining to Berlin or certain things that the West Germans were contemplating doing, and to listen to his complaints –justified–about German failure to back us on Vietnam and that sort of thing. It was a most challenging job and one that I thoroughly enjoyed. I worked hard, it was a six day operation and sometimes even on Sunday. But it was a most challenging job. The most challenging job in some ways I ever held even though as ambassador, of course, you have certain prerogatives that you didn't have there. But it was the most interesting job of my career I think.

Q: Again, what years are those?

PUHAN: 1964 to 1969.

Q: That was a period during which the opinion of the Germans with regard to the United States began to turn around a bit and become sour, wasn't it? What are your comments on that?

PUHAN: That is true and it was caused partly because of the fact that we were bugging them constantly for more money. We had very little to offer them except possible quick death with our nuclear weapons, our constant changes in policy from massive retaliation to flexible response to whatever they were called at the time, had them in a stew. At the same time the Wirtschaftswunder, the miracle of their economic recovery made them a power to be reckoned with. Yet Germany was a big economic body with a small political head. They had no say in foreign affairs. They rather resented our asking them to do things which they thought they had no business doing like backing them up on Vietnam and so on. And so relations did sour. I had very good relations with the ambassador, Heinrich Knappstein, and his brilliant political counselor, Berndt Von Staden, who later on became ambassador to Washington and I think somehow maybe I helped a little bit to keep American-German relations on an even course.

And then our top people in State, as you well know, were preoccupied with Vietnam. Germany

could under the circumstances only be a nuisance. I think the Germans felt this. And their leaders, Adenauer, Erhard, Kiesinger—were all fairly submissive. Adenauer knew he was head of a defeated country, a divided country and Erhard was a specialist in economics. When we got to Willy Brandt, you got a different personality and a man who, as you know, when he became Chancellor was the one who actually preceded Nixon in detente, I mean, in settling the Berlin situation, settling it more or less.

But, yes, it was a fascinating period. I saw Germany struggling from impotence, total impotence, in the political international arena, to a role of some significance, and of now much greater significance with an army of nearly 500,000 men and an economic structure that is not rivaled in Europe today—with the reunification of 80 million Germans in the offing. But in the '60s the Germans became more assertive. I can remember walking with Helmut Schmidt from the Sheraton—I don't know, one of the hotels downtown Washington—to the Golden Parrot for lunch and he was quite sarcastic about American policies and American leaders. The Germans began to feel they were being used and they were not allowed to play their proper role. So it was kind of a touchy situation.

I was asked one time what do you do with these delegations? We had a delegation of mayors this week, a delegation of Bundestag members the next week, a delegation of journalists the following week. And one of my friends said, well, what do you say to them when you have these sessions? I said, well, I welcome them and then I listen. And that's what they wanted, someone to whom they could sound off. And our people—there was a man who was very helpful to me in this case. You see, Johnson was too busy. Rusk, too, was busy as was McNamara. But Hubert Humphrey—I could always count on Hubert Humphrey to meet a delegation of Germans, to meet the Vice President of the United States. He was always very jovial and of course patted them on the head and made them feel good when they left the office. So he was a real help.

Q: This was also the period I think in which the real radicalization of the German student group came into full flower wasn't it?

PUHAN: Are you talking about the Greens?

Q: Yes, the Greens began moving into Berlin very extensively and finally just virtually ruined their free university at Berlin.

PUHAN: Yes. This is the time when this began. Now, you know, radical movements, of course, exist in every country. I got a lot of questions about that when I was in Hungary. The Hungarians knew, of course, of my past as Director of the Office of German Affairs. So I became sort of their unofficial consultant on German affairs. And they were always concerned about radical movements in Germany, both of the left and of the right. And I had to point out to them that, look, you can't expect the country not to have—in a free society you've got to expect this. I always told them I thought it would remain rather small. I didn't think they had to be too concerned. But this added a little spice to the whole operation, yes.

ALLAN W. OTTO
Visa Officer
Berlin (1965-1967)

Allan W. Otto was born in Illinois in 1938. He graduated from Northwestern University. His Foreign Service career included positions in Aden, Yemen; Zagreb, Yugoslavia; Warsaw, Poland; Mexico City, Mexico; and Washington, DC. Mr. Otto was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

OTTO: I was sent to Berlin, my first overseas assignment, as a consular officer. The Wall had been up a relatively short time. In terms of consular work I handled all of the consular duties in Berlin, including all of the East German visa cases. People could get across from East Berlin, if they had permission to do so. There was no difficulty in getting into West Berlin for the people whom the East German authorities wanted to allow to travel. They would cross over and come in. We would interview them and get decisions made. It was a fairly complicated process at that time, in terms of security.

My best recollection is that most of the East Germans who came out were official travelers. They were official in the sense that they were going to conferences, mostly in the scientific field. I wouldn't say exclusively -- I think there were some people in the cultural field, though I cannot, offhand, remember too much about the cultural travelers. At that time the Ford Foundation had a fairly active program in Berlin, which brought in people from various places, including the Eastern European countries. Some of those folks would also come in for their visas to go to the United States for a year to do a combination of study and acculturation at various universities. But in a general sense they were people within the academic community.

I don't remember any East Germans coming in for immigrant visas. I don't think that in terms of immigration there was any particular policy which said that we tried to encourage or discourage people to immigrate. I think that we did have a policy which said that we would like the Berliners to stay in Berlin and not migrate to West Germany. As you know and as you are aware, the law specifies who can come and on what bases. People who could qualify and wanted to leave, left. We certainly had immigration, but my recollection is that it was more from spouses of military people than anything else.

We didn't deal with the East German authorities at all. When I first arrived in Berlin, you could travel in East Berlin as a diplomat, but you had to go through a procedure that was prescribed for you. When I initially arrived there, you could only go into East Berlin on the S-Bahn subway system. There was a particular stop. At that time, you could get on a subway that ran from West Berlin to East Berlin to West Berlin. The thing was that normally, if you were a West Berliner, if you got off in East Berlin, you took some risks. But if you were just going from one part of West Berlin to another part of West Berlin, it didn't make any difference. I don't know to what extent they pulled people off -- that is, the East Germans pulled people off. But I don't think that happened very much.

If you wanted to go into East Berlin, you got off at a particular station -- I've forgotten the name of it -- and you went through a procedure of showing your diplomatic passport, but you did not

relinquish control of it. There was a certain amount of gamesmanship at the time between the guards who reviewed these things and people who were going through. Presumably, the diplomatic fiction was that you did not recognize the East Germans' authority, so you never gave them possession of your passport. At the same time, there was a practical reality that they wanted to know who was coming over. I remember -- it was some time after a year -- they opened up "Check Point Charlie" to vehicle traffic. Then, indeed, you could go through, but it was the same sort of thing. Your car had specific plates on it. You would show the passport through the window of the car, without actually opening the window and without turning the passport over to the East German guards. Then they would wave you through.

ARTHUR H. HUGHES
Rotation Officer
Frankfurt (1965-1967)

Ambassador Hughes was born and raised in Nebraska. He attended the University of Nebraska and entered the Foreign Service in 1965. He held posts in Germany, Venezuela, Denmark, The Netherlands, and Israel. He also held an ambassadorship in Yemen. He was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 1998.

Q: Your service in Germany involved language study, or you had an opportunity to use some of the German you had learned in college?

HUGHES: I had a German minor, and I was able to use the German and expand it while I was in Germany. We had a kind of pre-language lab situation at the University. That was in the late '50s, of course. I think it was pretty rudimentary as far as language labs go. So my reading was pretty good, but my speaking was not much good when I got to Germany, but being there allowed me to improve.

Q: You then came into the Service, as you say, in March of 1965. You did the usual junior officer orientation and training, and then where were you assigned?

HUGHES: I was assigned to do four weeks of German, hopefully to get me over the hump, and then I went to Frankfurt, which was right across the street from what had been my Army headquarters. I was in Fulda actually, 65 miles away up on the border. But that was our headquarters right across the street on Seezmyerstrasse from the consulate general.

Q: So you knew how to get there?

HUGHES: Knew how to get there.

Q: And you did the usual first tour counselor work?

HUGHES: First-tour rotation, I think I had five jobs there. That was actually the most fun of it, the rotation. Because it was a pretty big post, there were a lot of us junior officers and we made

lasting friendships. Still some of our best friends we met in Frankfurt in those days.

Q: It was a large post, of course, and it had probably a number of junior officers.

HUGHES: It was a real consular factory in a sense. Our main clients were actually service members. I spent a month or two doing nothing but registering births of almost all service members, a few businesspeople but almost all service members.

Q: And I suppose something with marriages too?

HUGHES: Marriages, adoptions, all kinds of interesting social situations.

Q: Citizen services.

HUGHES: Yes.

ULRICH A. STRAUS
Labor Officer
Berlin (1965-1967)

Ulrich A. Straus was born in Germany in 1926 and, after some time in Japan, his parents settled in the United States. He served in the U.S. Army and attended the University of Michigan. Mr. Straus joined the Foreign Service in 1957 and served in Japan, Germany, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

STRAUS: I was born in Germany in 1926 of German parents in the town of Wurzburg, which is in northern Bavaria. I left there at the tender age of about nine months and went to Berlin. 1932 was during the Depression and my father was most fortunate to get a job with a German record company to go to look at the possibility of an expanding market in Japan. So he took off for Japan in 1932. In those days you didn't travel with very young children and my brother had just been born so we waited until early 1933 to follow him.

Just before that Hitler came to power. So we were extremely fortunate. My father soon switched to a British company, British Columbia Records. Then British Columbia was sold out to Japanese interests and became part of the conglomerate Nissan.

So I came to Japan at the age of six and entered initially into a German school and then in 1936, when it was very apparent at what was going on in Germany, I entered the American School in Japan. Again in 1938, as the war clouds gathered in Europe, and East Asia, my father had the foresight to apply for an American visa. That came through in 1940. In the summer of 1940 we all marched down to the American Consulate in Yokohama and got an immigrant visa to the United States.

The reason I got the assignment was that I had been designated a labor officer and had spent three years in Tokyo as the assistant labor attaché. Berlin had had a close tie with the AFL-CIO. It had a tremendous impact there already from before the time the Wall went up, but particularly afterwards. I got there four years later. Berlin, as it had been for a long time, was a Social Democratic city with a strong labor union movement and the AFL-CIO saw the workers in Berlin as the backbone of the resistance against Communism. Jay Lovestone, who was the international director for the AFL-CIO, took a personal interest in that Berlin connection. So I was charged to go out there and be the labor officer.

AFL-CIO people were certainly major players at that time in anything affecting the trade union movements. At the time there was tremendous competition between East and West, between the ICFTU on the Western side and the WFTU on the Eastern side and Berlin, of course, was the place par excellence for competition between those two organizations and what they stood for. And Berlin, of course, was seen as the great citadel of freedom in the sea of Communism, which Jay Lovestone and others who were converts from the Communist cause tended to romanticize somewhat. Berlin, of course, was a very hardline city. At the time I was there Berlin was a divided city, and West Berlin was the largest industrial city between Moscow and Paris.

In between Tokyo and Berlin I stopped in Washington for consultation. I never had the labor course. I succeeded in avoiding that. But I did have my meetings with Lovestone and Irving Brown, who was his deputy at the time. Lovestone, in particular, was a zealot. He had been a Communist zealot and then became an anti-Communist zealot. Coming from Tokyo it struck me as somewhat excessive and I had that feeling while I was in Berlin, too. I can talk about that later. It was made very clear to me that the AFL-CIO did have a particular interest in nurturing this relationship with the West Berlin union movement as a political statement and that it was very important to them, and to us.

Not long after I was there I had one of the really interesting thing happen to my assignment there. It was on the anniversary of the day the Wall went up, June 17. There was a message sent by the President and one sent by the AFL-CIO. The bearer of the message was the head of the NAACP. The rally was conducted next to the burned out hulk of the Reichstag which was right next to the Wall. There were about 350,000 people out there. My task was to translate this fairly brief statement of support from the AFL-CIO and the President into German. It was the only time I have ever spoken to 350,000 people. Everybody was there. It was something special.

I soon found out that there wasn't really very much to this job. The reason being was that the West Berlin union movement was really part of the West German union movement and that the trade union negotiations took place in Bonn and elsewhere in Germany, but not in Berlin.

One of my unusual jobs there was as follows. We had in West Berlin West German civil guards. The civil guards were not military but did have military training who were kind of an auxiliary force for the rather meager Allied military resources in Berlin. They were ostensibly hired by us and we conducted the wage negotiations. We, being the British, the French and the Americans. But that too was a sham because the money was being provided by the German government and it was essentially the German government which decided how much they should get paid. So we fronted for the German government in this respect. That was one of my functions.

But things were going along rather well, so I didn't see where my predecessor could have spent so much time on these. But anyway, it was pleasant enough. Very nice people. There was a certain political significance in all this.

The Mission in Berlin was a State Department Mission headed by a somebody with the rank of Minister, who ostensibly reported to the American Commandant, who had the American Sector in West Berlin. And there were similar arrangements by the British and the French.

Under the Minister you had a political section and economic section. Then you had a section that dealt with East Germany. Since we didn't have any representation over there, they did all the reporting on East Germany. Of course, that was a very important part of it. And then there was a consular section. It was set up like an embassy. There was a certain amount of natural tension built in between Bonn and Berlin because Berlin reported separately. It didn't report through Bonn although during my time I don't think there was any real conflict.

Arch Calhoun was the Minister during the first year I was in Berlin; then he was replaced by Brewster Morris, also a German hand.

I was in the political section. After about a year I was able not to change jobs but in addition to the labor job I had, which I didn't feel filled my time adequately, I became the Berlin access officer. That I found much more to my liking. It was much more interesting. That labor experience was the last of my labor experiences.

I dealt with issues of access to Berlin by the Allies. This was air access, the air routes, barge access, rail access and autobahn access. The issues very often were as follows. We recognized the Soviet ability to exercise some control over the access. In other words they could check papers, but they couldn't inhibit us in any way. But we would reject any efforts on the part of the East Germans to exercise this checking facility. So we would show papers on the autobahn, for example, and elsewhere, to the Soviet authorities, but not to the East German authorities. Many of the problems arose in the air corridors which was the most neuralgic point, perhaps, although the autobahn was too.

In my time there were no really serious incidents, but a lot of minor incidents. Things in Berlin at that time had a tendency to escalate very rapidly into the highest level of government. A lot of the issues, actually, were settled locally. But certain issues that struck people as dangerous, as a slippery slope -- if we gave in to the Soviets on this minor little issue, then we could lose the whole ball game. You know things at that time were such that a lieutenant who was in his little jeep driving the autobahn was wired to communicate with the President of the United States, in case he had to make a decision of what to do.

I think a typical issue along those lines was the following one. One day the Soviets declared to us that they were going to do some re-paving of the road, or something connected with the autobahn and that would require that our convoys -- we had these eight vehicle convoys -- would have to park just off the autobahn in a parking lot when processing papers. Well, we recognized their right to process our papers, but we felt that if they could tell us to get off the autobahn there, they

could tell us to get off the autobahn everywhere.

This was a hot and heavy issue. The Soviets said they needed to do this because there was a lot of increased traffic on the autobahn. And there was by the mid-sixties. This issue eventually went up to the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and was resolved in a classic fashion. We felt that if we kept one tire on the autobahn itself, we retained our rights. I don't know what the Soviets felt about all this, but they were indeed concerned about traffic, it appeared, and never caused us any problems about this. It did seem a bit excessively neuralgic to me. I think I was perhaps unique in that sense. People focusing on this really lost sight of the real world in a way. But, you know, there was a sort of myth of Berlin that grew up. And our rights on this autobahn issue as well as every other issue did not rest on international agreements. It just rested on custom and practice which had grown up since 1945. Everybody was afraid to change anything.

I did not personally have contact with the Soviets. I wrote some protests on one or another issue, but we dealt through our military representative in the vast Berlin Air Safety Center where messages were passed back and forth about our incoming and outgoing flights. There was a Lt. Colonel Pothoff who I dealt with almost every day. He had the contact with the Soviet authorities.

I wasn't struck by that so much by the US military -- as some of my colleagues were -- perhaps because I didn't have the contact. We did have this other mission in Potsdam, which was a purely military mission, and they were there by right of an agreement with the Soviets which gave them reciprocal rights in West Germany. That was a game of "catch me if you can" sort of thing. The job of these people was to find out how many Soviet military personnel were at any one point and what they were doing, and the equipment they had. The Russians did the same thing. I think it provided a certain degree of stability, but this derring-do on their part energized everybody. It was great stuff. They had special souped up cars that the Soviets couldn't keep up with. A lot of fun.

It was a very pleasant time in Berlin. Berlin was off the front burner and while this was good for everybody, the Berliners felt neglected by the world and I think really would have preferred to be in the center of world attention, even if it meant privation and hardship.

We figured that Soviet tanks, which we could see, of course, from the air, could be in our house in five minutes. I don't think we thought about it a great deal. We had two children there. We occasionally went over to East Berlin which was our right and duty to do. We were always urged to go over there. We were always a little tense leaving two infants back in West Berlin. I never drove as carefully in my life as I did in East Berlin.

East Berlin was a drab scene. I think the drabness of Berlin -- it was the sense of lack of progress. It was as if it had been in a time warp and was still back in the 1920s in a way. That was particularly true on occasions such as New Year's Eve. We would sit home and flick the dial between East and West and the entertainment in the East was strictly 1930, nothing had changed. Everybody kind of looked the same. There was sort of one size, one color of raincoat. That sort of thing. But the arts were tremendous in East Berlin. That is where they put a lot of their money.

Again there was this competition between East and West which made it very exciting.

One more word about my Berlin assignment. Since I spoke German fluently, I was asked on a couple of occasions to go meet with student groups and other groups and talk about Vietnam. I personally felt somewhat ill at ease because almost from the beginning I was opposed personally to our involvement in Vietnam. I thought it was the wrong war at the wrong time. I recall one individual putting it this way. "You are saying that we are really defending Berlin from the Communists in Vietnam, but are you ready to equate Diem and Nhu with our Willy Brandt?" Frankly I couldn't.

The politicalization of the Free University in Berlin was just beginning at that time. When we arrived it was relatively minor but I think Vietnam more than anything energized these folks. And Berlin became because of its special status, a refuge for the left, interestingly enough, because citizens of Berlin were exempt from the draft. These people were, of course, very much anti-military, anti-German military as well. By the time I left in 1967 it was beginning to become a hotbed of anti-Vietnam activity. There was also a number of serious demonstrations. We had a young lady in our house who was a student there. She was a member of the SDS which was the student organization. Personally she was a delightful person and took very good care of our kids when we went away and we felt very comfortable with her. Her fiancée was in West Germany somewhere. He was much more active than she was.

So we had some good talks with them. But again I found them somewhat like the Japanese students that I was very familiar with. They were super idealistic While I didn't subscribe to our Vietnam policy, I thought they were overdoing it.

GEORGE JAEGER
Political Officer
Berlin (1965-1967)

Mr. Jaeger was born in Austria and raised in Austria, England and the US. Evacuated from Austria to Holland and England, he immigrated to the US. After serving in the US Army he was educated at St. Vincent College and Harvard University. He joined the State Department in 1951 and the Foreign Service (USIA) in 1953. Primarily a Political Officer, Mr. Jaeger served in Washington several times as well as in Monrovia, Zagreb, Berlin, Bonn, Geneva, Paris, Quebec (Consul General), Ottawa (Political Counselor) and Brussels (Deputy Assistant Secretary General of NATO for Political Affairs. His final assignment was Diplomat in Residence at Middlebury College. Mr. Jaeger was interviewed by Robert Daniels in 2000.

Q: So Mr. Tyler arranged for you to go to Berlin. What was your new capacity?

JAEGER: The assignment read 'Supervisory Political Officer', which meant, as I had been told in Washington, that I was to be the Deputy Chief of the Political Section at the US Mission in Berlin - a nice step forward which turned out to be a problem.

Q: How so?

JAEGER: It became clear, when I arrived in Berlin, that this 'top-down' assignment, in which EUR had 'parachuted' me into the No. 2 job in the Political Section, had caused resentment in the Mission and, Assistant Secretary Tyler having left EUR, was simply not going to be honored. So I was made Political-Military officer in the Political Section instead, responsible for the Berlin Wall and the Access Routes to Berlin - a clearly demanding job, but which, as was made clear to me, involved no supervisory responsibilities. I think their difficulty was that having me serve as Deputy to Jim Carson, the recently arrived Political Counselor, would have implied putting me above Brandon Grove, a formidable, well-connected officer, who had been Assistant to Under Secretaries Chester Bowles and to George Ball, who followed events in City Hall where Willy Brandt was officiating.

In spite of my tacit acquiescence to this change in my assignment, I never escaped the sense that I was seen as an interloper, a feeling compounded by the fact that Carson and I got off to an awkward start personally which did not improve over time.

Q: Well, that's not a great way to start a new job. Before we get into that, let's first set the stage a bit: Tell us about the US Mission in Berlin, how it was organized, and what it was supposed to do.

JAEGER: The U.S. Mission was America's headquarters and representation in the US Sector of Berlin, established under the quadripartite arrangements worked out after the war.

Q: Was it under the authority of the American Embassy in Bonn?

JAEGER: Yes and no. The head of the U.S. Mission was always an American General with his own line of command, in charge of the Berlin Brigade and responsible for all military aspects of the Berlin operation; whereas the Deputy Chief of Mission was a senior Foreign Service Officer, who took care of Berlin's political and economic policy issues and reported both to the Embassy in Bonn and the State Department. It was, and by necessity, had to be a harmonious arrangement, in which good personal relations across complex organizational lines were essential if we were to handle Berlin's Byzantine issues and frequent crises effectively.

Q: Who were the key Foreign Service people at the Mission when you arrived?

JAEGER: The Deputy Chief of Mission was an American Minister, John Calhoun, a stylish, competent bachelor, who got on well with the military and had everyone's respect. His passion was music, which he indulged on free evenings at the 'Philharmonie', Berlin's brilliantly cantilevered post-war concert hall where Herbert von Karajan presided. His Deputy, Arthur Day, was a bright, tightly organized officer, who kept the Mission running on all cylinders - a major challenge even when Berlin was not in crisis-mode, which, as often as not, it was.

Q: Besides the Political Section, were there other staffs in the Mission?

JAEGER: Most, importantly, the Eastern Affairs Section, a separate political/economic unit which followed developments in the Soviet Sector of the city. It was headed by Frank Meehan, an experienced Eastern European hand, and included several bright staff members like Bill Woessner, whose wry sense of humor often made the harsh drabness of the East German world they focused on a bit less depressing. Even though they were limited, as far as I know, to published sources and had no human contacts on the other side, they often did remarkably interesting work teasing out shifts in GDR policy from the dense and dull pages of ‘Neues Deutschland’ and other official output.

There were also an Economic Section, which followed Berlin’s then somewhat precarious economic health; a consular section; a very active Public Affairs staff, including my friend, the then Press Officer John Brogan, and a Legal Advisor.

As for the less visible parts of the Mission, CIA’s famous Berlin station, I can only say that I had no working relationship with them, and had only a general idea where their office was located. We did, of course, get some of the intelligence output, although probably only a fraction of what was produced.

Q: Can you show us how all this machinery worked through the perspective of your own experience?

JAEGER: As I said earlier, my job was to stay on top of all issues and incidents involving our access routes to Berlin, as well as the incidents which continuously happened at the ‘Wall’. As a result a great deal of my work was conducted at night. A duty officer might call, let’s say at 2:30 in the morning, and report that some poor guy had tried to flee across the wall in our Sector, had been shot, and that there was a big flap in the area, police, klieg-lights, potential tension.

The first step was usually to inform the British and the French on the inter-Berlin network, the mechanism through which the three Western occupying powers kept each other up-to-date and through which we coordinated joint positions on an almost real-time basis. I would, at the same time, attempt to rouse somebody on the Soviet side and take whatever action within our own system was needed to assure coordination on the ground.

Q: You worked with the Soviets rather than with the East Germans?

JAEGER: Yes, but it was a continual battle since, every time one asked for the Soviet duty officer, or any Soviet military officer, one invariably got an East German major or colonel. Their idea was to undermine the Western position that Berlin’s quadripartite administration, established in post-war agreements, applied to the Soviet sector of Berlin as well as ours and that the Soviets, and not their East German puppet regime, were responsible for what happened there. This was just one of many fronts on which constant effort was required to preserve the Berlin agreements and all that flowed from them, making for a complex, precedent-based and legalistic relationship.

Q: Must have gotten quite frustrating at times.

JAEGER: Of course. The way it played out in practice, I would usually have to waste a great deal of time telling the East German on the other end of the line, that I was only authorized to speak to Soviet officers, and that it was very important I do so promptly if we were to avoid escalation of the issue, et cetera, et cetera. Sometimes the Soviet duty officer would consent to talk to me, listen to our report of what happened and accept our protest. But those were the exceptions. Usually they would simply not respond.

Once I got to the office in the morning, the formal paperwork would follow, more detailed inter-Berlin reports were transmitted of what had happened, and draft texts of protests were coordinated. When issues were more complex or important they would be put on the agenda of our frequent tripartite meetings with the British and the French before being presented to the Soviets in writing or at infrequent quadripartite meetings.

So, to sum up and get back to your earlier question, the Mission was not only our headquarters in the American Sector but an intrinsic part of the tripartite system which dealt with the problems created by the GDR and their Soviet overseers and, in a congenial and usually light-handed, way supervised the Berlin government in City Hall.

Q: Did you work on air access to Berlin. There were still occasional problems there during your time?

JAEGER: Actually air and rail access produced only very occasional problems. Most of my time was taken up by incidents on the Helmstadt Autobahn over which, under the post-war agreements, we had the right to transit the GDR with military convoys.

There were, of course, all kinds of incidents, retrieving broken-down military vehicles, getting military personnel released who had been arrested by the East Germans for some usually trumped-up offense, dealing with medical emergencies which would arise, etc. We were helped in all this by the fact that we had a fairly reliable call-in system enabling us to know where at any time a train or convoy was located.

Q: What was the most difficult problem of this sort you ever faced?

JAEGER: Believe it or not, the pesky issue of what constituted a 'convoy'. Over time a certain modus vivendi had developed under the quadripartite agreements on access, and western military convoys, the life-line for the American, British and French Brigades and all our other operations, traveled to Berlin routinely on the designated Autobahns. There were, of course, frequent 'incidents', as I have said, to harass us and keep us aware that we could be cut off at any time. Even so, when I arrived, convoys moved fairly reliably in both directions.

We then began to have trouble with what came to be known as 'small convoys', usually convoys of three or four jeeps. After being permitted to start down the Autobahn, they would be stopped somewhere and detained, forcing us into urgent efforts to get them released. It gradually became

clear that the Soviets agreed that a 'convoy' might involve twenty trucks, but drew the line at anything as small as three or four jeeps - a clearly theological distinction intended to irritate and assert their local dominance.

I spent an absolutely enormous amount of time on this. Every few days I would be awakened in the middle of the night by a military message saying that a small convoy of, say, four jeeps and a command car had been stopped on the autobahn somewhere in East Germany, that the East Germans would not let them continue, and could I please get them unstuck? Sometimes it sufficed to raise hell on the telephone with the other side, sometimes it had to be escalated to the highest levels in Berlin, and sometimes the issue had to be taken to Washington. At the same time we engaged the Soviets in negotiations aimed at getting them to agree that even four jeeps constituted a 'convoy'. After months of back and forth we finally worked it out, and I think I can lay claim to having done it. But it was a long, hard slog.

Q: That's typical Soviet behavior, trying to create issues where something wasn't precisely nailed down in agreement.

JAEGER: That's right. I still have a wonderful cartoon painted by one of my colleagues which they gave me when I left Berlin, showing me, St. George, standing on the neck of the writhing small convoy dragon, with Carson, Brandon Grove and others riding through a raised barrier on four jeeps, waving and saluting - while I modestly accept their accolades with my broken lance.

Q: Tell us about other major issues which arose during your time.

JAEGER: There are two others that are worth mentioning. The first came to be called "the Battle of Steglitz Station House," a typical cold war story which involved some important lessons for policy makers, and succeeded in averting a major crisis.

Q: Well that sounds meaty. Tell us about it.

JAEGER: West Berlin had for some time been building a circumferential highway to link the three western sectors of the city; since, as a result of Berlin's gradual economic recovery, it had become increasingly time-consuming to drive through the existing, often narrow streets, let's say, from the French sector in the West via the British Sector in the middle, to the American Sector on the south-eastern part of Berlin. As far as we were aware, work had been progressing without a hitch, and long sections of the new elevated circumferential could be seen awaiting final connection.

Then, one day, word came from City Hall, that they needed to meet with us to discuss a major problem. It turned out that West Berlin officials had known for several years that the circumferential, as designed, would have to cross the East German-owned 'S-Bahn' at Steglitz - a borough in the south-eastern part of West Berlin - and that it would have to pass directly over the Steglitz Station building, which, and there was the problem, was owned by the East Germans.

Why this was so, involves another bit of Berlin lore: In brief, although the U-Bahn was clearly an East-German rail system, it made a big loop from East Berlin into West Berlin and back and,

while passing across the three Western sectors, carried a large amount of local traffic. It had therefore been agreed years earlier, that the GDR would continue to operate this vital West Berlin segment and, besides being well paid for this service, would retain full ownership of all of the S-Bahn's rail and equipment, even though located in the Western Sectors.

Q: How had the Berlin officials hoped to get around this obstacle?

JAEGER: They told us sheepishly, that they had been in telex correspondence with the S-Bahn's officials for years, had offered them millions of Deutschmarks and all sorts of other goodies if they would allow them to move the Steglitz station house out of the way of the circumferential, but had been consistently brushed off. Now, things had reached the crisis point. The circumferential was within 50 yards on both sides of Steglitz station house, and the whole project had had to be stopped pending resolution of this question.

The good news was that the Berlin press had so far not yet twigged on this. But the Berlin officials were desperately afraid that they would, any moment, publish pictures of the two ends of the circumferential looming ridiculously over the gap occupied by the Steglitz Station and that Berlin's City Hall would have no credible explanation as to how or when this issue would be resolved. Even worse, the East Germans might never agree to let West Berlin close the Steglitz gap. The result, would not only be the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars for this high-visibility project, but a huge political fiasco for the Berlin Senat (the City Hall administration).

Clearly, Berlin's City Hall had been very foolish not to come to us much earlier.

Q: Quite a mess.

JAEGER: And it landed squarely on my desk. As things stood, it seemed obvious that more appeasement wouldn't work: The GDR didn't care about the money, but were stonewalling to make the West lose face. There was therefore only one way to deal with this, to show the East that we meant business.

I drafted a simple action plan, whose first step was a telex to the GDR Railway Administration presenting them with an ultimatum: If they agreed within 24 hours to our moving the Steglitz Station house the previous financial offers would be honored. If not, the Allied powers would simply remove it. To my delight and surprise, my telegram was cleared without a hitch and quickly approved in Washington, even though everyone understood that our ultimatum could precipitate another major Berlin crisis.

Q: Who had to approve this sort of message?

JAEGER: Besides my boss, the American Minister Mr. Calhoun, as well as the Berlin Commandant. In Washington, State, Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and probably the White House. Locally the plan was also coordinated with our Embassy in Bonn, as well as the British and the French.

Q: I see.

JAEGER: So the agreed strategy was: Let them know that they were now dealing with the Western Allies; give them one more chance to resolve things amicably; insist on a prompt, constructive reply; and, make it crystal clear that if we don't receive one by the stipulated time, we would move in unilaterally and simply take down the Steglitz station house.

Q: So how did it play out?

JAEGER: Well, it was a big show. On the appointed night American troops, as well as some British and French elements, were quietly deployed in the misty gloom of side streets, together with all sorts of heavy equipment, while Steglitz Station house was starkly illuminated and set off against the drizzly dark by glaring arc lights. All the tripartite brass was there, as well as the senior diplomatic people. Tension was running fairly high, since our telex had been sent to the GDR the evening before and, as expected, there had so far been no reply. The action - appropriately nicknamed "Nacht und Nebel Aktion" (Night and Fog Action) - was to begin at ten o'clock.

But just before ten there was a crisis. For just as the wrecking ball was about to swing into action, someone discovered that moving the complicated railway clock, which regulated U-Bahn traffic, across the track to the temporary platform we were constructing on the other side, was more challenging than the West Berlin railway techies had expected and, if mismanaged, would disrupt the whole system. As it turned out one of them knew the man in East Berlin who was the S-Bahn's expert on railway clocks. In a rather desperate 'Hail Mary' play, he called him on the S-Bahn's own service phone and told him, I thought quite implausibly, that he was making some repairs and asked if he could help!

To our huge relief, the East German bought the story and dutifully talked him through the process of disconnecting and reconnecting the clock; helping us avoid a huge public mess, since S-Bahn traffic through West Berlin needed to resume normally at 6 AM the next day. As it was, the big wrecking ball went into action only an hour or so later and, in short order, knocked down the station house.

Then it was a matter of waiting to see how the East Germans would react. It was not till a bit after midnight that an S-Bahn train arrived at top speed and screeched to a stop. Its only passenger was an East German General in full uniform. He got out, looked at the remains of the station house with obvious amazement and said, "What in hell are you people doing?"

Our senior people told him. The West had sent them endless messages. They had ignored them. They had been given an ultimatum, and had ignored that. We then went ahead, as we said we would.

The General, still looking bewildered, simply said, "Well, we were all wrong! None of us thought you'd have the guts to do this!" He then got back on his train and left. The next morning, the S-Bahn ran on schedule, as if nothing had happened!

Q: Well, that was quite a success, and must have shaken them up on the other side.

JAEGER: It did indeed. We learned through intelligence channels some months later, that there had been a major purge in the East German Railway Administration, as well as in some of their intelligence organizations. The bottom line was that they had assumed the West would chicken out and that they could win a propaganda victory by hanging tough. Instead we won.

Q: There some lessons to be drawn from this, no?

JAEGER: I have always thought so - and still have a small piece of one of the bricks from Steglitz station house on my desk in Vermont as a reminder that competent diplomacy sometimes does have to resort to force, but only when the cause is just, the game plan has been carefully thought through and one has done everything reasonably possible to avoid it.

Q: You mentioned there was another major issue which arose during you time in Berlin. What was that about?

JAEGER: This was about access by US diplomatic personnel to East Berlin. Since the West was trying to maintain the principle that Berlin was under quadripartite rule, the three Western allies asserted their right to be and to be seen in the Soviet Sector of Berlin, even after the Wall had gone up. Simply put we had a monthly schedule, under which our diplomatic people would be assigned to go to East Berlin to spend a few high-visibility hours having lunch or dinner, going to the opera, the Brecht theater, concerts, or museums. The idea was to get the word around in that drab, sealed-off, police-ridden Communist world that we were still there and would not go away.

I myself went over many times and often found these visits richly rewarding. I particularly remember one evening, when three or four of us went to have dinner at the Writers Club in East Berlin, where a little band usually played. As we came into the room the music stopped, and they began playing the theme song of the 'Bridge on the River Kwai', as we were being shown to our seats! The yearning for freedom was palpable. It was deeply moving.

A similar thing happened when my fiancé, Pat Clark and I went across to East Berlin toward the end of my tour. Among other things we went to the famous Berlin Zoo. When we came out we found a bouquet of fresh flowers on the windshield of my Volkswagen, which, of course had diplomatic license plates.

Q: Those were still grim times. But, how did your problem arise?

JAEGER: My boss, Jim Carson, thought it was important to rationalize some of the crusty and illogical Berlin procedures which had developed over time. One day the proposal surfaced, with his strong support, that instead of the prevailing system of showing identity cards as members of the U.S. Military Mission when we passed Checkpoint Charlie on trips to East Berlin, which had worked reliably, we should make clear who we are and produce new diplomatic identity cards, equivalent to diplomatic passports.

I thought from the outset that this was just asking for trouble. Since I was the political-military officer responsible for wall issues, and so directly involved, I argued in staff meetings that we were just offering the Soviets a pretext to cause difficulties. If something works, why fix it, particularly since this proposal would reopen basic questions.

Q: Wouldn't using diplomatic ID, or passports, have implied recognition of the Soviet Sector as part of an independent state? The quadripartite administration of Berlin was a military arrangement.

JAEGER: You have gone right to the heart of the matter. The thing was fraught with problems if the Soviets chose to make use of them.

So I argued against this project at length over a period of weeks, pointing out that we didn't need to create new Berlin crises where there weren't any and should just go on using the military ID cards to go to East Berlin as we had done for years.

Well, the Mission's decision went against me and the project was approved in Washington. New ID cards were printed identifying us as diplomatic officers, and messages were sent to the Soviets that we would henceforth be using these new IDs at Checkpoint Charlie. Since the Soviets did not promptly reply, Carson decided we should have a series of 'probes'. The first went fine. Our guy went to Checkpoint Charlie, was waved through and came back. No problem. Then six, eight, ten more people were sent to East Berlin with the new ID's, and all still went well. So one day, Carson came into my office dropped my new ID on my desk and said rather sarcastically, "Well, everybody else has got through OK. It should be safe enough now for you."

So I took my new diplomatic ID card, and drove to Check Point Charlie, where, it was instantly obvious, there was unusual activity. There were film cameras, people on roof tops, and more uniformed people than usual on the ground.

Q: They had reached a decision.

JAEGER: Yes. I nevertheless drove into the slot at Checkpoint Charlie, handed the guard my new ID card and was immediately told it was no good: "We only accept military cards. What's this?" I did my best to explain that I was a diplomatic member of the American Military Mission, and that this was my new diplomatic identity card, about which the Soviets had been informed. He said, "Not acceptable! Turn around and go back to where you came from!"

Our standard rule was that if we encountered a problem at the checkpoint, we would stay put as long as reasonable so as not to look as if we were turning tail. So I simply said, "No, I am entitled to go through!" and blocked Checkpoint Charlie by sitting in the slot for about twenty minutes - creating a major fuss.

Eventually somebody from the Western side came running over to me and said, "OK. You have made your point. The Mission wants you to turn around and come back."

When I walked into the Mission, there was a deathly silence in my section. The next morning a message came from Washington saying that the diplomatic ID experiment had clearly not worked and that we should go back to using our military cards.

Q: Well, the Soviets just took a while to react. And you were proven right.

JAEGER: Yes, but it was a pyrrhic victory. Carson's embarrassment came on top of several other unfortunate encounters - the worst of which occurred when I was the duty officer during a Command Post Exercise simulating an attack on our access routes and needed to have him come in. When reached at home, he was too inebriated to respond. None of this endeared me to him or helped my efficiency reports, which had a pretty negative undertone and suggested that I had a lot to learn.

Q: Did that hurt your career?

JAEGER: Not seriously, although it did delay my next promotion. Luckily, I must have developed a better reputation at the Embassy, since in early January 1967 I got a message from Martin Hillenbrand, the Deputy Chief of Mission, saying that he'd like me to come to Bonn to work on our negotiations with Germany on the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the FRG's relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union! This was a wonderful break, which opened a whole new future.

Q: Well, that's a happy ending. Before we go on to Bonn can we round out the Berlin story with a bit of atmospherics. What were the Brandt years like, and how was your personal life there in what was clearly a difficult assignment?

JAEGER: Berlin, even in the sixties was an exciting city, for all kinds of the reasons: There was the Berliners' sharp, aggressive humor, their "Schnauze", or 'big mouth', which kept up spirits even in the glummiest times; their conviction that, even though the West Berlin economy was limping, and much of the place was still grey and run down, they were holding their own; and that the troubles on our Western side were as nothing compared to the misery of the fear-ridden regimented people in East Berlin and in the GDR. There was West Berlin's lively cultural scene, its bustling cabarets, excellent theater, and above all Herbert von Karajan's magisterial concerts at the Philharmonie, Berlin's new cantilevered concert hall. Last, but not least, there was the political presence of Willy Brandt, Berlin's extraordinary mayor during the first part of my tour.

Together with his long-time advisor, and Berlin Press Secretary, Egon Bahr, Brandt had cautiously pointed the way to a less confrontational future, with his slogan of 'Wandel durch Annäherung', or 'change through rapprochement'. Its central theses were first presented in Egon Bahr's famous speech before the Tutzinger Academy, rejecting the 'Hallstein Doctrine', which had argued that only pressure and isolation would bring the East German state to collapse. Instead, Brandt, who was both Berlin mayor until 1966 and head of the SPD, and Bahr called for a policy of 'little steps' to induce change in East Germany through detente as a way station to his new concept of two German states in one nation. When he became Foreign Minister in Kiesinger's Grand Coalition in 1966 he was better able to advance these views, but had to remain restrained, given the CDU's and most of the Allies' Cold War thinking. Eventually, however, Brandt

prevailed and provided the basis, once he was Chancellor, for the 1971 Four Power Agreement on Berlin, and the Basic Treaty signed by the two Germanys in 1972.

Q: How did Brandt's views affect work at the US Mission while you were there?

JAEGER: Actually not a lot. As Mayor Brandt had succeeded in arranging for a limited number of passes, enabling divided families to see each other occasionally. And Brandt, or Bahr made occasional forward-looking statements outlining their views. But, in the main, things were still frozen in solid Cold War confrontation. Brandon Grove, who did the liaising at City Hall, worked mostly with Brandt's aide Stoltenberg. The issues he reported on were usually technical and rarely fundamental. In fact few, on our side foresaw the enormous role Brandt's 'Ostpolitik' would soon play in changing the whole east-west equation.

Q: And how did you fare personally in all this? Were there any bright spots?

JAEGER: Of course. I spent wonderful evenings listening to Karajan, enjoyed exploring Berlin, both east and west, gave talks to groups of students at the Freie Universität, the Free University, which was already stressed by the sometimes violently rebellious attitudes of the sixties, and learned a great deal about the whole range of German issues.

Even so, Berlin was a confining experience. And the relentless killing and maiming on the wall, and the continuing pressures on our access routes, sometimes got to me. I particularly remember one winter evening when things had not been going well. The somber pine tree outside my apartment window, dripping with cold rain, seemed to embody the essence of the darkness we were all caught up in.

I did the smart thing, and went to see whom I might phone to cheer me up. In paging through my little black book, Pat Clark jumped out, the lovely, bright blond girl I had met briefly on Mykonos on a leave after my tour in Zagreb. We had only had a coffee together, in the bright morning sunlight of that enchanted island - not yet destroyed by cruise ships and mass tourism. But she had come to see my ship off that evening when I had to go back to Athens, and I still remember her standing on the dock and waving as we steamed off into the Aegean sunset!

So I phoned Pat in Brussels, where she was working, and asked if she would like to have dinner the next night, a Saturday. She seemed delighted, as was I. So I got on the US troop train which rattled across the GDR that night, went on to Brussels and found Pat unchanged, just as I had remembered.

We celebrated at a glorious dinner at 'Comme Chez Soi', the three star restaurant, which Churchill, Monet and many others had thought the best in Europe. As the kind, old, red-nosed waiter brought second and third helpings of 'mousse de becasse' through the narrow swinging doors of the venerable restaurant, with its green leather banquettes facing each other in a space not much wider than a diner, and we drank the first of what, over the years, would be many bottles of 'Domaine du Chevalier '55', Berlin fell away from me, and I knew that I had finally come home.

RAYMOND ELLIS BENSON
Branch Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Hamburg (1965-1968)

Raymond Benson was born in New York City in 1924. He served in the U.S. Army between WWII and the Korean War. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin and attended the Russian Institute at Columbia University. He joined the United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1957. His overseas posts include, Zagreb, Belgrade, Hamburg, Turkey, and Moscow. Mr. Benson was interviewed by Robert Daniels in 2000.

Q: After that tour in Norfolk, you went overseas again.

BENSON: After that tour in Norfolk, I went back to Washington for a summer's intensive German. I had used German in my research--we talked of that--but they wanted me to be conversational. It had been years before, so I went through all that, and then went on to Hamburg, arriving in August of 1965.

Q: How did they happen to send you to Germany with your East European expertise?

BENSON: Well, Germany was bellied up against East Europe, and there were certain cities which were very much involved, Berlin being one and Hamburg being one. And to Hamburg I went. It's a stone's throw from Hamburg to the border with East Germany. Now, the territory of the Consul General, therefore, of the public affairs officer, USIS, was enormous. It stretched from Holland across the sea to Denmark to the Schleswig-Holstein, the capital Kiel, and Hamburg and Bremen, which were free cities, and Lower Saxony down to Hanover, which was a branch post run by an American. It was an enormous territory.

Q: Did you get into East Germany at all in the course of that job?

BENSON: No, I did not. We visited Berlin. I did not get into East Germany. East Germany played a great role, you might say, at that time in how my career developed. East Germany began the--what was the name of the East German newspaper; it might have been the Neues Deutschland, I can't recall now--but they began a series of articles in 1967 on who was who in the CIA. It became finally a book, Who Is Who in the CIA [Ed: published in 1968]. The very first article that they wrote in that series; this is 1967, it was very early September--was on four individuals who were serving in West Germany who were, according to them, important agents of the CIA, and, by golly, they had all served in Yugoslavia.

Q: Including you?

BENSON: Including me. I was the first one. Jerry Livingston was in Berlin, and--I forget his first name--Geesa was in Frankfurt, and Yeager, George Yeager, was in, I think, Bonn. We had all been in Yugoslavia. Geesa was a graduate of the military academy, was a retired Army

officer, so he was suspicious. You asked me last time who was serving in Yugoslavia when I was there who could be called a Yugoslav expert, and I did not mention Terry Livingston, who had a higher degree based in good part on research in Yugoslavia. He came to Yugoslavia a year after I left, 1953 to 1954, as a graduate student, and while I served in Belgrade; he was the labor attaché and had contacts with economic, banking, and labor officials.

In any event, this article was published very much at the same time that one of our officers was expelled from Moscow in one of those tit-for-tat deals, and it was then felt at the Agency that I could not even begin to aspire to serve in Moscow. Now, how did all this come up? Dick Davies, the Foreign Service Officer of the State Department, was a loan officer, if you will, in USIA and was in charge of the East European/Soviet area. We had lunch. He had heard a paragraph's worth of my background. He said, "We really have to try to get you to the Soviet Union somehow," and I went off to Hamburg. In 1967 we were vacationing at the beach north of (Leonardo da Vinci-) Fiumicino Airport in Focene, and I got a call from the embassy in Rome saying that there was an eye's only telegram for me. So I dashed in to see what it was, and it was from Dick Davies. He said that Francis Mason had flunked his physical after a year of Russian. He had a congenital eye problem, and the medical officers would not allow him to go to Moscow, and they would want very much to send me. This would have been as cultural affairs officer. And what can I tell them about my father's being alive or not? They had the file there and they had all the rest. So I wrote back and I said, "I know nothing beyond what you have in the file and probably not all of that. I don't know if he is still alive." In fact, he had been dead for three years, but we'll come to that later. I didn't know that at this time. He sent me a message, "We'll be back on line on this channel when I get to Hamburg." By the time I got to Hamburg, the series in the Neues Deutschland, the major East German political daily, had begun. One of our guys had been thrown out of the Soviet Union. It was a tit-for-tat thing. So, USIA decided to leave me alone. The last word from Dick Davies was, "When you come back after Hamburg on your tour of duty" --which had already been decided would be in Washington-- "let's have another lunch and talk about it." And it was because of that meeting with him, because of his advice, because of the way he handled it all that I got to the Soviet Union, but, again, we will come to that in chronological sequence. He played a vital role in my career, in my life.

Q: And what was Davies' position at that time?

BENSON: He was the head of what we call the geographic area in USIA for Soviet and East Europe.

Q: On loan from the State Department.

BENSON: Yes. He was later the ambassador in Poland. He was a Soviet hand. He knew Russian very well.

Q: So after Hamburg you were called back to Washington to run research at the USIA? How did that move come to pass?

BENSON: Well, I had a good record and the confidence of the public affairs officers in Bonn who were writing my personnel assessment report, the evaluation report, every year. It was time

to have a Washington tour. I had been in the Research Service before. It was not exactly relevant to the new assignment, but maybe we should backtrack and cover my very fiery tour of duty in Hamburg.

Q: In respect to the East Germans' attack on you?

BENSON: No, no, no, it wasn't that. It was in regard to the Vietnam War. Our library was fire bombed by the radical students. The American flag was torn down in front of the Hamburg Information Center, which was a huge library. This would have been probably 1966. See, the bombing had begun in 1965, and there were two groups. Mind you, this building was the property of the University of Hamburg. It was a block and a half from the university on the Moorweide near the university, a short walk from the consulate, and it was a huge library and had many reading rooms, and the students used it a lot for their work. But they began to break up our lectures. You know, the German USIA program was exemplary. There would be lectures on aspects of American life, American history, American culture. They were very much open to the public. There were not canned prepared by somebody in Washington and given by anybody with a voice. We used American scholars, who were always there in great numbers. We would invite them, visiting scholars or resident scholars, senior graduate students, and we gave some of our own, of course. I gave some. But they would come in in 1966 with cries of "Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh, Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh" popping up in various corners of the auditorium, obviously quite planned. It became impossible to hold public lectures. Fascinating, and it says a great deal about West Germany, that the important student groups, two of them, the Jugendunion and there was another one. One was affiliated with the Evangelische Kirche, the Lutheran Church, and the other one was, let's say, more secular, if you will, more socialist, and they were in the forefront, the activists from these groups were in the forefront, of those who would break up our meetings, and perhaps the more radical of them threw the Molotov cocktails through our windows and so on.

When we went, or our program people went, to these organizations and said, "But you're really forestalling all discourse on this important issue," they said, "That's the last thing in the world we want to do." And we said, "Well, how in heaven's name are we going to square the circle if you break up our meetings?" They said, "Well, let's have weekend seminars," and that's what we did. We were busy beyond belief for the years when we could not any longer have public lectures. In running weekend, by invitation only, seminars in the various inns and country homes that surround Hamburg and Kiel, and these were splendid and they were good and they were open.

Q: Who were the attendees of these seminars?

BENSON: The attendees were those who came--they were Germans--who came from the bodies of these organizations.

Q: Actually the protestors?

BENSON: You got it. It was extraordinary, and I say it speaks well for Germany.

Q: So they closed down your public lectures, come one/come all, but they were willing to come on a select basis and hear your message?

BENSON: They were eager, not only willing. We had a very active program director at the America House who was himself a socialist, left leaning, and who had many, many contacts over the years with these organizations and who organized these. We had them all over the place.

Q: Was the experience of other posts in Germany similar to yours with the Vietnam trouble?

BENSON: It was similar to ours in phase two. I don't think they were fire bombed. Berlin was tough.

Q: Well, the Free University was the hotbed of the new left student movement.

BENSON: Yes, you got it. Berlin was terrible. Other places had troubles, and they had very active student groups. Frankfurt was bad. They were all not good on the Vietnam War. It was, I should say, a watershed anyway in attitudes toward the United States.

Q: Was this more or less simultaneously with Willy Brandt and Ostpolitik, or did he come a little bit later in the 1970s?

BENSON: Well, I think he came a little later, *kleine schritten*, little steps. I think he came a little later. [Ed: Willy Brandt was chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1969 to 1974.]

Q: As we continue flashbacks, you were going to say something more about your time in Hamburg in the 1965-1968 period. What did we view particularly about the Consul General at the time?

BENSON: The first Consul General I cannot remember. I think I may have said this already. I will get his name and we'll put in the record. He was interesting in my experience for one thing. He was there only briefly. He had been a teacher at Monmouth Junior College. It was an evening school at that time; it's now Monmouth University, of which I am a graduate having gone evenings while working on the farm. We had this bond, but he wasn't there for long. He was replaced *ad interim* by his deputy, Walter Marx, who was an unusual man in the Foreign Service or anywhere. He was a stalwart of the Catholic Workers Movement. The movement started in New York during the Depression. They had various farms in northern New York where they took in poor people and they produced foods which were given to Catholic parishes. It's all a product of the early 19th century.

Q: These were sort of communistic communities or communes, 'communistic' with a small 'c'.

BENSON: They were definitely that, and Walter Marx--a great, big, tall, craggy fellow--used to write columns for the Catholic Worker, which newspaper you might have seen in your days around. What he was doing in the Foreign Service I do not know, but there he was. He was a gorgeous man, replaced by Coburn Kidd. Coburn Kidd had really a great influence on me. He was also, as so many people in the Foreign Service were, an unusual man. He had a Ph.D. in

Anglo-Saxon literature from St. Andrews, went back to the States, during which time, mind you, he spent, I think, a year or two studying--did we say this already on the record?--in Freiburg studying philosophy. He became a lawyer. He worked on Wall Street. And he joined the OSS. What he did was involved with Germany somehow. He was then in the Foreign Service, and he worked with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in his outer office in his early career. They might have met on Wall Street for all I know. But Coburn was a man of great charm when you got to know him. His special interest was bawdy lyrics of medieval England, which he could recite in Scottish accent or English. The man, with only one lung and emphysema in the other, who inhaled cigars, retired to New Hampshire and died close to 80, all of that.

But there is one incident which was quite personal to me but which was still of interest to the Consulate General which occurred something like this: When George McGhee, then the Ambassador in Bonn [Ed: McGhee served from May 1963 to May 1968.], visited in Hamburg--he used to visit the consulates general sequentially--very elaborate preparations were made. It was scripted as if the Secretary of State were visiting. When he came--and he would call on the leading editors and he would do various things in town which affected my work in USIS. Coburn said, "You must attend these meetings, all of them"--in fact, I had to set them up--"and I want you to take notes, and I want you to write memoranda of conversation." So off I went with George McGhee. Most of his calls in Hamburg, which was the press center of Germany, as you know--Axel Springer and the tabloid Bild was there. Die Zeit was there. At that time Gerd Bucerius was the editor. Henry Naunen did Der Stern and (Rudolf) Augstein edited Der Spiegel, and Springer had his whole family of newspapers. So at the end of the visit, I had loads of notes, and Coburn said, "Come on over, and let's talk about it." He was there by the fire in his dressing gown--this is how one dressed in those days--with scotch on the rocks, and he said, "Let me see your notes." So I showed him my notes. I had, in fact, memoranda of conversation, handwritten. So he read these. He paused halfway through and he said, "Have you written many memcons?" And I said, "No, there are my first." He said, "How did you get through Yugoslavia with that record you have, back-to-back promotions and all of that, without doing any memcons!" I said, "Well, I don't know. Nobody asked for them. I did write some telegrams and so on, their oral briefings." He said, "Memcons are the very basis of our work. I'll tell you what. We'll talk about this in the office tomorrow." This was Sunday evening. "After the staff meeting come and see me." We had something like a 9:30 am staff meeting.

There was a huge staff in Hamburg, so the meeting room had a great big table. Coburn Kidd was at one end of the table, and he distributes two stacks of papers, one on one side of the table going all the way around and one on the other side going all the way around. He never referred to me once. He said, "There's something I should have done. I haven't done it. Forgive me, but we're going to do it now. The memcon is the basic document in any diplomatic office whether it's in Washington, and there is a way of writing it and there is a way you mustn't write it." And he offered several basic principles, one of which is that nobody cares what you say. That was never my fault in the memorandum of conversation with George McGhee, because I played no role, I was merely a notetaker. "What one cares about in a memcon is what the other person said. That's why you're having this meeting. And your views should be reflected in what that other person is saying, not directly through quoting what you said. Unless you're defending the honor of the queen or something like that, no one gives a hoot what you say. Now," he said, "Mark Twain visited Germany several times, and what I have done for you is to have hypothesized

conversations that Mark Twain had while he was in Germany and which he wrote up in the form of memcons.” Now remember, these were done the night before, after I left him.

These were written as though Mark Twain was visiting somebody or other, you know. Two of us, one of my old friends and me, were at that meeting, and we saved these for years. Both have lost them. And they were gorgeous. They were witty, they were to the point of what Mark Twain would be expected to have discussed with a burgomaster and so on. I met him in the office afterward, and I said, “Thank you for not having mentioned my name.” He said, “It was totally unnecessary. You get the point.” I said, “I get the point.” He said, “Do you think you can write some memcons based on your notes?” I said, “I think so.” He said, “Do it.” I said, “I’ll do it fast,” and I did, and I learned, and I became a great memcon writer, and thank him for it.

IRVING SABLOSKY
Amerika Haus Director, USIS
Hamburg (1965-1968)

Irving Sablosky was born in Indiana in 1924. He graduated from Indiana University in 1947 and served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1945. His postings abroad have included Seoul, Cebu, Hamburg, Bangkok and London. Mr. Sablosky was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2000.

Q: You were in Hamburg from 1965 to when?

SABLOSKY: 1965 to 1968.

Q: Could you talk about how you saw Hamburg at that time, and what the German/American relations were in that area?

SABLOSKY: Hamburg, is a north German capitol, very close to England. English is very widely spoken. It is different from the rest of Germany, in many respects, and proud of it. They were proud to being the last major city to be taken over by Hitler. At this point, the Hamburgers were very receptive to American presence. Hamburg, of course, was the second city in Germany... I think I mentioned before about the second city complex... Hamburg was greatly affected by the division of Germany. Though the “Oder-Neisse Line” lay about 30 miles east of Hamburg, it effectively cut off Hamburg’s commerce on the Elbe River. The greatness of the port had diminished, and Hamburg was feeling it. Anyway, the great shipping companies were there. Hamburg University was very important there. An important contact there was Fritz Fischer, the professor of German History who was controversial at the time because he was the first to raise the idea that Germany was at fault for World War I. I got to know Fritz Fischer a little bit. Another was Guenther Moltmann, who was doing American studies at the University of Hamburg. He was a very fine man. One project we had at the Amerika Haus at that time was to try to get instituted by the education ministry or office a curriculum in American studies for the Gymnasium - that would be upper high school, not just in Hamburg, also in the surrounding territory, but mainly in Hamburg. We had some luck with that, actually. There was a very fine

German national employee of ours, Rheinhard Kapishke, who worked very hard on this, and he had very good contacts in education circles. We helped the education department fashion and distribute a new curriculum in American studies, which had not existed before at that level. Those who go to the Gymnasium are most likely going to university and possibly lead the country in the future.

Q: Well, one of the gaps in European education that has been pointed out has been American studies. The United States has been terribly important to Europe. Most Americans who reach leadership roles have gotten a pretty solid dose of European history, whether it sticks or not, is another thing, but this is true in any course. But, the Europeans often don't really get much about American history. So, they are trying to understand us from a rather frail base.

SABLOSKY: That is exactly right. What happened, generally, around that time at European universities was that American Literature was taught as part of English Literature. There would be an English Literature department, and some American Literature was attached to that. American History hardly it all, only as it related to the literature. So, you hoped to get a rounded curriculum in American History, Literature, Politics, even Geography.

Q: Did you find that you were in competition with the British Council at all?

SABLOSKY: Not really in competition. Of course, the British Council was teaching English. It was a very active program, it had resources beyond ours. The Amerika Haus had a fine library and a wonderful clientele, mostly of university students. We were right across the street from the University of Hamburg campus. It was well trafficked, so we had lectures, of course, and exhibits. The British Council did similar work, and we worked closely together. The head of the British Council, and I, and the French cultural representative and the Italian - the four of us would have lunch together every once in a while. We were all in the same business, and worked together very well.

Q: I would imagine that the Hamburg cultural life would be quite rich, wasn't it?

SABLOSKY: Oh, yes. The Hamburg Staatsoper was one of the best in the country, featuring at that time, 16 major American singers - Tatiana Troyanos was there, Arlene Saunders, Jeanette Scovotti, Richard Cassilly... There were some very good and very valued American singers there at that time. In fact, we arranged a recital at the Amerika Haus to show them off. They appeared in pairs - joint recitals. They were glad to do that for the Amerika Haus at no fee. They just did it for their country's sake. The programs were very well received.

Q: This was a period, wasn't it, when an American opera singer... to get solid work and to develop their repertoire would find that particularly Germany was the place to go.

SABLOSKY: Yes, at that time, there were something like 600 American singers in German opera houses. Of course, there is an opera house on every corner in Germany. But, they got to love the American singers because they were very well trained, and were willing to work, often harder than German singers. Once the German singers were in the opera company, they were civil servants, and tended to coast. The Americans didn't become... few were actually appointed

as civil servants. They were the younger singers. They were getting started. They were learning new roles, and they worked harder at it than the German singers did. So they were highly valued.

Q: 1965 to 1968 was at the height of the civil rights movement in the United States. How was that playing in Germany? I mean, were you working on that?

SABLOSKY: Yes, we certainly were. There was a lot of interest in it. We didn't address it really, but allowed it to show. James Baldwin, for instance, came through Hamburg on his own and we had a reception for him at the Amerika Haus. He was somebody who had to be presented in the Amerika Haus. We were honoring James Baldwin, and giving access to him. He spoke freely. Even radical Americans, when they are abroad, are suddenly more consciously American, and proud of it. Baldwin was not an exception. He was not crazy about the civil rights situation in the United States, but he did recognize that it was happening. Patricia Roberts Harris came through also. It wasn't exactly easy to see that she was black, but she passed for black. She lectured for us at the Amerika Haus.

Q: She had been a professor and was an ambassador, and a member of the cabinet, I think, at one time.

SABLOSKY: I don't know that she was actually in the cabinet.

Q: But, she had a fairly high position.

SABLOSKY: She was a lawyer, and she spoke about the American judicial system, and of course, got into Civil Rights. What happened at these lectures often was that there would be a general, or even a very specific subject of the lecture, and in the question period, anything might come up. If it was a black lecturer, of course, the Civil Rights movement came up. As the years went on, the Vietnam War came up more and more, though we did not program directly on the Vietnam War, a question arose and was discussed often in our programs, not only in Hamburg, but in outlying towns in which we held programs as well.

Q: How did you find the German media in... What is the main paper, is it Die Welt?

SABLOSKY: Die Welt is published in Berlin, but it had a Hamburg edition, and Die Zeit was the weekly. It was published in Hamburg.

Q: Was your job to monitor the press?

SABLOSKY: We certainly kept track of it. Ray Benson, the Public Affairs officer in Hamburg had that primary responsibility. I was responsible for the Amerika Haus the public programs there. Ray and his staff were doing most of the monitoring.

Q: Ray is up in Vermont now. I talked with him about a week ago. I'm getting a professor at the University of Vermont to interview him.

SABLOSKY: That's great. That's perfect. Ray would have the story, all of his history in

Yugoslavia and Russia, is invaluable. He is so articulate.

Q: His parents were communists. They took him to Russia as a kid, and then left.

SABLOSKY: The father stayed there, and the mother brought him back. Ray is a fountain of information. He has total recall, and he is very articulate. That will be a very good contribution to your program, I'm sure. He was the Public Affairs officer in Hamburg at the time I was there.

Q: What was your impression of the Amerika Hauser in Germany? What role were they playing during the mid-1960s?

SABLOSKY: The numbers were being reduced by the time I left Hamburg. At that time there were nine left of the original 30, I believe. A number of the rest had become bi-national centers, called German-American Institutes. They were run and financed by the Germans. We furnished books for the library. In some cases, the American director remained in the Amerika Haus. I think they played a very important role. They were a center mainly for the university students, and some of the upper high school students. For Germans, this was a source of information about the United States. One thing that impressed them maybe more anything was our shelf of periodicals. We had periodicals of every shade, from left to right, in American politics, and literature, whatever. The fact that these were open shelf, American-style libraries was a new concept to the Germans, and the variety of periodicals which were offered, with no regard to whether they were for or anti-government, was a demonstration of American democracy, for sure, and openness.

Q: Were you just letting people know about America or were people coming over and using the library for all sorts of things, including getting more information about Physics, and that sort of thing?

SABLOSKY: Well, our libraries were limited in that sense. They wouldn't really find an extensive collection on Physics in our libraries. Our libraries were mainly about the United States. We did have the Encyclopedia Britannica and Americana, but it was a library about the United States. That is what they came here for. They were curious about the United States, and they wanted to be informed about it. The journalists used it too for background research. They trusted it. It certainly was not a slanted library. It was a real library.

Q: Did the Soviets have an equivalent organization in Hamburg?

SABLOSKY: No, they did not.

Q: What about English training? Was that left to the British Council?

SABLOSKY: We didn't do English language training in Hamburg, or Germany at all, as far as I knew. The German American Institute, the former Amerika Haus often had English teaching as part of their curriculum, but we did not do that.

Q: What was your impression of the University of Hamburg? Did it rest somewhere, at least in

the political spectrum, right, left? What sort of activity was going on at the university?

SABLOSKY: My impression is that it was a very high level of scholarship, certainly highly regarded among the German universities. It was very strong in Science, and finance, I believe. Also, because the kind of city that Hamburg was. I would say that the faculty I knew tended to be a little to the left. There was a lot of Marxist type thinking in the German universities at the time, but not communism. Marxist from the academic standpoint and the philosophical approach to economics, mainly. The Vietnam War did become a factor in the last year I was there. We hadn't really had any friction on it, until then. Late in my time there, I would go out and lecture, in, say, Lüneburg, 30 miles from Hamburg. We would go to a youth group affiliated with the social-democratic labor unions (the DGB). My lecture was on the history of American jazz, which attracted a lot of interest there. That was one of the advantages I had in lecturing. But, the question period was about Vietnam. That happened a number of times when I was lecturing on something completely different, but the questions were about Vietnam. I carried a number of Dean Rusk official statements and would quote from them.

Q: You left there in 1968, and whither?

SABLOSKY: In 1968, I came back to Washington. Let me just mention one thing about the Vietnam War. During my last weeks of my stay in Hamburg, we had an incident. We were presenting a lecture by an American who was with the German radio in Berlin, RIAS, the radio in the free sector of Berlin. He was coming over to lecture in German on NATO, the North Atlantic Alliance. He was supposed to be fairly scholarly. It was a technical lecture. The police warned us ahead of time that a student group planned a demonstration against our role in Vietnam. They were going to break up the lecture. They suggested that we might be wise to call the program off.. Well, I didn't want to be buffaloed. Ray Benson and I discussed it and decided we would go ahead with it. The police asked us what we wanted them to do if something happened. We assured them that we could handle it. The students who came to these lectures were a faithful public and they would help us, and it would be okay. One of the thoughts in my mind was that I didn't want to have pictures in the newspapers of police carrying students out of the Amerika Haus. So, what happened was that I got up to introduce the speaker. Mind you, it was not on the subject of Vietnam at all. I started to introduce the speaker and heckling started from about 10 people in the audience of 150. They also had bottles of champagne and they started popping the corks, just making a racket. I pleaded for silence so that we could go on with the program, and if they wanted to discuss something, this was a democratic institution, and we certainly were open to any kind of open discussion, but let's give the speaker a chance to give his lecture, then we can discuss anything you want. They wouldn't stop. It was obvious that the thing couldn't go on, so I finally called it off, at that point, on the spot. I apologized to the people who really wanted to stay and hear the lecture. We called it quits for the evening.

Q: What was the audience's reaction?

SABLOSKY: Most of the audience wanted to hear the lecture. They were kind of disgusted. I think that was the main reaction. They left quietly. I have to say that one of the most rewarding aspects of my tour in Hamburg was the chance to associate with some of the younger generation of Germans. Many were quite outstanding, and it was interesting to find that many consciously

thought of themselves not as Germans first but as Europeans - some turned to a European identity really as an alternative to German nationalism, which they found unsympathetic. It was an attitude that was new to me at the time.

BRANDON GROVE
US Liaison Officer
West Berlin (1965-1969)

Brandon Grove Jr. was born in Chicago in 1929 and lived in Hamburg, Germany at the time of Hitler's rise to power. Before Germany invaded Poland, his father was transferred to Holland and later to Madrid in 1940. He attended Fordham University and later Bard College and Princeton University. His Foreign Service career took him to such places as the Ivory Coast, India, West Berlin, and Jerusalem as well as an ambassadorship to Zaire. Ambassador Grove was interviewed by Thomas Stern in 1994.

GROVE: Back in Washington after serving in India, I sought out Elwood Williams III on the German desk, and we soon became soulmates. He was the State Department's renowned expert on German affairs, with an encyclopedic knowledge of the US relationship. Personnel assignments to policy positions required his tacit approval. Rarely have I known a wiser, more thoughtful or generous man with his counsel. I was among many colleagues in the "German Club" who felt privileged to guide his wheelchair, to which he was confined with multiple sclerosis, into the cafeteria for lunch.

In the spring of 1965, the State Department assigned me to the Foreign Service Institute for a three month German language refresher course. The Institute was still housed in the infamous Arlington Towers garage in Rosslyn. My German did not come back as easily as I had hoped, because what I remembered was the vocabulary, grammar, and phrasing of a nine year old boy living for a while in pre-war Hamburg. In Berlin I would find myself suddenly against a linguistic wall, unable to find the right German word. A child's world does not include phrases like "value added tax."

In reading recently published transcripts of deliberations in the cabinet room secretly taped by President Kennedy during the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962, I am struck to see how closely everyone's assessments and decisions were affected by the situation in Berlin, whose four-power status was being challenged anew by Khrushchev. In a call on the president in the early stages of the Cuban crisis, Foreign Minister Gromyko characterized the Western military presence in Berlin as a "rotten tooth that must be pulled out." Kennedy and his advisers believed Khrushchev would move on Berlin following a US response to the Soviet missiles positioned ninety miles off our shores. He did not do so, but West Berlin remained a tinder box NATO feared would touch off World War III. My first assignment to Berlin began a little more than two years after the Cuban missile threat was defused by a calm and clear-thinking president, and four years after the East Germans built their wall. Throughout, Berlin remained the great diplomatic issue of the Cold War.

Nearly everyone traveled to Berlin by air. Leaving Tempelhof Airport, you found yourself in a unique environment ninety miles within East Germany, and were soon aware of the Allied military presence and its role. West Berlin had three military sectors, the US, British and French. East Berlin was the fourth, legally occupied by the Soviets and distinct from the others. It was a grim city in many ways, although Berliners are a resilient people. I still think of the man in the street as the "Irish" of the Germans, with his good humor, fatalism, and Berlin brogue.

In 1965, the city bore scars of the war beyond its pock-marked buildings. One in three Berliners was a woman over 45, an indication of the loss of men in the war and the aging of the population. Young men from the Federal Republic, however, came to Berlin to avoid military service. Below the surface, Berlin was always tense. The wall separating West and East Berlin had been erected four years earlier, on August 13, 1961, giving rise to frequent shooting incidents which were shocking and depressing. What kind of Germans were on the other side, people wondered.

We lived at 54 Thielallee in Dahlem, in the American sector of Berlin, in a pre-war villa whose garden of fruit trees and shrubs bordered a quiet park. Our children attended the American school, and were happy there. In many ways, life with a big PX and commissary was easy, yet we could not shake off feelings of remoteness and menace. I have served at no post, including in the middle of Africa, where people were more conscious of their isolation. We felt we lived on a fortress island in the midst of a red sea, the German Democratic Republic, surrounded by Soviet armed forces. There were three ways in and out: the *Autobahn* highway, military train, and air corridors. The first was subject to tight, formal Soviet--and *de facto* East German--control; the second and third were also subject to Soviet interdiction. There was constant tension between the Allies and East Germans over the Soviet role at the crossing points. The East Germans attempted to control access to Berlin in efforts to create what would amount to an international frontier around West Berlin.

Berlin was a place where American forces were welcome and respected, even during the Vietnam War. Americans were *primus inter pares* among the occupying powers. The Berlin airlift in 1948, Kennedy's resolve in confronting Khrushchev over Cuban missiles, and countless other acts of support created a deep affection for Americans. "*Ich bin ein Berliner*," JFK had ungrammatically stated, and Berliners loved him for saying so.

The Allied commitment to Berlin guaranteed the freedom of the city's western sectors and kept Soviet forces in East Berlin on their side of the wall. The Allies were referred to as "occupying" powers, but in the west, beyond the three aging Nazi inmates in Spandau Prison, there was no one for them to subdue. Their civil role was largely symbolic, but it was no less indispensable for that. In military terms, the Berlin brigades served as a trip-wire, should the Soviets move their forces westward toward the Fulda Gap. West Berlin could have been overrun in hours. The symbolism and trip-wire mattered, therefore, and the Allied commandants held their parades and maneuvers and cultivated good relations in the city with this in mind. It was widely believed, including by the Soviets, that a third world war would likely start over Berlin.

Berlin's legal status was thus always a concern. In 1969, for example, the West German parliament decided to hold a meeting in West Berlin for the first time. The Allies had serious reservations about this prospect and the Soviets were opposed, claiming it inappropriate to the occupied status of West Berlin. We, in turn, did not like the fact the *Volkskammer*, the East German parliament, met all the time in East Berlin. West German legislators felt that if their eastern counterparts could meet in Berlin, the West German parliament should be able to do the same. To complicate matters, the Allies did not recognize any competencies of the Federal Republic in Berlin. Bonn's proposal was a departure from the *status quo*, whose maintenance was regarded by the Allies as a near-sacred obligation. We were able to quash the idea, although a few individual parliamentarians traveled to West Berlin and "committee meetings" were tolerated. This was not the only instance in which the three Western powers and the Soviets saw eye-to-eye, even if for different reasons. Each Allied mission in Berlin had a legal adviser on its staff, as did their embassies in Bonn, a highly unusual arrangement at foreign service posts dictated by the intricacies of the legal aspects of a four-power presence in post-war Germany. I served with Marten H.A. van Heuven and his successor, Arthur T. Downey. Both were skilled and thoughtful lawyers and each had, in ways that differed markedly in personal style, a thorough appreciation of the political context of our presence in Berlin at a time when its governing mayor, Willy Brandt, was developing his *Ostpolitik*. The smallest steps affecting Allied-Soviet relations assumed legal dimensions in terms of past agreements and current responsibilities.

In the late 1960's, Rudy Dutschke led a student movement in Berlin of major proportions fueled by the war in Vietnam and a narcissistic mood of nihilism. A similar uprising in Paris was inspired in 1968 by Daniel Cohen-Bendit, who battled the police, brought on a general strike in solidarity, and indirectly caused the resignation of President de Gaulle. In France, its effects were compared to the revolution of 1789. It was a shock to see so many young people embittered, anarchic, and feeling lost. The serious among them in Berlin felt blameless for the Nazi past, alienated from the emerging "economic miracle" in Chancellor Adenauer's West Germany that catered to its "bourgeois" majority, and found their parents, professors and what they were learning in the social sciences and humanities largely irrelevant to their times and needs. They saw themselves as social revolutionaries committed to reshaping a bankrupt, patriarchal and sexist order to socialist ideals. They avoided thoughts of implementation, however, and concentrated instead on slogans, defamation, and mob action. Today, in America as well, these ex-revolutionaries of the 1960s occupy key positions in government and private life without having wrought much change.

There was, then, an ugly aggression to their anger, which opposed nearly every aspect of the establishment and its governing institutions. Sexual freedom, drugs, and an anything-goes mentality bred hatred on both sides and led to public confrontations. All of this was negative and intended to destroy; the mobocracy articulated no positive goals. All of this, also, was sanctimoniously deplored by the East German and Soviet media as further evidence of the decadence and decline of the West. Berlin witnessed almost daily student demonstrations on the Kurfuerstendamm that were often subdued by police and powerful water cannons. Demonstrators were wounded; performances in theaters interrupted; life in general disrupted. Berliners felt frustrated, angry, and ashamed. How does one counter nihilism except by force, they asked

themselves. While the Allies were responsible, ultimately, for the safety of the city, this was primarily a problem for German authorities.

I remember our attending the Opera one evening in 1969 during the Shah of Iran's visit to Berlin. He was hated by the students. That night, a student named Benno Ohnesorg, a demonstration bystander, was accidentally shot and killed by the West Berlin police. This triggered even uglier confrontations and further radicalized the student movement, which now had its martyr. Such unrest, disturbing as it would have been in any city, was particularly upsetting in Berlin, since Berliners were already living under Cold War tensions.

One of our political officers, Kenneth C. Keller, provided a flow of brilliant reporting and analysis of the unrest during this period. Ken was a quiet and gentle man from Idaho, with a shaggy moustache and low-key approach, who could elicit conversation from nearly anyone. He could easily pass for a Berlin student, and blended into the crowd of demonstrators. Ken rivaled Berlin's journalists in his depth of understanding of what was happening, and they sought him out. Few in our Foreign Service had keener minds at reportage, or were better writers.

Living in West Berlin, one felt oneself in a truncated city of smokeless industries and suburbs, and an odd handful of main streets downtown. The historic center of the city, Alexander Platz, was on the other side of the wall. West Berlin had no logical center. The Kurfuerstendam, its main street of elegant shops, cinemas and cafes, petered out into a dead end as it approached the wastelands bordering the wall. Its architectural landmark, the Memorial Church, was a bombed-out shell standing as a reminder of the devastation of World War II. One had a feeling of incompleteness and amputation in the city's downtown streets, a depressing reminder of something absent and lost.

Life under military occupation sometimes bordered on surrealism. The decades-long Allied involvement in running Spandau Prison, a vast compound maintained solely for three Nazi prisoners, Rudolf Hess, Albert Speer, and Baldur von Schirach, was the most expensive and bizarre incarceration anywhere. Eventually, Hess was alone. Allied authorities responsible for managing the prison met daily during the week for a luncheon there. Allied guests, such as myself and my wife would occasionally be invited to a more formal monthly luncheon. It was a form of *theatre noir* to have a four-course lunch accompanied by French wines served in the prison commandants' dining room while Rudolf Hess a few yards away read in his cell, or worked in the garden. Each country tried to outdo the other in hosting a great meal. The changing of the guard each month was an extraordinary sight, especially when the Americans handed off to the Soviets. The first time we came I thought we were on a different planet.

The Allied Command Authority building located in the American sector was another Berlin anomaly. Formerly a court house used in the Nazi show trials, most of its nearly 500 rooms remained empty and unheated. Its grand halls were on rare occasions used for the ceremonial signing of four-power agreements on Berlin. The Berlin Air Safety Center for flights in the Allied air corridors was located there, not to direct traffic, which was done at Tempelhof Airport, but to secure a Soviet clearance for each flight. Military officers of the western Allies sat at their desks, frequently passing flight information on slips of paper to their Soviet counterpart for his

stamp of approval. Three air corridors transited the Soviet Zone of occupation and this ritual reminded everyone that the Soviets controlled the air space over East Germany.

Each Pan American, Air France and BOAC flight coming to or from Berlin in the prescribed, tube-like corridors of 10,000 feet required Soviet approval. Other air lines did not provide service to West Berlin. Occasionally, Soviet fighter pilots would draw near the corridors for a look or be sent up if a plane strayed out of its corridor. Sometimes these pilots came too close and the Allies protested. "We could see his face!" a PanAm pilot might complain. As with the administration of Spandau Prison, this function remained a daily exercise of four-power occupation rights conducted with the Soviets in West Berlin. Pan American's pilots announced to their passengers over West Germany that they were "about to enter the Berlin corridor," and one could feel the plane descend to 10,000 feet. The back of my neck always tingled at this matter-of-fact reminder of the Cold War.

There was a Berlin Document Center, which held millions of incriminating documents on Nazi affiliations and Hitler's regime. The Allied Kommandatura, a small empty looking building in Dahlem served as the formal meeting place for the four Allied powers--who no longer met there, except for the occasional Western Allies meeting. The Soviets had walked out, and their flag pole was kept forever bare. Allied rituals in West Berlin had an aura of unreality at many levels, but what was being done served to maintain the occupation status intact, since if that was lost, the basis for Allied access to Berlin from West Germany would also be lost.

If the rituals seemed contrived, Berlin did not lack real life drama. One afternoon, an East German attempting to escape swam across a lake and reached some reeds near West Berlin's shore. He had made his flight unobserved by East German patrol boats which, with their search lights, might later spot him in these reeds. West Berlin police watched him through their binoculars. I learned about the escape attempt in my City Hall office when it began, and about the rescue arrangements Berlin authorities were making. They hid ambulances in the woods near the shore, and stayed out of sight until night. It was a cloudy day and the man's success in escaping would be largely decided by the weather. If it rained, his chances were good; if it did not, they were lower. That evening, my wife and I were scheduled to attend a social function, and I became obsessed by the weather. As we left our front door to walk to the car it began to sprinkle, then pour. I have never been so relieved to feel rain.

There were many potential crises during the years 1965-69, incidents at the wall and checkpoints, on the *Autobahn*, or in areas of city administration such as the common sewage and subway systems between east and west. These were manageable, because we carefully assessed the nature of each provocation and the required Allied response, if any. A Soviet decision to escalate tensions was always possible. The Soviet government was celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, believing itself stable internally and a world power internationally. Its constant mischief-making in Berlin was intended to wear the West out, but failed to do so. The Russians historically backed down to the letter of wartime agreements when confronted by strong protests. East German authorities felt less committed, but we knew that eventually they would pay heed to their Soviet masters and be made to comply with Soviet international obligations. When I opened our embassy in East Berlin in 1974, I would come to know them better.

My job in Berlin during the late 1960's was to serve as US Liaison Officer to the city government of West Berlin as the representative of the US occupation authorities to the governing mayor and the Berlin legislature. For much of my tour, that governing mayor was Willy Brandt. The British and French had similar liaison functions, also filled by their foreign services. My British colleague for much of this time was Christopher Mallaby, who later became ambassador to Bonn and Paris. On a 3-month rotational basis, I was the Allied spokesman at city hall during the month when the American commandant became the senior representative and spokesman for the three Western powers. The Western representatives in Berlin worked together closely and nearly always harmoniously. If there was an odd man out, it was usually the French wanting to be lenient toward the Soviets. We had a local classified telegraphic system, called the "Intra-Berlin" network, dedicated to exchanging information among the Allies. The three missions were virtually identical in their organizational structures. The US, of course, had by far the largest establishment, and in political as well as military terms, we were the heavyweights in the leadership role among our Allied partners, with the Soviets, and in Bonn.

The US occupied an embarrassingly large office in the Rathaus Schöneberg, West Berlin's city hall on the John F. Kennedy Platz, and I was there at least part of the time on an average day. I dealt with the governing mayor and his staff, and monitored meetings of the Berlin House of Representatives, ostensibly to insure that no laws were passed which were contrary to Allied responsibilities and legal obligations. There were never any surprises. The debates, especially those concerning the student demonstrations, were often lively, however. Berlin has traditionally been a politically active city. The struggle for voter support between the SPD, CDU, and FDP was intense, and their party conventions, attended by the Western liaison officers, were informed debates of the leading issues in which rhetorical skills mattered. In all of this I was helped by Frau Katharina Brandt, our German employee in my office who knew everything about key people and how the *Rathaus* functioned. She was the most professional, competent, and supportive Foreign Service National with whom I have served and our country owes her much. There was no other assignment in the Foreign Service comparable to this one in Berlin.

The Allied liaison officers met with officials of the West Berlin government, the *Senat*, on a daily basis. Our business ranged from protocol planning for official visitors--from Jimmy Stewart to the Queen of England--to the most sensitive and closely held developments in East-West negotiations. Each liaison officer also had bilateral business with the chancery based on the needs of his or her commandant or country. Our regular point of contact was the chief of chancery of the *Senat*, Dietrich Spangenberg, and his successor Horst Grabert. Spangenberg was the gloomy ("Things look bleak!") pessimist and Grabert the jovial ("We'll do it!") optimist. Both were superb interlocutors, highly intelligent and articulate men, strategically oriented, open, frank, engaging, and warmly disposed toward us. They shared our values and emotions, and from them I learned what it meant to be a post-war German on either side of the wall. The four of us--the liaison officers and chancery head--became an intimate group committed to each other, having dinner in rotation at each other's homes for long and relaxed evening meetings, and socially close in all of our relationships within the highly stratified Allied diplomatic and military communities.

Our discussions were often tough, however. We pressed for details on what Brandt was up to, warned of possible missteps, delivered official statements from the Allies. The Germans were

equally outspoken, sometimes criticizing Allied timidity and inaction or, privately to me, the crossed lines of some of the more visible aspects of American intelligence activities. On this last point, raising an intelligence problem with me was intended to place a political light upon it; there were separate channels for intelligence liaison. This give and take and exchange of information, duly reported by us, formed the basis for Allied comprehension of and influence upon developments in Berlin, and permitted the Germans to understand our positions and constraints. These were among the most exciting and productive diplomatic exchanges of my career, as Brandt progressed in his *Ostpolitik*. They had their basis in Allied authority in the city, and sometimes that authority was invoked; but they went far beyond this in tenor, content, mutual respect, and openness as we dealt with the present and speculated about Germany's future. What a contrast to the way the Soviets and East German authorities dealt with each other across the wall, where the Russians talked and the East Germans listened!

I became well acquainted with Willy Brandt, the governing mayor of Berlin during the first half of my tour there. While mayor, he was also national chairman of the Social Democratic party, the SPD. When he was later elected chancellor, he moved to Bonn and was succeeded by his deputy, Heinrich Albertz, a pastor. Brandt's dual role enabled us to observe the internal workings of the SPD and its evolving national leadership. We had close working relationships with senior advisers around Brandt such as Egon Bahr and Klaus Schuetz. They provided information and insights we reported to Washington, Bonn, and NATO, as well as Allied capitals and Moscow, on Brandt's evolving East-West policies.

During his tenure as governing mayor, Brandt developed his "small steps" of rapprochement toward East Berlin's municipal authorities. He initiated meetings for mid-level functionaries to discuss such matters as canal traffic and the operation of the subway system, whose S-Bahn crossed into West Berlin. Although these discussions were of a technical nature, they were politically important as first attempts at cooperation on specific matters.

No issue was more poignant than wall passes, or *Passierscheine*. These were issued by the GDR on special occasions such as Easter and Christmas, and permitted West Berliners to visit relatives on the other side of the wall for short periods. They went beyond the categories of regular visits granted the elderly or for certain emergencies. The issuance of wall passes was a matter for negotiation among East and West Berlin authorities and the Federal government, and served as something of a barometer in the relationship. It provided political leverage for the GDR with Bonn and West Berlin's city hall. Heated bargaining involved large payments and Interzonal Trade concessions from Bonn in cynical manipulation by the GDR of humanitarian concerns for financial gain.

The chief negotiator for the *Senat* was Gerhard Kunze, a well-built, six-foot-six, ramrod straight Prussian, known for his cold-eyed stubbornness as "police club Kunze." Allied liaison officers, who appreciated his warmth and humor, and his humanitarianism, were kept apprised by him of progress, step by painstaking step. His well phrased, vituperative condemnations of East German counterparts were a pleasure to listen to. Negotiations were protracted and fought out to the last minute, nearly always with successful results heralded in the Berlin papers of the West with the banner headline: "*Passierscheine!*" and announced across the divide in a short piece at the bottom of the front page of *Neues Deutschland*. There would soon be long lines of West

Berliners at the crossing points, often standing for hours in snow and cold as they clutched gifts for relatives and their identification papers and prepared to pay fees, in West German marks, for family reunion passes. It was a highly distasteful business.

Allied policy was clear: we would not get ahead of the Bonn government in its relationships with East Germany, and would take no initiatives of our own toward the GDR. Relations between the Germans was thus a matter left entirely to the leadership in Berlin and Bonn. We insisted, however, that our international agreements with the Soviets be respected. Chancellor Kiesinger was not always happy with Brandt's efforts, but did not openly restrain him.

The fact that the chancellor led the CDU and Brandt the SPD played a political role in this drama. It was always Brandt who took the initiative with East Germany, prodding the Bonn government to follow through. Brandt realized his "small steps" would become an important part of the SPD's platform in the next general election. The Western Allies, meanwhile, scrambled in Berlin, Bonn, and their capitals to keep pace with events. What we were hearing in Berlin from Brandt and his coterie was crucial to achieving an understanding of where Brandt was taking Germany.

Brandt was also talking with the Soviets directly, meeting occasionally in East Berlin with Soviet Ambassador Piotr Abrasimov. Our Berlin mission was in the forefront of those who expected Brandt's "small steps" gradually to lead to a wider range of topics for discussion between East and West. We were certain Brandt did not intend to keep contacts between East and West Berlin limited to technical levels. We saw that should he become chancellor, the pace would accelerate. His motive in *Ostpolitik* was to achieve a more healthy and human relationship among Germans, even at the cost of accepting two German states. He was not a panderer or accommodator toward the East. Yet Brandt's moves at times caused suspicion in Western capitals as to whether he might trade West Germany's western orientation for reunification.

Brandt's chief counselor on openings to the East was Egon Bahr, a dour, even furtive man who kept his own counsel. I wonder whether anyone on the Allied side was ever fully apprised of Brandt's activities; the risks of "telling all" were high in such a fragile process. Brandt never went beyond the formal limits the Western powers had imposed, which were based upon their responsibilities as occupying powers. He stayed within the framework we had established with great skill, yet subtly forcing the Western powers to re-examine and gradually expand their parameters of accommodation. Such was his *Ostpolitik*.

Brandt was a dynamic, gravel-voiced and powerful speaker with great charisma, as I saw when I attended Berlin SPD party conferences. He was a rugged, sturdy, earthy individual who was popular because ordinary people identified with him and thought him sincere; he came across as tough and dependable. Brandt was also a warm man, attractive to women, yet given to frequent bouts of depression. Often tormented and brooding, he had a fierce temper. He drank a lot, favoring brandy, *Branntwein* in German, as cartoonists liked to point out. I saw him on many occasions when he was suffering from a hangover. I would bring distinguished visitors, or our ambassador in Bonn, to his office, and occasionally Brandt would sit in a funk and say nothing. I warned people before their meetings of his moodiness, and that they might find long lapses in conversation. Even under the best of circumstances, he was privately a man of few words.

Brandt had an extraordinarily complicated personality, and a troubled marriage to a strong and patient woman named Rut. My acquaintance with Willy Brandt enriched my appreciation of what one person with a driving sense of purpose can accomplish. I have seldom dealt with a man of so many facets, and such boundless political, physical and intellectual energy. He was a visionary who led Germany to its reunification, beginning with the necessary first small steps in Berlin.

The US Mission was housed in the cavernous military headquarters, formerly Goering's, in Dahlem's Clayallee, where the senior American was the US commandant, an Army major general. The US minister, always a foreign service officer, served as deputy commandant. The fact that the most senior Allied officials in Berlin were highly visible military men who wore their uniforms on duty underscored the fact that Berlin was an occupied city whose status remained unresolved following the Allied victory in World War II. My nearly four years in the Navy at the end of the Korean War taught me about the military mind: its planning capabilities, precision, discipline, emphasis on training, and pride in service. I knew the jargon and understood the need for hierarchy. Throughout my career, I found military experience invaluable. Those in uniform seemed to recognize that I bore none of the innate suspicion and lack of understanding that can make civilian cooperation with the military an uncomfortable, even unsuccessful, process.

During my tour from 1965-69, I worked for two foreign service ministers, John "Arch" Calhoun and Brewster Morris. They had entirely different styles, and one could learn about civilian-military relationships by observing them. Arch Calhoun was masterful in handling the military, sensitive to the policy responsibilities of the US commandant, and adept at anticipating his needs and concerns. Arch took the initiative in bringing matters to the military, along with his proposals for handling them. Brewster Morris, his successor, was not as skilled in this partnership. He too enjoyed good personal relations with the commandant, but was excessively deferential, more likely to seek guidance from the military than to come into a room with his own draft telegram.

There were, as I recall, some sixteen American intelligence entities, most of them military, in West Berlin, yet they missed plans to build the wall. Reliable intelligence was critical. Oddly enough, given the importance of Berlin to the west, the other Allied services were not much better. There were many difficulties built into the conduct of human intelligence functions in Berlin in the mid-sixties. Not only were the Soviets and East Germans formidable opponents, there were problems of process as well. Foremost among these on the US side, in my view, were overstaffing and lack of coordinated priorities and gathering methods; compartmentalization of effort and product among services; absence of centralized screening for duplication and reliability; destructive competition among services; and lack of responsible analysis in many cases.

No one seemed in charge, civilian-military rivalry was intense, and agents collided with each other in a great scramble to report something. One had the impression many were operating under a quota system based on the number of reports they could send off. Intelligence operatives tried to co-opt open sources, among them people I knew at city hall. This was stopped when we

learned of it. Protective cover for these large enterprises was usually poor. Many agents and safe houses were known to the opposite side and our German employees. I do not recall learning from intelligence reports anything startling or particularly worthwhile, from my standpoint, during four years in West Berlin. In fairness, I should add that I was at the margins of what was going on in the intelligence world.

I had occasions to visit East Berlin never realizing, of course, that I would one day open our embassy there. At the Checkpoint Charlie barriers we lowered our car windows a crack to show passports and be able to hear the East German guard. "Charlie" was simply the military communications term for the third letter of the alphabet--this was US military crossing point "C." Following Allied instructions, we did not permit border guards to handle our passports, much less take possession of them. We showed the passport cover and the page on which a photo was displayed, then proceeded through the checkpoint. In case of a problem, we demanded to speak to a Soviet officer, who normally remained out of sight. It was a tense experience because you could never know whether the other side wanted to provoke an incident.

The rationale for these procedures, which were uniformly observed by the Western Allies, went to the heart of the legal status of all of Berlin as occupied territory. We were prepared to deal with Soviet military authorities on questions pertaining to the four sectors of Berlin, but refused to discuss these matters with East German officials of any stripe because we did not recognize their authority in the Soviet sector of Berlin. That is why, in any difficulty at the checkpoint, we summoned a Soviet military officer as the appropriate discussion partner. We tested Allied rights continuously, in the belief that a right not exercised soon ceases to be a right. A separate political/economic section of the US mission in West Berlin was devoted to East German and Soviet affairs, and these FSOs traveled to East Berlin regularly to visit their Soviet and rare East German contacts. The rest of us went not only out of curiosity and to maintain the right of passage, but also to remind ourselves that despite the isolation of living in West Berlin, another part of the city was far worse off.

East Berlin in the mid-1960s was a stark, shabby, down-at-the-heels place with shop fronts decorated for show and sparsely stocked food stores. Scars of destruction from World War II were everywhere, and formed a pathetic landscape alongside the hideous Soviet-style blocks of cheaply constructed high-rise apartment buildings whose concrete facades were already deteriorating. The acrid smell of low octane gasoline, brown coal and strong cigarettes permeated hotels, restaurants and shops. Pedestrians avoided one's gaze. The contrast to West Berlin was riveting. The authorities were communists and often Prussians to boot, a deadly combination that made them seem even more dour and hostile than the Soviets. We were not permitted to visit East Germany, other than to travel on the *Autobahn* to West Germany.

Reunification of Germany seemed a fading prospect, and was mentioned less frequently in the West. The Allied powers had settled in for the long haul. West Berliners accepted the comforts of their lives and made the most of tightly controlled opportunities through wall passes to visit their relatives on the other side, who were stoic about their fate. The division seemed nearly complete, except for the knowledge that Brandt was making slow progress with his "small steps" toward normalization with the East.

Our son Paul was born on May 17, 1965 shortly before we left Washington for Berlin. He would later attend Bates College, where he met his future wife, Martha Merselis, of Williamstown, Massachusetts. A lovely, lively and caring woman, she is a professional archivist, with a graduate degree in her field from George Washington University. They lived for two years in Cambodia, where Paul directed the International Republican Institute's office and Martha was in charge of women's programs, and have retained a strong interest in Southeast Asia. Their son, Samuel, bears an old family name.

There are two terrible events I sadly recall from my tour in West Berlin. The first was the murder in Memphis of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4, 1968 at the age of 39. Klaus Schuetz had succeeded the former pastor Albrecht as governing mayor of West Berlin. Schuetz, at the height of the disruptive student demonstrations that plagued the city, decided to lead a march of his own to memorialize King. The point he made beyond Berliner's affection and admiration for King, was that not all demonstrations are displays of negative, angry protests; they can be held with dignity to express positive feelings.

US Minister Brewster Morris, Schuetz and I were in the front rank of this march honoring Martin Luther King's memory. I had never before been on the streets as a demonstrator, and was moved by the expressions of esteem Berliners showed toward King and the American struggle for civil rights. The march went off smoothly. The crowds were not large, but made a counter-statement about the positive potential of demonstrations.

On one of my return visits to the State Department from Berlin, in the autumn of 1967, Robert Kennedy invited me to Hickory Hill for dinner with Ethel and the football hero Roosevelt Grier. After the meal we sat in his study that fall evening and our conversation turned to politics. Bob was wondering whether to run for president, hesitating to get into an ugly fray and far from confident that even the nomination could be his. It was a discussion he must have had many times before. He was a man undecided about what to do and dispirited by the choices. Johnson, whom he had never liked, was president and would probably run again. The primary campaign would be divisive and difficult. He thought the country had been torn apart by Vietnam, civil rights issues, and young people feeling themselves alienated from the rest of society.

Bob believed we were bogged down in the White House and in Congress where, as a senator, he said he often felt frustrated and bored. You can't get anything done there, he told us. He believed he could make a difference in the campaign and as president, but still he hesitated. Rosie and I urged him to try to make that difference. Ethel was noncommittal but I sensed she agreed with us. That evening, we seemed to be overwhelmed by our country's problems and the political choices available. On March 16, 1968 Kennedy declared his candidacy and barely two weeks later, on March 31, Johnson announced at the end of a television address on Vietnam that he would not seek another term as president.

I was in Berlin when Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated in Los Angeles on June 5, 1968 at the age of 42. It was almost impossible to explain why this had happened. Berliners blamed a deep streak of violence in American society. People felt there was something wild and ungovernable in the American psyche, a bad strain in our national character. West Berliners, when Robert Kennedy was killed, placed lighted candles in their windows, which they did only on deeply felt occasions such as November 22, 1963 when his brother, our president, was gunned down.

I returned to the US for the funeral at the invitation of the Kennedy family, and was asked to be an honorary pallbearer at the ceremonies in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. When the pallbearers were lined up alphabetically so we could enter the church as a group, I found myself standing next to Rosie Grier, the football star with whom I had dinner at Hickory Hill the last time I saw Bob and Ethel and we talked about Bob's tough political choices. Now, there was nothing to say. Afterwards, I joined the family and cortege on the train back to Washington, and at the burial in Arlington Cemetery where Mrs. Kennedy insisted there be no rifle salute.

The weather was hot on June 8. Standing by the casket in the cathedral when my turn came, I felt myself to be somewhere beyond reason and reality. The train ride to Washington remains my most vivid memory of that day. When we came out of the tunnel into New Jersey and moved slowly down the tracks toward Washington, a routine trip made so often in other circumstances, we were astonished to see people standing all along the roadbed: men from veteran's posts wearing their overseas caps and saluting; families with children lifted up; people holding flags or waving slowly as we went by. I saw the body of a man near the Elizabeth platform who had just been sliced in half by an oncoming train. The platform was so jammed that in a surge he had fallen off. All traffic in the opposite direction was stopped and our train proceeded on a clear track to Washington.

The further south we went the more Afro-Americans were in the crowds, and the crowds grew larger. In Baltimore, as we crawled through the station, people sang the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." It was hard to keep emotions in check. The train became a capsule in which we were the spectators, looking out at these enormous numbers of people, hour after hour, who had come to watch us pass and pay their respects. I sat first with Kennedy's secretary, Angella Novello, and then with Claiborne Pell. We were hot and worn out and didn't speak much, surrendering ourselves to the incredible scene along the tracks. My mind often flashes back to that day when I ride the train, especially heading south from New York to Washington.

There was a place, somewhere in Robert Kennedy's inmost self, to which he withdrew when he thought or listened intently. From this quiet and very personal place came his deepest feelings and convictions; it was the source of strength required for daring, even noble, commitment and action. He was a man who quoted Aeschylus from memory. At his core was his Catholic belief and room for pain, self-doubt, resolve and ultimately, a tragic sense of life. When he was there, people noticed that his hooded eyes lost focus and stared ahead, while his voice became soft. During such moments, one could almost see him coming to a decision and, sensing his vulnerability in this intensely private process, kept silent. His acquiescence in responsibilities thrust upon him that he passionately believed he must meet drove him to the edges of endurance, as few others are driven by an awareness of public purpose in their lives.

To people of my generation, in particular, who believed with the Kennedys that government could do good, the shock was devastating. Part of our world ended and never reassembled itself the same way. I had thought when Lyndon Johnson announced he would not seek the presidency because of the course of the war in Vietnam, Bob Kennedy had a good chance to succeed him. I now wonder whether he would have found enough support in our southern states.

On my way from Berlin to New York for the funeral, I stopped in London, where I stayed with my father in Knightsbridge and walked through Hyde Park to our embassy in the warm evening air. I stood in line in Grosvenor Square to sign the condolences book. When it came my turn, I read what the young woman in front of me had written. She asked: "Why do you Americans always kill the best in you?"

ARTHUR F. BLASER, JR.
Financial Attaché
Bonn (1965-1969)

Arthur F. Blaser, Jr. was born in 1908 and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. He received an undergraduate degree from Yale University in 1929, an M.B.A. from Harvard University in 1932, and a Ph.D. in economics from Columbia University in 1941. In addition to Japan, Mr. Blaser served in England, Germany, and Brazil. He was interviewed by Raymond Ewing on October 16, 1996.

BLASER: Since we had no children and were free to go, and also liked overseas assignments, we were asked to go to Germany and arrived there in mid-1965. In Germany one of the principal objectives was to increase German support for our forces there. In this work we assisted, along with our Embassy colleagues, officials and teams who came from Washington from time to time to discuss these matters. Another part of the work was to establish contacts with Ministry of Finance officials, the Bundesbank and private banks to keep abreast of financial developments in Germany, and, to the extent that I was able, to share with them similar developments in the United States.

THOMAS STERN
Administrative Counselor
Bonn (1965-1969)

Thomas Stern was born in Germany in 1928. He received a bachelor's degree from Haverford College in 1950 and graduated from the Maxwell School of Public Affairs in 1951. Mr. Stern's Foreign Service career included positions in Rome, Bonn, and Korea. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1980. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1993.

STERN: In 1965, I was anxious to go overseas. I had been in Washington for about a decade and it was time to go back to the field. I had been integrated into the Foreign Service Officer Corps and I thought that I should join my colleagues. An opportunity arose in London. Findley Burns, then the Counselor for Administration, had been nominated as Ambassador to Jordan. I thought London would be a great assignment. I had managed to get a trip to London which permitted me to look at the Counselor's house. Everybody thought that it was a "done deal" when one day Findley called Crockett to tell him that Ambassador David Bruce had changed his mind. I have never understood what happened; no one ever even tried to explain to me why the assignment was not consummated. Bruce's decision came out of the clear blue sky. This was the Spring of 1965. Bill very nicely tried to cover up this comedy of errors; he wrote me a note saying that he couldn't release me at that time and would I mind staying on for a while longer? Eventually, Pete Skoufis went to London. As I said, to this day, I don't have the slightest inkling of why Bruce changed his mind at the last moment or whatever happened in London on what everyone thought was a firm assignment. Needless to say, I was somewhat disappointed, but fortunately another opportunity arose a few months later.

The next opportunity arose that Fall when Basil Capella, then the Counselor for Administration in Bonn, Germany, was assigned to Sydney as Consul General. He had a deputy, Dave Belisle, who did not have any overseas experience. Dave had served for a long time in the security field and had been assigned to Bonn to get him out of harm's way since he had been implicated in the alleged "bugging" of Otto Otepka's phone. That allegation had brought to the attention of the House Internal Security Committee which still had a somewhat unsavory reputation for "witch-hunts". Otepka had been accused of leaking material from personnel files to that Committee and the leadership of the Office of Security decided to catch him by tapping his telephone lines. It turned out to be a comedy of errors, but Crockett had to remove the head of SY, Bill O'Reilly and his deputy, Dave Belisle. So Dave was assigned to Bonn, but since he had not been overseas or in administration at all, he was not considered to be qualified to succeed Capella. Of course, there was a snag; Ambassador George McGhee was not willing to take such a young officer (I had just turned 38 at the time) such as myself sight unseen as a Counselor and proposed that Dave be moved to our Consulate in Dusseldorf, while I be assigned to Bonn as the Deputy Counselor. McGhee said that he could then observe me for a few months and make a decision later.

It of course didn't work out quite that way. Dave never moved to Dusseldorf. Capella was so anxious to leave (I think he was concerned that the Sydney assignment would be given to someone else) that a few weeks after my arrival, he began a campaign to have me anointed as his successor. I became a veritable administrative genius in Capella's eyes, for reasons which had nothing to do with me and all with his desire to leave as soon as possible. His public relations efforts must have had some positive effect because by the end of the year, McGhee had agreed to let me become Counselor. I had gone to Bonn around Thanksgiving time without my family because when my assignment was first proposed it was, as always, a matter of urgency and we hadn't had time to make any preparations. In any case, I returned to the States at Christmas time, helped pack the family and returned to Bonn as Counselor for Administration.

As it turned out, as often it happens, Bonn turned out to be a much more interesting job than London ever would have been. London was undoubtedly a more attractive place to live, but the

Bonn job was unique and probably one of the most challenging Administrative Counselor jobs in the world. The responsibility for directing a relatively large Embassy Section was really secondary to my other functions. Dave did most of that work. My principal responsibility, both in terms of time and effort, was the management of a small American community on the Rhine. I was the mayor of a village that one of my predecessors, Glenn Wolfe, had constructed with German reparations funds in the early '50s when the High Commissioner for Germany moved from Frankfurt to Bonn. Bonn was the home of Germany's Chancellor, Conrad Adenauer, and he wanted the capital to be there. And so it was that a major government moved to a small academic community which was in no way prepared to house the horde of politicians and bureaucrats that must be involved in the running of a government. Of course, the foreign diplomats also had to find shelter and I am sure that it must have been a wild scene for a couple of years while all this influx of people were provided shelter and a community. The Americans, of course, did it as only we can; we built our own community on a very desirable area right on the shores of the Rhine, on the outskirts of a suburb of Bonn, called Bad Godesberg. Wolfe built a power plant for the community; he built a shopping center, with commissary and PX; he built a school; he built a club facility which was the envy of all other diplomats (he eventually permitted other diplomats to join). The school was an interesting facility; it was run by the U.S. military and therefore basically staffed by DoD, but the Bad Godesberg American community supplemented its resources and therefore provided educational experiences that no other DoD school ever could. Our community was called Plittersdorf and it was essentially an independent municipality. We only relied on Bad Godesberg for sewer and water, police and fire although we were not at the time very heavy consumers of those services, since we used our own security staff, for example, for any minor violations of law and regulations.

The Counselor for Administration was the unelected Mayor. When I tried to recommend that the mayor become an elected office, I was quickly and forcefully squelched by the Embassy's administrative staff which was convinced that the Embassy and community had to be supervised by the same man because they were so closely linked. Also the Board of the Association, which was elected, I believe, although in such a manner that all constituencies were represented, was not really in favor of broad elections. So I spent much of my time worrying about community affairs. We provided many services, as only American communities do: summer baseball leagues, winter youth activities, swimming pool, tennis, etc. We made sure that our young people had plenty of opportunities for activities; we were not going to tolerate any "hanging" around or mischief making either in Plittersdorf or other parts of Germany. It is very useful to have the power of shipping a family away if their children become troublesome; I think we threatened a couple of families, but never really had to exercise that power. So we used the "stick and carrot" effectively to minimize any potential youth crime or adventurism. It was, I must admit, a very paternalistic approach, but in general it made for a very close knit and happy community.

There is no end to the wishes and wants of the human animal. You can never satisfy every one in a group. The apartments in Bad Godesberg were large. They were very spacious. We had five houses: one for the Ambassador, one for the DCM, one for the Counselor for Political Affairs, one for the Counselor for Economic Affairs and one for the General in charge of the Military Assistance Advisory Mission. The latter used to be occupied by the Counselor for Administration, but one of my predecessors gave it up, for which I was quite thankful because my family could then live with the rest of the community and not be separated from it, even

though the houses were all within easy walking distance. The Ambassador's residence was not a great house; it was built on a steep slope and that made large parties like the Fourth of July somewhat difficult to manage. But all in all, the American community lived in good shelter. But everybody wanted more. If it was not the size of the apartment, then it was the furniture, either more or newly covered. I don't want to overstate the situation, but we still have friends today who remind me how I had refused them something or other. On the whole, I think the American community was quite happy.

I had some evidence of that late in my tour. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge replaced McGhee in 1968. As had been true for many years, many of the substantive officers complained to him, as they had to his predecessors that their ability to function effectively was constrained by the fact that they had to live in a "ghetto". They couldn't meet German neighbors and that inhibited their effectiveness. One of the reasons we restrained people from living on the economy was because it would have been far more expensive to pay them living allowances than to support them as part of an established community. So Lodge considered the matter for a while and finally said that those officers who wanted to move out of the community and live in Bad Godesberg could do so. Two families, as I remember it, took advantage of the opportunity. The dozens of others who were eligible did not move. It was far too convenient to live in Plittersdorf. Among those who stayed were some of the most vociferous officers who had called for "liberation" since their arrivals. That was a lesson in itself. I wish we had made that policy earlier in my tour. It would have restrained the few discontented "campers", although I suspect that in some cases, at least, we would have heard complaints under any circumstances.

But again I want to re-emphasize the positive aspects; in general, the American community was a happy one and morale was quite good. It was the only community in the Foreign Service that I know of which at the end of a fiscal year, was given a voucher for \$ 100 worth of purchases at our commissary and PX. Our profits had been so great that they getting obscene and we thought that we could decrease our surplus in that way. We did, but not to the degree that we had hoped because people took the \$ 100 and spent more in addition to buy things which they would not have purchased at all otherwise.

The school, which, as I said, was a DoD school supplemented by our own community's resources which were used to hire extra teachers and additional supplies, provided a good education to our children. The mothers were very vigilant and there were a few that wished we would do more. We had a shopping mall, as I have also mentioned, which always was subject to wishes of the community. We naturally had some who wished to increase the range of goods available and there were some that wanted the opposite because they felt that Americans should do more shopping on the local economy. The commissary got me involved in an interesting case. The manager was believed to be a homosexual. It was the first time in my career that I had encountered that issue. The Department, of course, along with all agencies that required security clearance, did not employ homosexuals and fired those that it did find in its employ. So the issue was unusual. But this manager was not a government employee. He was an employee of the American Community Association. The Embassy's Security Office kept insisting that I fire the manager in accordance with U.S. government policies. They viewed him as a threat, even though he had no access to classified material; it was true, of course, that he had close contacts with American families and I guess there was an outside chance that he might find out something that

could subject some American to potential blackmail by some foreign power. There were one or two members of the Board who accepted that argument. I did not. The manager was not an employee of the U.S. government and therefore could not be so treated. If anything, he should have been judged by German standards, although I really thought that we were adult enough to judge the issue by our own standards. In any case, there was nothing in German law which would have justified the firing of the manager because of his sexual orientation and I refused to do so. The issue was kept alive for months, but the manager was continued as an employee; I suspect that did not endear me to SY. Today, I doubt whether any one would have even raised the question.

My other responsibility had to do with the acquisition and disbursement of the German contribution to the maintenance of our Berlin brigade. Under one of the various treaties that we signed with Germans after the war, we held them financially responsible for our role as one of the Quadripartite powers that occupied Berlin. After the Berlin Wall went up, it became essentially a matter of three Powers being responsible for the protection and general supervision of one-half of Berlin. To maintain our commitment, the U.S. stationed an enhanced brigade in Berlin, more as a trip-wire than a real force that could protect the city in case of attack. This was the only situation in the world where a State Department Foreign Service Officer was in charge of financial resources required by a U.S. military unit. I, on behalf of the Ambassador, was responsible for review of the Brigade's budget request and then for negotiations with the German government to allocate the necessary resources. I spent a lot of time on this function although the Germans were always very accommodating and had few, if any questions. But Ambassador McGhee particularly insisted that we be very tight-fisted and not permit the charging of anything that might appear as excessive to this German fund. I must say that I interpreted "tight fisted" to be a relative term; I looked for excesses and there were many temptations that the Brigade considered, but on the whole, especially when compared with the British and the French, our budget requests were appropriate. The British and the French, for example, charged the Germans for the cost of the uniforms that their troops in Berlin wore. The French had a great time with that approach because they rotated their men in Berlin on a quarterly or semi-annual basis so that periodically a new group of French troops would arrive in Berlin and be fully outfitted at German expense. It was a good way for the French to keep their defense costs down. The British did the same thing, but on a much more modest level. We were the model of fiscal conservatism, although I don't think our Brigade in Berlin ever suffered from lack of necessities. In fact, Americans in Berlin lived well, which included the State's representatives as well. The Ambassador had a house in Berlin which was financed by these occupation funds. Our Minister in Berlin had a very nice house which was financed the same way as did all our officers, both military and civilian.

The availability of these German funds made our Embassy allocations from Washington go further than they might otherwise. We supplemented our State resources with the German funds, charging to the latter all the costs that we could legitimately claim were attributable to our presence in Berlin. My role as the steward of the German occupation funds got me involved in all the Quadripartite and Tripartite operations at least to the extent necessary to support them financially. I was treated as a king by the Brigade and when I went to Berlin, it was as a VIP. It was very heady stuff.

Both the management of the American community in Bad Godesberg and my role in the Occupation Force process made the job as Counselor for Administration very rewarding.

George McGhee and Henry Cabot Lodge dealt relatively little with administrative matters? McGhee just wanted to be kept informed, as did the DCMs I worked for -- Marty Hillenbrand and Russ Fessenden. They left me pretty much to my own devices. Occasionally, their wives might receive a complaint, usually about the American Community Association. In such cases, they would call me to their offices and ask me to get their wives off their backs. In general, they wanted to know what was going on, but did not give me much supervision. McGhee, as I mentioned, was particularly interested in the occupation forces budget, but that was about the extent of his interest. Only Mrs. Hillenbrand made demands on us and they were relatively very few.

By the time Henry Cabot Lodge arrived, we had learned that the key to an Ambassador's heart -- and good efficiency ratings -- was his wife. After a while, we really tended to neglect McGhee and Lodge and we concentrated on keeping their wives happy, particularly Emily Lodge. She was a delight. She really didn't want anything done for her or the residence. She was happy with what we were providing. She didn't want the furniture re-upholstered; we had painted the residence during the period after the McGhee's departures and the Lodges arrival. We kept asking her if there was anything we could do and never got a single request. That meant we never had any requests from the Ambassador either, even though we had anticipated the worst. We had heard from people who had served in Saigon that he was very demanding and imperious. I think he left off all of that in Saigon. He was demanding at times for substantive support, but never in the thirteen months I worked for him, did he make any demands on us. We loved the Lodges. I think we were also helped by the fact that Lodge knew that he would not be in Germany for too long. That ambassadorial post was offered and accepted as a stop-gap measure, I think. He didn't try to suggest otherwise. Peter Tarnoff, who was then Lodge's special assistant and is now the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, was very helpful to us. He had been with Lodge for a couple of years and steered us in the right directions. But the key for an administrative staff to be successful were wives of the Ambassadors and to a lesser extent, the wives of the DCMs. If the ambassador is not stirred up by his wife, he tends to leave administrative matters in the hands of others.

I only had one problem with Lodge. One of our officers became mentally unstable. I wanted to send him home as quickly as possible both because in a close community, it was a major problem and because I felt that he could get better treatment in the United States. Ambassador Lodge was very insistent that we follow "due process", which meant examination by a local psychiatrist and a lengthy exchange of correspondence with the Department. The Department finally agreed to repatriate the officer and his family, but it took several weeks. I was much more anxious to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

We had some dealings with the local Bad Godesberg government. I met with Mayor of Bad Godesberg on a couple of occasions, more as a courtesy than anything else. We had no problems since we were pretty much self-sufficient. Plittersdorf was a suburb of Bad Godesberg, but our demands on municipal services were minimal. Our presence in a choice location on the banks of the Rhine could have been a political liability, but we tried hard not to be noticed. Our kids

behaved well when they went to town and we were really good guests. We welcomed Germans when they wanted to stroll along the river or watch our baseball games. We would have permitted more of them to join our club, but were not allowed to do so by the German authorities because the club was tax-free and was therefore essentially a facility for the diplomatic community. We permitted some German officials to live in our apartments, again with the permission of the German government, but it was essentially and clearly an American community.

McGhee was a very active Ambassador. He traveled frequently and made a lot of speeches. That required administrative support, although he usually traveled by himself and was hosted by the nearest Consulate. We had some major establishments in Germany outside of Bonn. Both Frankfurt and Munich were large establishments with Frankfurt being the hub of the European supply network and Munich being the home of Radio Free Europe. Lodge was much more low key, but had the respect of the Germans because they knew that unlike McGhee, he could call the President directly and did so on a couple of occasions. Both were viewed by the Germans as first class representatives of the United States and took both of them very seriously. Of course, in those days, the Germans were still growing and were essentially very receptive to U.S. suggestions and policies.

I would be remiss if I did not comment on our staffs in Germany, both in the Embassy and the subsidiary posts. In general, we had the cream of the Foreign Service; German affairs attracted a lot of interest and there were never any shortages of well qualified officers at all ranks. The local staffs were also superb. On the administrative side, in addition to some highly qualified German employees, we also had some third country nationals -- English and Spanish. After the war and for many years, working for the U.S. Government was a highly privileged opportunity for Germans. By the end of the 1960s, that employment edge had pretty much worn off and although we continued to hire first class people, it became increasingly difficult to find them. Our local staffs were the backbone of the administrative operations and our only problem was recruiting enough German employees. By the time I left, the economy was really booming and Germans had many opportunities for employment. In the Embassy, we even had a small management staff which was very rare for an embassy. That staff helped us to keep our operations as effective and economically as possible, but was also a training ground for young Germans who would later transit into their economy, hopefully having learned something about American management techniques. Our Embassy in Bonn was the second experience -- Rome having been the first -- that proved to me how valuable local employees really were. They were an asset that we could never have been able to replace.

I might just mention at this stage that while in Germany, I had my first experiences with Presidential visits. The first visit was President Johnson's who came for Chancellor Adenauer's funeral in 1967, I believe. His visit was sandwiched in between two visits from Vice-President Hubert Humphrey. Humphrey left one day; two days later Johnson arrived. Johnson left after three days and Humphrey came back a couple of days later. It was ten days of continuous circus. When we planned for Humphrey's visits, we of course did not know that Adenauer would die and that Johnson would come to his funeral. When we found out the totality of our challenges, I thought we would never make it. In fact, in retrospect, I now know that it is much easier for a President to visit a country with little and less time for preparations.

Johnson, of course, arrived without being scheduled for any appearance except at the funeral. That was the only thing he was supposed to do; any other events at that time, at least, would have been entirely inappropriate. He brought with him George Meany, the head of the AFL-CIO and a few of his immediate staff. The entourage was of modest proportions because of the nature of the visit and we had no great difficulties accommodating them. Johnson's private secretary and his two stewards (a man and wife) stayed with him in the DCM's house. The rest of the staff we scattered around. There were very few trappings that normally go with Presidential visits, except that his bed and his car were shipped ahead. We did have a small advance team which came a couple of days before Johnson's arrival. It decided that Johnson would have to stay in the DCM's house. So overnight, we moved the Hillenbrands out much to their unhappiness. We stored all their valuables. The advance team instructed us on two requirements: a) that the President's bedroom had to be completely dark when the President slept (there couldn't be a ray of light coming through) and b) the shower head had to be 11'6" high (not an inch higher or an inch lower). The shower head that was there was only 9' or 9'5" high.

So first of all, we blackened the room with new shades and some special material on the panes to insure that no light would come through. It was pitch black dark. That left the shower. This was a much greater problem. The house was approximately fifteen years old and the plumbing consisted of pipes that were made in Germany right after the war and therefore very brittle by this time. We told the advance team that by raising the shower head, we were running the risk of demanding such an increase in water pressure that the pipes might well break. We could just foresee the house being flooded when the pipes finally burst. That would have been bad enough but to have it happened while a President was occupying the premises, would have been catastrophic. The advance team was not swayed; the shower head had to be raised to the required level. So we did and presumably the President was happy. Two hours after the President's departure after three days, the pipes in fact did burst flooding the bathroom and the room below. By that time, we didn't care that much; we were worn out from worrying about the event during the President's stay.

I will never forget those three days. As I said, Johnson had nothing scheduled except his attendance at the funeral. Most Presidents have trouble relaxing and must be doing something all the time. Johnson was very much like that. We had established a control room in our guest house where I spent most of the three days. One evening, at around 11 p.m., we received a call from one of Johnson's staff members: "The President wants to hold a birthday party now for the pilot of his plane. Please send us a cake right now!". In Bad Godesberg or even in Bonn, nothing is open at 11 p.m. The Germans rolled up their sidewalks early. No stores would be open; there wouldn't have been anyone on the streets even. The staffer would not or could not be swayed. He kept repeating that the President wanted a cake and he wanted it right then. We knew that the hand-writing was on the wall and so we called the chef of the American Club and told him to come in to make a cake. Of course, even if he had all the ingredients, he couldn't have done it that quickly, but he had a brilliant idea: an ice cream birthday cake. He had enough ice cream in the freezer, so that by midnight, we were able to deliver a cake with candles. It was a pure coup, never recorded for history!

We lived through another episode, which history has also never recorded. Johnson decided on his

second day in Germany that he wanted to take some German art back to the U.S. as gifts for his Texas friends. Some USIA staff members went out to some galleries in Bonn and brought back the best they could find. It was not great, but at least it could have passed for art. Johnson looked at these paintings and said: "No, no, no! I want real German art!". We finally figured out that he was referring to paintings of old farmers with their pipes in their mouths, people in lederhosen, women in peasant customs, etc. Real junk! That was no problem. Those were available for tourists by the hundreds. USIA went down to the Cologne bazaar and cleaned it out. Johnson was delighted; he picked out 30 or 40 of them; they were just what he wanted. Then he wanted to know something about each artist because he was convinced that this was valuable art work done by well known painters. He insisted that on the back of each picture, a short biography be attached so that his friends would recognize the great value of these paintings. Of course, no one knew anything about the artists. These paintings were thrown together overnight by unknowns and were sold primarily as souvenirs, not as art. So Fred Fischer, who was McGhee's special assistant and I spent the night dreaming up names and biographies for the alleged artists. On the back of each painting we placed a small typewritten note with the name and history of each artist. I am sure that somewhere in Texas there are a number of paintings, if they haven't been thrown away by now, by artists from the "Stern School of Hamburg" or the "Fischer School of Bremen". We made up as many fictitious biographies as needed and Johnson took the paintings with the notations home, as happy as he could be. The costs, of course, came out of State Department's confidential funds, but that was probably the greatest scam I ever participated in.

I mentioned that we had removed the Hillenbrands' personal valuables before turning the house over to the Secret Service and its occupants. It turned out that this was a very wise move because after the Johnson party left, we took inventory and found that some of the silverware and china was missing. This was all government property and fortunately could be replaced easily. We assume that the stewards helped themselves, but never bothered to follow up out of bureaucratic "prudence". We just considered ourselves fortunate that the Hillenbrands had the foresight to ask us to store their valuables. I don't think I would have thought of it as necessary, but I learned a lesson.

It was a hectic three days with little sleep which was followed by a return visit by Humphrey. He didn't get much attention then; we were exhausted. Johnson was kind enough to host a lunch for the embassy staff, which consisted essentially of a continual dialogue between Meany and himself. But that kindness was well received by all of us who had slaved in the vineyard.

I might add one footnote to the Johnson visit which may give some flavor to how the Department operated in the 1960s. I mentioned before that the Department had appropriated to it some funds for "Emergencies in the Diplomatic Service" or better known as the "Confidential Funds". As I said, they were used to pay for the purchase of the paintings for Johnson. The funds were also used to pay for Presidential trips in general and other expenditures which neither the Administration or Congress wanted to have made public. They were not subject to GAO audit and only the Chairmen of the Appropriations Committees got a full picture of the expenditures. In some cases, as a matter of fact, the Chairmen may have been consulted prior to an expenditure. Presidential visits, even a modest one like Johnson's, were a real financial burden on the posts. But we managed put together the best estimates of the costs that we could -- it had to be done while the Presidential party was still in town. Through some inventive, but perfectly

legal, book-keeping, we were able to make a small profit which we used to build a medical facility in the Embassy. The military had provided a doctor since the Embassy was moved to Bad Godesberg; the Department paid for the employment of a nursing staff and for medical supplies. But we didn't have a proper facility for this small medical unit. With the use of some "Confidential Funds" and our own labor force, we were able to build a very nice little doctor's office on the ground floor of the chancery. We thought that was only just compensation for our three very trying days.

The second Presidential visit in Bonn came at the beginning of 1969 when Nixon made his first swing around Europe. The Johnson visit had been particularly difficult for the administrative staff because there were no substantive reasons for his presence. It was purely ceremonial and although he may have had a couple of meetings, he was there for one event only. The rest of the time, Johnson was left to his own devices, some of which I have already described. That put a strain on us because we were the main dispenser of support services. The Nixon visit was a substantive one, which meant that most of the load fell to the substantive side of the Embassy. The management of the Nixon visit was the responsibility of John Ehrlichman, whom I met first on conference calls. Ehrlichman, later to be well known for his participation in the "Watergate" scandal, at the time was one of the President's senior assistants in Washington. Since this was very early in Nixon's presidency, Kissinger, although involved in deciding what Nixon would do in Bonn, was not yet so powerful that he could make all the decisions on the President's trip. Ehrlichman was the decision maker. He had sent an advance man to Bonn, who was familiar with Nixon's predilections because he had advanced his campaign trips. But this gentleman did not draw a sober breath in Bonn from the time he arrived. We seldom saw him; he was not available to answer our questions. To this day, I still don't know what he did for the two weeks he was in Germany. In any case, with the guidance of the DCM and Ehrlichman, we managed to pull our support efforts together. Ehrlichman was very good; I think he recognized that he didn't know the territory as well as we did and relied heavily on our advice on the administrative support for the visit. But the Nixon White House, even at the beginning, had some interesting demands. It insisted, for example, that every place the President went had to be plotted out on a chart with exact measurements. The drawing, to scale of course, had to show where all the furniture would be, where the President's host would be and where Nixon would be expected to be. We had to show how many steps he would have to take to reach the chair or couch which he would occupy. I was given the assignment of measuring the Office of the President of West Germany. The Germans looked at me as if I had two heads because I came with my measuring tape and marked off the room where the two Presidents would meet. I also paced off the distance from where Nixon's car would stop to the steps he would have to climb to get into the building to the German President's office. I don't know that the Germans who observed all this ever recovered from the shock; I know I haven't. Every single place that Nixon visited had to be paced off because his staff insisted that he wanted to know how many steps he would have to take at every function. I don't know whether in fact Nixon really cared, but I do know that the staff insisted on having that information. By the time, Nixon arrived we had a very thick briefing book of charts and diagrams. I doubt that anyone ever looked at it because it was much too detailed. But for the administrative section, the Nixon visit was much easier than Johnson's because Nixon had a lot of substantive business to discuss with the Germans and was not wondering all the time what to do. The Ambassador, the DCM and Kissinger took care of all appointments; the Presidential party came with their own car, Secret Service and the increasing

number of "strap-hangers". That was one noticeable difference with the Johnson visit. The White House entourage increased geometrically, not only with staffers, but also with communication staff, Secret Service, military aides, etc. The era of the royal Presidency really started with Nixon's first European visit and grew and grew and grew from there. Our major challenge was transportation and we brought in fleets of cars not only from our constituents posts, but from military bases in Germany. We learned one lesson during that trip: always have a back up for everything. We had two ambulances, double the number of cars that might normally be required, etc. Redundancy was the word of the day.

The real problem we had with the Nixon visit was housing. In a small town like Bad Godesberg, housing is very scarce. We squeezed the White House and State Department staffs in wherever we could. People tend to forget that on Presidential trips not only is the White House well represented, but the Secretary of State comes along as well and since he is the Embassy's boss, you can't afford to forget him and his staff, which also adds a few more visitors. The Secretary has an aide or two, usually the Assistant Secretary for the region and his aide or two, the Secretariat to keep his paper flowing, etc. The State contingent tends to get overlooked during Presidential visits, but it is not wise for the administrative staff to forget them. They also need to be provided support and in some cases, woe be to he/she who might appear to overlook a State official.

Then there was the press and that was USIA's problem. The feeding and shepherding of the press is a subject all unto itself. In Bad Godesberg, I think we solved it by chartering some Rhine passenger cruisers and putting the press to bed on them. That worked well; in fact, it was such a curiosity that it dispelled many complaints about accommodations that usually arise. Presidential visits are a major trauma for an Embassy, but I think the Nixon visit went off quite well. My only negative recollection is that by this time, the reimbursement to an Embassy for extra expenses had to be documented thoroughly and we didn't make a profit as we did for the Johnson visit.

RICHARD E. THOMPSON
Diplomatic Courier
Frankfurt (1965-1970)

Mr. Thompson, a Californian, was educated at the University of Southern California, the University of Madrid, Spain and Occidental College. Joining the Department of State as a Diplomatic Courier, his career took him to diplomatic courier centers in Washington DC; Frankfurt, Germany; and Bangkok, from which he serviced US Embassies throughout the world, collecting and delivering diplomatic pouches. His later assignments in Washington were of a senior managerial nature. He was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 2001.

Q: Okay. You said you were interested in the Foreign Service generally, not specifically, initially, to be a diplomatic courier. You applied only to be a courier or did you take the Foreign Service examination?

THOMPSON: No, actually I didn't actually take the Foreign Service examination until I was already an employee of the Department of State. It was almost a whimsical thing when I happened to see the... it was good luck. I just happened to see this job, and it said in the application, "Openings are infrequent" but I applied anyway. I didn't even really know exactly what the job was.

Q: Well, so, you were accepted. They did the background investigation. You came in 1965 to Washington. Did you have an initial period of training, or did you go right to work?

THOMPSON: Yes, there was about a week of training. When I went to Frankfurt, my first assignment was to Frankfurt, we had about three weeks of training, and the rest was on the job, which means that you are accompanying a senior courier on actual courier trips until they feel that you are comfortable with the situation.

Q: And your one week was probably really just orientation here in Washington.

THOMPSON: Yeah. That everyone else goes through.

Q: And then you were sent immediately to Frankfurt.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: I don't think any other Foreign Service categories get an overseas assignment quite as quickly as you did. [laughter]

THOMPSON: It's quite different now. The situation now is different. They give the new couriers five or six weeks of training here in Washington.

Q: Most of them are assigned abroad?

THOMPSON: Yes, most of them are. We have a small office in Washington and a small office in Miami now, Fort Lauderdale.

Q: Okay. But you went to Frankfurt and you had these three weeks of training there and then you began accompanying a senior courier. How long did that last?

THOMPSON: That was only for a couple of trips.

Q: By that time it was felt that you knew what you were doing and you could do it on your own?

THOMPSON: Yes. Except that in the beginning, they usually would send us to Vienna. In those days, all of the trips out of Vienna, to the Iron Curtain countries were paired trips. So, in effect, I continued to be under the supervision of a senior courier during that time because I was in effect a junior courier on these trips.

Q: And how long did these trips last? Are we talking about two weeks, maybe?

THOMPSON: The trips lasted anywhere from one day to 59 days. The longest trip I had in those days was 59 days to West Africa.

Q: Wow. Fifty-nine days. I've been in the Foreign Service for a long time and I've met lots of couriers, but I have certain perceptions of what the courier life is like. That is sort of alternation between a lot of tedium and probably a few crises. Is that a fair description?

THOMPSON: Yes, that's a fair description. It sort of alternates between a certain amount of almost boredom and extreme stress.

Q: And you have to be ready for those situations, and alert and aware of your surroundings, and so on.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: When you made these trips out of Vienna with another courier, those were mostly by air?

THOMPSON: Yes, except for the trip to Budapest, which was by train from Vienna. The rest of them were all by air on Austrian Airlines. In most cases we would go to a place and arrive late at night, overnight, leave early the next morning and come back to Vienna, and then leave that night. So we were having very long days.

Q: But you were not based in Vienna.

THOMPSON: No.

Q: They preferred to, for whatever reasons, base people in Frankfurt and then have them stage out of Vienna.

THOMPSON: That's right.

Q: Partly, the latter, because there were flights from Vienna that perhaps weren't so convenient from other places in Europe.

THOMPSON: Yes, in those days, Lufthansa didn't go into all of these countries in a manner that would be the most efficient way for them to move the material. So we used Austrian Airlines.

Q: I suppose generally, there's a preference to use American carriers if they were available, but they weren't available to Eastern Europe at that time.

THOMPSON: That's right. Our mandate was to use American carriers if they were available or if they fit... sometimes there were American carriers available but they just didn't fit the schedule. So the Department was very reasonable about this rule, the 'fly American' rule.

Q: I can see that besides the boredom and the crisis mode, you also had to be fairly flexible in

terms of sleep and I suppose even eating and things like that. Your schedule, such as it was, was very demanding in the sense that what you are describing getting in late at night, leaving early in the morning and then coming back to Vienna and then leaving again that night. It sounds like it wasn't very good for sleep.

THOMPSON: That's true. But on the other hand, I liked the irregular workweek because sometime you would work 18, 20, or even 24 hours in a day, and then you would have several days off. That was one of the things I liked about the job because it wasn't a nine to five job.

Q: I suppose you would work not just five days straight but maybe ten days straight, and then you'd have a number of days off.

THOMPSON: Not normally. Usually, we would work four or five days straight, it's hard to generalize. And then we would have several days off. It all depended on the airlines. Of course there was obviously a lot more flexibility in Europe. When you got down to Africa, you just had to take what was available. Sometimes that required that you go for many days and then you would be forced to have several days off, sometimes in quite unpleasant places.

Q: Now, Frankfurt where you were initially, for four years or so...?

THOMPSON: Yes for four years.

Q: Covered not only Europe but all of Africa, most of Africa?

THOMPSON: Yes, and the Middle East.

Q: And the Middle East too. Roughly how many couriers at that time were doing that coverage?

THOMPSON: About 40 or 45.

Q: Working out of the Frankfurt office.

THOMPSON: Yes, it is and was and has always been our largest office.

Q: And it's part of the American Consulate General?

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: Headed by a senior diplomatic courier.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: At that time when you came in, in 1965, the diplomatic courier's organizationally were not part of the Diplomatic Security Bureau as they are now. What were they part of?

THOMPSON: They were part of the Office of Communications, OC.

Q: Which also was responsible for cable communications and other...

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: Pouches.

THOMPSON: Yes, they made up the pouches.

Q: Okay. How about talking about one of the longer trips. You would go into Africa, say, or the Middle East, you'd be gone for up to 59 days. Who made up that schedule? Did you make that up as a courier? Or was there a scheduling office?

THOMPSON: There was a scheduling... each area was divided and one person was given the responsibility for making up the schedules in that area. That person, we were all men in those days, made up the schedules, but they all interlocked with each other. In other words, when we had to cross the Atlantic, we were just carrying not just material for Africa, but we were carrying material for other posts, so the trips would interlock and we would pass off from one courier to another. And not just in the Frankfurt office, but throughout the world. They were all connected to each other.

Q: So you might, just as an example, go from Frankfurt to Cairo, and somebody else then would pick up at least part of the pouches from you and go on to somewhere else.

THOMPSON: That's correct. A better example is from Frankfurt to Beirut, because if someone would get on the same plane that you would get off, then you would pass off pouches to him -- we were him in those days -- you would pass off pouches to him and he would get on the plane and continue on. Or you might even have two or three couriers at the Beirut airport and you would all pass off to each other and each courier would get on a different plane going to a different destination.

Q: As a lay person, it seems to me that a lot of what you are describing depends on airlines meeting their schedule, being on time. From my experience, that doesn't always work. What would happen then? You'd have to scramble.

THOMPSON: Yes, and that's part of the training they gave us, in trying to figure out a way to effect a backup in case something happened. Sometimes you'd have to think very fast. You had to decide to abort the trip completely or whether to take a chance on a backup flight. Sometimes you had to make this decision while you are standing underneath the plane and you aren't privy to the latest information. So it made it very difficult. With more experience you could use your wits a little bit better. In those days it was much more difficult. Of course you always worry about someone back in the office who has an ABC book and can kind of second guess you on what flights you could have taken or what routes you could have taken. And the complaint of the traveling courier always was, "Well, you weren't there, so you don't know what it was like." And then there's the underlying idea that perhaps the courier may have made a decision based on his own personal convenience, which just outraged some of us when a suggestion was made,

which wasn't made very often.

Q: I have kind of abandoned the notion that the courier was always the first person to get off the plane and the last person to get on and spent a lot of time under... next to the cargo hatch of the plane. Why don't you talk a little bit about that sort of detail, if you will, about how you would handle things at airports. And also would somebody normally from the embassy, say a post in Africa, to pick up pouches, or how did that work?

THOMPSON: You are talking about when I started...

Q: Well, let's talk about initially about this period in the 1960s.

THOMPSON: Okay. In the period of the 1960s, it's true that we had to be the first person off and okay the last person on, and for that reason we rode first class, and not only in first class but we tried to get the seat right next to the door. In those days we didn't have escorts, and in most cases we were not met by anyone from the embassy, we were met by a driver. Quite often that embassy driver wasn't under the plane but was in fact in the arrival area. So, not only did we have to get off the plane, take possession of our pouches, and move through the terminal with a series of porters, but we had to keep control of the pouches during this time and it was quite stressful because sometimes you'd have three or four porters and one of them would decide to run off in one direction and another would in the other direction, so you sort of had to keep them corralled. Later on, of course, we had escorts standing under the plane, and people from the embassies standing under the plane to make an exchange.

But in those days, we were pretty much left on our own. The same thing leaving the airport. They would pick us up at the hotel, we would go to the embassy and pick up our pouches with the driver, and we would go out to the airport and we would unload the pouches with the porters and have to go through as a regular passenger with all these pouches. And sometimes that meant standing in a series of lines, vaccination lines, the customs control, passport control, with all of these pouches and all of these porters and we were conspicuous representatives of the U.S. government at that time and it was a little bit difficult, I always managed to do it, but it was a little bit difficult to stay cool under those situations, especially in Africa.

Q: And you certainly were dealing with situations where an American government representative wasn't very popular, let alone somebody who had needs like that, porters and you know, it was conspicuous as to who you were.

THOMPSON: Yes, as a practical matter though, the porters were always happy to see us because we were always very generous with the tips. In fact they would fight, sometimes, to get to us because we were very, especially in some of the underdeveloped countries, we gave the proper tip but it was always a good tip.

Q: I assume you got reimbursed for the tips on your travel voucher.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: Traveling first class, sounds pretty nice, you always got the best food, drink, and so on. I assume you weren't supposed to drink very much.

THOMPSON: No, we weren't allowed to. But, yes, that's true and I enjoyed it very much. It was one of the... but the best we get now is business class.

Q: No, first class any more.

THOMPSON: No. And by the way, whenever the plane was configured in such a way that the best way to get off the plane was tourist class, then we would fly tourist class. For example, all of these flights to Eastern Europe on Austrian Airlines were on the Caribell, so we were on the last seats of the tourist class section, because that's where the pouches were. They were loaded in the back of the plane.

Q: And there were rear exits that opened.

THOMPSON: Yes, there was a rear entrance that opened, but the pouches themselves were actually loaded inside the cabin because on the Caribell there was an area right behind the tourist class section and that's where we put the pouches, and for that reason we flew tourist class, cabin class.

Q: So, for the first four years in Frankfurt, you basically roamed all over Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Did you pretty much cover all of these countries in that period?

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: I'm tempted to ask you now, just generally, is there any place in the world you haven't been?

THOMPSON: Except for places where the United States has no recognition, I don't think there is. No, I've been everywhere.

Q: You haven't been to North Korea.

THOMPSON: No, or... well now we recognize Albania, but I hadn't been there before. No, I hadn't been to North Korea, and I hadn't been to North Vietnam until recently.

Q: And how about, well Iran, you probably were there.

THOMPSON: Yes, I was.

Q: And Libya?

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: Okay. [laughter]

THOMPSON: [laughter]

Q: And we'll talk about this later, but all over South America, Cuba...

THOMPSON: Yes, I've been to Cuba. But the places where there's no recognition, of course, we didn't go there. But everywhere else I've been to.

Q: Okay.

THOMPSON: For a while there, we didn't go to certain places which were serviced by the Armed Forces Courier Service, ARFCOS. It's now called DCS, Defense Courier Service. Japan, for example, we didn't go there for many years, but we do now.

Q: I think you said something about when you were in the Frankfurt office that sometimes couriers would go across the Atlantic. Did I understand that correctly, or was that handled either by the Armed Forces couriers or by people coming out of Washington?

THOMPSON: Both. Our sister organization, the Defense Courier Service, would in those days feed us from Washington, they would bring the material over to Frankfurt, to the Rhein-Main Airbase, and would be broken down there and we would take it off on our trips. However, we would also supplement this with trips out of Dakar on Pan Am to New York and then down to Washington.

Q: So, instead of things going to West Africa or to Africa in general, often they would be taken from Washington to New York to Dakar, Senegal, and then distributed further and State Department diplomatic couriers would do that.

THOMPSON: Yes. A typical trip would be a courier would leave from Washington and fly up on a private plane to New York, and get on Pan Am to Dakar. Another courier would be waiting there in Dakar and get on the same flight and carry the material to Bissau or maybe all the way to Johannesburg.

Q: And as I recall, Pan American service in those days stopped in a number of other places, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, and so on.

THOMPSON: Yes, it would stop right down the coast all the way.

Q: So that worked out well. You connected with a courier...

THOMPSON: Yes, it was perfect for us. It worked very well for us. You call that a trunk line.

Q: A trunk line.

THOMPSON: And then a person would get off the plane, like for example in my hypothetical, in Dakar and then that person would take the material for Dakar and for some of the countries in the interior, Ouagadougou, Bamako, and so on, and would be based for maybe three or four days in

Dakar and would shuttle in and out of there into these other places.

Q: Using Air France or _____.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: Okay, this is a good beginning to a career as a diplomatic courier. Is there anything else we ought to talk about in terms of the initial four years in Frankfurt?

THOMPSON: Yes, for me it's very interesting that in the beginning when I first started until about 1970, the courier service was restricted to single males, under the age of 31, who had completed their military service, and were college graduates. Those were the requirements. Now, every one of those requirements has changed.

Q: There's no longer an age ceiling.

THOMPSON: There's no longer an age ceiling. Of course, we take females now. There's no education requirement. So it's completely flipped over.

Q: Dick, you served something like 32 years... how many years did you spend...

THOMPSON: Almost 33 years.

Q: Of the people who started in your period, in 1965, were you fairly unique in sticking with it for a full career or did others do so as well?

THOMPSON: I'm not unique, but there were several of us who stuck it out the whole time. Very few of us remained as traveling couriers. Most of us became managers. The people who got out of the courier service, those who have remained in the Foreign Service, have done very well. We have consuls general and many Foreign Service Officers all over the world who started out as diplomatic couriers in those days.

Q: And the way that they moved into other parts of the Foreign Service was through the written examination or was there some sort of lateral...

THOMPSON: It was a lateral movement.

Q: That was done at various times in various ways.

THOMPSON: Yes, there were always openings. As you know these things keep changing, the rules keep changing, and during the late 1960s, '67, '68, '69, there were many of my colleagues who got out of the courier service and became usually consular officers and remained so and then retired.

Q: Consular officers more than, say administrative officers, or security officers?

THOMPSON: Yes, there were a few security officers, but most of my friends became consular officers and I don't know why, but I was told that the consul general in Mexico City once said in the early '70s that he wanted as many couriers as possible to be consular officers because they weren't easily shocked. [laughter]

Q: [laughter] Nothing sufficiently dramatic to shock them. And they also knew the importance of documents and passports and visas and understood the philosophy behind them.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: That was a factor.

THOMPSON: Yes, and I suppose what he meant by that was that maybe they were a little more worldly, a little bit more streetwise than someone who came in from the outside, cold.

Q: How about the characteristic of flexibility? Was that something that was important to careers?

THOMPSON: Absolutely. You have to be able to roll with the punches. You can't get set in your ways. You have to be articulate, sometimes in a place where you don't speak the language. I found that I could use German in many places in Eastern Europe, and I could use Spanish in many places, even in Italy and Portugal. My French was nothing, so I had a difficult time, but I was able to get the idea across in places where I was alone and didn't speak the language.

Q: You carried a diplomatic passport and maybe a special courier pass of some sort?

THOMPSON: Yes, we carried what we called a courier letter, which is provided in the Vienna convention. It's a letter signed by the Secretary of State asking for free passage and making sure that our pouches are inviolate. No one ever asked for that except the Swiss.

Q: Did you have problems sometimes, particularly in this early period with officials who perhaps didn't know about the Vienna Convention or hadn't seen you before?

THOMPSON: Oh, yes. Absolutely. Not just in the early period, but throughout the career, it's still happening that you find sometimes in isolated places, and sometimes surprisingly in big cities. A customs official will ask you to open the bag and you try to explain to him what it is and he still doesn't understand. So, you either open it or put it through an X-ray machine. But we were trained on how to handle these situations and it's never happened to my knowledge that anyone has ever opened a bag.

Q: So you were insistent that bags not be opened or not X-rayed either.

THOMPSON: No. Not examined in any way.

Q: We sometimes have an image from movies and otherwise that a bag, a diplomatic pouch is maybe handcuffed to your wrist and tucked under your elbow and that's it. I assume that

diplomatic pouches often are very large and you were talking about the number of porters that you had to use in some airports, talking about multiple containers, I guess.

THOMPSON: Yes, the United States' interpretation of a diplomatic pouch is very broad. Every country has a different interpretation, and ours is extremely liberal. Sometimes we have crates that weigh thousands of pounds which we put a seal on which is considered a diplomatic pouch. Some countries don't recognize this, and we've had difficulties in the past... not the couriers but the diplomats in certain countries have had difficulty persuading the local foreign offices to accept our interpretation. Some places never did accept it. For example, Dubai I think still won't accept the fact that these crates are pouches, and even the large pouches they won't accept. They will only take small ones to this day.

Q: Now, do other countries employ diplomatic couriers and use them in some way similar to what we do? Would you run into couriers from other countries sometimes on flights?

THOMPSON: Yes. Most frequently, we would run into the Queen's messengers who are the British couriers who were and are retired military officers from the British Army. We had a certain camaraderie with them. Occasionally, we would run into the French, and the Israelis. And the Russians, who traveled in Paris, all over the place, everywhere they went, not just to certain countries as we did.

Q: One of the requirements in this period in the 1960s for a State Department diplomatic courier was that they had completed their military obligation, or not be subject to the draft, I guess. How could you keep up your reserve commitment as a Marine officer?

THOMPSON: The requirement was to have completed your active military service, which I had done, and when I got the job I became an inactive in the Marines and I didn't have to go to meetings any more and four years later they sent me an honorable discharge. Some of my colleagues who were in the Army Reserve were required to go to summer camp and even to attend meetings in Europe.

Q: In Frankfurt, I suppose, there were opportunities to do that.

THOMPSON: Yes.

**G. NORMAN ANDERSON
Russian Language Training
Garmisch (1966-1967)**

G. Norman Anderson studied Russian while he was in the Navy and later attended the Russian Institute at Columbia University. He entered the Foreign Service in 1960 and served in Lebanon, Germany, the Soviet Union, Morocco, Bulgaria, Tunis, Sudan, and Macedonia. He was interviewed by J. P. Moffat on June 18, 1996.

Q: When you returned to Russian training at Garmisch, it must have been a pleasant year.

ANDERSON: That was a very nice year. Our first activity was a week devoted to learning. We had a very good group of Russian former officers, who had mostly defected during World War II. Previously I had studied Russian in the Navy with various princes and counts who had defected or left in 1917. So this second group was an entirely different group, brought up under the Soviet system. So it was complementary to the earlier training.

In any case, after a year in Garmisch I went to Moscow as a rotating trainee, became the assistant administrative officer and later political officer. Actually, administrative work gave us more contact with Russians than political work. I was the liaison officer with the so-called UPDK, which was the organization that took care of all the servicing of embassies, including providing local personnel. So I had to spend much of my time at UPDK headquarters negotiating for drivers and maids and various services. And when the Ambassador's plane came to Moscow I had to organize the unloading of the aircraft, which meant dealing with the KGB, whose officials were all over the cargoes and made life difficult for us. The KGB, for example, came up with new rules for cargo every time the plane came in. Without notice, for example, we were told to list everything on board, all the equipment and things of that kind. Some of the equipment was very sensitive and couldn't be listed, it was in sealed containers. In any case, we very often had a stand-off during which we had to wait at the airport for many hours, but finally the cargo was always released after the KGB had inflicted what pressures it could.

J. RICHARD BOCK
Vice Consul
Bremen (1966-1968)

Richard Bock was born in Philadelphia and raised in Shelton, Washington. He attended the University of Washington and Princeton University and entered the Foreign Service in 1955. His career included posts in Germany, Vietnam, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, and Australia. He was interviewed in 2002 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Where did you go?

BOCK: Bremen, which in those days was a small consulate, a four officer post.

Q: You were there for two years?

BOCK: Yes.

Q: Was the post a consulate or a consulate general?

BOCK: It was a consulate general, but much smaller than the other German consulates general.

Q: Who was the consul general?

BOCK: Leo Goodwin, who was not career Foreign Service. He had been in the military Judge Advocate Corps, I believe. He had had something to do with the Nuremberg trials and then had later on had been in government work and then was named consul general specifically for this assignment.

Q: How many other officers were there?

BOCK: There was one mid-career officer who did the economic work and then two junior officers, including myself. I had the consular assignment and the other junior officer had administrative plus overseeing the USIS operation.

Q: Was the rotational policy in?

BOCK: There was a rotational policy, but it didn't apply to Bremen. We were too small.

Q: So you were doing consular work. What sort of work did you have?

BOCK: Everything except immigrant visas, which was good. I would compare notes with my consular colleagues, many of whom were junior officers elsewhere in Germany. We'd have get-togethers. I thought, "Boy am I lucky" because these were people doing non-immigrant visas all day long or immigrant visas all day long. In my case, it was quite a few non-immigrant visas, most of which were fairly non-controversial. We had a lot of crew lists, since Bremen was a major port. Then there were all the American citizen services, which was considerable, ranging from lost passports to various people with either claims of U.S. citizenship or wanting to renounce U.S. citizenship for one reason or another. Then there was a drawer full of files on crazy people who would show up from time to time and claim this or that.

Q: Were you involved in putting destitute Americans on ships or anything like that?

BOCK: Yes. This was a major problem because other posts in Germany would say, "Go up to Bremen."

Q: I was 10 years before you, but I was down in Frankfurt doing protection and welfare.

BOCK: People always sent them up there.

Q: Oh, yes.

BOCK: Yes. Yes, we had a good number of those. That was always a bit of a struggle.

Q: Can you give me some ideas of some of your more interesting cases that you had to deal with?

BOCK: Well, I really should have written a chapter after I finished Bremen. I was full of stories in those days and I really haven't had a chance to think very much about it since then. I do remember somebody who came in... The consular assistant said, "Mr. So and So wants to see you." She said it in a funny kind of way. I said, "Okay." I was in charge. He came in and was complaining about the implants in his teeth that were receiving signals from the CIA and outer space - all this sort of thing. I finally got him out of my office and came out and sort of rolled my eyes. I said, "Do you know anything about this guy?" She said, "Here's the file on all his previous appearances." I remember one case I was concerned about because this woman was an American citizen who was married to a Hungarian-born stateless person. She had been trying to get him into the United States one way or another and all doors were closed. She hadn't been dealing with me on this. I don't remember where she had been pursuing it. So, she came in and wanted to renounce her American citizenship. She had nothing else to fall back on. It wasn't like a German-American saying, "I want to defer to the German citizenship." So I stalled her and asked Washington for advice and tried to figure out ways to persuade her not to do it. I think ultimately she did it, but we waited a while because she was doing it out of frustration.

Q: Her husband couldn't get a visa?

BOCK: I don't remember what the problem was with her husband. I have a feeling... We had extensive files on people with communist affiliations and many of those files were suspect. But what had happened, of course, is that right after the war you had all these military intelligence people all over Germany. You would know this better than I.

Q: Yes. And they investigated the hell out of-

BOCK: And they investigated. You were coming from a situation where Germany in the '30s was to a certain extent divided between Nazis and communists. And if you weren't a Nazi, then somebody was going to call you a communist. A lot of the stuff got into the files in a fairly undifferentiated fashion. So, they were on a lookout list. I don't remember specifically - this guy was Hungarian, not German, but I have a feeling it may have had something to do with that, that he had something in his file which was preventing him from getting to the United States. It wasn't anything that I had been asked to deal with and I don't think I was in a position to deal with it. We didn't handle immigration matters in Bremen.

Q: Yes. No, we had a lot of cases where, particularly after the Hungarian Revolution, too, a lot of people came in. I was a refugee relief officer at one point. We had these people who were coming out of these camps which were cesspools of intrigue and people would come out with claims that they were Nazi war criminals and communist kommissars. Everybody was informing on everybody else, mainly out of spite or jealousy.

BOCK: Well, I was seeing the legacy of that in the late '60s. There wasn't much new information going into these files at that point, but it was stuff that had been accumulated in the first 10 years after the war and nobody had really sorted out properly. I remember several cases where there were prominent people in the German Social Democratic Party who wanted to go to the United States for one reason or another, perfectly legitimate. You'd get the town burgermeister who would apply for a visa and we'd run into a brick wall in Washington because

we had this thing in the file and we'd have to go through some elaborate waiver process, which was not really appropriate when you were talking about someone high in the government, and in a friendly government.

Q: How did you find German society at that time? Were you able to get around and meet Germans?

BOCK: I was able to get around considerably. I mentioned that I was the consular officer, but this was a post that had no political officer, so I was sort of the fallback political officer, too. The consul general did the high ranking stuff, but to the extent that we did reporting on rallies and that sort of thing, I was encouraged to do that. I also got involved with the youth groups of the political parties and found them very congenial, if sometimes a little overboisterous.

Q: Where did Bremen fit in the political spectrum in Germany?

BOCK: Very SPD. But not left-wing SPD. Bremen was a city-state, so, like Hamburg, you were talking about more left-wing electorate for the large part. You just didn't have the countryside, which would be a more natural basis for the conservative parties. Of course, the real struggle within the Socialist Party took place before I was there as to whether it would come to terms with the division of Germany and with the anchoring of Germany in NATO. All that was over with, but there were still scars within the party in some cities like Hamburg, but in Bremen, that wasn't considered a problem.

Q: Did you get any feel for the relation to Bonn? Did Bonn's hand run heavy or was it way off over to the right?

BOCK: You mean the Bonn embassy?

Q: Yes.

BOCK: It didn't seem to be particularly heavy as it affected me. Unlike a lot of countries, the Bonn embassy's consular district was very small. It was basically Bonn and Cologne. Partly as a result, there was no real supervisory consular officer in Bonn. There was a person who had a kind of a coordinating responsibility, but he was not, I think, as high ranking as some of the senior consular officers in places like Frankfurt or Hamburg. So, from the point of view of consular work, no. I was, of course, on my own with a consul general who knew very little about consular work. I was constantly on the phone to Hamburg. I functioned to some extent as kind of an offshoot of Hamburg, not that they had to clear anything I did, but anytime I had a question, I would call Hamburg.

Q: There, you were able to call on people who had been in the trade for a long time.

BOCK: Yes. So that was helpful.

Q: In the '60s, was there much tourism in the area or students going to the United States?

BOCK: There was a considerable amount of it, I suppose. It wasn't all that heavy, but we certainly had students going on a regular basis. And a number of tourists. I'm sure it was nothing to compare with 20 years later, but it was there.

Q: Did you get any reflection of – this was some years after the Berlin Wall had gone up – the feeling towards East Germany and all?

BOCK: I'm not quite sure how to answer that. I was there at the time of the Grand Coalition in Bonn between Kiesinger and Brandt. So, the issue of how to deal with East Germany was certainly front and center. I don't remember it being a major factor in the politics of the region around Bremen.

Q: Was the Soviet Union considered a threat or was this again something for the citizens of Bremen over the horizon?

BOCK: To the extent I can answer that, I think the Soviet Union was looked on as kind of a boogeyman. Not maybe the immediate threat, but...

Q: You were in the British zone, weren't you? Was there much NATO business going on?

BOCK: Bremen itself was American zone. Bremen had been carved out as an American enclave in the British zone because of the Port of Bremerhaven. We had military down in Bremerhaven, a considerable logistics setup there, which we serviced for consular purposes out of Bremen. There was no significant outside military in Bremen. The Bremen consular district actually covered more than the state of Bremen. It covered the east half of Lower Saxony. There were some British bases scattered around, but nothing that I had much to do with.

Q: How about destitute Americans getting on ships? I remember getting a call from the vice consul in Bremerhaven - at that time, I think we had somebody in Bremerhaven – saying, “You know, you sent this destitute American up here. He's arrived with three suitcases and a set of golf clubs.”

BOCK: Yes. We occasionally put these folks on board military ships. I don't remember any case quite that blatant.

Q: Did you have any Americans in jail?

BOCK: Oh, yes.

Q: How did you deal with them in those days?

BOCK: Well, the basic role we played was not so much to see if they were being treated properly. It was Germany. It wasn't some little dictatorship someplace. But even if they were treated properly, if they needed legal representation, we had our lawyers list. A lot of our responsibility was a question of communicating with somebody back home. Some of them didn't want to. Some did. The most vivid memory I have had to do with a big sailor from the

Mississippi Delta, a black fellow, who was taken off the ship in Bremerhaven on suspicion of having killed one of his shipmates. And they had him in leg irons in a psychiatric ward with a psychiatrist doctor who was scared stiff of him, absolutely scared stiff. And part of the reason was because this sailor spoke with a very heavy accent. Although the psychiatrist spoke English, he didn't speak Mississippi Delta English and he couldn't understand this guy. So, the best thing I could do there was just to try to help these two communicate. I eventually arranged for him to be sent back to the United States. That took some doing and dragged on for months.

Q: When did you leave Bremen?

BOCK: I left at the beginning of '68.

Q: Before the Czechoslovak crisis.

BOCK: Yes. Czechoslovakia was in the news before I left. The Prague Spring was beginning. That was visible before I left. It was quite exciting to some Germans.

Q: By the way, during this time, was our commitment in Vietnam arousing any demonstrations, students?

BOCK: Yes.

Q: How did this manifest itself?

BOCK: We were demonstrated against at the consulate several times. The police were pretty good. They usually knew about it in advance. They'd let us know and they'd be out there with protective force. But we had things, paintbombs, I think, at least, thrown at the consulate. I don't remember any Molotov cocktails. But there were some very angry people out there demonstrating on several occasions. And during the course of my contacts with these political youth groups, too. Clearly in the SPD youth group, this was a major topic.

Q: Did you find them to be hostile toward you?

BOCK: Not toward me personally, no. But they'd become pretty argumentative with you.

BRUCE W. CLARK
Rotation Officer
West Berlin (1966-1968)

Bruce W. Clark was born in Los Angeles, California in 1941. He attended Claremont Men's College from 1958 to 1959 before transferring to Stanford University, where he received his BA in 1962. He also served in the U.S. Army Reserve before joining the Foreign Service in 1966. His career has included positions in countries such as Germany, Vietnam, Belgium, and Saudi Arabia. He

was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 4, 2002.

Q: So you were in Berlin from '66 to...

CLARK: '68.

Q: What was West Berlin like, '66 to '68?

CLARK: The Wall had been built, of course. People had adjusted gloomily to its existence.

Q: It was built in '61, wasn't it?

CLARK: Yes, in '61. The original anger had largely passed and there was a resigned feeling among the Berliners that they would never get rid of the Wall. It was still easy to drive around the city and park. Berlin wasn't exactly a thriving, booming city yet, but the remains of the war were pretty much all gone.

Q: What type of work did you do?

CLARK: Well, I was a first-tour, rotational officer so I served a few months in each of the main sections of the Mission in order to get an idea of which area I might want to specialize in.

Q: Who was the head of the mission?

CLARK: Brewster Morris.

Q: And where'd you start?

CLARK: They put me in the admin section to start with, under Bill Jones, and I guess I was in that section for about three or four months. I went on, I think, to USIA, and then to the economic and the consular sections. Then I was made the aide to the Minister, Brewster Morris, and ended my tour in the Eastern Affairs section.

Q: Was there a lot of tension in Berlin at that time, being in the heart of East Germany and all that?

CLARK: I don't think so, or at least I didn't feel it. There was a lot of interest in Berlin, which was still considered a possible flashpoint in East-West relations, but I think the hot point had passed. Things had settled down. The U.S. Military Liaison Mission was still doing its thing, snooping around East Germany and East Berlin, driving into Russian formations and going into sensitive areas closed to the public. There was a lot of spying on each other, but the Mission wasn't in any day-to-day crisis mode or anything like that.

Q: Did you get involved in interesting episodes, you know, like a G.I. doing the wrong thing or other critical situations? Did you get involved in any of the liaison or dealings with the Soviets?

CLARK: No, that was all taken care of by Sol Polansky, who headed the Eastern Affairs section. He was the guy who did all the things with the Soviets.

Q: Did you have friends or acquaintances in the German population?

CLARK: Yes, I met a few young Germans that I would see from time to time, and through another American FSO, I met a young East German and his friends whom I used to visit from time to time in East Berlin. He later became a doctor in East Germany.

Q: Was the Free University a major center of political activity among young people?

CLARK: I roll my eyes. And how! Of course, the U.S. Mission backed up to the Free University, and the Free University was a hotbed of student unrest. The Berkeley of Europe, I think, while I was there. And all the unrest was brought to a head when the Shah of Iran visited in June 1967. At the time, I was the Mission's protocol officer, so I got to greet him at the airport. I remember escorting our consul general, Alice Clements, to a formal, command performance of an opera in the Shah's honor. As I approached the Opera House, I heard all this yelling and I thought they were all applauding the arrival of the Shah. But they weren't. Eggs and rocks were flying through the air. I ran to get into the opera while the police were flailing their batons to keep the mob at bay. I think that's when the police killed a young man, Benno Ohnesorg. And that led to two years of unrest, if not more. All sorts of demonstrations and violence followed. It was a very bad period in West Berlin's history.

Q: Well, did we feel that students had ties to the East Germans or was this unrest more or less tied to student unrest in the United States and elsewhere, and of course in France?

CLARK: Well, yes, 1968, the year of great student unrest in Germany and France was coming. There was a lot of unrest everywhere, I think, over the war in Vietnam, over the corruption and repression in Iran, and over the old-fashioned, unresponsive faculties and teaching methods in the universities. The Shah, however, already had a huge number of detractors in Germany because of his lavish lifestyle, repressive government and brutal police. What were they called? The SAVAK?

Q: SAVAK.

CLARK: SAVAK. There was a lot of criticism of him anyway, especially in magazines like Der Spiegel, for being a repressive ruler who exploited his people while living lavishly.

Q: Were you close to the Shah when these demonstrations went on?

CLARK: No. I met him at the airport, but the worst demonstration occurred later when the Shah was entering the opera.

Q: By that I mean, were you with him in the car?

CLARK: Oh, no, no. Once he was greeted at the airport by the protocol officers of the three

Allied missions, he was escorted by West Berlin's protocol chief in a big motorcade. In the Opera House I sat nowhere near him. He and his party sat in the imperial box or whatever you want to call it.

Q: While you were there in the Foreign Service, were you picking up any of the American unrest from Vietnam?

CLARK: We were certainly aware of the anti-Vietnam demonstrations in America and Europe and of the critical coverage in the press. But with the Wall and a very repressive Communist state a few miles away, I wasn't very sympathetic to the criticism of our policy in Vietnam.

Q: It was my understanding that for a long time there was practically a theology about West Berlin and what one could do and not do. Everyone had to be very careful not to do anything that could undermine our rights in Berlin or give the Soviets or East Germans an opening to exploit. Our relations and contacts with the Soviets and East Germans were done by the numbers, so to speak, and watched very closely.

CLARK: Oh, yes. You had to be especially careful whenever you traveled in or out - or to or from - the Soviet Sector. You had to be careful how you did it, what documents you had, what documents to show or not show, which guards you spoke to, and whether the guards were allowed to look inside your car or trunk. There were all sorts of things like that.

Q: Were you married at the time?

CLARK: No.

Q: Did you get any feeling for the political life in Germany? For example, who was the mayor of West Berlin at the time?

CLARK: Heinrich Albertz. Willy Brandt had already gone to Bonn several years earlier.

Q: Did West Berlin or West German politics intrude much in what was going on?

CLARK: Not in my world. I really didn't follow Berlin politics very much. The central concerns were the student demonstrations and whether they were going to somehow open Berlin up to Soviet or East German meddling.

Q: From the people you were talking to, was there concern that the student demonstrations might catch on to other elements of society? Trade unions, the intellectuals or something like that, or did they seem to be kind of isolated?

CLARK: I think there was some concern that they could spread. Other people thought not. They thought that the average German worker or citizen was not impressed by these students and violent demonstrations. Student demonstrations are almost a rite of passage in a lot of European countries. But the ones in Berlin were pretty violent.

Q: Why was that?

CLARK: Berlin was particularly attractive to student radicals because it had two major universities, a lot of students, and a long history of tolerating alternative movements and lifestyles. In addition, the FRG subsidized the cost of living in West Berlin and exempted West Berliners from military service. This made it a magnet for anti-government and protesters. But even today there seems to me to be a peculiar tolerance among many young Germans for those who like an opportunity to trash streets and break windows and cause a big fuss.

Q: Were there any spectacular escapes or attempts to break over the Wall when you were there?

CLARK: Attempts to escape were common. I don't recall any particularly spectacular escapes or attempts, but it seems to me that while I was there one group escaped through an extensive tunnel.

Q: Was everyone in the Mission very careful not to get involved in trying to get people out from East Germany?

CLARK: Absolutely. We weren't even supposed to take letters back and forth for fear that it might somehow be a plot to involve the United States or one of its diplomats and create a problem.

Q: Was there a feeling that, as a single man, the Soviets might set up traps, you know honey traps with girls and things like this, in order to involve you in a compromising situation that they could exploit?

CLARK: Well, I socialized mainly with members of the U.S. Mission and other diplomats, so I don't know. I suppose if you were a serviceman who went out to bars, etc., in the areas frequented by U.S. Army types you might well find yourself targeted by some young woman. But that was not much of a problem in diplomatic circles as far as I knew.

Q: Was the diplomatic life and work there with the French, British and Germans and all, pretty interesting?

CLARK: Just as in the American mission, it seemed that the other missions had an awful lot of bright young people. My counterpart in the British mission became the British ambassador in Bonn and later Washington. Anyway, he rose very fast to the top levels of the British foreign service. I think a lot of foreign services sent some of their brightest people to Berlin. At the time, Berlin and Yugoslavia were two areas that got a lot of attention in the Department.

Q: Yes, I was in Yugoslavia from '62 to '67 with Larry Eagleburger, David Anderson and Jim Bullenstein, I mean I never ran across such a bright group later in the Foreign Service. Did being in Berlin entice you to change your specialty or geographic area??

CLARK: Not my preference for political work. But I changed from being interested in Latin America to being interested in Europe because when I went on vacation and saw other parts of

Europe, I really liked it.

SOL POLANSKY
Political Officer
West Berlin (1966-1968)

Ambassador Polansky was born in New Jersey and raised in New Jersey and California. He was educated at the University of California, Berkeley, and the Russian Institute, New York City. After service in the U.S. Navy, he joined the Department of State in 1952 and was commissioned Foreign Service Officer in 1957. A Russian specialist, he served in Poznan, East and West Berlin, Moscow, Vienna and Sofia, Bulgaria, where he served as United States Ambassador from 1987 to 1990. In his tours at the State Department in Washington, D.C. he dealt primarily with East Europe Affairs. Ambassador Polansky was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

Q: You moved from Soviet affairs in 1966 and went to West Berlin where you served from 1966-1968. What were you doing there?

POLANSKY: I was in the section that nominally dealt with what was going on in East Germany and I acted as the liaison officer with the Soviet Embassy in East Berlin on political matters relating to the four power occupation of Berlin and if there were problems related to the US Military Mission in East Berlin. We would talk with the East Germans and Soviets about it and that was one of my responsibilities. It was basically two things. One was looking at the East Berlin/East German media to try and get some idea of political, economic, and foreign policy developments of the East German regime and then dealing with the Soviet Embassy on a variety of bilateral issues.

Q: What were your main concerns during this period from 1962 until 1966?

POLANSKY: There was concern about Germany and about Soviet/German relations and how that had an impact on us.

Q: Did we feel that West Germany was solidly in the western camp or did we feel that if the Soviets made the right moves they could nudge them towards a neutral position?

POLANSKY: There was some concern about that, but it was not overwhelming. The Russians couldn't offer Germany anything at that point that could induce it towards any kind of neutrality.

Q: Did we feel that there was much for the Soviets, either through their surrogate Communist parties in Western Europe or as a military force to mess around in Western Europe?

POLANSKY: Nothing really pops out.

Q: Khrushchev left the scene in about 1966.

POLANSKY: Yes, but I remember more about when Malenkov and Kosygin left the scene. I remember more about the business of Khrushchev secret speech about Stalin, which we didn't know about until later. It was the 20th Congress speech.

Q: How did you find dealing with the Soviets on these bilateral issues. They were mostly military problems right?

POLANSKY: Some were military problems not all. There was also the question of unimpeded US civilian access to East Berlin. We went through a process of trying to work out a pass system that civilian members of the US Mission in West Berlin could use to enter without being checked by East Germans. They were, but we worked out with the Russians a system of a flag card, which had identification on it, which the East Germans were not permitted touch, but was held up as one went through the checkpoint. That was a form of identification, but we maintained the fiction that the East Germans were not controlling us. With a certain amount of cooperation from the Russians, that kind of system went into effect, presumably making it easier for Americans to enter East Berlin without being checked by the East German guards.

Q: Did you have problems with American military units getting into trouble?

POLANSKY: Yes, periodically, but they never evolved into major problems. There was a standard protest from the Russians on behalf of the East Germans and vice versa. It never became a major sticking point in the relationship.

Q: Someone was interviewing Pete Day, who said he discovered, through bitter experience that usually the Soviets, when they complained, had a reason for complaining. He couldn't really trust the American military with giving him the straight story because usually some guys in a jeep were screwing up somewhere and they were trying to cover up.

POLANSKY: I think there may have been some of that and certainly with the Military Liaison Mission field trips. They were out looking for whatever they could find in terms of Soviet and East German forces and equipment. There were certainly cases in which they strayed over the line. My own recollection was that was more the case with the Military Liaison Mission people, who were better trained, and were competent in Russian or German, than it was the case of stray US Military units in East Berlin itself, either as a result of being on tours or patrol in East Berlin. There were regular patrols in East Berlin, but there aren't too many cases where they were at fault.

Q: Did you have any contact with East Germans at all?

POLANSKY: We tried to and did have some contact with a very select number of people. It didn't amount to an awful lot.

Q: Did you have much work with the East German authorities?

POLANSKY: No. We had, at least speaking about myself, we had contact with the media world in West Berlin. Brandon Grove and others had the responsibility of liaison with the West Berlin government in terms of the US Military Mission. I had no official responsibilities with the West German or West Berlin governments. The relations we had with West Berliners were really social.

Q: Were there any major problems in this two year period?

POLANSKY: No. The main issue was getting the flag system for access to East Berlin down pat. There were not any major issues. We left West Berlin for our next assignment in Moscow right on the eve of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. In fact, we were in East Berlin having dinner with the Finnish commercial representative in East Berlin when it happened. Had we stuck to our original travel plans, we would have been traveling through Czechoslovakia to Moscow by car, but for our own personal reasons, we revised the plans to go up to northern Germany and take a ferry to Helsinki and then down to Moscow. You couldn't tell the night we were in East Berlin. It was quiet and then we came back and heard about it.

Q: Did that have any effect on what we did there?

POLANSKY: We left literally about that time. We were listening to West German newspaper correspondents who were broadcasting from Prague about what was happening and then subsequently met one of them on vacation in Greece. We left right after that happened and got to Moscow under the atmosphere of the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

**DENNIS KUX
Political Officer
Bonn (1966-1969)**

Ambassador Dennis Kux was born in England in 1931 and emigrated to New York, New York in 1933. He graduated from Lafayette College in Pennsylvania in 1952 with a degree in history. He entered the U.S. Army in 1952, working as a prisoner of war interrogator. Ambassador Kux's Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Pakistan, Turkey, and the Ivory Coast. He was interviewed by Thomas Stern on January 13, 1995.

KUX: Bonn was an enormous Embassy, with a 13 or 14 man Political Section. There were subsections which dealt with East Germany, the U. S. Military, the Atlantic Alliance, Labor, and Internal Political Affairs. I was in the Internal Political Affairs office, which also handled Germany's relations with the Third World. We had very capable people in all of the sections. The staff of the Political Section, in terms of brain power, was the best that I ever worked with in the Foreign Service.

In Germany the task of a political reporting officer was a combination of between newspaper work and public relations. My particular assignment was to follow a part of the German political

scene -- specifically, the Left Wing. So I actually started with a small center party -- the Free Democrats [or FDP]. Then, when I became more familiar with the situation, I was given the Socialist Party of Germany [SPD] as well. Later, after students became a problem in 1968, I was asked to report on the student movement. This was my beat. My job was to report on significant developments in my area of the German political spectrum. I followed what the political parties were doing by reading the newspapers, meeting members of the political parties, attending party conventions, and pretty much doing what a newspaperman would do, if he were covering this beat.

I spent time on university campuses trying to understand the student movement. However, dealing with the student "Left" was rather a specialized thing. There I did essentially the same thing. I went to some of the conventions and the offices of the student movement. I met with the leaders; I sought out what their ideas were -- very much as a newspaperman would do. Then I would come back to the Embassy and write up a report. I remember attending the Socialist Party convention. I went to the Conservative Party convention later in Berlin, stayed there the whole time, and sent off a cable to the Department on what had happened.

Our office also covered the German Parliament. I would go there when there were important debates. We had a German national there, all the time, filling us in on the debates. If we thought that there were some matters which were of special interest, I would go down and cover these.

Periodically I would draft a "round up" analysis in which I tried to convey where things seemed to be going. In Germany you had a lot of elections. Not only were there the general elections for the Federal Parliament, which are held every four years, but each of the "laender," -- the provinces [or states] -- have their own parliamentary or "Landtag" elections. They are on different schedules, staggered throughout the year, depending on the date when the local government was set up during the Allied occupation after World War II. These state elections have an impact nationally. Consequentially, there was a whole cycle of information that we were sending back to Washington.

We reported back to Washington in two ways -- either in what was called an "Airgram" [report sent back by diplomatic pouch] or in a telegram. An airgram was then duplicated in Washington in the State Department and sent around to all of the various offices in the Department and other U. S. Government agencies, including the intelligence community, which were interested in the subject. In those days about 100 copies of each airgram were distributed.

In the case of a telegram, of course, the report went back faster, and it received a somewhat similar distribution. If I remember correctly, about 85 or 90 copies of telegrams were distributed. Sometimes, you had very "hot" [sensitive] subjects. For example, I remember when the Socialist Party decided to break with the U. S. position on Vietnam. It was clear that something like this was coming. I was friendly with the spokesman of the Socialist Party. I called him up and asked if I could come down to see him. He agreed and then gave me a "read out," as I recall, on what happened at the party leadership meeting earlier that day. That night I went back to the Embassy and sent off a cable to Washington explaining the SPD decision. The next morning the weekly Embassy staff meeting was held. The Ambassador, George McGhee, asked me to report on what had happened at the SPD leadership meeting, which I did, essentially giving the same report I

had sent into Washington.

I was not really aware of the second part, or public relations aspect, of the assignment when I got to the Embassy in Bonn. That was making contacts and explaining US policies with members of the Bundestag [Federal Parliament] and party officials. I picked the younger members of the Bundestag across the political spectrum as my "target group." It turned out that, at age 35, I was the youngest person in the Political Section. There were some 80 members of the German Parliament who were under 40. Few people in the Embassy knew any of them. I set about meeting them.

We had an assistant in the Political Section which made it easier for us to contact members of Parliament -- arranging for office calls, lunches, and so forth. Maybe once or twice a week I would see someone whom I selected almost at random. What it meant was that, at any given time, I had just seen somebody and I was able to keep quite current on developments.

When I first arrived in Bonn, I was not at all familiar with the German political scene. I became more familiar with it and got to know "who was who." At the beginning, as I suggested, it was really something of a random series of contacts with members of the German Parliament. By the time I left Bonn in 1969, I had a fair number of contacts and had become good friends with some of them. I would invite them to lunch. They were very happy to come, sit, and talk. In Germany at the time it was seen as a "good thing" to be talking with somebody from the American Embassy -- even a lowly Second Secretary. That surprised me, although perhaps "surprise" is the wrong word. I hadn't had this experience before. The Germans were intensely serious, very interested in American policy, not only on questions of German politics, but on any issues of global import, such as what was happening in Vietnam and Latin America and what we thought of various NATO issues. An issue which was very important at the time was the "Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty." I found that, in effect, I became a spokesman or salesman for American foreign policy with my parliamentary and political contacts. I spent a lot of time keeping up on the various issues. Those I dealt with were very intelligent people, well-educated, and very interested in world affairs. So it was an interesting experience for me.

You had to work at establishing contacts. It did not happen by itself. I was happy to have the assistant do the phone calling. At that time, the German deputies in the Bundestag did not have assistants. So they would answer the phone themselves. They had small, government allotted apartments when they were in Bonn -- like efficiency apartments, which also doubled as their offices. So it was often hard to get in touch with people.

Most politicians, but not all of the students were willing to talk to us. When I called on the leader of the most radical group, the SDS, he was not too happy to meet with me. Finally I just went to their office in Frankfurt. I said: "Here I am. I am Dennis Kux of the American Embassy." It was a little awkward talking to the head of the SDS. On the wall there was a scrawled sign, "Fuck LBJ." Still, we somehow got through the conversation. The whole student viewpoint seemed strange to me. The SDS were real revolutionaries, but highly theoretical. Germany had done so well after the war consider the disaster the country faced. It was hard for me to understand why they wanted to revolt. But they surely did.

Once I had an appointment with the leader of the West German Communist Party [KPD] who lived in Dusseldorf. I called and made an appointment. He was definitely not happy to see me and it was a rather cold conversation. As I said, I took the "vacuum cleaner" approach. What we were doing was keeping informed on German politics. So we were gathering information on a "rolling" basis. If I couldn't get in touch with Mr. X, I saw Mr. Y.

My boss, Hans Imhof, introduced me to the press spokesmen of the major parties. They were not necessarily very influential, but they were very knowledgeable. Indeed, Edward Ackermann, the spokesman for the CDU [Christian Democratic Union] -- the conservative party -- has just recently retired. He had eventually become part of Chancellor Kohl's inner circle. I knew the spokesmen for the Socialists, the Free Democrats, and the Christian Democrats. They were very well informed on internal party matters. I also had a modest amount of contacts with the Foreign Ministry since our office in the Political Section also covered Germany's relations with the Third World. We went around to the Foreign Ministry from time to time. We didn't spend a lot of time on that.

CIA covered some of the same issues and personalities as we did. There was some duplication in official U. S. coverage of various sources. The U. S. had built up, during the occupation days just after World War II, an extensive intelligence network in Germany. The Germans didn't seem to mind talking on an overt basis to representatives of two different U. S. Government agencies. They knew that I was part of the Department of State and someone else was from CIA. But of course the CIA had in addition some confidential relationships with people. Some of our senior CIA people were "declared" and were well known to the German Government with whom they work in a liaison relationship. The reporting system was very different for each agency. Although we might have reported on the same issues, State and CIA reported them differently. The Agency reports what Mr. X or Mrs. Y said. It had a check list of specific questions. After writing a summary of any conversation which a CIA man might have had, the "Station" [CIA office in an Embassy] would add a comment at the very end, separately. In the State Department, we didn't usually just report what Mr. X or Mrs. Y said. That would have been a "Memorandum of Conversation." When we sent in a report, we tried to synthesize different conversations and other information. The "comment" was usually woven into the story, more like a newspaper article, although we also sometimes added a comment at the end when we were reporting a conversation with a senior person. The main difference was the "Station" didn't do the analysis in their reporting while Embassy messages did. For CIA, the theory was that the analysis was done in Washington and not in the field intelligence report.

I felt that in general there was over reporting from Germany because the Political Section in Bonn was too big. That was a legacy of the occupation [of Germany], when we covered everything. I didn't think that all of the information we sent in was really needed. But I was tremendously impressed with the staff of the Embassy in Bonn.

I served two Ambassadors, George McGhee and Henry Cabot Lodge. McGhee was a very capable and hard-driving man, a trait was not always helpful to him in Germany. He was too hard a driver, too activist in his approach in Germany during a time of transition in U. S.-German relations. Germany was well beyond the occupation phase and was coming back into its own. Ambassador McGhee was, by nature, a little too "pro-consular." He also didn't speak German

which was an enormous handicap. He got off to a bad start when he had his picture taken, presenting his credentials to the German President, with his hand in his pocket. That was something that was not done in Germany and gave him the image of a "gauche" Texan.

He was replaced as Ambassador by Henry Cabot Lodge, who, in a way, was the reverse. He was very relaxed and had two advantages which McGhee didn't have. He spoke German. He had a German governess when he was a child. The Germans appreciated that. Furthermore, he was an American aristocrat, and the Germans appreciated that. The Germans tend to be rather snobbish. They liked the idea of having somebody from an old American family who was well-connected. They also liked his relationship with the German Government. Ambassador McGhee was constantly on the phone, trying to arrange to see the Chancellor, asking about this or that. Ambassador Lodge rarely took the initiative. Indeed, it was the other way around. The German Chancellor would be the one trying to see Ambassador Lodge. Ambassador Lodge probably better fitted our policy at the time than McGhee.

McGhee -- inadvertently -- created frictions with the Germans by being too much of an activist. McGhee was constantly on the road speaking whenever he could, whereas Ambassador Lodge waited for an invitation. Basically, Lodge let the Embassy "do its thing." He was much more relaxed about running the Embassy. He didn't stay that in Bonn for very long. He was just there for about nine months, but it was a happier, more relaxed Embassy than it had been under George McGhee.

My first DCM was the extraordinarily capable, "Mr. Germany," Martin Hillenbrand, who suffered a bit under Ambassador McGhee. But I think that anybody would have, because McGhee was so much of an activist and so demanding. He was into everything and worked long hours. Martin Hillenbrand left to become Ambassador to Hungary. He was replaced by Russ Fessenden, who, as I remember, was more "laid back." He let his staff "do its thing," but he was also very capable.

I had two Political Counselors, both very capable and very different. Jim Sutterlin was the first one. He was a person who could work very rapidly and very effectively, seemingly without any effort. He was very quiet. He knew Germany extremely well. I think that he went on to be the chief of the German desk and then was the head of Policy Planning.

He was replaced by Jonathan "Jock" Dean, who was very, very different in style. Jock was high profile, worked more or less constantly, and was also extremely knowledgeable about Germany. Jock dominated the Embassy. Just after Jock first came to the Embassy, I remember going into his office one day. He had a rather abrupt manner. I was trying to explain what I did. He said: "Well, what the hell is it that you do?" -- or something like that. However, we got along pretty well. He was intensely interested in the substance of things and instituted the practice of having lunch once a week with someone at a senior level of the German Government. He sort of did what we were doing in the internal section, but at a higher level.

During my last year in Bonn, I was "de facto" in charge of the internal Political Section, we had a variety of personnel problems. In effect, nobody was in charge of the Section. Jock tended to work with me, so I would go to the lunches which he hosted. He would invite the heads of the

different Parliamentary groups and other important Germans. These were very interesting meetings. I believe Dean was instrumental in developing the Berlin Agreement. I think that Jock was the "behind the scenes" architect of the Berlin Agreement. He was very much involved in things like that.

One thing that I felt was unfortunate there was that the American community was so large that it became self-contained. When I first arrived in Bonn, all official Americans lived in the "Golden Ghetto," the American housing area along the Rhine in Plittersdorf. That, at first it struck me as awful. In Washington we had lived in the District, on Capitol Hill. When I arrived in Bonn, I thought that I had moved into some suburban development in Virginia, which I didn't like at all. However, I had three little kids -- and school was just down the street. The kids could tumble out into the yard and play with dozens of other kids. That was an offsetting advantage.

In May 1968, I was promoted to FSO-3 or First Secretary and we moved into a bigger apartment. This was the "high rent district" on Turmstrasse with a direct view on the Rhine. Those were really lovely apartments. They were bigger, had more bedrooms, larger living rooms, and so forth. You weren't surrounded by other apartments. In theory I would have liked to have lived outside the American compound. I guess that by the time that became possible -- toward the end of my tour -- it wasn't worth it to move. I was just too comfortable where we were.

Also, by then, I had a lot of German contacts. We had developed our own style of living. I couldn't have done the job I did if I had just stayed in "Little America." So we got out of the compound frequently. I must say that living in the American compound was not a bar to having contacts. Quite the contrary. The Germans I knew were quite happy to come there. Also, it wasn't just all Americans living there. A number of apartments were rented out to Germans. Somebody had the idea of making a "swap." In the cities where we had Consulates, the German Government rented places for our people, and we, in turn, gave the Germans apartments in Bonn. At the time these Plittersdorf flats were regarded as prize apartments by Germans.

In addition, the American Club which, I assume, had been put up during the occupation, was something which Germans liked. The American Club, which was close to our apartment, was not just a place to which only Americans belonged. The Germans were quite happy to come to lunch there and to be members. Still, if my job hadn't required to be in contact with a lot of people, I probably would have had a lot more trouble breaking through the cultural barrier between Germans and Americans.

Among the special memories I have of the assignment was the visit of President Johnson for Konrad Adenauer's funeral. I was control officer for George Meany [President of the AFL/CIO], who had trouble walking. The Labor Attaché was on home leave and wasn't there at that time, so I took care of George Meany. He literally needed help from me and from a young German from one of the German labor unions. To walk, Meany had to lean on each of us. I got to know him quite well during the course of his stay. Because it was a Presidential visit, the rest of the Embassy virtually ignored Meany. Everybody else was involved with the President and with the other members of his party. Meany liked to talk and was pretty free in his comments, blistering about Bobby Kennedy. At the end of the funeral Mass for Adenauer, Meany had me accompany him to a reception, attended by all of the European leaders and other notables. I remember

Meany, with his Bronx accent, walking up to an Italian, "Mario, how are ya? What're you doing these days? I haven't seen you in Washington for a while." The Italian replied, "Well, I am now the Prime Minister of Italy."

Another trip I recall the most vividly was a Congressional visit -- Congressman Wayne Hayes. Hayes and a Congressional delegation more or less "dropped out" of the sky. They were a parliamentary delegation going to Brussels for a NATO meeting and couldn't land in Brussels. They landed in Frankfurt instead. I was assigned as the control officer because I was the first person that the DCM ran into in the embassy. I was told to go over to the Petershof, a luxury hotel across the Rhine River, and to take care of the delegation which was going to stay there. The Embassy was ready to go all out since Hayes was the chairman of the subcommittee that passed on State's funding. The other Congressmen were not a problem. However, Wayne Hayes was a difficult person to deal with. That weekend was quite an experience.

Congressman Hayes, who was the leader of the delegation, arrived about 15 or 20 minutes after I got to the hotel. He got out of his car -- not an Embassy car but a car from the Consulate General in Frankfurt. He was with a young lady -- he said she was his "secretary" -- and off they went upstairs. Some 15 or 20 minutes after that, a bus arrived with the other five or six Congressmen in it.

They were all talking about the "big scene" at the Frankfurt airport, when Congressman Hayes arrived. Apparently, Hayes had cabled ahead that he wanted this or that kind of bus and that they would all travel by bus. However, when Congressman Hayes arrived, he insisted on a car for himself. As the Commanding General at the air base hadn't provided what Congressman Hayes wanted, Hayes proceed to chew that general up and down. Hayes read the riot act to this general because he hadn't provided a car, and Congressman Hayes was going to have to ride in a bus. The Consul General in Frankfurt said: "Mr. Congressman, take my car." So Hayes took the Consul General's car. They zoomed off and then ran out of gas! Anyway, by the time that Congressman Hayes arrived in Bonn, he had calmed down. The other Congressmen were all reverberating about what had happened.

It turned out that Congressman Hayes, as the chairman of the group, had virtually dictatorial powers over what they did. That night they all ate at the hotel. I became the "bag man." The Congressmen had the right to draw money. I had the money, and all they had to do was to sign vouchers with me. There was a system, about which the Administrative Counselor of the Embassy, briefed me. The wife of one of the Congressmen was also there -- the wife of Congressman Mendel Rivers [Democrat, South Carolina]. He was then Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. Congressman Rivers wasn't there, but his wife was. (Later I learned he had disappeared on a bender in London) She asked me for some money, and I gave her Congressman Rivers' money. There was a number of Congressional staffers along, including the Staff Director for the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He was a very senior man -- supposedly a power on the Hill. He came up to me, sweating profusely, and he said: "You gave Mrs. Rivers money. Did the Chairman Hayes approve?" I said: "I don't know. I didn't ask." He said: "Oh, my God! You can't do that!" Then he said: "I'll be back in a second." Five minutes later he came back and said: "Whew! It's OK. But never give out money without checking with Cong. Hayes."

Also visiting Bonn at that time, was the chief or deputy chief of the Foreign Buildings Office [FBO], the office which controls State Department buildings overseas. When he heard that Congressman Hayes was in town, he shot over to the Petershof. He didn't get more than 10 feet away from Hayes for the rest of the trip. He kept mumbling: "Mr. Chairman this and Mr. Chairman that." It was shameful but sad.

There were very senior Congressmen in the Hayes delegation. Congressman Les Arends was the leading Republican, Congressman Jack Brooks, a Democrat from Texas, and there were a couple others. The weather was bad the next day, so the Hayes delegation stayed in Bonn. The Marine Ball [November 10, anniversary of the foundation of the Marine Corps] was held at this time. Congressman Hayes decided that he was going to go to Cologne or someplace else. He wasn't going to the Marine Ball. He wanted a specific type of car. I turned to the Administrative Counselor and he got the right type of car. I remember that he told me that if Hayes asked a car with for one green tire, one red tire, and one blue tire, we would not argue with him, but it.

We arranged for a control officer for each of the Congressmen; each got an Embassy car, and they went off in different directions for the day. That night, everybody but Congressman Hayes went to the Marine Ball, and the congressmen had a good time. Congressman Hayes got hold of me and said that on the next morning the group were going to go to Brussels by bus. Congressman Hayes had told me: "You arrange for the bus." He specified what kind of bus it was supposed to be. But then he said that he was not going in that bus. Only the others were. He wanted to travel to Brussels in an Embassy car. He said, "I want you to be here with the car. Be here at 8:30 AM sharp with the car, and don't tell anybody. The others won't be up."

So I got hold of my friendly Administrative Counselor. We got the car. The Administrative Counselor had been wise and had positioned backup cars, out of view. I had to cross the Rhine River on a ferry to get to the Petershof Hotel. The only thing that could wrong -- I thought that I had enough time -- was that the Rhine would get fogged in and the ferry wouldn't run. That happened, maybe, once a year. I got down to the ferry, having left home at 8:00 AM. It should have taken about 10 minutes to get over to the Petershof Hotel. I had allowed myself plenty of time. And what happened? The Rhine fogged in. I was stuck down at the damned ferry for 10 or 15 minutes. Fortunately the Embassy had a radio system. At 8:20 AM I heard Congressman Hayes -- calling from the hotel -- saying: "Where's the Embassy car?". Just at that moment, miraculously, the fog lifted, the ferry went over, and I arrived at 8:29:30 AM. Congressman Hayes said: "Good morning, Mr. Kux." He got in the car with his "secretary" and off they went.

About 15 or 20 minutes later down came Congressman Les Arends, the ranking Republican on the delegation. They were all coming down for breakfast, but he happened to be the first one down. He said: "Where's Hayes?" I said, "Well, Mr. Arends, he is gone to Brussels." Arends said: "He is gone to Brussels? How did he go?" I said: "In a car." Arends asked: "Who gave him the car? We are all traveling by bus." I said: "Well, he asked for a car, so we gave him a car." Arends said, "Oh, you gave him a car?" He said: "Now that I am the ranking member of the delegation here, can you get me a car?" I said: "Yes, Mr. Arends." He said: "That's fine. I will be leaving in 15 minutes after I have finished my breakfast." So, 15 minutes later, Mr. and Mrs. Arends sneaked out in a car. So off went Congressman Arends. As he was going off, the other congressmen came down for breakfast and asked: "Where the hell is he Arends going? What's

going on here?" Then the bus arrived, but it was a pretty rickety bus. The next ranking congressman said: "Well, I want a car, too." By now the others were there, and they started joshing him. In the end, everybody rode in the bus, and they used the extra car for excess baggage. And off they went, but it was quite a weekend.

The DCM was breathing easier. Congressman Hayes, apparently, had raised such hell in Frankfurt that he later had the American general commanding the U. S. Air Force installation transferred. I got a profuse letter of thanks -- a commendation -- from Bill Macomber, who was in charge of Congressional Relations in the State Department. That was a memorable weekend.

What struck me about Germany in the late 1960s was that the Germans had successfully come through the rebuilding of their country. They were very much a going concern. The country was successful economically and, I thought, politically. Things worked very well. The Federal Parliament was very impressive and serious about things. There was a high level of voting and quite a stable, functioning democracy. However, what struck me was how insecure the Germans were. They felt that all of this might vanish, somehow. They were very fearful of the Soviets. They were psychologically insecure about themselves. Hitler and World War II had been a terrible trauma. They had to start all over, having lost part of their country. They had created something, but the people who were leading the new Germany had lived through a long, dreadful experience. Even twenty years later they hadn't shaken off that experience. They viewed their resurrection through a prism which was hard for an outsider to appreciate. Maybe I had the advantage of not being a German specialist. I was struck by this lack of confidence, whereas a German specialist might have taken it for granted. They were genuinely fearful of the Russians, of the Soviet presence, of the Soviet threat. They leaned on the United States as their "security blanket," in a psychological sense.

I think that the Germans also appreciated the way that the United States had treated them during the occupation and the early post-war period. They knew that we had treated them much better than they themselves had treated other people. The Germans can be pretty rough. They are a lot rougher than we are. You always think of German foreign policy being run in the way the Germans drive on the autobahn at 90 miles an hour. If you're in the way, watch out! They'll run over you. We Americans didn't act that way, and I have a feeling that the Germans appreciated that. We could have been rougher than we were -- as some of the Europeans were -- but we weren't. So we didn't face the resentment that might be expected naturally among some people. There was a psychological dependence, and the Germans also felt a physical dependence on the United States.

Often, Germans would say: "All through our modern history Germany has suffered from having bad allies. We have always picked the losers. This time, we have not."

A development that I reported on -- the 1968 student rebellion -- still puzzles me, to this day. They were rebelling against "having it so good." They did not have the experience of fighting in the war. They were in their late teens or early 20s in 1968, so many were really born after the war. They didn't have the experience of Hitler. I remember one Socialist Party meeting where one of the Leftists was heckling Willy Brandt. He blew up and said: "What the hell do you know? We rebuilt this country from the ashes." The young man shouted back at him: "Well, you

destroyed it first. It was the Germans who destroyed it, and not somebody else. So what is so great about rebuilding something that you, yourself, destroyed?"

The students had a very peculiar outlook, which didn't seem to be any cause for a revolution, but they really wanted to carry out a revolution. They were university students, children of the upper middle class and upper class. They considered themselves as intellectuals. They had accepted a Marxian view of society that was really to the left of the Maoism. They felt that capitalism was bad, that the Marxism practiced by the Soviet Union was bad, and that what was needed was a "real revolution." I read their writings, and it just went right by me. I could report on it because I knew what the people were saying, but, for the life of me, I never really understood it. I knew that there was a part of German society was addicted to highly theoretical approaches -- which this was. That part had been historically left behind, and this was another example of that. There were a few things that they were complaining about which were legitimate gripes -- university traditions, and so forth. However, I didn't fathom the general outlook. Maybe it was a generational thing for me.

PATRICK E. NIEBURG
Lecturer/Speech Writer, USIS
Bonn (1966-1969)

Patrick E. Nieburg joined USIS in 1962. He held positions in Bolivia, Brazil, Vietnam, Germany, Sweden, and Turkey. Later he was the Director of Radio in the American Sector and Director of Foreign Language Broadcasts of the Voice of America. Mr. Nieburg was interviewed by Allen Hansen in 1988.

NIEBURG: But I should say that while I was "rewarded" with a Bonn assignment, so was the Ambassador in Vietnam, Henry Cabot Lodge. I had hoped to escape from him because I had a run-in with him in Saigon during a cocktail party -- and there were quite a number of those amongst the Saigon warriors, as we called them. I had been imbibing a little bit more than I should have -- felt no pain. And I talked to the Ambassador. And I asked him: "Mr. Ambassador, do you remember when you were running for Vice President in the 1960 campaign?" And he said: "Sure." I said: "Well, I was running for Congress at that particular time and you came to my district and talked. I was a Democrat. And after you came to my district I think I picked up a couple of hundred votes."

Well, he looked at me and he did not feel amused at all. I had felt no pain. I didn't give it any further thought. But you can imagine that when I was transferred to Bonn I was rather pleased to escape Ambassador Lodge. But lo and behold, he too was rewarded for his faithful service in Vietnam and became Ambassador to Bonn. Since I was information officer, and also press attaché, my job also involved some speech writing. I remember being called to his office to discuss a speech. He saw me. He said: "Not that man. Get him out of my office." I could hear him today because I was so pleased. Speech writing was not one of my favorite occupations. So I was relieved of that particular duty.

While I was in Germany -- because of my relationship with Ambassador Lodge -- I tried to spend as much time out of the office as I could. Actually I arranged for a very extensive, almost continuous, on-going lecture program on Vietnam and Vietnamese problems and questions. I lectured at universities, at political clubs, at civic organizations. I remember very vividly being invited by the student body of the Free University of Berlin to talk about Vietnam. When I arrived, there were the police. There were police dogs. There was a huge banner of the Viet Cong. And there was a very rowdy group of students who did not want to let me speak. Which was all right with me, but they had invited me to come in the first place.

They told me: "Dammit, we know this is a bunch of lies and we don't want to hear about Vietnam. We want you to talk about the Brazilian government's genocide of the Amazon Indians." Well, that may have sounded facetious. But I told them that I was quite willing and quite prepared to talk to them since I had served in Brazil. That ended the argument. I must say I never got to give my speech on Brazilian Indians in the Amazon Basin because the crowd got so unruly. Eggs were thrown. Objects were thrown. I was ultimately rescued by the police and their dogs and went back to my hotel.

That was not one of my more successful lecture pursuits. But I lectured widely and I hope judiciously in the sense that I came prepared with a great deal of background material, of history and tried to really give a historical approach to these various problems and to defend U.S. Administration policies as best as I could. There was a lot of logic to it. Certainly my heart was in it. So the Agency actually saw fit to reward me for this particular effort.

I of course lectured in German since I am bilingual in German. That surprised many of the audience. Of course, they all remarked that I had somewhat of a Prussian accent which is quite true.

ROBERT L. BARRY
Russian Language Training & US Army Training
Garmisch-Partenkirchen (1967-1969)

Ambassador Barry was born and raised in Pennsylvania. He attended Dartmouth College, Oxford University, St. Anthony's College, and Columbia. He served in the US Navy and entered the Foreign Service in 1962. He served in Yugoslavia, the USSR, Sweden, and Indonesia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1996.

Q: Well, fair enough I mean all of us were doing things and I mean this was how, you know, how any office operates. Then did you get on to the Garmisch-Partenkirchen gravy train or not?

BARRY: I did. I guess the other thing that I did during that period on two or three separate occasions was to go up to the UN General Assembly to be sort of general handyman, note taker and things like that and to help deal with Soviet affairs from that angle in a very minor way. In fact I remember the first year I was up there I was told by the political counselor at the U.S.

Mission to the UN since I was a Soviet hand I ought to go out to the airport and meet all these distinguished Soviet experts who were coming in to be there for Rusk's discussions with Gromyko. I took one of the mission's big cars out to the airport and I was picking up Tommy Thompson and Chip Bohlen. These were names that were familiar to me, but I couldn't recognize one of them if they stepped on me. I went out there in my best meeting and greeting style and said to the wrong one, "Hello, Ambassador Bohlen. My name is Barry." He looked at me and said, "I'm Thompson, he's Bohlen." I felt about better later on because after serving as a section chief for a year in Thompson's embassy I went down the elevator with him on his last day there and he obviously didn't know who I was. I guess that in those days of course there was always a bilateral with the Russians and they always brought the ambassador back from Moscow, Bohlen was at that time the special assistant to the secretary on Soviet affairs. This was the early times of the Jewish Defense League and all the activities of the mission to the UN and there were these various other issues going on at the time.

Anyhow after two years of laboring in the vineyards, both Tom Niles and I did succeed being sent to the Garmisch gravy train, which was as advertised a very nice experience. The first thing we did when we got there was to take a six-week trip through Eastern Europe and the USSR. The army set this up, of course they have all these foreign area specialization programs and in most of them they indeed send the military officers to the country in which they are specializing, but that wasn't possible in the USSR. So, they created this institute made up largely of people who had recently defected from the USSR who had come back from the Vlasov armies or who had gotten out in the '20s and '30s and had been in Europe and were attracted to this place. Because they came from different periods of immigration, some of them came from the KGB, some of them came from the GRU, some of them came from the foreign ministry. They didn't get along very well. Some of them were Chechens; they didn't get along very well with each other. It was a place where they carried out all their arguments in Russian so you were forced to work hard on your Russian and there were usually three or four of us State Department, USIA, NSA people who were there for each class.

The military program was two years. We did one year and as a familiarization tour we went to, I guess we went through Intourist as a tourist group, we got Intourist guides and all that, but we started out through Czechoslovakia and Poland and then into the Baltic States and to St. Petersburg and to Moscow and then we took the train and plane all across the USSR and spent four or five days on the Trans-Siberian Railroad and then came back through the southern tier, through Kiev and through Romania and Bulgaria. So, it gave us a good, if gray initial look because it all took place in October and November. It was very hard to get into a kind of conversational situation with Russians because the Intourist guides knew we were from the so-called famous spy school and were eager to isolate us as much as possible, but still wanted our money. On the Trans-Siberian for example, you'd get thrown willy nilly into discussions with Russians. It was fascinating, sort of a first impression which was one of great hardship at the time. We thought Poland was pretty grim, but when we got to the USSR and began to look at places like Bratsk and Novosibirsk and places like that we realized what a gray and dull life it could be. The Russians were fascinating and I have enjoyed Russians ever since. Of course we got to know a lot of Russians in Garmisch, one of the more recent emigres, I guess had been a defector who'd been, had something to do with the military, but he was somebody in his thirties and very critical of course of everything he saw around him among the Americans. It turned out

later he was probably a plant because he redefected after being there for a couple of years. He wrote a series of articles about the spy school, which greatly exaggerated its abilities. I remember he came over to the house one day and said something about, "Well, you Americans are crazy about guns. I look around and I see all your children are playing with guns. It's a violent society." I was saying that this was healthy because it taught you how to argue in Russia with Russians. Just at that point my three-year-old son came walking into the room with a new Christmas present which was a big gun, so big he could barely carry it.

There was also a very fascinating couple there who were from the old NTS which was a sort of left-wing populist anti-Bolshevik group that had a lot of connections among intellectuals in Russia. They had something to do with Sinyausky and Daniel and they introduced us to the Russian writers of that time and made us read them in Russian. That really gave us an excellent introduction into the underground and dissident literature of that time. So, that by the time we got there we not only had picked up about Russian military terminology, but also, were able to discuss intellectual questions pretty well.

Q: How did you find the American military related to this part of the training or was this more I mean did you kind of divide yourself up into the military in wanting to know how to say, "Take me to your 155 mm canons" while you at the same time tell me about your intellectual.

BARRY: Well, it was interesting. The army of course, is very different from the navy or the air force. The army does have a genuine and successful foreign area specialization program and they do usually use the people who graduate from these programs as their attaches and later. In serving with people who had done this I have much more respect for the army attaches, not that they aren't all good people, but that the people who went through this FAS program were basically head and shoulders above others in terms of their knowledge and breadth and interest about the country. Yes, there were some people in the group who were nuts and bolts people. Of course, in the FAS program you maintain your original specialty. Some of them were intelligence specialists, others were combat arms specialists. This was the Vietnam period, so a lot of them were either coming out of Vietnam or were going into Vietnam. In fact one of the sad things about the school was that so many of the people who were trained there never went on to do anything in the Soviet area. They ended up going back to Vietnam or getting involved in other things. I think that these were all people who were genuinely interested in the USSR. This was at the time when this was considered to be the main national security challenge so it was more than the location of the nearest howitzer that they were interested in.

Q: I interviewed somebody not too long ago about the army, the National Defense University who said that he was told before he went and he said it was true, he said that you can characterize the air force as being the most non-intellectual group of this. The navy as being really rather narrow as far as what they knew and the army would be just like us speaking just like us in the Foreign Service in a way with a broader view.

BARRY: I think the army does a better job of giving various kinds of postgraduate training. Both the navy and the air force don't promote you unless you have been able to hold increasing command responsibilities. You can't get to be an admiral unless you've commanded a capital ship. The amount of time that you get to spend on out of area interests is considerably smaller. I

went to school with the newly frocked generals and admirals, this so-called Capstone course. I think it's even true at that level. The NDU gets them sort of at an earlier stage, but there again I thought that the army people were generally broader and more inclined to have done training in areas like political science or MBAs or something like that. But their foreign area specialization I think has been a great success. The problem with it is that many of them get selected out before they ever make colonel.

DAVID L. HOBBS
Rotation Officer
Hamburg (1967-1969)

David L. Hobbs was born in Iowa in 1940. After serving in the US Army from 1960-1963 he received his bachelor's degree from University of California at Berkeley. His career included positions in Germany, Brazil, England, Japan, Colombia, and an ambassadorship to Guyana. Ambassador Hobbs was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in March 1997.

Q: When you came out, what was your first assignment?

HOBBS: My first assignment was to Hamburg, the consulate there, which was a very interesting place to be at that time.

Q: You were in Hamburg for how long?

HOBBS: I arrived in Hamburg in February 1967 and left in July, 1969.

Q: What was Germany like in that period of time from your perspective?

HOBBS: Hamburg was a very developed, highly sophisticated city with very little evidence of any of the war damage that you still saw southern Germany. It was always raining, dreary and cold, although I recall every summer there were a couple of weeks when the sun shone everyday and you would see many Germans out walking in their shorts, sandals and red sox. This shows that the way people behave is affected a little bit by the weather. The northern Germans, who have such heavy gloomy weather much of the time, are not therefore prone to go frolic about in the meadows wearing shorts and sandals.

It was a very difficult city to crack in a way because Hamburg society is pretty set. The Germans in the north didn't have Americans there, they had the British, so we didn't have some of those ties. Although I found it was fairly easy after an initial effort to make some good contacts and good friends. I enjoyed it very much.

It was the time of the Vietnam war and I remember there were a lot of demonstrations against the United States. The consulate was only two blocks from the university and Amerika Haus, our USIS cultural center, was at the edge of the university. The Amerika Haus was regularly

splattered with paint and had windows broken. In the end they just gave up and put split boards on the windows. The consulate got hit several times with paint and stones thrown through the windows.

The consul general, principal officer, at the time was Coburn Kidd. This was his last assignment before he retired and he was a very old school person. He handled the English language beautifully and told fantastic stories and was very effective in most of his career in Germany. He was very helpful to the three or four junior officers there, spending a lot of time coaxing us along and trying to make us diplomats. It was a great experience for me to work with somebody like that.

Q: What type of work were you doing?

HOBBS: In those days they still had central complement. The idea was that you were supposed to rotate among the four different types of work that the State Department is responsible for. However, I spent most of my time there in consular work, doing visas first and then a little political work, but only for four or five months. I had a brief period in the economic office and then back to the consular section to work on the passport/citizenship side. I had never done this type of work before so some of the interesting cases that came up I have never forgotten.

Q: To get just a feel of the time, talk about some of the interesting cases.

HOBBS: There was a countess who worked as my foreign service national along with another lady who had worked together for 20 or 30 years and never had gotten beyond the formal addressing. One day she came running to my office and said, "Oh, Mr. Hobbs, you have got to come out and talk to this man out here who is getting a passport." I said, "What is the problem?" "No, problem, he is just interesting." I went out to talk to him. He was a man who was 98 years old and applying for his new passport and had a choice between a five and a ten year one. He wanted a ten year passport. I asked him what plans he had for the next ten years, and he said that he was beginning to do a technical dictionary, in some field he was expert in, and that it would take him about ten years to complete it. Therefore he needed a ten year passport so he could travel about. It never occurred to him that he might not be around in ten years. I was just amazed at him— tall, vigorous, alert, 98 years old and wanting a ten year passport, never doubting that he wouldn't be around to use it.

This was in contrast with another man, 50 something, who just two or three weeks before had come in dragging himself up to the counter and said that he was there for his last passport. It is interesting how people can be different.

There was a very interesting case of a person whose passport said he was a man but he claimed to be a woman. It took me a little time to figure out which passport to give him. You do meet some interesting people in the consular section.

There was a priest who came onboard a ship and had fallen just as the ship had come into the harbor. He was an American man who was born in Germany and was returning for the first time after many, many years. He got kind of excited, I guess, when the ship came into port and in

running from one side to the other he fell down and broke his hip. He was taken to the hospital and I saw him several times and he seemed to be doing very well. However, he died on the operating table while they were trying to do something to his hip. You had cases like that.

I remember a very strange case. A man came to me one day and said that he needed to get a passport. He spoke broken English with a lot of German syntax. I asked for evidence that he was an American citizen, but he had nothing. However, he said he had a story to tell me. He said he had been in the US military and sometime in the early '50s he had gone AWOL and went across the East German border and had been living in East Germany for a long time. It sounded like a fascinating story but I didn't know if I believed him or not. After talking to him a lot I just couldn't believe he had forgotten so much of his English. He said that he never used it, etc. I decided that if he had been in the military and gone AWOL, there would probably be some finger prints on him somewhere. So, I got him to give me his fingerprints and sent them off to the army. Sure enough he was exactly who he said he was and had done exactly what he said he had done. They weren't interested in him anymore because the statute of limitations had run out on going AWOL. Therefore, I issued him a passport and sent him off to the United States.

A few months later I was in Berlin on a personal visit to see some friends assigned to the mission there, and I was at a dinner party. One of the officers was telling me about someone having thrown a rock over the Berlin Wall with a note attached to it saying he was a former military man who had gone across the border years ago and he wanted to come back. They had been curious about that but couldn't make anything of it and finally dismissed it. I suspect it was the same person.

Q: Did you have any seamen or shipping problems?

HOBBS: Yes. There was one that was particularly interesting. There had been a storm at sea that had damaged a lot of cargo onboard a ship and there was some kind of insurance question and a court case going on in the States. I had to take a deposition from the captain of the ship which went on for two days with so many questions. I had to hire an interpreter and transcriber and sit there and ask these questions. It was the longest and most cumbersome deposition I have ever done and it was the first one I ever did.

Another thing I want to say about Hamburg, because of Vietnam we were being drafted to make speeches about U.S. policy in Vietnam. Bill Swing worked in the visa section when I was in the passport section and we went out quite often, most months two or three times, to make speeches to groups on U.S. Vietnam policy. Of course those who opposed the Vietnam war asked us to speak, those who were already on our side never invited us. So, we usually got verbally beat up quite a lot with many hostile questions. The only subjects I had a fairly easy time doing were those on civil rights and racial relations in the United States, the civil rights movement got a lot of attention in Europe, and the U.S. electoral process. Otherwise, I got pretty well chopped up every night. But, it was good training, according to my principal officer.

Q: Where were the German students coming from? Was this anti-Americanism or support for North Vietnam?

HOBBS: I think it was primarily the German students who were on the left of the political spectrum, who were inclined to be critical of us. You would meet other Germans, sometimes young Germans, too, who were more conservative and would be quite supportive of us. But, because we were fighting in Vietnam to prevent a communist takeover of the South you found the leftists in Europe were opposed to our efforts to do that. The university had a number of leftist organizations attached to it. The consulate was close by and a great target. This was not unusual. In the United States at the same time there was an uproar and the Europeans were sort of mimicking what was going on in the United States.

Q: Of course, in the United States it was more of a "I don't want to be drafted" attitude. The uproar seemed to dry up once the draft ended.

HOBBS: Yes. I knew an American businessman in Hamburg, who I used to see quite often at various events, who was a very strong, vocal supporter of the war effort in Vietnam, until one day his son got drafted and he became a pacifist over night. He completely changed literally from one day to the next.

HENRY L. CLARKE
Rotation Officer
Munich (1967-1969)

Ambassador Clarke was born at Fort Benning, Georgia. He was raised both in the US and abroad. He attended Dartmouth College, served in the US Army and then went to Harvard. He entered the Foreign Service in 1967 and served in Germany, Nigeria, Romania, the USSR, Israel, and Uzbekistan. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: You were in Munich when?

CLARKE: I was given a few months of refresher training in German, because although I continued to read German literature, I needed to work on my spoken grammar again. I got to Munich before the end of '67.

Q: And you were there for two years?

CLARKE: Two years exactly.

Q: What were you doing there?

CLARKE: I was a rotational officer. Because I was considered an economic cone officer, I had one year at two different times in the economic, or really commercial section and six months as a non-immigrant visa officer and six months as a political officer.

Q: Who was Consul General at that time?

CLARKE: I can't even remember his first name. I think his last name was Creel. Anyway, he was an old German hand. The rest of the consulate was really working on largely a 40 hour week. I would occasionally come in on Saturday either because I was duty officer and had to check on things or because I had some project I wanted to finish. That was entirely voluntary except for the duty officer portion. Nobody was around. There was no prescribed activity for single people within the consulate and our evenings and weekends were usually free. I had the very good fortune of having family friends in the area so I made contact with them very easily, very quickly, and then I met their friends. I know that's not always the case in Germany, and Munich in particular, to have that kind of access.

But I did other things, too. I went to an early ski training week with a regular German travel agency and there met another bunch of Germans from Bavaria who were doing the same thing. In my age bracket and as a single person, I found it very easy to get around.

Q: Did you feel that this was a different Germany from the one you had known before?

CLARKE: It was clearly more modernized in a physical sense, but no. The Germany I had known before hadn't really been involved in politics or anything like that. No, I don't think I could say this was a different Germany. The aspects of culture and how to get along with people that I had remembered from before served me well. While I was in the political section, I was supposed to follow, among others, the radicals. I found the radicals at the Munich University to be way beyond any sense of decency by my standard, but also by the standards of most Germans, so I didn't visualize them as some future new Germany. I visualized them as left-wing radicals. I also had to follow the neo-Nazis in Bavaria. That was an important function at the time because the neo-Nazis actually had representation in the Bavarian parliament. As the election of 1969 approached, there were worries that somehow these guys might reach the five percent necessary to be represented in the Bundestag. So we were watching them very closely. We figured they had to get – I don't remember the exact figure – but something above 15 percent in Bavaria in order to make five percent in the country as a whole. Our early prediction was that they'll never make it, and they never did.

Q: What was the feeling about the neo-Nazis? Were these really Nazis or was this just a very conservative group of people?

CLARKE: No. The true conservatives, the ones that I thought of as conservatives in Bavaria, would have been very conservative members of the Catholic church, very conservative farmers. One of their leaders was Agriculture Minister Hundhammer, who was a veteran inmate of the Dachau concentration camp. The Nazis sent him there in the 1930s as part of the Catholic opposition to Hitler. The concern with the neo-Nazis in the 1960s was that they were harping on ethnic hostilities and trying to arouse support through hostile actions against people. My idea of a German conservative was a guy who's trying not to change anything. Franz Joseph Strauss was by far the outstanding leader in Bavaria in those days. Although he was very dubious by American standards because he was so conservative, he did a marvelous job as far as I'm concerned of running the right-wing radicals off the road. He simply took their votes. I felt he did an enormous service to Germany and to the democratic development of the country. He

positioned the Christian Socialist Union in Bavaria, which was the CDU's Bavarian partner, fairly far over on the right side of the road and by doing so just ran the radicals out of space in the legitimate political spectrum. If they tried to be more radical by attacks on people, they were vulnerable to prosecution.

Q: When you say radicals, would this include the neo-Nazis?

CLARKE: That's what I mean. They couldn't use the term Nazi because that was really prohibited, so they would call themselves nationalists or something. I'm sorry, I don't really remember the names that they went under, but there was one prominent neo-Nazi party. Once they won seats in the Bavarian parliament, they acquired a certain respectability that they'd never had before. But I was the guy who had to go out and attend a couple of their rallies to see what they were like. It was pathetic. Almost no one came to their rallies. The speaker would stand there with Plexiglas around him so he wouldn't be hit with rotten eggs or something worse. The number of policemen in the surrounding streets far outnumbered the crowd that could be assembled for these guys. In the late 1960s, neo-Nazis were an echo from the past. In retrospect, the neo-Nazis could have died out politically if anti-immigrant sentiment hadn't come along to save them.

Q: What about the other group you called radical, the students? It's always struck me that for some reason, the Germans turn out a really violent, almost crazy bunch of people at the universities. They seem to go over the edge.

CLARKE: The leftist students showed extreme bad taste, but in Munich there was no violence during the time I was there. The violence was in Paris. The red flag in Paris was a lot more substantial than the red flag in Munich. That helped to make this less of a German issue. It seemed like more of a Western European development than German.

Q: Did the summer of '68 and what was happening in France have much reflection in Munich?

CLARKE: I think it helped left wing students to be more demonstrative and nastier. But they tended to be disruptive in their own classrooms rather than elsewhere, and they were very insulting to their professors and so forth, but they never brought Munich to a halt.

Q: Was Vietnam raising its head while you were there?

CLARKE: Of course.

Q: What were you getting from the various Germans you were dealing with?

CLARKE: Most of them didn't bug me about it. I do think that most Germans were not interested in criticizing the United States for being involved in Vietnam because they didn't want to get involved in any recriminations about what they'd done in World War II. There were some who openly favored it because they accepted the Cold War logic, but most of the Germans I met did not want to get into the subject. It was more of an issue for Americans.

Q: What about the economy? How were things going from the Munich perspective?

CLARKE: In the economic section, I didn't do a whole lot of reporting. There was one interesting proposal that I did do some reporting on which was to come up again much later in my career. The Bavarians were proposing to buy natural gas from the Soviet Union, because they felt they were paying too much. They thought that it was not fair for the North Germans, who were closer to the North Sea, to have cheaper natural gas than they. They thought by buying from the Soviet Union, they could balance that out. They wanted, in other words, a natural gas network in Germany where everybody would be priced the same, which is of course possible. This was the very early days of to-ing and fro-ing with the Soviets. At that point I think the U.S. was very interested, but we had not yet taken a position on this pipeline, which was ironic. The reason I say it's ironic is because in 1982 I went to Moscow to be economic counselor and I had the misfortune of arriving only a couple of weeks after our embargo against our allies designed to stop the biggest gas pipeline to the West.

Q: I take it during this '67 to '69 period the "Soviet threat" had not gone away?

CLARKE: I remember very distinctly a group of American college students that came over and met with some Germans. I met with them at some kind of reception because nobody else in the consulate could come over and see them. This one guy was telling me with great exuberance, "The Cold War is over," and I thought he was nuts. There was no evidence that the Cold War was over from our point of view. He wanted to visit Czechoslovakia as I did, and did so under Cold War rules.

Q: I take it by this time there really wasn't much in the way of emigration to the United States except for GI wives?

CLARKE: Yes. My only challenge to speak of – there were occasional other things – but the only real challenge was to deny non-immigrant visas to fiancées of American citizens, usually the girlfriends of soldiers or students. The policy was to require them to wait for an immigrant visa, which took months. I didn't like the policy very much then. I still think it was dumb. From time to time when I was absolutely convinced that the person was just going to find out what it was like over here and was going to come back, I would issue a one-entry visa. Often they returned. But every once in a while I would issue a one-entry visa, and they'd get married in the states and change status, and my boss would fuss at me, but not too severely.

Q: Looking at the guest-worker side, in particular the Turkish "Gastarbeiters," was this a phenomenon in Bavaria or was it more evident elsewhere?

CLARKE: I don't know how the statistics would run. I might have known then but I don't remember anything about the statistics. But yes, you could see a "gastarbeiter" in Munich. Yugoslavs and Turks, even Italians, were basically visiting workers in those days. If you took the train from Munich to Italy, one of the things you had to count on was it was going to be overcrowded with workers. I imagine the same was true going to Turkey or to Yugoslavia, but I didn't do that. So yes, it was definitely an influence.

When I took my Fiat to be worked at the repair shop, I knew that the mechanic was almost certain to be Italian. There just weren't enough German mechanics to go around. Occasionally you'd run into an Italian or Portuguese waiter. So yes, the process was well under way.

Q: By this time I would imagine we were looking at Germany as being a real industrial powerhouse?

CLARKE: Yes. I think our commercial policies were certainly taking that into account. We weren't always doing the right thing, but we were adjusting to the idea that they were a rather strong economy. We had fixed exchange rates then, and at 4DM for one dollar, the U.S. could hardly compete.

Q: As an economics officer was there interest in all the work/social regulations in Germany? I don't know how it was in Bavaria. I do know in an earlier period in Hesse, you couldn't be open on Saturdays. You could only do this and you could only do that. There was an awful lot of social work regulations.

CLARKE: Yes. As I remember the worst of it from an American point of view was that stores were open such limited hours. The consulate, not being an embassy with 24 hour worldwide reaction responsibilities, could do its business in a 40-hour week. Therefore I don't believe that work in the consulate was unduly hampered by people leaving early. I certainly don't believe the German workers minded it very much. The amount of beer consumed on the premises was pretty substantial, especially down in the maintenance areas in the basement. So they may have been over-regulated as to what they couldn't do at work, but not over-regulated as to what they could drink on the job. "Brot Zeit" in Munich, literally "time for morning bread," is really time for a morning beer.

Q: It's just a different way of ingesting grains.

CLARKE: Yes. Yes.

Q: At Fasching do things shut down?

CLARKE: Fasching was certainly phenomenal in Munich. Of course Germany was no longer poor, the costumes and the elaborateness of the balls were phenomenal. They really went all out. It was still true that it was very difficult for a couple to ever get a divorce based on anything that happened during Fasching.

GEORGE JAEGER
Political Officer
Bonn (1967-1970)

Mr. Jaeger was born in Austria and raised in Austria, England and the US. Evacuated from Austria to Holland and England, he immigrated to the US. After

serving in the US Army he was educated at St. Vincent College and Harvard University. He joined the State Department in 1951 and the Foreign Service (USIA) in 1953. Primarily a Political Officer, Mr. Jaeger served in Washington several times as well as in Monrovia, Zagreb, Berlin, Bonn, Geneva, Paris, Quebec (Consul General), Ottawa (Political Counselor) and Brussels (Deputy Assistant Secretary General of NATO for Political Affairs. His final assignment was Diplomat in Residence at Middlebury College. Mr. Jaeger was interviewed by Robert Daniels in 2000.

JAEGER: Coming to Bonn in February 1967 was an exhilarating experience. I had not fully realized to what extent our insular Berlin life, surrounded by hostility and oppression, had colored my life until I took my first meander along the tree lined banks of the Rhine, which flowed by our vast barracks-like Embassy building, and began exploring Bonn, Cologne and the lovely surrounding villages and towns. Although Berlin had been sharp-edged, lively and cultured, there was a mellow depth about the Rhineland, for all its provincialism, which was deeply therapeutic.

Q: Where did one live at the Embassy?

JAEGER: Living arrangements, were simple. Everybody lived in the Plittersdorf housing area on the outskirts of Bonn not far from the Embassy. Essentially it was a "Little America" in a sea of Germans, a collection of two story military-type apartment buildings, with an officers' club, a PX, a school, a movie and all the other usual American amenities - all overlooking the Rhine river which flowed by below.

Apartments were assigned on a rank basis, just like in the Army. If you got a promotion you got a better apartment. It was all very convenient but tended to keep many of the Americans rather insulated from German life.

Q: Sounds like an ideal place. You mentioned Henry Cabot Lodge. Why don't we talk a bit about him and the several other Ambassadors you worked for, as well as some of the other senior people at the Embassy.

JAEGER: My first Ambassador, after I was assigned early in 1967 as Second Secretary in the Political Section was, as I said, George McGhee - originally an oil man, who had been Director of Policy Planning and Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs before President Johnson sent him to Germany in 1963. He was a Henry the Eighth type, florid, full-chested, self-confident and hard charging, liked action and good food, and was clearly in his element in Bonn. I certainly was in awe of him, and liked and respected him. I still have some notes he sent me, saying that he particularly liked this and that telegram.

Q: Could you sketch in the context?

JAEGER: Although he looked and acted the part of a pro-consul, McGhee actually presided over a certain loosening of relations between the US and the FRG, after Erhard's right-center coalition was replaced by the Grand Coalition between the CDU and the SPD in 1966, and Willy Brandt

became Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister. There were sharp disagreements over a range of issues, particularly German off-set payments for American troops and equipment stationed in Germany (increasingly divisive because of our growing problems in Vietnam), non proliferation and Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik which Washington initially found threatening, but which McGhee personally rather welcomed as a much-needed breath of fresh air.

Of the three Ambassadors I served under, I think McGhee certainly cared most deeply about Germany, and maintained close and cordial relations, first with Chancellor Erhard, and, in my time, with Kiesinger and Brandt

Q: Laughter. Who were the other major players?

JAEGER: The Political Counselor Jim Sutterlin, a cultivated, deft, literate and gifted diplomat, who later had a long and distinguished second career at the UN. He was succeeded by Jonathan Dean in August '68, a brilliant, bigger-than-life workaholic who had vast experience in Germany and with European issues. My immediate superiors, were Jack Shaw, an experienced, thoughtful Eastern-Europeanist who unfortunately died only a few years later; followed by bright, articulate, manipulative Gerry Livingston; and finally Jock Dean himself.

Q: Who else stands out in your recollections?

JAEGER: It was a cast of extraordinary characters. There was Nelson Ledsky, Bonn's Berlin man, a loud, flabby take-no-prisoners type, straight out of central New York casting, who in spite of his abrasiveness, had everyone's respect for his huge productivity, consistent competence and hard work; Phil Wolfson, who philosophically followed German domestic politics; and Hans von Imhof, a hugely overweight former Viennese Baron of the Imhof banking family - wise, shrewd and consistently pessimistic - who became a good personal friend.

Besides being the Embassy's acknowledged sage, Hans was the Embassy's link to Herbert Wehner - the tough former member of the German Communist party's Central Committee, who had gone to Moscow in 1933, survived Stalin's purges (some say by denouncing other Germans) left the Communist Party while imprisoned for espionage in wartime Sweden, and then, after the war, became a leading light in West Germany's Social Democratic Party, the SPD and, as such, critically important to Willy Brandt's election as Chancellor. Wehner was the SPD's leader in parliament in my time in Bonn, didn't suffer fools gladly and made it clear that he only wanted to deal with Imhof at the Embassy.

Sadly, Hans died soon after he returned to the States following his Bonn assignment, perhaps from depression or the effects of his passion for genuinely great cuisine. I found him anxiously waiting for me one day, when I returned from a world class lunch at the French Ambassador's residence, where some important current issues were discussed, with only one question: "What was on the menu?"

There were others. Dennis Kux, bright and capable but, I thought, rather too flexible on issues; my always clear-thinking and perceptive classmate and friend Tom Hirschfeld; and Herma Plummer - the elderly Margaret Rutherford-like graduate of the Nürnberg trials and Allan Dulles'

World War II operation in Geneva - who liked me because I too sometimes swam against the tide. That, as she never tired of explaining, was also her main role as Deputy in Ray Cline's huge Bonn station - to shoot down enthusiasts and ill-founded projects which she said popped up relentlessly, like daisies.

Herma, Pat and I remained in touch for years, and we even visited her after she had retired in Vevey on Lake Geneva in Switzerland, still fulminating as ever against our government's "stupidity". She was mercifully spared the second Bush administration.

Q: There must have been many more?

JAEGER: Yes, of course. I should certainly add Joachim von Elbe, the small, sharp-nosed former Prussian lawyer who had been a figure on John McCloy's legal staff when the latter was High Commissioner for the American Sector. Better than anyone, he knew and embodied the complex legal lore of Germany's post-war arrangements and so was often the key advisor in choosing just the right technical argument in some east-west dispute.

Although he could be mildly snippy, I was fond of Joachim, not only for his courtly manners and knowledge of history, but because of his unusual avocation: He was arguably the leading expert on Roman remains in Germany and even produced a small, much-appreciated tourist guide to Germany's Roman sites. I once asked him how he found the locations of erstwhile Roman camps. "Well, its simple", he said, "You just look for piles of oyster shells!" It seems all the Roman officers had oysters brought north over the Roman road system and left the indestructible shells behind! I always wondered, given the then lack of refrigeration, how they could possibly have avoided getting sick!

Q: It must have been quite a challenge running so big an operation?

JAEGER: Of course, it was a huge Embassy, with extensive military representation, a large economic section, treasury attachés, all kinds of folks doing various things. When Russ Fessenden took over from Hillenbrand he ran this empire efficiently but with an even lighter touch.

He did, I suspect, have a difficult relationship with Jock Dean, who invariably insisted on being center stage. Russ managed this with finesse and subtlety, even when he himself was sometimes put in the shade - and quietly protected Dean's staff who chafed under his constant pressure for quality and production.

Q: Quite a cast of characters. Henry Cabot Lodge became Ambassador with the advent of the Nixon administration?

JAEGER: Actually a bit earlier, in May '68

Q: After he had served as Ambassador in Vietnam and had run for Vice President?

JAEGER: Yes. He was there only till January '69, and used Bonn as a platform to keep his hand in Vietnam. The odd thing was that although he really didn't do squiddy-doo for the Germans, worked very gentlemanly hours, and did not convey the intensity of leadership the times called for, he became an overnight celebrity in the FRG and was lionized, I assume for his aristocratic background and status in American politics. McGhee had battled hard for the Germans in Washington and had cared deeply, but was seen as a sort of imperial legate and so got a rather low-key goodbye when he left. Lodge, on the other hand, received a hero's send-off after a very brief, I think, largely unproductive tour.

Q: And then, to round things off, there was Kenneth Rush.

JAEGER: Yes, after an interregnum of several months when Russ Fessenden was chargé. Rush, a former President of Union Carbide and Nixon's one-time law professor, arrived in the summer of 1969. I remember him as a nice, friendly man starting on a rather steep learning curve, who didn't speak a word of German, needed a lot of backstopping and had the great good sense of letting Jock Dean and others show him the way on policy.

Although Dean later claimed that Rush was a go-getter, I had the impression during my final months in Bonn that it was really Dean who seized the lead and guided Rush, first to and then through the critically important Four-Power talks on Berlin in 1970; talks which later lead to the Four-Power Agreement on Berlin in 1971 and the Basic Treaty of 1973, a pathbreaking process which reversed the Hallstein doctrine, secured the status of and access to Berlin and led to the reciprocal recognition of the GDR and the FRG. It was Jock Dean's vision, drive and relentless determination - reflected in a complex and enormously labor-intensive process, involving back-channel contacts with the Soviets and vast numbers of detailed daily briefing papers, which guided Rush through these talks, broke the German log jam and, in time, culminated in the reunification of Germany.

Although the Cold War would continue, these fundamental changes ultimately vindicated Brandt's Ostpolitik.

Q: Obviously war games like this would expose NATO's most secret nuclear capabilities and plans. Were people afraid of Soviet and Warsaw Pact espionage?

JAEGER: That's a fascinating question. Since a military alliance of, at the time, 16 nations involved thousands of people who to varying degrees were privy to security matters, the issue of espionage and Soviet or Warsaw Pact penetration was obviously on people's minds; although, psychologically, the normalcy of headquarters life tended to dull one's instincts.

NATO did have a security division under an American security expert, who presumably liaised with the alliance's security and intelligence services. Since he reported only to the Secretary General in private, it was hard to know how effective this was and what was going on. There were rumors from time to time that someone had been dismissed for security reasons, but that could have been for anything from alcoholism to more serious indiscretions. Most of the time they dealt with routine things like documents being left out at night, safes or doors being left unlocked, risky personal behavior, this kind of thing.

Q: Did people think that NATO was penetrated?

JAEGER: That, of course, was the real question, since KGB and other Warsaw pact agents had, very occasionally, been uncovered in the past. While this was the continuing worry, there was an interesting counter-theory that this might actually not be a bad thing. The message their spies would take back to Moscow would be that, yes, NATO really was committed to using its nuclear deterrent if attacked, thus reinforcing the deterrent message, but had no plans for its part to attack the Warsaw Pact, as Soviet propaganda had long claimed in describing NATO as an aggressive alliance.

Q: Were any Warsaw pact agents uncovered during your time there?

JAEGER: No, but some years after I had left NATO I learned to my amazement that Rainer Rupp, one of the people in the economic section of my Political Directorate had been arrested and tried in Germany as the Warsaw pact's arguably most successful spy at NATO. I knew Rainer quite well. He was nondescript, retiring, did solid, but far from brilliant work, punctually handed in all his assignments, never drew attention to himself and volunteered to go on occasional trips to give speeches about the alliance or to attend conferences as our representative. I remember approving several of these trips, including an unusual one to Tokyo. Rainer had persuaded me on the grounds that NATO officials don't often get to Japan, and that it might be good thing for them to hear something about NATO. What none of us knew was that all this was simply the cover for his real work as a highly gifted and productive East German agent, who, I heard, also directed a network of other agents at NATO, including his wife who for a time worked as an assistant or a secretary for our Security Chief!

Q: How did they find out that he was a mole?

JAEGER: I don't know beyond the accounts I have found in researching this recently, one of which, from Wikipedia, is excerpted as follows:

“Born in East Germany, Rupp grew up in West Germany with strong leftist political leanings. In 1968, as a student in Mainz, work as a spy for the GDR was suggested to him, and he agreed out of conviction. He continued his studies in Brussels, was trained as a spy in East Berlin and was hired by NATO in 1977. He rose quickly in the ranks and provided photographs of some 10,000 pages to his bosses, including the precise location plans for the deployment of cruise missiles and Pershing II rockets in Western Europe, as well as the central MC 161 document (Cosmic Top Secret) which summarized the NATO strategy as well as NATO's analysis of the Warsaw pact and its intentions. These documents were promptly transferred to the KGB.”

“He would photograph documents in his office, or take them home and photograph them in his wine cellar. He met contact persons all over Europe and received instructions via number stations, radio programs broadcasting messages encrypted as number sequences. His British wife knew about his activities and tried to persuade him to stop. He later said “At the time I did it, I believed it to be my moral duty.”

Q: Did you have any contact with Kissinger after those Harvard years?

JAEGER: I had been on fairly friendly terms with Henry in Cambridge. Many years later, when I was working on east-west relations and the NPT in the Political Section of the Embassy in Bonn, he asked me during a brief visit to get in touch with him when I was next in Washington to talk about Germany. I did phone his office that fall, and was told to meet him in New York the following day, November 25 1968. As I was about to leave for the airport, the phone rang and his secretary explained that he had an unexpected conflict.

I learned later that Henry, who had been working for the Rockefellers, had been called to see Nixon who wanted to make him his National Security Advisor. I often wondered whether Henry would not have brought me along to his NSC staff had the Nixon meeting come a few days later. As it was he never got back to me. I think I was lucky.

Our only other, indirect, but illuminating meeting was one night at the Ambassador's Residence in Paris during one of Henry's many Paris visits during the Vietnam Peace negotiations, a story I will leave for later in this narrative.

Q: As we know in retrospect, the Czech invasion didn't put an end to Ostpolitik. As you saw it, what happened when Brandt became Chancellor, and the SPD/FDP government succeeded the Grand Coalition in 1969?

JAEGER: The new left-coalition, as it was called, reflected an evolving shift in German public attitudes: Greater acceptance of detente with Moscow, increased willingness to accept the Oder-Neisse line as Germany's eastern border, and fewer illusions about early German reunification, or for that matter European unification.

Most importantly, by being willing to accept the existence of the DDR de facto, the new Brandt/Scheel government was in effect agreeing to the division of Germany temporarily, hoping that Ostpolitik would produce the further improvements in east-west relations, which, in time, would make reunification possible. It was Brandt's great merit that this vision would in fact be realized.

Q: We won't go into the whole complex history of the Helsinki process, but perhaps you could give us a brief overview to set the stage?

JAEGER: As we said, Nixon and Kissinger had originally been lukewarm about this project, which gained momentum after the Berlin treaties of the early 1970's which validated Brandt's Ostpolitik and ratified the division of Germany. US reticence moderated further after it was agreed that decisions would only be reached by consensus, that the US and Canada would be full participants and that real gains might also materialize for the West, i.e. implied Soviet acceptance of NATO and the US presence in Europe, and opportunities for making Brezhnev accept human rights provisions.

Others, particularly the French and their diplomatic allies, Belgium, Italy and Spain, had other motives. Under France's leadership, these countries had for some time seen an over-arching,

permanent East-west security structure, which the CSCE promised to create, as a way of reducing NATO and American influence, without entirely eliminating them. By steering closer to Moscow than the other allies, they were therefore both occasionally troublesome and influential.

The French also played a major role in the Mediterranean context, where countries like Malta, Italy and some on the north African littoral wanted the Med to be recognized as an entity with special interests, issues in which I became much involved.

To promote these and other, partly inconsistent interests, participating countries formed informal caucuses in which they coordinated their positions: For example there was a NATO and a separate European community caucus; the more neutral counties, including Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria, Yugoslavia, Malta, Cyprus, Lichtenstein and the Vatican, tried to be peacebrokers with a relatively more muted agenda; the Mediterraneans met to work out their positions, etc. So it was a very complex conference, not only because of the number of states involved, but because each of the groups had special interests which it pursued.

HANS N. TUCH
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Berlin (1967-1970)

Hans N. Tuch came to the United States from Germany in 1938 as a 14-year-old. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II, gaining enough active combat points to be discharged early. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas in 1947 and a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Mr. Tuch's career with USIS included positions in Germany, Washington, DC, Russia, Bulgaria, and Brazil. Mr. Tuch was interviewed on August 4, 1989 by G. Lewis Schmidt.

TUCH: I came back again to Germany in 1967, as the PAO in Berlin. I was coming back to my hometown, the city of my birth. I had visited Berlin, but I certainly hadn't lived there since 1938. The following three years in Berlin were very interesting years for me, personally. Of course we did not have any relationship with East Germany at that time. We had no mission in East Germany so in Berlin we were expected also to get over into East Berlin and to try to spend some time there to just observe what was going on and to become acquainted with East Berlin. That was for me particularly pleasant, especially since I was able to establish friendly relationship with the then head of the principal East Berlin opera company, the *Komische Oper*, a man by the name of Felsenstein, who was known throughout the world as one of the great opera directors. We established a very pleasant relationship. And that got me into East Berlin frequently. And it didn't create any difficulties for him. This man was on the same level in the East German bureaucracy as a member of the Politburo. As a matter of fact, he lived in the same area as the Politburo members lived, on a huge estate.

One of the humorous incidents occurred was the first time we were invited to their home, which was outside of East Berlin in East Germany, and therefore out of bounds for us, since we didn't

recognize the East German Government. We were part of the occupational powers of East Berlin as part of great Berlin, but we did not go into East Germany. So he invited us to come to his estate. I said we couldn't come because it was outside of Berlin, in East Germany. And he said, "Don't worry about this. I have made all the arrangements. There will be no check on you whatsoever." So I went back to the Mission and talked to our people in Bonn and they suggested, "Okay. Let us do it as an experiment. Let us see what happens. But don't take your passport along, because we are not recognizing the East German authorities," and they couldn't look at our passports. So with some trepidation, my wife and I went over to East Berlin. We left our car at the opera house and went on in Felsenstein's car. He was driving a 1968 Ford V-8 station wagon, on the rear window of which was an American flag, on the side windows of which were the decals of our 50 states. Completely covered! It was a station wagon which had every piece of equipment, including a television set. So we rode in this very large American station-wagon. When we came to the border I found that we really didn't have to fear anything: the gate was up, the border guards were lined on both sides of the street and gave us a military salute as we drove by without slowing down. We arrived at this baronial estate. As we went through the gate, there was on one side a four car garage; there was the station wagon in which we were riding; he also had one sports Mercedes and one passenger Mercedes, and another American station wagon in those four garages. On the other side of the gate was a stable where there were four riding horses. Over the entrance hung a huge wagon wheel chandelier that, he told me, his wife had picked up in Wyoming. We drove in, and it was about as fancy a private residence as I had ever been in. Mrs. Felsenstein immediately showed us the kitchen, which had only the latest General Electric equipment; dishwasher, garbage disposal, refrigerator, freezer, range; nothing but General Electric. I asked her, "How can you take care of this General Electric equipment over her?"

She said, "That is easy. Once a month a General Electric repair truck comes from West Berlin and visits the residences of every Politburo member and our residence and checks all of our equipment." At any rate, this is just a side light of our experience in Berlin during that period of time.

My hobby is opera, and we were able to enjoy opera in Berlin, both in West Berlin and East Berlin. When I recently went through my opera programs of our time in Berlin, I counted up that we went to the West and East Berlin opera over 60 times during my three years there. At any rate, it was a very pleasant time for me in Berlin. Except that it was also a very tense period politically, because of the student revolution and anti-Vietnam demonstrations, which had started just before we arrived in 1967. There had been the shooting of an Iranian student in West Berlin by the police during an anti-Shah rally that set off demonstrations and led to the big, so to speak, Easter 1968 uprising in Berlin among the students led by a radical youth leader by the name of Rudy Dutschke.

Life in Berlin took on a definite anti-American tone during the following three years, related to the Vietnam War and the opposition to it by Germans and German youth especially. Our America House in Berlin was sacked, completely sacked, two weekends in a row. Every window was broken. In the second incident 60 policemen were hurt by students who were throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails.

If you were trying to explain American policy or lecture at either one of the two Berlin

universities, you were taking some physical risks, although we did it. We tried to explain American policy, but it was very tough at that time; however, the students were even tougher on the university itself, especially on the liberal faculty members of the Free University of Berlin. I would say that the Free University of Berlin was intellectually destroyed during that time. It was so badly disrupted by the students that even now it has not recovered the reputation, the intellectual and academic reputation, that it had as the most liberal and progressive university in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Many of the faculty were driven out. Several of them emigrated to the United States and became teachers here. Others went to universities in West Germany, especially some of the new universities that were being created at that time in the Ruhr, Bielefeld and Bochum University, among them, and to universities which had remained more conservative like Munich, which was not as radicalized as, say, Berlin, Frankfurt and Hamburg were at that time. But some of the universities including the Free University in Berlin were almost destroyed by the radical students and the leftist assistants on the faculty at that time. Not physically destroyed, but intellectually.

It took many years for them to reestablish themselves. You know, people were appointed administrators, presidents and rectors of these universities who had absolutely no qualifications whatsoever, either as academic people or even as administrators. They were radical students and assistants who took over these universities and mismanaged them badly. There are some that never did recover. I would say that Bremen University is one that has lost its reputation to such an extent that, for instance, graduates of Bremen University have a tough time finding jobs. People will just not hire them because they know they have not had a good education.

The student movement took place all over Western Europe. Certainly, it took place in France, the Netherlands and in West Germany, and it had a very close connection with the movement that was taking place in this country at that time. It followed the American radicalization of some American universities. For instance, the University of California in Berkeley became a model, so to speak, for the radicalized students in Germany. Berlin was particularly fertile because it attracted, for one thing, West German students to Berlin. Berlin was a good university; I mean, the Free University of Berlin had a very fine reputation. So it did attract a lot of students, but it attracted even more West German young people because if you were a resident in Berlin, a student in Berlin, you were exempt from the draft.

So young people who were already out of sorts with the conservative government in Germany, who were opposed to what we were doing in the world, would drift to Berlin because they knew they could exempt themselves from military service, and take part in the radical movement that was finding fertile soil in Berlin. So you had more of it in Berlin than you had in West Germany, but you certainly had it in West Germany. Especially, I would say, Frankfurt and Hamburg were the other two major cities where the universities became radicalized during that time. But it was a movement throughout the Western free world; the students becoming radicalized. I think that probably it started in this country.

In Germany, it was a peculiar phenomenon. This turning against the United States especially by the young population was an interesting sociological phenomenon, because in the 1950s and early 1960s there was a great attraction on the part of Germans towards the United States. We

were held up as a model. During the Kennedy years, for the Germans the United States became the Camelot, and President Kennedy was their model. America was over-sold to the Germans, that we were the perfect society, which we were not, and that we should become the model for the Germans. Then in the middle '60s, with the assassinations of President Kennedy, Senator Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, with the Vietnam War, with our own civil rights revolution, many young Germans suddenly became very disillusioned with America. They had been over-enthusiastic about America before that, and when they found out that we were not the perfect society, that we had our own problems and that we had major problems in our own society, the turnaround became too abrupt. Whereas we had been possibly over-sold in the '50s and early '60s, the radical turnaround, the antagonism towards America, the disappointment with America was also too one-sided and radical. This shift took place, I would say, between 1967 and 1972. It was almost a social revolution in Germany also, and these young Germans, I remember, had the phrase, "We will march through the institutions" in Germany and convert them and radicalize them. Looking back from the present vantage point, it seems to me that they were not successful. Germany as a society was not overturned or even radicalized, except in three major institutions where they did take over these institutions. These were, first, in electronic journalism, radio and television. The people who run radio and television were radicalized and are now the people who are still very much, so to speak, anti-American. The second element were secondary school teachers, people who taught kids in the high school. The third one, with which I am less familiar but I am told that it is true, is the judiciary, the judges, especially in the lower courts, who tend in all social issues to make decisions which are quite radical. At any rate, in high school teaching and in electronic journalism I don't think this is true for print journalism, but it is true, in my view, for electronic journalism the radical elements prevailed. In the '80s you had German kids being taught by high school teachers who had become very anti-American. Everything that was bad about America -- not necessarily that it was not true about America, but it was too one-sided about America -- was emphasized in the teaching in high schools to these German kids. The Soviet Union and the United States were both the same. The U.S. was a restrictive society, unfair, especially towards our poor; we didn't pay attention to the environment. You had the feeling created that these young Germans felt sort of in the middle between two equally bad super-powers between which they shouldn't make any choice.

What I meant by the fact that the radicalization didn't succeed is that Germany was successful in maintaining its democratic institutions, its democratic society. They remained a close ally of the United States, they remained part of NATO. In other words, the radicals did not succeed in turning over and really revolutionizing Germany as they had wanted to do. Germany to this day remains a close, respected ally and friend of the United States. The problem is that at least these two elements in the German society, electronic journalism and teaching, created an atmosphere that affected the young people. We realized that this was taking place, that the young people had a different attitude or were taught different things about the United States than the elders had. There was a difference of view on the part of young Germans vis-a-vis the United States, vis-a-vis their society, vis-a-vis the East-West conflict. There was a generational difference. We also realized that these young people who did not have the same experiences as their elders had in the 1950s and the 1960s, who had an entirely different experience in growing up and being educated, were about to take over the leadership in the German society. This is taking place right now.

We recognized that changes had taken place, and that we had to readdress our ideas on our association with the Germans and how to deal with this problem, how to cope with it in order to be able to maintain the relationship that we feel is necessary to maintain. The close and friendly relationship with the Federal Republic is the basis of our transatlantic partnership. We, meaning people in both the State Department and USIA, thought about this quite a bit.

HALVOR C. EKERN
Political/Military Officer
Bonn (1967-1969)

Political Advisor
Heidelberg (1969-1973)

Halvor C. Ekern was born in Montana in 1917. He served in the U.S. Army from 1941-1947, reaching the rank of colonel. He entered the Foreign Service in 1947. Mr. Ekern served in Austria, Iceland, Sierra Leone, Germany, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

EKERN: In Bonn, I was called the political/military affairs counselor. We had Ambassador George McGhee followed by Henry Cabot Lodge. It was probably the most intense atmosphere of any Embassy in the world because that was the center of things. It wasn't London, Paris, or Moscow; it was Bonn where the world looked. Fortunately we had some good people. Jimmy Sutherland was Counselor for Political Affairs; Marty Hillenbrand was DCM. Sutherland had some very good officers. Sutherland was one of the finest men I have ever met. Later he went up to the UN. I thought Ron Spiers took his place, but I am not dead sure of that.

It was a tough spot. We worked long hours, weekends, holidays, etc. It consisted of mostly feeding information to Washington about things that were happening there and policy matters. Whither NATO? What was the German future? Heavily defense oriented because that is where we faced the Soviets. The actual telegrams that went out were about quite a variety of everything, I am talking about the political section. There was the ABM treaties; Nuclear Proliferation treaties; all of those affairs that were current at the time; Germany's positions on NATO affairs, Our liaison with our mission to NATO was very close.

Our attitude -- with which I couldn't quarrel -- was that reunification for Germany was something that might happen long after our life time. That was the universal position. I don't know a single soothsayer who foresaw what has recently occurred. There was the question as to whether the East Germans would fight very hard for the Soviets if they came. That was a big question mark.

The American Embassy in Bonn even today is about to fall down. It is a temporary building. We couldn't even do a paint job without arousing comment that we had given up on East Germany and were not going back to Berlin. It was a very touchy thing.

During my period there, our attitude toward West Germany was that they were our loyal allies,

our most loyal allies. I guess Willy Brandt did some things that caused us to fuss a little, but at the level of the Laender and the military, they were our loyal allies. I am surprised that they jumped through the hoop as often as we required them to do. They would bend over backwards to be loyal. I don't know of any conspiracy against us. There may have been some political elements toying with a less obsequiousness, but they were not a factor. Cooperation was 100 percent.

The Soviet threat certainly was very real. There weren't very many people who downgraded it. It was there. The tanks and soldiers were right there. During the Czech crisis in 1968, there were 25 divisions moved and we didn't know whether they were going to stop at the German border. That was the first time I really got talked to by the German Foreign Office. It was before they actually moved; we knew they were coming, and the State Secretary called Sutherland and myself over and he said, "You tell your Generals not one soldier will move forward." They didn't ask us; they told us. They were so concerned that there might be an imagined provocation that would cause the Soviets to cross the border. So I got General Polk on the phone and said, "General, you are not supposed to move any of your soldiers at all." He swallowed hard because he certainly didn't want to go down in history as the general whose troops were overrun in their barracks. In the event only one officer disobeyed and that was a German Commander who pushed his troops out to where he might be able to defend himself. He was relieved later. So the "threat" was considered very real.

As I remember it, our friendly CIA covered both sides of the street. One day they said that the Soviets could come, they next that they won't come, etc. The military intelligence was that they knew they were there and moving. The one person whose telegram was correct was from Thompson in Moscow. He said they will move. Up until then, the general consensus was that they were bluffing about moving into Czechoslovakia.

They did move, but didn't cross the border. We believed they could have. The distance between the Soviets and Rhine at that point was about 70 miles, so you had to take it very seriously. At the border, reconnaissance was up there, you stayed up all night and the commander kept ordering "You be ready wherever you are." But we weathered that all right.

I was in Bonn for a little while Lodge was Ambassador before I moved to Heidelberg. He was entirely different from George McGhee. He was not losing much sleep over the job. He was thoroughly relaxed. Made a good TV appearance and that was what we needed. He came into the Embassy after he had had his coffee, etc. I think this was his last act. He had seen the whole course. He was not prepared to get too uptight over this

I moved to Heidelberg where I served for four years as POLAD, political adviser to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army there. It was Headquarters, CINCEUR and Seventh Army. My first Commander-in-Chief was General Polk; the second was two years with General Mike Davis.

The POLAD did pretty much whatever he wanted. First of all, he had to keep the General completely current about the political situation around him -- the German Army, the British and all. I did at least a weekly updating. I got all the pertinent cables sent down from Bonn.

Secondly, he had to bring about good relations with the Laender where his troops were. This we accomplished by setting up briefings for the Minister-Presidents and their cabinets. Having the Commander-in-Chief visit them, to get to know each well. The problems were pretty enormous. Germany is about the size of Oregon and has a population at that time of about 61 million. So every square meter of land was needed for something. We had large chunks of it there for troop training, barracks, etc. There was a push all the time -- some of them could get acrimonious -- because some development was needed and our barracks sat right in the middle of the area. Having barracks in the middle of town was an understandable nuisance to the Germans. We also requisitioned good houses for our senior officers. We were under pressure to turn some of these back. But we operated under a Status of Forces Agreement and the Germans were reasonable. When it came to the crunch they were fair and we tried to be fair and work the problems out. And they never did get up into the diplomatic levels to speak of.

That was the internal scene. Then we tried to get the Commander-in-Chief to visit the Defense Ministers and hopefully the Prime Ministers of the Low Countries, France, etc. so he would be known.

General Polk and Davis certainly were sophisticated on political issues. But there were officers beneath them who had a lot to learn. In fact I told the Commander-in-Chief when I went there that I would not tolerate any officer here calling the State Department a bunch of striped pants bastards. But I also told Bonn that I would not tolerate any of them talking about those brass hats in Heidelberg. So that was settled. I said to the Embassy that there are things that we do in Heidelberg that I am not at liberty to tell them about even though the Department paid my salary. So I had, I think, the complete confidence of the Commander-in-Chief and that helped a lot. He was always willing and anxious to listen to what role he had in this German frontier state.

Vietnam had a major impact on our military in Germany. General Polk had only one captain in command of a company; all the rest were lieutenants. He was stripped of senior non-commissioned officers. This was a period, the late sixties, with all the turmoil of racial and drug problems. He had a hell of a job. It was a draftee army. So he had a real problem with discipline, which he handled to the best of his ability. But everything was drained off to Vietnam including his ammunition, gasoline. It was hard to get his forces to Grafenwohr and training grounds like that. The Germans were rioting in the streets. They had some bombings in Heidelberg at the Headquarters. They would march pass by the thousands in front of the Headquarters. But by keeping their cool and just doing their jobs all the commanders did a good job.

The Soviet Army was, of course, probably the number one objective for the intelligence people, particularly military intelligence, which was supposed to find out who their opponent was and how he was equipped. They used all the resources they could. Human and signal intelligence, etc. And they kept track of movements. I think they had a reasonable picture despite some of the shortcomings in the Soviet Army and particularly the East German and Czech Army. They had to view it as a real threat, so they kept track of the armored vehicles, what kind they had, the aircraft, etc. I would say they were pretty up to date on it.

I don't think there were any doubts about the Soviet Army concerning obeying orders. The real

question was how far would the East Germans go? Would they shoot fellow Germans? The question was never fully answered. It was debated forever. The same as to what the Czechs, the Hungarians, etc. would do. We didn't put them down as much of a threat as the Soviets. In fact, we always thought if the Soviets were successful in going right to the Atlantic, the East Germans, Hungarians would come in for a piece of the action. But if they met resistance, there would be some defections.

There was the big debate about the use of nuclear weapons. NATO's question about the first use of nukes and our position was "Yes, before we surrendered we would use nukes." So I think our Commanders-in-Chief felt they would be able to give the Soviets a hell of a fight although we would be outnumbered. It certainly wouldn't have been a walkover. They would have held them east of the Rhine for quite a long time. Our worry was more on the northern flank because the British forces were weaker there. Thank God we all felt the Germans were on our side. They are good soldiers. To this day they have fine troops, I am sure. I knew all the 3 and 4-star generals in the German Army. I went on maneuvers with them. The Dutch, I don't know about them. The French were good soldiers.

There was this political division with de Gaulle, but at the military level we had good cooperation. I visited the French Headquarters both the Second Corps in Germany and the First Army in Starkburg frequently. I told the State Department that they would fight. Why do we need to revise the NATO Treaty? I told that to Ron Spiers.

ROBIE M.H. "MARK" PALMER
U.S. Army Training Program
Garmisch (1968-1969)

Ambassador Palmer was born into a Navy family in Michigan. He was raised both in the US and abroad. He was educated at Yale and Kiev University. He became a civil rights activist and entered the Foreign Service in 1964. He served in New Delhi, Moscow, and Belgrade and held an ambassadorship in Hungary. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.

Q: Well, in '68 whither?

PALMER: I had been fighting and lobbying to get into Soviet affairs. I was selected to go to Garmisch to the Army training program there. As you probably know, for many years two to four Foreign Service officers were selected to go there.

You had to have already advanced Russian language skills and you normally had to have had some other experience with the Soviets. You went there for one year and then you went to Moscow. It was guaranteed that you went first to Garmisch and then to the embassy.

You were trained along with Army officers who were going either as attaches or as intelligence or whatever. There were people there from NSA also being trained. And it was wonderful! It was

the greatest program!

Q: Of course, this program was run completely in Russian, wasn't it?

PALMER: Right.

Q: Was it lectures mainly?

PALMER: Lectures by people who were all Russians or Ukrainians or whatever. They were émigrés and had come out, many of them, after the Second World War. Some of them were quite recently defectors. And they taught everything. They taught Soviet economics, Soviet politics, Soviet military stuff.

We were allowed to do a lot of reading, too, on our own in Russian. We were allowed to speak only Russian while we were in the institute. You could speak with your wife otherwise, but in the institute you could only speak Russian. Also as part of the program, we had a long trip to the Soviet Union as a group which was very, very useful.

Q: Was there a Soviet counterpart to this?

PALMER: Not to my knowledge. They trained people as interns in their embassy in Washington, but I don't think there was. Well, there may have been and I just wasn't aware of it. There was at that time already Georgy Arbatov's institute for U.S.-Canadian things and some of their people did train here but it was a little different. That had a more academic flavor, I would say, than what we did. We were really being trained functionally.

Q: What about the military officers who were going there? Was there a difference between the attitude of Foreign Service officers and military officers that was noticeable, or not?

PALMER: Well, I think we had debates; but on the whole, no. A lot of people established strong relations there, inter-service and strongly continuing relations. This kind of joint training together is a really useful thing. It breaks down a lot of barriers. We used to ski together. We traveled together for two and a half months. We lived together in the same compound. I think it was a very good experience in that sense.

Q: Did you find that you were getting a pretty heavy dose of émigré thought?

PALMER: Yes, and we used to have a lot of fights. There was one guy, Yuri Marin, who was there who had come out more recently. He'd jumped off a ship off San Francisco and swum over to another ship. He played the role of the Commie in the institute. The older émigrés used to fight and argue with him, etc. Many of us used to argue with the older émigrés, too.

The older émigrés were always bad-mouthing this guy and saying, "No, no! He really is a commie!"

And all of us were saying, "No, that's preposterous! He defected. He's just been asked by the

Army to play this role of the commie so that you have some richness here. After all, we're going to be dealing with communists there." Well, lo and behold, this guy re- defects! (Laughter)

So, he may have been planted. I don't think anyone really knows to this day if he was planted and this whole thing was their penetration of Garmisch. Was this really a very successful KGB operation to spot all of us, to get all of our bios?

We spent hours with him alone one on one. A lot of the work in Garmisch was very individual. It was wonderful to be able to do that, to spend hours talking in Russian about different aspects of Russia. So I spent a lot of time with Yuri, as did many others. He must have known everything about us for what it was worth.

Q: What sort of picture were you getting? We had the Soviet crushing of Prague's movement towards some liberation. This is early Bergen. What sort of feeling did you have about the Soviet Union?

PALMER: Well, I guess that in my own mind, and I guess in the minds of the other Foreign Service officers, in all of our minds it intensified our dislike of communism. We were in Lithuania the morning that Soviet forces invaded the Czech Republic. They had been moving over a period of a day or so through Lithuania into Czechoslovakia.

We were spending time with Lithuanians, talking with them in cafes and restaurants. They were acutely aware of what was going on. A lot of them thought that world war three was breaking out. They thought that the West might react. Also some of them bought the line that was then being distributed. This was that the Germans had actually invaded Czechoslovakia and the Soviet army was moving to meet the Germans. (laughter) This, of course, was complete crap but it was surprising how many people bought that line.

So I think it made many of us really hate the Soviets, hate the government and the system. It certainly did with me. You know, they were going against what was really the great hope of the region.

Q: Is there a difficult problem in going to a place in which you love the people and hate the government? I'm talking about before you went there. How did you feel about this?

PALMER: Right. I was desperate to go there. I had thoroughly enjoyed my student times. The thing I most wanted to do in my life was to spend time there so, no, it didn't change my desire to go at all. If anything, it intensified my desire. I wanted again to be in this environment of dissidence and of people who were fighting against the system. I wanted to try to figure out ways to help them.

WILLIAM J. DYESS
Chief of Liaison to Soviet Authorities
Berlin (1968-1970)

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

DYESS: The Department needed, again, someone in Berlin who was an East European- Soviet specialist. So I was assigned as the chief of liaison dealing with Soviet authorities in East Berlin. The four-power thing was my job. There were the Americans, the British, and the French. The British and the French had their spokesmen, too -- their chief of protocol. Chief of protocol and liaison was what he was called. Actually, in fact, the American did the talking. This is the way it was before I got there.

I would go over frequently to East Berlin to see Soviet authorities and I had a Soviet counterpart. He was quite ready to speak Russian, and I was quite ready to speak English, and each of us insisting that Berlin was not a Russian city or an American city respectively. We compromised and spoke German. So all of our official dealings were in German.

I once went over fourteen times in two days to the Soviet Embassy because the East Germans had arrested a young American lieutenant who had been caught smuggling people out of the East. Two people were found in his trunk and one of them was a ringer who turned him in. Unfortunately, he was doing it. Unfortunately, he was caught. Additionally unfortunate, he was caught by the East Germans rather than the Soviets, so he was in East German hands. Fourthly, it was unfortunate because he was doing it for money, not doing it for altruistic reasons. We were insisting that he be turned over to the Soviets and that he be turned over to us and we would punish him. I went over again -- over, over, over, and over, and finally they agreed to bring him to us. I met him at "Checkpoint Charlie" and brought him out. I sometimes think that they turned him over just to get rid of me, because they were tired of seeing me come. I camped outside. They did it for me because I had helped them out in the West. They would have somebody over in the West -- drunk or whatever -- and they didn't want him to be turned over to just anybody. So I would go -- maybe three or four o'clock in the morning and rescue him and get him back to "Checkpoint Charlie" to turn him over to the Soviets.

I will tell you another little anecdote which I found amusing. This is after I left Berlin. As I said, I went back and forth without any trouble, frequently. There was a male individual who belonged to an intelligence organization, and he was over in East Berlin and had an accident. The East German police came to him and they demanded identification. Do you know what he did? He told them he was Bill Dyess and refused to give them anything -- and, he got away with it.

My boss back in West Berlin was furious when he heard about it. I had just left. I wasn't even there then. I thought it showed a great deal of presence of mind because this person didn't want to be caught, didn't want to be interrogated or taken in. That was how he got around it.

It was a fascinating time in Berlin. I went to the theater there a lot because I spoke German and my wife spoke German. It is one of my favorite cities of the world.

The first time I was in Berlin I was with the Army. I was not able to go to the East. This time I could go over to the East freely. I enjoyed the theater life, the opera -- both sides. A great time.

Relations were good with the French and British. We entertained each other back and forth. There was a lot of entertaining.

My boss was the American commandant. One was George Segniouis and we have been friends through the years -- a nice fellow. Then Bob Ferguson was there. We got along well. I didn't entertain them but they entertained me socially a lot. They were two stars and I was still down about the level of a full colonel. I guess I was a light colonel in a full colonel's billet. It was a socially active post. We had nice houses and we lived very well. It is a beautiful city.

USIA was there. We got along well with them and with the military -- after all, I had been part of the military intelligence there. I knew Berlin inside out when I went there the second time. Berlin was a very happy place for me to be. I enjoyed the assignment enormously.

NEUL L. PAZDRAL
Science Attaché
Bonn (1968-1970)

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

PAZDRAL: At that point I had spent only two years overseas and almost seven years in Washington. I think I held the record for a junior officer spending time in Washington. I was really keen in getting overseas again. So I looked around and the only overseas job that I could find that looked any good at all was deputy science attaché in Bonn.

In those days we had a fairly active science program and particularly with the Germans, but also with a number of other European countries. The program was not terribly old at that point and my recollection is that it was staffed with well qualified scientists from outside. For example, my boss, whose name was William Wilson Williams, had been the research director for General Film here in the United States. He had something like 50 or 60 organic chemical patents to his own name and was a millionaire as a result. He was the fellow who invented the chemical that makes your shirts white and that is apparently still used and did him very well.

The science attaché in Paris, Dr. Ed Peree was also very wealthy. Peree was a physicist and invented the little glass beads that they now used to coat reflective surfaces with. These were somehow arranged so that when light shines in it is reflected directly back at the source which makes it seem very bright. Before that the light had been scattered. Anyway, Peree was very well off, also. And there was a fellow named, I think, Rambert, down in Italy. I don't know what his science was, but he drove a large Rolls Royce. His hobby was cars. The fellow in London, I

think, was a Nobel Prize winner. I don't know his name but he had an electron microscope in the basement of the Embassy because he considered that if you were a scientist you had to keep on doing a little science to keep your hand in. It was a fascinating cast of characters.

The job in Germany was fascinating. We got there in March or April of 1968 and right away was thrown into the winding up of the process of renegotiating all of our nuclear reactor fuel supply agreements with the German government. We were providing the enriched uranium for a variety of German nuclear reactors at that time. I think there was something like 43 separate nuclear fuel supply agreements. And, of course, in those days we had the Atomic Energy Commission and they were both very active and very influential. The Chairman of the Commission was Glen Seaborg, a Nobel Prize winning physicist, whom I met as a result of the job. In fact I spent a lot of time with him on his various trips to Germany.

We also had a very, very large space science program going with the Germans. They were mounting experiments on US rockets. They were trying to develop their own launch vehicle and they were also taking a part of the NASA Space Program. At that time they were going to take the near solar environment so whereas NASA and others were flying experiments outward in the solar system, the Germans more or less asked to take over the part flying experiments inward towards the sun. How far they got I don't know, but that was the thrust of it.

And, of course, there was a great deal of cooperation in other areas too. I used to pay a visit every week or two over at the German research institute for air and space flight near Cologne. There would be somebody doing aeronautics, somebody doing rockets, or something like that. This was fascinating for somebody who had never been in the science business before. I think I saw at one time or another almost every nuclear test reactor that the Germans had, including one up at Ulich which was quite advanced and well thought of where instead of using fuel rods they had fuel in balls about the size of croquet balls and this has certain advantages. And they had fast reactors and fast breeder reactors. They had the "Otto Hang" which was the world's first nuclear powered merchant vessel. My boss, Bill Williams, being a scientist himself, was well into this and knew just about everybody there was to know in German science, right up to the top, on a first name basis. He had made his contacts in Europe before that because he had worked seven years in Switzerland before coming to the State Department.

I remember on one tour going to a research reactor up near Hamburg some place and I saw for the first time -- I have forgotten what it is called, the Chejenko factor or something like that. If you put a radiating nuclear source down in a pool of water, certain sources will create a kind of eery blue glow and you see that all the time in the photographs.

Anyway, that was a lot of fun. My predecessor in that job had been a man named Dr. Norman Neuwriter, who was a scientist himself. He and Bill Williams had gotten along famously. So much that Bill, when a new scientist attaché job was created in Poland, recommend Norm for that job. And Norm, who is now working for Texas Instruments, as far as I know, was a genius. He taught himself Polish while bicycling back and forth between the Chancery and the Embassy's Compound in Plittersdorf, which is about a three mile ride. He had a little tape recorder, which was unusual in those days before the Walkman. The story was that Norm had listened assiduously to Polish as he was bicycling back and forth every day to the point that

when he finally got to Poland four or five months later he spoke the language fairly well.

Well, Norm got called in 1970 to come back and work in the office of the Science Advisor in the White House. So he left Poland very abruptly and knowing that I spoke Polish and was well recommended by Bill Williams, Norm called me and asked if I would like to go to Poland and be the science attaché there. Well, I had not had any thoughts of staying in the science program because I was trying to get out and be a regular Foreign Service officer. But it was so attractive and the thought of going to Poland was so attractive that I said, "Sure, I would be happy to come." I did so and spent three and a half years in Poland. We got there in 1970 and was there until 1973.

The science program, I thought, was a very useful one. I am not speaking only of Bonn now -- perhaps less so in Bonn. We got a request from the Air Force to give them a rundown on the state of German jet turbine manufacture technology. How good were the Germans at making jet turbines? Dr. Williams scathing comment was, "How the hell should I know? General Electric has got 37 graduate engineers out here trying to find out the same thing. Why don't they ask GE?" And it was true basically. We didn't need the kind of contacts in the science program in Germany that were so useful elsewhere, for example, in Poland or Czechoslovakia or Hungary.

That having been said, as I have already said, the job was a fascinating one and very necessary because we had so many scientific contacts with the Germans. For example, in the last year I was there the environmental issue became very important in the United States and EPA's forerunner was created. We started getting groups of American scientists coming to Germany to look at what the Germans had done in a variety of environmental protection areas.

So I would say that in those days and for that Embassy, everybody knew that there was a lot of work going on in science and so everybody else in the Embassy sort of gave us our own niche, if you will. To some extent, there was any impact both political or economic affairs. For example in technology issues, let us say dealing with air navigation technology which might affect the Berlin corridors and therefore have a political spinoff, we would consult very closely with the political section. I remember on that score going in one day on a Saturday and working in my office. I was called over to the political section by the then head of the section, Jock Dean, who was a tiger. He just ate people up. We discussed some complex issue on which there was a science aspect. He had three or four of his own people there and said something about getting the desired product, namely a report, out the next day, which was Sunday. I said, "Jock, I have something planned with my family. I can't get out of it." He looked at me as if he was about to bit my head off and said, "Oh, that is okay. You are in the science section. You are not one of my Indians." And he let me go.

But the point was that if you were in the Political Section there you were obviously expected to be on call seven days a week. But we had very cordial relations to the extent that he was willing to let me off the hook. We were organizationally in the economic section. The chief of the economic section when I left was Leonard Weiss, who was a very dynamic guy. Jerry Goldstein was the number two. It was a big section because they had, for example, the legal attaché was attached to FBI; he had a three man office there which was attached to the Economic Section. The Treasury had some people there -- financial attachés. That was when Treasury was just

establishing or getting their hands on the financial attaché programs.

The Treasury had agreed with State Department on the establishment of a system of financial attachés around the world in which we were suppose to share equally. But I remember Jerry Goldstein, who was a sweet fellow, never got mad at anybody, would grouse about this because he said, "You know, we have financial attachés in 45 posts (or something like that) and guess who is staffing Paris, London, Rome, Bonn, Ottawa and all those other good places? And guess who is staffing Abidjan, Kinshasa and places like that?" This was apparently true. I mention that because to the extent that you get into other agency cooperation with State in providing some service around the world that same phenomenon tends to occur. That is very natural.

And that is perhaps an interesting story too because I, by virtue of working occasionally as Embassy staff assistant Since I had been a Bureau staff assistant, every time there was a vacancy in the front office and I wasn't terribly busy, I would run up and be staff assistant for the Ambassador. So I got to see a little more of the internal workings of the Embassy than I might of otherwise as just deputy science attaché.

I didn't really work with either ambassador, so to speak, because again it was sort of a paper work job and you worked through the senior people in the Embassy. Later in my career, I was assigned to EB, for example, where I was the special assistant to Tom Enders and that was a job where you were very much more closely related with the boss. But my staff assistant days in Bonn -- have changed -- was more making sure the paper was actually accounted for and got to the right place fast. And calling up the drafting officer and saying, "Look, you have four typographical errors in one paragraph and we really need to have this re-plated before the Ambassador signs it and sends it to the Chancellor." That kind of thing. I really didn't have too much contact with the Ambassador. The secretary took care of his personal schedule. I would occasionally run errands and, sure, talk to him, but I really don't have any impression at all of Henry Cabot Lodge and Ken Rush -- only very dimly. I actually did the staff assistant job about three times. Peter Tarnoff was Lodge's staff aide and he was gone several times and that was when I went up and did this. I don't really remember the dates or more than that because Peter went on to much bigger and better things in the Department in later years. But I don't really have any impression of either man as Ambassador.

PAUL F. DU VIVIER
Deputy Principal Officer
Frankfurt (1968-1972)

Paul F. Du Vivier was born in New York in 1915. He graduated from Princeton University in 1938 with a degree in history and from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service with a master's degree. In addition to serving in Germany, Mr. Du Vivier served in Newfoundland, France, Ghana, Canada, Sweden, and Scotland. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on February 20, 1990.

Q: Then your last post was Frankfurt.

DU VIVIER: My last post was Frankfurt. I came back here...I'm not sure when I met you. But it might have been in that period of '68.

Q: Around that, it was about that time, before you went to Frankfurt, just when you were on your way to Frankfurt.

DU VIVIER: I was waiting and I was left cooling my heels because I obviously wanted to be a consul general and there weren't any vacancies, except on the Mexican border. I don't know, things were getting a little bit awkward, so I went to Frankfurt as the number two under Jimmy Johnstone and then he retired. I was left in charge for a while before Bob Harlan came from Saigon. So I was number two all the time and number one some of the time. And Frankfurt, as you probably know, is a huge, semi-military consulate where you live really on the American GI economy which was a radical change from what I liked. But other than worrying about the pecking order as to how many stars I was the civilian equivalent of, there was an opportunity to travel which I did a great deal, sometimes with a vice-consul in tow to call on the regional city mayors, the bishop of Fulda on the East-West German frontier, Kassel in order to get the political flavor. And many times I called on Helmut Kohl at Mainz. I had two excellent German clerks who did a great deal of political reporting with me. It was maybe the first time I delved into serious political reporting in a big way.

Q: It was the Land of Hesse mostly there.

DU VIVIER: Yes, we had three. We had Hesse and Rhineland Pfalz and the Saar. The head of Rhineland Pfalz was Helmut Kohl, and I got to know him quite well although he doesn't speak any English. I wrote to a friend at the consulate recently that I remember so well calling on him and remarking on the large bronze bust of Gustav Stresemann, and he told me that he always admired Stresemann for what he did in bringing Germany into the League of Nations. He wanted to do something bigger in Germany. He was a very ambitious but loquacious man. He is on the hot seat now. But my German correspondent says he wants to be the equal of Bismarck. I don't know what he wants, but he was a very difficult man to work with, and terribly proud. But at the end he did give me another bronze plaque with his name on the back and a medieval knight or something on the face of it. I reported as best I could, but that I think all went through the embassy, where it was ruminated by the pundits. In France I was allowed to do my reporting directly to Washington in the form of letters. In Germany it was in the form of letters to the embassy, but I also sent a copy to the desk officer. It's a very good system because that way the desk officer -- and there were two or three of them on Germany at that time -- knew firsthand what I was saying. They could compare it with what the official report from the embassy said.

In Bordeaux one day, the principal political officer, Hans Imhof, telephoned me, from Paris to say, "There's a terrible farmers' strike going in France, and I can't find any farmers. Can you tell me what's going on?" "The Bretons are shredding their artichokes on the highways, and the other people are turning over their tractors and so on. What's the beef?" And fortunately the consulate then was right next to the National Federation of Farmers, not in Paris at all, and I went there and talked to the president for over an hour, and then I wrote it up and mailed it to Imhof the same

day. And he incorporated it into his report. And this to me is what consulates should be doing all the time, and it's what embassies can never do properly alone.

I was always fighting in a friendly way with Findley Burns, who I consider the colleague always closing consulates worldwide. He ruined the consulate service in England and, to some extent, in Canada by always closing more places and reducing them to visa mills. And I felt that a consulate is the most direct link to the foreign people. We didn't telephone Washington but made the decisions on the spot. And God help you if you make the wrong one.

Q: And also they do have a much closer access to public officials. When you're at an embassy, you're almost trapped within a very tight circle, diplomatic...

DU VIVIER: Foreign Service, foreign office, yes.

Q: ...and that often means these are the worst people in the world because you're often talking to other people, all of you including the people at the foreign ministry are really strangers in their own land.

DU VIVIER: That's true! They've come from abroad themselves! Crazy capital cities like Washington.

Q: They've been working abroad, and it's a very enclosed atmosphere, and it's difficult to get out and around.

DU VIVIER: Well, when they wanted to close Nice when I was there, and I persuaded the inspector who came at the right time, in 1964 -- he later went out to Istanbul as consul general, you must have known him. He had an open mind, and after a day he realized that I was doing a lot of work for the Navy and some indispensable work for Princess Grace which my wife was indispensable. He concluded there was a need for the place. Later they closed it, and then Ronald Reagan had a friend of a friend so for him, they reopened it. When he was transferred, they closed it again and now it's closed, and we've lost a perfect little real estate villa in the heart of town which we can never buy back. But I'm preaching, I think. It doesn't matter anymore. I loved it.

Q: Well, in looking back on your career, you ended in Frankfurt, is that right?

DU VIVIER: I ended in Frankfurt as the Principal Officer in charge of one of the largest consulates in Europe, and dealing as best I could with 14 other, 14 US government agencies and 3 US generals resident there!

**WILLIAM V.P. NEWLIN
Office of German Affairs
Washington, DC (1968-1972)**

Mr. Newlin was born and raised in Pennsylvania. He obtained degrees from Harvard University and the Fletcher School and, after serving a tour with the US Army, joined the Foreign Service in 1960. A generalist, Mr. Newlin's service took him to France, Guatemala and Belgium, where he dealt primarily with European Organizations and NATO. In Washington his assignments concerned Trade, Law of the Sea and other economic matters. Mr. Newlin was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2001.

Q: In '68, whither?

NEWLIN: I came back to the Department and worked in the Office of German Affairs.

Q: You were there from '68 to when?

NEWLIN: '70.

Q: What piece of the action did you have of German affairs?

NEWLIN: Berlin.

Q: Oh, boy.

NEWLIN: At that time, we were renegotiating the Berlin Agreement. It was an interesting time.

Q: People who dealt with Berlin in these times were almost like Talmud students. There was a holy writ. Whether the tailgates could be lowered and the whole thing. What was the status of Berlin and what were we trying to do with this agreement?

NEWLIN: Berlin was still under Four Power control. But the access to Berlin was still only cleared to the allies by air. We blew it at the end of the war by not pinning down that we had secure access to Berlin, secure land access to Berlin, and the Soviets periodically would block land access to Berlin. Of course, we had the Berlin airlift. Then the Soviets would open the corridors and then they'd periodically close them. We had the Quadripartite Working Group, which played games talking about what we would do if the Soviets blocked access. We had the French and the Brits and the Germans and the U.S. dealing with how we would respond if the Soviets blocked access. We played wargames once a year. The people who were directing the wargames would block access. Then we would respond with this and that until finally they would back down and we didn't have to go to nuclear war. But nuclear war was at the end of all of those options. "Ich bin ein Berliner." The game plans that we had took us to war. Whether we would actually have gone to war, who's to say. The games always stopped before we got to war.

Q: Who was in charge of the Berlin group?

NEWLIN: Jimmy Sutherland was head of the German desk. Nelson Ledsky was the guy on the German desk who was doing most of the Berlin work. I worked for Ledsky.

Q: What were the negotiations about?

NEWLIN: I don't remember.

Q: There is always trying to smooth about problems.

When you were there, was the attitude that any give on Berlin could lead to the complete collapse of our position in Berlin?

NEWLIN: You put your finger on it when you said there... Every little word counted. Yes, we were very reluctant to give on anything. But I'd have to try and piece back together... I'm drawing a blank on what those issues were. In fact, I'd love to cut it off here and go back and try to pull my thoughts together.

Q: Okay.

Today is March 15, 2002. You wanted to back up a bit and talk about what you had been dealing with previously.

NEWLIN: I was thinking of the time before I started to work on Berlin affairs. I was working with Elwood Brilliance, who was an older man who had been working in German affairs for a long time and who had multiple sclerosis and had a hard time doing certain things.

Q: Talk a bit about him. I used to see him. He'd be wheeled into the cafeteria. He was considered to be... People would point and say, "He's absolutely first rate on Germany."

NEWLIN: He was a wonderful man. He loved Germany. He loved the German desk. He loved what he was doing. When I came there, it was clear that there were some people who were trying to ease him out a little bit. I found that very painful. Alex Johnpoll was head of the desk at the time. I have forgotten who the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs was. I guess it was Leddy. Alex and Leddy were kind of trying to ease Ellwood out. I'm sure that they had their very good reasons. There was lots of stuff that Ellwood couldn't really do. He had somebody who assisted him and turned pages for him and did things like that. He dictated, of course. But what he really served as, among other things, was a wonderful institutional memory. Sometimes you didn't have the luxury of having somebody who was largely institutional memory.

Then we had a change of personnel and Jimmy Sutherland came in as head of the German desk. I can't remember who came in. There was a change at the Assistant Secretary level, too. Certainly Ellwood went back as a respected elder statesman, which was something that pleased me tremendously.

I might just mention a little anecdote, too. When I reported to the German desk, it was in the summer of '68. I was coming up from Guatemala. I moved into my house, which I had been renting and it was completely empty. I had a bed, but I didn't have a lot of stuff. I didn't have a

radio. I got up early that morning. I didn't have breakfast. I thought I'd go into the Department, have breakfast in the Department, read my newspapers and things, and then report to the desk. I got into the Department quite early, maybe 7:00. In those days, you didn't have any security to speak of at all. I thought, "Well, I'll just go up and poke my head into the offices and see what they look like." I didn't expect anyone to be there. I poked my head into the office. I hadn't even bought my newspaper. The office was a beehive of activity. I was embarrassed. I didn't know what was going on. People with their neckties and shirts open and half shaved and bleary-eyed. Typewriters clattering like crazy. I couldn't just pretend I had gone to the wrong office. I was going to have to appear in an hour and a half and say who I was, so I had to say who I was. I was taken immediately in to see my new boss, Alec Johnpoll. I just knew that I was kind of in trouble. The best I could think of to say is, "You guys certainly get an early start." He looked kind of askance at his new political officer and he said, "You don't know what's going on, do you?" Of course, I had to admit that I didn't know what was going on. He told me that the Soviets had just invaded Czechoslovakia. That was my introduction on the German desk. I think that I got off on the wrong foot with Alex Johnpoll then and never got back.

Q: He was an interesting person. He was a political counselor in Belgrade when I was chief of the Consular Section under Kennan. Martin Hillenbrand was the man-

NEWLIN: Martin Hillenbrand. There you go. One lovely man.

Q: He was Assistant Secretary for European Affairs.

NEWLIN: Exactly. He and Sutherland were both lovely men and friends of Ellwood and had respect for Ellwood. That situation which had been painful and hurtful to me because it was painful and hurtful to Ellwood got resolved in a way that was satisfactory. I guess I said Vest because Vest is another fine man. If Vest had been involved in it, he would have been [inaudible].

Q: George would have been.

You came there at the time the Poles and everybody else invaded Czechoslovakia. Was it August of '68?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: After Johnpoll, what did they have you doing?

NEWLIN: You can imagine that the German desk was [inaudible]. The German desk wished to think it was. It wished to think that it was the heart of everything. Alex wanted to have his group playing as big a role as possible. But it was the Soviets who invaded Czechoslovakia. It was not really our issue. So, we were on the fringes of it and appropriately and properly stayed on the fringes of it.

Q: When you got established, you had the Berlin side?

NEWLIN: I started out working on non-Berlin things for the first year or so. I was the junior person on the regular German side of things. You'd get a whole lot of stuff to do. You answer the congressionals. You take care of visitors. That was the 20th or the 25th anniversary of NATO and there was a big NATO meeting. The Germans at that time were in the NATO chair. Willi Brandt was foreign minister. He was the president of NATO – it was their turn – during this big ceremonial meeting. I was his control officer. That's the kind of a job where it's completely sort of no-win. If you do it well, you don't get much credit. You're supposed to do it well. There is not much to doing it well. You've got a lot of details to take care of and you've got to be nice to the guy you're with. I was with him all the time. I'd ride in the car with him and that kind of thing. But if you do it wrong, something happens, it's a highly visible mistake, and you get in trouble for it. I do remember one time when it could have been very wrong. The political officer, of course, is in charge of that kind of thing. The details that go into the planning are extremely complicated. At one point, we were going in a motorcade from one place to another where we were going to have some presentations. Then we were going to go to the eighth floor of the Department. The motorcade was supposed to stay intact. Willi Brandt's car was in the front. All the other cars were following him. We were supposed to pull up to this place, let everybody off. Each car would pull up in turn. Then all the cars were supposed to circle the block and come back and line up in exactly the same order. But that was not clear to all the drivers, so when we came out, the cars were all completely piggledly wiggledly. We were supposed to be going from there to the Department. Brandt's car was nowhere in sight. The Turkish ambassador's, I think that was the car that was right in front. The cars all behind, all those flags, there was no German flag in sight back around the corner. I said, "Mr. Foreign Minister, we'll just keep the order. You should arrive first. We'll go in this car." I opened the door for him, whoever the hell's car it was. I went around to the other side. I said to the driver, "Go to the Department, please." The driver went to the Department. I thought, "Oh, boy. We're either all right or we're not all right." Everybody else just got into the next car and went off. Nobody said, "Boo" to me until quite late in the day when somebody from the Office of Protocol came up very quietly and said, "Are you the guy who stuck Brandt in that first car?" I thought, "Oh, here it is." I said, "Yes, I am." He said, "Oh, Jesus, thank you." Nobody paid any attention.

Q: As you were there, Willi Brandt being a socialist and we've always thought much more comfortable with the CDU (Christian Democratic Union), as you got there, what were you getting from the corridor and your impression of Willi Brandt at that particular point?

NEWLIN: I am not a socialist, but I'm a democrat. Willi Brandt, you have to remember, wasn't just a socialist. He was the guy who had done such a wonderful job as mayor of Berlin. He was thought to have done a wonderful job of mayor of Berlin.

At the end of that trip, he gave me a very nice photograph of himself signed, "To William Newlin with best wishes from Willi Brandt." I was with him quite a lot during that time. I thought that was very nice. It became particularly nice when he became Chancellor. Here people from the German embassy would come in... When I was in USEC (United States Mission to the European Communities) a little bit later, I had this picture of Willi Brandt on my desk. When people from the German embassy would come in and see this signed picture from their Chancellor, they stood a little straighter. You could sort of hear the heels click.

Q: You began to deal with Berlin affairs later on?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: This was '69ish?

NEWLIN: In that period, yes.

Q: We had a new administration coming in, the Nixon administration?

NEWLIN: Before we get to Berlin, there was kind of something interesting in the way we reacted with the German embassy. We're in the '60s. The war is a long time behind us. But there was a war. All the people who were working remembered the war still very clearly. The German embassy was staffed with a lot of people who had fought in the war. Nobody in the German embassy fought anywhere but on the Russian front. I won't believe that.

Q: I found this when I went to Frankfurt, all the Russian front fighters.

NEWLIN: Yes. Their ambassador at that time was a man named Powels. He was a fine man. He had lost an arm on the Russian front. We had an awful lot of German evenings, as you imagine, where the German desk and the German embassy would get together for these great friendship fests. We had very good working relationships with our German colleagues. But I tended to be the person, as the junior guy on the desk, to write the toasts and things. I would read my toast to my wife, who couldn't help giggling and laughing. Then she would be at the affair and hear the German return toasts. It was quite comical what excruciatingly good friends we were then and were sort of thought to have always been.

Q: In that period, most of the Americans, too, had fought in the war.

NEWLIN: Of course. Most of them fought in Germany.

Q: Let's talk about your impression of the Nixon administration coming in to power and all this vis a vis the State Department and Germany. What was your impression?

NEWLIN: I don't remember its having made a big difference in the way we conducted our business with Germany.

Q: I would imagine that there would be a certain comfort in having Nixon coming in, coming from the more or less right-wing of the Republican Party. I've talked to people who have been involved when the Kennedy administration came in. These people dealing with Germany were very nervous because, as we all know, particularly the Berlin situation by precedent where everything is very nuanced and very careful because any deviation, our feeling was that it could lead to a wedge in our position in Berlin. In the Kennedy administration, people I've talked to have said they were playing kind of fast and loose at the beginning. They thought there was more room to maneuver than not.

NEWLIN: Let's move on to Berlin now. Certainly with Nixon, I didn't for a minute think we were being fast and furious. I thought that we guarded all the dotted "Is" and crossed "Ts" of the folklore that had practically grown up around all these agreements in Berlin. But we were trying to change it. If we weren't doing it from the very beginning, very soon, we became involved in this negotiation, which was leading towards the quadripartite agreement on access to Berlin. Obviously, we all remember that access had been poorly delineated at the end of the war. In fact, the agreements post-war only specified clearly that we had assured air access. Both train and rail had been left a little bit vague. The people on our side who had written it had thought that we had the access, but it wasn't really clearly spelled out in the agreement, so periodically the Soviets would block access on the autobahn and access by rail. That led at one time to the Berlin airlift. They never rocked it long enough for that to have to happen again, but we were trying to clear up that ambiguity and that very dangerous source of potential conflict. One of the things that I spent quite a lot of work on during that time on the Berlin negotiations was on the CCG [Contingency Coordinating Group]. It was contingency plans for what to do when and if the Soviets blocked land access to Berlin. You had in Washington the ambassadorial group. What you had was the governments of France and Britain and Germany had given to their ambassadors the authority to agree or disagree with American plans to use nuclear weapons. It didn't have to go back to governments. You could deal on the spot in Washington when you were dealing with Berlin access contingency issues. It was a curious, unique sort of a situation where ambassadors had been given more authority than is usual in a particular little area.

Q: All the way up through nuclear weapons?

NEWLIN: That is certainly my recollection of it, that that is what it was for. It was so that... We played these wargames. You had a bunch of people – I think they were military people – who would plan these contingencies and would all sit around pretending to be different players and would come together and be briefed, "The Soviets have done this. What are you going to do?" We'd go back and sit around and discuss what we were going to do and we'd say what we were going to do. We'd ratchet the pressure up a little bit on the Soviets in other areas. Then they would ratchet the pressure up. But mercifully and happily, in all of the war games, it was finally the Soviets who blinked. Land access was reestablished and we never had to go to any kind of a war in the war games. Then we'd go over to NATO and critique how these war games had played out. It was a never never land. But it was very scary stuff. Clearly, what our ultimate contingency plans were to go to nuclear war over Berlin.

Q: Eleanor Dulles had left by this time?

NEWLIN: Eleanor would keep coming back as a consultant. I never really understood where Eleanor fit, to be perfectly honest. She was popping in and out. She certainly was not part of the office.

Q: What piece of Berlin have when you were in Washington?

NEWLIN: In one sense, I was the junior person, but in another sense, I was the Berlin desk officer. Nelson Ledsky was my boss. He was certainly in charge of the Berlin negotiation side of it except that it was really the biggest thing that the whole office was working on it. But I had all

the junky side of any Berlin stuff. I had all the paperwork side of the Berlin stuff. When I got there, the Berlin files were a mess. I tried to create some order around the Berlin files, which I think I did. During the negotiations, we were able to put our hands on the stuff we needed in the way that we hadn't been able to when I started.

Q: What was the status while you were there in '69, '70 or so? Were there any major movements in Berlin?

NEWLIN: When we left, we signed that agreement.

Q: Who was doing the agreement?

NEWLIN: It was Sutherland in our office. We had a main negotiator.

Q: What about the French and the British, who had pieces there. Were you talking to their Berlin person?

NEWLIN: Yes, we were talking all the time to their Berlin person. But it was a frustrating time for me in the Foreign Service. It wasn't sure to me that I was going to stay in the Foreign Service. It is such a layered business. I was at the bottom of that layer. I would never talk alone to colleagues at the other embassies except in this tripartite contingency stuff. I often was the person dealing with the contingency plans. But in the real negotiation, I was not the person who was a point man in any meetings with foreign embassy people. I would go along, but I was not the spokesman.

Q: At that point, from your perspective, albeit you were kept considerably removed from some of the action, how were we dealing... You had the East Germans, the West Germans, the Soviets, the French, the British, and the Americans.

NEWLIN: You have to remember that the East Germans didn't exist.

Q: Okay. In our perspective...

NEWLIN: Yes. Part of the liturgy was that we didn't talk to the East Germans.

Q: How about the West Germans? Were you all together? Were they part of the negotiations or were they off to one side but being sort of a silent partner?

NEWLIN: It's awful that I can't give you a straighter answer to that. I think it was a tripartite issue. The agreement was between the U.S., the French, and the Brits with the Soviets on access to Berlin. The West Germans were involved. We talked to the West Germans all the time. But they were not parties to this agreement.

Q: I imagine that they'd be off to one side but we'd keep them fully informed.

NEWLIN: Yes. They particularly wished to hold our feet to the fire on these...

Q: If we strayed from this quadripartite status, things got very loose.

NEWLIN: Well, the quadripartite is Berlin. The Soviets were in with us in the management of Berlin itself. Then tripartite versus the Soviets in things like access to Berlin. We had, for example, Hess in prison in Berlin. The Soviets had as big a say as we in how Hess was treated and how all of that was done. Hess was the single prisoner in Spandau Prison for many years. There were always people trying to free Hess. Hess' family was always trying to free him. People would claim that it was cruel and unusual punishment. It was, of course, solitary confinement. He had no one to interact with but his jailors. The jailors would rotate on a monthly basis through the four powers. One month, it would be the Soviets who would run Spandau Prison. There was a luncheon every month at Spandau Prison hosted by the country in charge. People would parade their visiting firemen... would ask that their visitors would be invited to this lunch. It was a very civilized lunch. I attended it once when I was a visitor in Berlin at the time of that lunch. They said, "We'll take you to the lunch at Spandau Prison. It will be interesting for you." It was. It was a bunch of more or less senior military and diplomatic people sitting around having a... If you didn't know the setting or anything, you'd have no idea that you were in prison and that these were the people-

Q: I take it that Herr Hess was not invited.

NEWLIN: Herr Hess was not invited.

Q: What about the Berlin Wall at that time? Were you having to deal with crises around the Wall, people escaping, getting shot?

NEWLIN: Yes, but there wasn't much that we did about it. People were getting shot. We did not protest people getting shot. That was not something that was going to bring us to war. If people tried to escape and got shot, we could raise a lot of moral indignation questions, but nobody thought that we were going to retaliate. We acknowledged that the East Germans had the right to have the Wall and to keep people in it. It was not like closing off access to Berlin, which we claimed they did not have the right to do and that was a right that we would fight to maintain. This was something that we would complain about. This happened throughout the period, but it wasn't anything that got our attention in any serious way as I remember it.

Q: You were thinking, what the hell am I going to do? Did you feel part of the German cadre in the State Department?

NEWLIN: No. The State Department – I suppose, particularly Ellwood – wished to make me part of the German cadre. But I had never served in Germany. I didn't speak German. I was going to early morning German class.

Q: What were you looking at? Were you looking for a geographic home?

NEWLIN: I wanted my geographic home to be in French-speaking Europe. I had served in Paris as my first assignment. I later went to Brussels. Then I went to Nice. I guess I found my

geographic home. But at that time, certainly the German desk was trying to create its German cadre. It had its German cadre. Hans Himmhof, for example, was part of that group. Quite early in the game after I got there, they sent me for an indoctrination tour around Germany. It makes me a little bit embarrassed. They really planned it as if I were a tourist. Hans was very careful to make sure that I drove down the Romantische Strasse and stayed at this and that hotel. He was very careful to make sure that I stayed in certain hotels in the places we had consulates. They made me visit all the consulates, which was fun, of course, but I really didn't feel that it was a very good use of taxpayers' money. You asked if I felt part of the German cadre. I never really did. I didn't speak German. I pretty much knew I was never going to learn to speak German. I had pretty good French and wanted to make that better. I had some Spanish. I'm not hugely gifted in languages. German is a hardish language. It's got a more complicated grammar than French or Spanish. I never thought I was going to get very good at German.

GERARD M. GERT
Chief, Radio in the American Sector, USIS
Berlin (1978-1980)

Gerard M. Gert was born in 1920 in Danzig, Germany and spent his childhood in Berlin, Germany. In 1937, he moved from Berlin to the U.S. Mr. Gert received a bachelor's degree from New York University and then served in the U.S. Army from 1942-1946. Prior to joining USIS, he worked for the Office of the Military Government U.S. (OMGUS), then transferred to RIAS. He has served in Vietnam, Laos, and Psychological Operations.

GERT: It seems there were some real problems in RIAS Berlin at the time. This was an expensive operation. It cost somewhere between \$4 million and \$6 million a year with a large staff -- about six Americans by this time. There were almost 600 Germans on the payroll. A very big operation. I had some familiarity with RIAS having been there in '53. What was the problem? They had a very good American director, a guy named Bob Lochner, most capable.

Bob was a most capable guy. The problem seemed to have been that Bob had crossed swords with the Director. The Director and the Agency had looked for ways and means of cutting down the RIAS operation to save money. Also some staff studies had been done with all sorts of expectations, and Bob objected and he said so. Bob was ready to quit. He got transferred to Switzerland, PAO in Berne, and I succeeded him. I knew that I was starting out there with a few people with a few strikes against me. Lochner wasn't very happy with my coming there, and I knew I was stepping into something a little delicate. I had marching orders from the Director: "Come what may, you cut down that operation to save us money."

In the days of Bob Lochner and before him we had involved the German Government into paying more and more for the operation and upkeep of RIAS. But all the personnel were on our payroll; these were all American paid employees. My marching orders were to cut down on the amount of American money and commitment. This, of course, was done with the full knowledge of PAO Germany and PAO Berlin, and we developed a very comprehensive plan to put more

and more of the cost on the German Government.

All this had to be done secretly. All this was classified. We wanted to give the impression that this was an American commitment, and we didn't want to admit that the commitment was paid for by the Germans. The Germans didn't want to admit that they were paying for RIAS. They didn't want to tell their own people, because the Americans were bragging about this great commitment, RIAS was one of the great pillars of the American commitment to Berlin, just as important, as we always said, as the presence of 6,000 American soldiers. That meant it looked kind of silly if the Germans keep on picking up the tab. So this had to be handled very carefully, with a great amount of "fingerspitzen gefuehl."

What we did was keep on increasing the German percentage. I believe that by the time I got there, the Germans were paying something like 20% or 30%, and every year we would squeeze them some more. As you all know -- by now it is public knowledge -- we got the German Government to pick up 95% of the tab.

There was a year, you may remember, I think it was 1969 or 1970, when the Agency had to cut down tremendously on the number of employees. The Agency reduced overall worldwide staff by some considerable figure -- 595 of which were employees of RIAS. I think we took almost the whole cut worldwide in reduction of national employees. Actually, what happened is they came off the American payroll and went onto a German payroll paid by the German Federal Government. This sounds all very simple. But what goes with it, which I am afraid quite a few colleagues, particularly in Washington, never really understood -- and I would like to say that now, very emphatically -- the fact that when you have such a transfer of staff from the American payroll to the German payroll, there goes with it a bit of shift of loyalties. He who pays the piper calls the tune. The staff was always conscious of being German nationals, but now that they weren't even paid for by the Americans, they became very conscious of being Germans. At the same time, we cut down American staff. From six Americans, we went to two. I was alone with one deputy and for long periods I didn't have any deputy.

So we cut people and money, but some in Washington often believed that we still had the same control. We did not. I would still receive daily guidance from the Voice, "Emphasize this, play this up, play this down," as if we were running the Voice of America. This is something which I think was never fully understood and appreciated in Washington.

Anyhow, we carried on and got the Germans to pick up more and more of the tab, put out a program which one could generally not object to. We did have some programs which, if examined by the program review board of the Voice of America wouldn't have passed muster because they were often critical of U.S. developments. During the Vietnam War, when we carried items that would have been entirely too critical and in the wrong tone to be broadcast by the Voice. But to keep up our credibility and also our peace of mind with our German staff and our German audience, we had to go through with this, which I, as a program officer for the Voice, would not have been happy with.

The German employees loved the shift because we are not as advanced as they are when it comes to social legislation. They have a better pension system, much better. Their retirement pay

is much better than ours. Their health plan is much better. Once on the German payroll they got the same benefits that German employees have in the radio networks all over Germany -- better pay, better health plan, better retirement pay, much better social conditions. So they were delighted.

There were other points of friction which we had over the years. There was the fact of the RIAS choir. Let me back up for a minute. One of the problems that Bob Lochner faced before I got there was a man named Alex Buchanan. He was sent out by Leonard Marks to do studies on how RIAS could be cut down -- cut out music and cut down the choir. RIAS, for quite a while had its own symphony orchestra, dance orchestra and choir on the payroll. Of course, that is unheard of when you think of an American radio station. Alex came to RIAS as an American radio expert and he just couldn't understand how a radio station could have its own choir, dance orchestra, so much money in the symphony orchestra, a radio play department that produced more radio plays than three networks combined in the U.S. This all looked too big. So he was out there trying to make all sorts of cuts and suggestions, and that is another thing that Bob Lochner didn't like and I didn't like either. I had the good fortune over Bob Lochner that I could say, "Well, I have to study things. I am new here. Don't bother me." But I was trying to get rid of Alex, who was always telling me he was going to report to Leonard Marks.

As I said, the Germans were very happy, to go on the German payroll, and they are still enjoying that today. But the German Government wanted some influence. They wanted to have a say in the appointment of the German director and they wanted the German director to have more control. There was the matter of a new title of intendant. Intendant is a German traditional title for the top man in a radio station. That title had not been used except shortly, I think, after Schechter came up with the idea of the radio station. It was used once in 1946, but the title had not been used since then for the German chief, and the American chief was always called the U.S. director.

The government and the German who would most likely get that title was very interested in the recreation of it. I suggested it to Gordon Ewing, CPAO, who at first wasn't too happy with the idea, but we went ahead and created an intendant who would be the top German.

The man we picked as the top German was Roland Muellerburg, a wonderful guy who had worked for RIAS for a long time. Politically he belonged to the CDU -- Christian Democratic Union -- conservative. He had been an officer in World War II, had absolutely a clean background, a very good person, very loyal to us, but conscious of his German nationality, he became more conscious when he got the top title, and became the representative of the German Government in the radio station, because they paid him now. He was the intendant -- he was paid by the German Government.

Obviously he acquired more power, and I lost power. The meetings used to be chaired by me exclusively. They began to be chaired by us in sort of a co-chairmanship. Later on, he ran the meetings. It wasn't an usurpation of power, but that was just the way the cookie crumbled. I had to be very tactful and I realized exactly what was going on around me.

Then came one phase which I found very difficult and very interesting. Intendant Muellerburg,

along about 1974, was not feeling well. He had an operation and we had to look for a successor. Muellerburg, himself, was close to the Christian Democratic Party. The government at this time was headed by Willy Brandt, SPD. The Berlin government was headed by Klaus Schuetz, SPD. So both governments were socialist and so were most of the employees in German radio stations. But I would say less so in RIAS. Radio had become a rather ideological medium. As you know, radio is run by a quasi-government institution in Germany, not run commercial like in this country. There was a log of ideology, and there still is today, in the radio and television in Germany.

Now here we are in a country where the government in Bonn and in Berlin is SPD. We have a lot of SPD people, or close to the SPD, in RIAS, and we were talking about the top German official and what party he should belong to. I wanted a successor to Muellerburg who would also be CDU, because I felt we had enough SPD all around us. I didn't want a socialist as intendant. The German Government had to approve the new man since he was going to be on their payroll. They had to approve the choice and help make the choice.

I have to back up here for one minute. The union was an important player. They were pushing for higher wages and were trying to cut down on work time. They also wanted influence on management because of the German concept of co-determination, where the unions play an important role in determining policies of the organization, and they wanted to have an input in policy in the radio stations, which I surely didn't want to see. So there was a bit of a controversial relationship with the union, and the union now felt they were in solid, particularly with the SPD. Another reason for me to insist on a CDU intendant.

This became very difficult. Whatever candidates we came up with -- when I say "we," this was a joint operation between Muellerburg and me. We were in complete agreement, we had the same goals, we wanted to do the same thing. We focused on the former deputy intendant of the North German Radio in Hamburg, the richest radio network in Germany, Freihert Ludwig von Hammerstein, a man who was involved as a young lieutenant in the uprising of the 20th of July 1944 when along with other good people, he was trying to overthrow Adolf Hitler. Just one quickie about his background. His father had been the Chief of Staff of the German Army long before Hitler, and as such, he had lived in the same building where years later most of the events of July 20 took place. So Ludwig knew the building inside and out when he was in there with his pistol, and when the plot failed and all the plotters were arrested, Ludwig knew of a secret passage which he had discovered when he was a boy. He used the passage to escape from the Gestapo. So from the 21st of July, he hid in Berlin until the day the Soviets marched in. That was his background. A great guy, still a friend of mine.

I flew to Hamburg and asked him to become our intendant. He said he would take it under advisement. All this had to be done in secret. I couldn't tell anybody in RIAS about these activities. I didn't want staff to know, because they were all finagling. There were some people who wanted to become the number one on the German side. I didn't want any of them to have that opportunity. This was also very difficult because the German Government was submitting names of candidates whom I wanted to turn down because they submitted nothing but socialists.

Finally, we discussed it with the German Government, and there was hesitancy. I went to see

Egon Bahr who was a personal friend of Willy Brandt. He was the Federal German representative in the city of Berlin, a ministerial post. I had known him from my days in 1953, because he had been an employee of RIAS. I said, "Can I speak to you freely, without diplomatic niceties?"

He said, "Of course you can."

I said, "Well, tell Willy Brandt to show his generosity and his magnanimity by not insisting on a socialist. I want a CDU man. I have a name here of a perfectly good person. I want your approval."

He said, "I will find out. I will call Willy Brandt." A couple of days later, he said Willy Brandt wanted to make the offer of intendant to Spangenberg who was State Secretary in President Heinemann's office and a member of the SPD. If Spangenberg wanted the job, I could not deny him that. However, Spangenberg didn't want the job, and therefore we got agreement on Hammerstein.

By this time, the story began leaking. I was very unhappy about that, and I had to make an announcement. One person whom I couldn't consult in time was the governing mayor of Berlin, Klaus Schuetz, who, when he heard about it, called the American Minister in Berlin, David Klein, and complained about me not having checked it out with the governing mayor. The Minister called me and bawled me out and complained to Embassy Bonn. This was a five-ring circus, but I prevailed. We got von Hammerstein. He became the intendant, and he served two tours from 1975 to 1984 or '85. He is now retired.

Von Hammerstein was succeeded in 1985 by another CDU man, and right now, I believe the guy who is intendant is also CDU. So this is interesting because we now have a situation in RIAS Berlin, as I understand it, where Mr. Wick and the CDU mayor of Berlin had the idea, along with Axel Springer, to have a RIAS-TV program, which is in operation now. They are thinking of using Worldnet as an outlet. Maybe one or two items from Worldnet can be used, but generally speaking, I don't think Worldnet is tailored for broadcasting in Berlin under the circumstances. So it is a RIAS operation, but as I understand it, it has no more than 35 or 40 minutes a day of programming. I think they were trying to do a breakfast show and they wound up with an evening program of 35 minutes, so it's part-time TV.

When I talked about the financial and personnel changes in RIAS and everything else that happened there during my tenure it becomes clear why I stayed there so long. You had to have continuity, you had to know the players, and you had to know the language and all that. I guess that is why the Agency kept me in Berlin as long as it did.

I quit in 1980, at which time I turned 60. As you know, that was mandatory at the time, and I have been a retiree ever since.

Let me just say a word about the differences between RIAS and Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. RIAS has a similar role in broadcasting to the GDR in the German language only, as Liberty has in broadcasts in the languages of the Soviet Union, primarily Russian, and Armenian,

Georgian, Uzbek, or whatever. RFE broadcasts in the language of the satellites, from Polish to Czech, Hungarian, Romanian, Bulgarian, except for German. East Germany was covered by RIAS. That was our primary target audience, the East Germans. However, our broadcasting to West Berlin became almost as important as a status symbol of our presence, and commitment to Berlin as our broadcasts to East Germany.

Of course, our programs were targeted primarily for the listening audience in East Germany with topics which were of great interest to them, world topics, but also those dealing with developments inside East Germany, just like RFE talks about developments inside Poland in their Polish broadcasts.

At the time that I was there, we were still in the middle of the Cold War. There was no Gorbachev, there was no opening. There was, on the part of the SPD, always a sort of a yearning for the thought of reunification. This is part of the "ostpolitick", under that rubric. You will find that there was an inclination to be less hawkish, if you will, and make more concessions and hoping that if you kiss them long enough, they will be nice to you. That was there at the time.

What has happened now, I can't really comment on. I don't really know. I suspect, though, that there may be the suspicion, that I would share, that there would be more of an accommodation now, not only from the SPD, but also from the FDP, with Genscher, the Foreign Minister, most likely in the lead, yes.

You could always wind up at loggerheads when it comes to policy. You knew it was a miracle that you didn't have more fights between the Germans and the Americans, because sometimes our policy did not go together. But in my days, generally speaking, we were lucky inasmuch as our foreign policy objectives tended to be parallel.

RIAS had a difficult task since it couldn't physically reach its audience. You couldn't conduct a Nielsen survey or a Gallup poll. I would say listeners' mail was an important factor, the amount of mail we got, the amount of attacks on us by the East Germans. If we weren't effective in some shape or form, they wouldn't have paid any attention to us, but the constant attacks on us by the East German media showed us that it hurt. Somehow or other, we got through. Also, of course, jamming. They spent more money jamming RIAS than we spent putting out a program. You have heard that same thing being said about the VOA. We were heavily jammed by East German transmitters throughout. I understand they have stopped that recently under the glasnost policy. I am not sure of that, because East Germany doesn't necessarily follow Gorbachev. But those were the three main measurements, if you will, the jamming, the listener mail, and the attacks on the station.

During my second tour in Berlin, I think we were less Cold Warish. I believe that in the fifties and sixties, the Cold War was at its height, and we would have been, in tone, a little more aggressive. Of course, we were never as aggressive as they were, but still, we would have been a little more. I remember, for instance, something that we did early on which sort of petered out, and which today wouldn't be possible. There was a political cabaret, a European way of making fun in a jocular manner by song, poetry, and sort of kidding or sometimes being pretty heavy handed, making fun of the opposing side. We had one of the best political cabarets called "Die

Insulanert", which means The Islanders in which we were poking fun at the East German Government. That was pretty heavy stuff, very, popular in my first time at RIAS. By the second time I got to RIAS in 1968, it was sort of petering out, so there was, in that sense, a change in tone and trend.

JOSEPH C. WALSH
Executive Officer
Bonn (1969-1973)

Joseph C. Walsh graduated from college in 1933. He decided to pursue a career in Social Work, so he obtained his M.A. from the Fordham School of Social Service. In 1941, he was sworn in as an FBI Special Agent. One of his former FBI colleagues, Charles Noone asked him to come work for him at the U.S. Information Agency. He accepted the offer, which began his 20-year association with USIA. He has also served in Mexico. He was interviewed by Lew Schmidt on April 25, 1989.

WALSH: I remained in Vietnam until April '69 and, after some home leave, reported to USIS/Bonn, West Germany as Executive Officer. Shortly after the completion of the Bonn tour I retired in early '73--thus completing twenty years service with the U.S. Information Agency, plus eleven with the FBI, totaling thirty-one years in the service of our government.

Q: Well, I've got you beaten by one year. I had some difficulties with Mr. Shakespeare. He and I decided we had no mutual respect and I retired in November of 1972. Do you have any comments to make about your total career in the Agency and how you feel about it or how you feel about the Agency in general? Or do you have any anecdotes that you would like to add before we conclude this?

WALSH: For so many reasons, all essentially personal, I am beholden to the USIA for such as the friendships and associations with so many good and noble and hugely talented people from which I and my family have so greatly profited throughout my years with the Agency.

I've been away too long to offer any kind of a valid estimate of the Agency's current doings, but there is one program--enormously important in my view!--which seems to have been sustained through the years, viz: exchange of persons programs. It goes all the way back to the solid policy concept depicted in that great agency exhibit "The Family of Man." I'm sure you remember, Lew, and then the "People-to-People" programs supporting the same concept and, of course, the on-going exchange of persons programs down through the years. I read recently of an "au-pair" program fostered by USIA which I think is a great idea. The Agency's very purpose of existence directs its aims towards international understanding. This method is certainly a sure way of accomplishing that end.

As for anecdotes: At an Agency Christmas party, back towards the end of the 50's, a wife of one of the Agency's officers remarked to my wife, "Isn't it lovely? Every Christmas we have a new

Director!" Her view wasn't precisely on the mark, but she wasn't far off. There had been a steady parade of political designees to head up the young USIA who through their careers brought varying degrees of prominence and success to the Agency; one I'm sure you remember, Lew, made a speech in Hawaii in which he referred to "alien influences" of USIA, which generated great concern among some of the Senate's leadership--so much so that, short of being wiped out of existence, our budget was heavily cut--but we survived.

OWEN B. LEE
Political Officer
Berlin (1969-1973)

Owen B. Lee served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He graduated from Harvard University in 1949 and studied in Paris, France at Institut d'Etudes Politiques. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Bolivia, Romania, and Spain. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on December 4, 1996.

Q: After your period in the Operations Center you went to Berlin as political officer. Who was in charge in Berlin at that time?

LEE: David Klein was the minister, and Deputy Commandant.

Q: How large was your political section?

LEE: We had six Foreign Service officers, plus the Eastern Section which was a separate section covering East Germany. My position was Senate Liaison Officer with the local German authorities.

Q: Who was the political counselor at the time?

LEE: Robert Gilman followed by Albert Seligmann.

Q: I knew Bob, he was in Heidelberg when I was in Bonn. Explain a little bit about the liaison function to the Senate.

LEE: The liaison function was shared between an American, a Britisher and a Frenchman, three of us representing the different occupying powers in West Berlin. We each had offices adjacent to the office of the Governing Mayor of the city. Our job was to keep track of what went on in the Senate, in the Abgeordnetenhaus (House of Representatives) and to act as liaison with our mission in terms of the Governing Mayor. Now, the Governing Mayor obviously dealt with the Allied Commandants of each sector and the missions, but we saw him also from time to time. Our contact more often was with the head of what they called the Senatskanzlei, or the chief of staff.

Q: Could you explain this a bit for me?

LEE: A senator corresponded to a minister of government, if you will, in the city government there. The man I dealt with mostly was the head of the Senatskanzlei, or the Senate Chancellery, but really he was what we would call a chief of staff of this government. He was the person who received us once a week. We had an extensive meeting immediately following the weekly meeting of the city council. He would brief us on everything that took place in the council meeting so we could pass it on to our commandants and missions. We also attended the periodical meetings of the House of Representatives, (the Abgeordnetenhaus). We knew what was going to be said in advance because we also had a meeting with the President of the Abgeordnetenhaus which meeting was always a very pleasant tea. We would go over the agenda and what was expected to happen politically with each agenda item. This was important because, at the time, Berlin was adopting and making its own laws, drawing on the basic laws of the Federal Republic of Germany. However, in each case there had to be a review because the Western powers were anxious to preserve their prerogatives as occupying powers and therefore had to make certain there would be no conflict either in policy or in law. I must say in all of this process the Germans, themselves, in the Senate were very meticulous in helping us work on this problem to make sure there was no conflict. That is why it was important always to know what was happening in the agenda and to insure that there were never any surprises that might arise.

Q: Were there still meetings of the Allied Kommandatura at that time?

LEE: The Kommandatura morning meetings that took place were mostly protocol meetings. I never attended them because there was no substantive interest. But they did have meetings without the Russians. The Russians, as you know, hadn't attended since the late forties.

Q: I had been our representative on what was called the civil administration committee where we went over the laws. We had difficulties with our French colleagues, but that is another story.

LEE: You mention difficulty with a French colleague. I have to rebut that with the good side of some of the reservations the French had sometimes. At the time I was in Berlin we had several interesting incidents, at least two, of aircraft-hijacking with different outcomes. The first case involved Poles who hijacked a plane and landed at Tempelhof, in the American sector. This was a misfortune because, with our Anglo-Saxon approach to the law, we took a hard line with embarrassing consequences. It was correct in law and all, but it also had not the best effect in Poland and elsewhere. There was a second hijacking by the Poles landing at Tegel in the French sector. The French jailed him immediately. He was prosecuted and sentenced immediately. There was no delay, there was no bringing a judge from the United States and having it take six months to a year. It was all over with in a matter of days and everyone knew that the following July 14th the Pole would be pardoned and freed. Justice was swift and freedom was swift.

Q: Our justice is slow and freedom is not going to be swift for the hijacker, anyhow. Were there any demonstrations during your time in Berlin? The Wall was up and feelings were running high.

LEE: We had demonstrations against ourselves over the invasion of the South Vietnamese into

Cambodia. That was quite serious. At the time the Free University (Freie Universität) was going through a crisis. Students were up in arms and they came down the Clay Allee near the mission and we had quite a time. The minister was in an awkward position. His son was among the demonstrators.

Q: *That would make it awkward.*

LEE: But, he decided on the right thing and invited several of the students to come in and I was one of the people who talked to the demonstrators. There was really no violence. There were other demonstrations at other times downtown near the Technical University where there was a little violence but nothing exceptional. Those were the only demonstrations that I can think of during my time there and they were related more with the Vietnam war than the situation in Berlin.

Q: *At this period, and while you were there, we were carrying on Four Power talks were we not?*

LEE: Yes.

Q: *Did you have any role in this?*

LEE: Yes, I did. There were several levels of talks in 1970-71. The Allied and Soviet ambassadors got together and talked about Germany in general, while the FRG and the GDR discussed inter-Berlin and inter-zonal matters. The talks that I was involved in covered merely intra-Berlin issues, involving the increasing of the number of people who could cross through the Wall within Berlin. I was not in the talks themselves, but I tracked the Senate which sometimes was not involved and sometimes was leading. One thing I can take some pleasure in, however, is that the final agreement on the intra-Berlin talks was decided in my living room. It was done on a Sunday morning with the head of the Senatskanzlei calling and asking if we could get together with our representatives in my house. The Senate had a final agreement that had been worked out with the East Germans for improved arrangements between East and West Berlin. As we look back it seems very limited but at the time it was a big breakthrough. What was being done was that the West was going to allow the East Germans to set up temporary offices in West Berlin. At these offices West Berliners could apply for visas, if you will, that would allow them to cross over. This could be done on a daily basis and you had to pay certain fees. We had to make arrangements for the East Germans to come through the Wall and to be returned at night and make sure that they all went back, etc. There were a lot of little details. But it was an opening and that was one part of the overall Quadripartite Agreements. But, it led to others.

For example, one day I received a call from my colleague in the Senate who said, "Mr. Lee I have to talk to you about a new proposal." I said, "What is this about?" He said, "Well, we want to open up another opening in the Wall to East Germany from West Berlin." "What is that for?" He said, "Garbage." So, we had to look into their proposed new garbage agreement because the city of Berlin was running out of space in the Grunewald Forest for dumping waste, rubble, and garbage. They couldn't send it back by train to West Germany because people didn't want to take it. The East Germans were interested in the money and they had the space, but it meant breaking a hole in the Wall. So, we had to find a way of opening up the Wall, providing for the trucks,

insuring that no one would escape, who was involved in the operation, etc.

Q: Now, the Wall was technically, I suppose, between East Germany and West Berlin in our sector under the control of our military. Did you have any relations with US military in your job?

LEE: We had another officer in the mission who handled relations with the military, I didn't.

Q: Well, those were exciting days because they opened up a new chapter in German relations, as I recall, that agreement of August, 1971. Willy Brandt had started all this.

LEE: And in 1972 East Germany (GDR) and West Germany (FRG) reached a bilateral agreement. In late 1973 we eventually established relations with East Germany.

Before that happened I had an interesting experience in East Germany. In March, 1973 I had the second coldest night in my life. My experience in Bolivia was unforgettable but the coldest night in many ways was in Leipzig. After the two Germanys concluded an agreement, recognizing each other in effect, we knew we would be recognizing East Germany too, but we didn't know quite how to go about setting it up. In the U.S. Mission in Berlin we had an Eastern section that kept track of these things and they had some contact with people in East Berlin. Some of their contacts were made through the annual Leipzig Fair. The Leipzig Fair came up in March, 1973 and somebody had the idea that we ought to go. I was proposed to go with one of the officers in the Eastern section. I said, "Fine, how will I go?" I was told not to carry a passport, to travel with an East German Fair Pass to Leipzig and to drive in a State Department vehicle. I thought that was quite a combination.

Q: Don't carry a passport?

LEE: Well, I had it with me but it was not to be shown. And driving a State Department vehicle, not a military vehicle. The Eastern Section of the Mission got the pass for me, my wife and the other officer, Philip Valdes. We drove to Leipzig arriving with no place to stay. We went to a Housing Office and they directed us to a suburb somewhere in Leipzig. It was still very cold in Germany. We got out to the house, a nice looking house, and a lady received us very courteously, etc. She showed us the two adjacent rooms. We noticed when we walked into the house it was a little cool in the house, but when she opened the kitchen you could feel heat coming out of there. We got to the rooms she had for us and they were cool. She had one of these old, what I call Transylvanian stoves made of porcelain in the corner that use coal or wood. She put her hand on it and said it was warming up and said we would be all right. That sounded good to us. We put our things down and went back downtown intending to look at the Fair. We came back that night and the room was freezing, absolutely freezing. And, of course, it suddenly dawned on me that she probably had put that stove on for the first time in years and only put enough fuel in there to take the cold off the stove but nothing more. The room had been frozen for years. We went to bed and I covered myself with a blanket, threw over my coat and all the rest. The room my wife and I stayed in had no stove in it, my colleague was in the adjacent room and he had the stove. I asked if he minded leaving the door open and he said not at all, but it didn't make any difference. Well, psychologically to us it made a difference. But, it was freezing

and I will never forget it in my life.

The visit to Leipzig was very worthwhile and we had no problems. No one bothered us. On our way back I wanted to stop in Wittenberg and see the place where Luther posted his objections to the Catholic church. We stopped there and I was kind of shocked that the statute of Luther in the main square was missing the letter “T”. I will never forget it. I thought to myself that things were really rundown there. And places did look rundown in many areas of East Germany.

Then we started back to Berlin and suddenly along the road I saw a car veer off the side and turn half over. We were under instructions not to stop. I stopped nonetheless, and we got out and looked inside the overturned car. Inside was an elderly man with a young woman. We helped the woman get out first who was uninjured. It was one of those little light East German cars. By this time a couple of farmers had come up and looked at me and the car and asked if we thought we could lift it. Well, we were able to lift the car up, right it, and help the old man out. He didn't seem to be injured, but I couldn't tell for sure. It didn't take but a second for everybody to start looking around and the East Germans began to show fear. They were frightened that they would be picked up by the police for being involved in an accident and for talking with Westerners. So, I said, “Is there anything more I can do?” They said, “No, thank you very much.” And we left. I think they tried to put the car back on the road, etc. so you couldn't tell there had been an accident, but I never have forgotten the attitude.

RICHARD C. BARKLEY
German Affairs
Washington, DC (1969-1971)

Aide to Ambassador
Bonn (1971-1972)

Eastern Affairs Section
Berlin (1972-1974)

Ambassador Richard C. Barkley was born on December 23, 1932 in Illinois. He attended Michigan State College, where he received his BA in 1954, and Wayne State University, where he received his MA in 1958. He served in the US Army overseas from 1955-1957 as a 1st lieutenant. His career has included positions in Finland, the Dominican Republic, Norway, South Africa, Turkey, and Germany. Ambassador Barkley was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 12, 2003.

Q: You were doing this from '68 to '70 about?

BARKLEY: No, actually I did it from '68 to '69. Then came an opening in German affairs. They found out that I had German, and a German background and asked if I would be interested in taking over the political military office in German affairs. That fit in nicely with NATO, and it

got me out of civil emergency planning which I thought was not really a direct linkage to where I wanted to go. I ended up in German affairs.

Q: Well on that civil emergency planning, what was your impression? I mean I would have thought that you would be up against organizations that really didn't want to get involved. You know if you are running a railroad it is all very nice, but...

BARKLEY: Well it is interesting. From the American side which of course, is the side we had to coordinate, we had a lot of activities with the Department of Commerce and different Defense groupings such as the maritime affairs and things like that. There was always great curiosity and interest in having an international link. People like the idea of international affairs. So they would go out there and sometimes with some bureaucratic enthusiasm. Actually to be perfectly honest, I saw a side of American bureaucracy that was quite attractive. There were some very good people engaged, people I would normally wouldn't see. Many, of course, were in the Pentagon, but in other agencies as well. They worked hard. From my perspective it was more interesting to see how the bureaucrats within NATO handled this. For many of them these jobs became sinecures. Of course if you had been engaged particularly with the French and others and watched their bureaucrats move, you had no idea what rigidity is. But these guys became little Napoleons in their own right with enormous power and authority. Many times they would just position themselves so all they had to do was reject what anybody else wanted to do. Like bureaucrats everywhere there was an attempt to make yourself extraordinarily important, if you can. So I got a certain taste of European bureaucracy which I found not nearly as forthcoming as American bureaucracy which is also an interesting commentary.

Q: I think there really is a difference in attitude for the most part with obvious exceptions. You get to a certain point in American bureaucracy, you are judging what you have accomplished. Your bosses are always found responsive to public criticism. I don't think in the European context this is...

BARKLEY: Well some are obviously more efficient than others, but the legendary "petit fonctionnaire" can drive you nuts. Most Europeans have those. For one thing bureaucracy has become much more an integral part of European life than it ever did in the United States. People have greater authority for bureaucratic functions in Europe than usually in the United States as you pointed out. Congress and political appointees, who feed in and out of the system, sort of keep you honest.

Q: Well I know as a consular officer I was very much aware of Congressional oversight. I mean I had vast powers of no you can't do this and all that. I realize that yeah that is all very nice except if I get a Congressman on my neck or the ambassador or the State Department get on your back, you try to avoid that because you knew that you were responsible. I don't think the European bureaucrat has that. Their system does not, tier representatives in parliament or whatever you call it, assembly, don't have that same power.

BARKLEY: Well I am sure I digress here a moment but any guy who has been exposed to American consular service particularly protection and welfare is aware that the United States extends to our citizens privileges far beyond those of any other nation on earth. I remember

talking particularly to Germans and Italians, who we would have to often take care of because their people had no representation. They were astonished at the things we would do for our people. But I think once again it reflects the kinds of pressures that are exerted in our political system.

Q: I remember when I came into my first job, one of my first jobs in Frankfurt was protection and welfare officer. I would respond to Congressional letters and all. I asked some very savvy German ladies who worked at the consulate, "If you had a problem do you write to your Bundestat member?" They looked at me as though I were nuts. You know, why waste a stamp.

BARCKLEY: Exactly right.

Q: That is interesting. Well move over to when you were dealing with what was it now?

BARCKLEY: Political military affairs in Germany.

Q: In Germany. Well this would be from '69 to...

BARCKLEY: Yes, '69 to '71.

Q: What sort of piece of the action did you have?

BARCKLEY: Well because we had an enormous American military presence in Germany, I had quite a bit of action. There was always something going on whether the Germans wanted particular military equipment or whether there were particular things we wanted to have from them or have them do. There was all of the things having to do with the Status of Forces Agreement. It was a very active office.

Q: Well this '69 to '71 was a particularly active one as far as our military was going through a lot of turmoil. This is during the Vietnam war and all of this. It was having its repercussions in Germany. Were you noticing that? I mean morale and discipline?

BARCKLEY: Of course you know it was not my task to look at this force structure. That was made up in the Pentagon. But there was a lot of interaction where for example, when there was a draw down in American forces, at the same time there were great efforts to try to get the Germans to fill certain jobs. The Germans of course, way before that time had gone through a rearmament program. At the same time they were trying to divorce themselves from traditional militaristic traditions. But it was a sophisticated and a good force. Of course they also were modernizing. I remember one of the things that was going on at that time was a major competition on the M-1 tank, where the Germans had developed a 120 mm cannon for the tank. In all of the different tests that we had the Germans proceeded to win, and yet American generals were reluctant to put a German gun on the tanks. It got into a sort of a push comes to shove with the Germans threatening to back off from their commitment to buy AWACS unless we honored our commitments on the tank gun. They also were developing at that stage their first fighter aircraft. We had been selling them American aircraft for the longest period of time. So there were a lot of things that were going on, and of course probably from our standpoint the most

important thing was maintaining the strategic alliance. Of course the Soviets were constantly challenging us.

Q: How did you find, was the State Department the PM bureau, you must have worked very closely with the Pentagon.

BARKLEY: Well we had very good contacts in the Pentagon, and of course with RPM. Our PM bureau was actually the responsible office that at State. But when you got into particular German things, like burden sharing, was always one of the major problems that we would have. We spent a lot of time on that. There was always an attempt to get the Germans to do more, to pay more and all of those things. It was quite an active office. But at that time the key thing that was going on in German affairs was the election of Willy Brandt and his effort to institute a policy of détente and an eastern policy of trying to reduce tensions with the Soviet Union.

Q: This was the Ostpolitik.

BARKLEY: The *Ostpolitik*. They were already beginning the four power negotiations on Berlin in 1969-'70. That was the major preoccupation of the Germans and indeed of the entire German desk. There was a spin off on all of these things because of course we knew that American military power underpinned almost everything that was negotiable.

Q: Well did you get any flavor? I realize you were imbedded in the middle ranks of this thing, but did you get any feel for how we felt about the Ostpolitik of Willy Brandt and all of that? Was there a certain amount of nervousness that this might, I mean there has always been the concern that in order to unite Germany, East and West Germany, Germany might become neutral which would take the guts out of NATO.

BARKLEY: Well there was always the fear that Germany would go it alone. Of course the whole Soviet effort was indeed to detach Germany from NATO. The Social Democrats always had more of a sympathy for the east than the CDU did, particularly under Adenauer, who wanted to anchor West Germany even further into the western alliance. So when Willy Brandt became chancellor, there was concern as to where he would go with all of these things. There had always been a deeper level, I think, of emotional commitment between Social Democracy and Communism than many people would like to admit. Although there was great warfare among the two and great hostility among the two, at the same time, they were working with similar views. I mean it was a long time before the Social Democratic Party declared itself a non-Marxist party. So Willy Brandt who came out of that entire era, always had some interest in trying to engage in the east. I think the reason that there was not as much anxiety over this was that the United States was at that time going through its own policy of détente with the Soviets. Of course, U.S. policy had much broader implication because Nixon was bogged down trying to wiggle out of over engagement in Vietnam. He was looking for ways to circumvent that. So although there was greater anxiety in certain German areas, I know a couple of German diplomats who resigned out of protest of the new direction of eastern affairs. But the key that would that eastern policy was the Berlin agreements. Of course in Berlin there could be no agreement without the four powers. The Germans had nothing to do with Berlin. It was still actually an occupied area. So we engaged in the Berlin agreements which took 90% of the time of the German bureau while I was

there. It was a fascinating time.

Q: Did you have any piece of the Berlin thing?

BARKLEY: Well I didn't have very much at that time. In German Affairs, there was a Berlin section that did nothing but work on Berlin. There was an awful lot of technical agreements governing our presence there.

Q: What was the Berlin agreement?

BARKLEY: Well the Berlin agreement basically increased the legitimate flow of activities between West Berlin and the West. The problems in Berlin always had been is that there is no agreements in the Potsdam accords as to for example free access because American and British and French sections of Berlin, which were totally within the borders of the German Democratic Republic. That is what led to the Russians of course, trying to isolate the West there. The blockade of Berlin by the Soviets and the subsequent airlift operation was one of the first Soviet challenges to the Truman administration. And of course in that process although the Soviets showed they had an enormous amount of control over the future of Berlin. They took such a political black eye that over time they retreated and guaranteed a certain amount of Western access. But that access was never anchored in any kinds of agreements. The intention was to anchor American rights and responsibilities in Berlin and for Germany as a whole, in an agreement that would guarantee that we would have continued access and freer movement between the two. Part and parcel of that was is that there would be then recognition on the part of the western powers of East Germany. The west Germans for the longest time tried to isolate East Germany and found out that it didn't work, so Willy Brandt tried to change that. He created the idea of two German states, one German nation. That would mean that they would try to regularize the status of East Germany, and we agreed to do that. As a result of that whole thing, of course, sooner or later we committed to establishing a U.S. embassy in East Germany and extended diplomatic recognition to East Germany, excluding Berlin because from our standpoint the four sectors in Berlin were under the direct mandates of the four occupying powers.

Q: Well what was sort of the attitude within the German bureau about sort of recognizing East Germany. Did they feel it was a price worth paying to get a good, regularize things in Berlin?

BARKLEY: I think initially, of course whenever you have change, a dramatic change, in policy there would be some resistance to it. The people who worked on Berlin knew that our vulnerability was such that we would be subjected to constant harassment depending on whatever the Soviets wanted to do. Therefore, the wild cards in that whole thing was East Germany because of course, they claimed they were independent of the Soviets although we knew that they responded absolutely to Soviet pressure. So we wanted to get the East Germans along with the Soviets to be cooperative, on the access to West Germany. So I think many of us saw that if we could come up to an agreement with iron clad assurances that we did not lose anything. Also engagement that East Germany probably had some benefits. Not everybody agreed to that. I was slightly skeptical myself, although I did not know much about Berlin at that time. Obviously it turned out to be an extraordinarily useful agreement.

Q: Well you know, Berlin was always such a faucet that the Soviets could turn on and off you know. It was the one place I think I always felt that this is where World War Three could start.

BARKLEY: That is true, but after the Berlin blockade it turns out there were many sides to that equation. One of them of course is that the idea of the Soviets could once again try to seize another segment of the west. It was something that you know the West would steel itself against. Of course we were engaged in an East-West propaganda war. There was hardly any better propaganda than to see how successful western sections of Berlin were functioning as compared to the poor performance at that time of the Russian sector. Wheels within wheels.

Q: We;; also there must have been a certain unease in '68 when the Soviets and their allies moved into Czechoslovakia, sort of the Brezhnev Doctrine that showed that this is not a static, the Soviets were not necessarily static. They would move.

BARKLEY: Well that is true. Of course you know the first shot across the bow there had been Hungary in '56. But nonetheless that certainly was true. Of course during that time Berlin was always the area where people sought to try to defuse things without backtracking in any way shape or form from our other things. The Soviets proved to be quite reluctant actually to get too boisterous in Berlin particularly after Stalin's death. But the Berlin agreements were negotiated over a long period of time. In that time American leadership through the entire thing was driven basically by Henry Kissinger and President Nixon, but the real hard work in this whole thing was done by Jonathan Dean who was the U.S. political counselor in Bonn. He did a remarkable job in hammering together an agreement that guaranteed western rights and responsibilities in the city. It turns out to have been a brilliant coup. No one foresaw at that time what the net result would be. But eastern accords followed an agreement between the Germans and the Poles on the border were largely successful. Indeed East-West relations settled down into a more regular routine than had previously been the case.

Q: Well also it led to the Helsinki accords. I mean you can see a direct chain there.

BARKLEY: The Helsinki accords were tied in with a lot of other broader things, the CSCE agreement. There was a lot of resistance to that. It was the idea that we are going to put human rights and the conduct of nations on the agenda, and the realization that the Russians have never honored them at all. The point was much deeper than that. In fact we were entangling Russian behavior in a series of agreements, and each time they violated them it made them look more and more like what they really were.

Q: Well I think this is probably a good place to stop. This would be 1971, where were you off to?

BARKLEY: Then I was assigned to be the ambassador's aide in Bonn.

Q: Okay, we'll pick it up then.

Today is June 10, 2003. We are dealing with 1971. You went to Bonn.

BARKLEY: Yes I went to Bonn as the aide to Ambassador Kenneth Rush.

Q: How long were you in Bonn?

BARKLEY: That time? One year.

Q: One year. Let's talk a bit about Kenneth Rush, his background and how he seemed to operate in Germany from your perspective.

BARKLEY: Well this was of course the Nixon administration. Kenneth Rush had been, I understand, a professor of Law at Duke University when President Nixon was there. That is when they apparently met. Subsequently Rush was the President of Union Carbide. He had had no foreign policy experience but obviously a lot of business experience. He landed in Germany I think in 1969. He had been there a year and a half by the time I arrived. My predecessor was John Kornblum.

Q: How did Ambassador Rush use you?

BARKLEY: Because he was not a career officer, he knew very little about the service. I did all of his programming. I did all of his correspondence, all of it. Of course the major activity he was engaged in at that time was the Berlin negotiations, the four power negotiations on the status of Berlin. He knew nothing about the issue at the beginning but he read into it very quickly. His political counselor, Jonathan Dean who was a formidable figure in the foreign service, one of the great experts in German affairs, actually lead the negotiating team. All of the background had been done by the political section. When it came time for a plenary session, the ambassador sat in. I did not sit in on the talks per se. I had to make sure that all of the talking points and everything else he received going into the sessions were clear and understandable. I guess I would say I also somewhat straddled the activities of the political section and the Ambassador's office. And of course, I was his note taker for all of his personal meetings beyond the scope of the four power negotiations themselves.

Q: When you arrived there in '71, how were German-American relations?

BARKLEY: Well this was the time, of course, that the Willy Brandt government come into effect. U.S. relations towards Willy Brandt, and the Social Democrats generally had been somewhat skeptical regarding their foreign policy intentions. But it turned out that actually this was at the same time there was somewhat of a thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations, a certain effort to reach out to the Soviets and try to negotiate something. Of course it all tied in with Vietnam. The Brandt government came up with a rather new and novel idea which was entirely different than previous West German positions. It was basically a rapprochement with central Europe. The concept was not only to negotiate an improved relationship within Berlin, but also to work out what they called a general eastern policy whereby they would also recognize for the first time the existence of East Germany within the concept of two states-one nation. They also wanted to solidify the boundaries between Poland and Germany which has always been a problem because there are revanchist groups in the FRG that wanted to reclaim German lands far into Poland and

of course into East Prussia. So it was a time actually of a great deal of movement. It turns out that German policy and American policy met quite tidily together at that time. It was one of those fortuitous moments I think where things could be done that couldn't have been done probably a year or two years previously.

Q: Well while you were at the embassy, did you pick up any concern that Brandt's aussenpolitik and our trying to open up détente and all of this was maybe going to endanger our position in Germany and all?

BARKLEY: Oh of course. One of the major concerns all along is Germany might be induced to have a go it alone policy. The elements in the Social Democratic Party that had always been there, certain intellectual elements, indeed promoted the idea of a neutral Germany, which of course was a nightmare for NATO. Western policy was based on keeping West Germany anchored in the West. Willy Brandt didn't have that same devotion to the anchor to the west as we did although Adenauer certainly he was anti communist and had a long history and career in that front. But there was always somehow a feeling in certain circles in the west that Social Democracy was full of fuzzy thinkers, and that indeed they never fully understood what the Russians were about.

Q: I was wondering whether you were hearing within the political section and elsewhere muttering within the ranks.

BARKLEY: Oh absolutely. Well it was not only muttering within the ranks, but also muttering within the ranks of the German government too. A number of people, out of protest for the eastern policy, resigned from the German foreign service. There was, I think, a sense of skepticism, because people couldn't see how we could improve our relationship within Berlin and within Germany as a whole by doing this. In fact it turns out that we could. But that had much more to do with the inherent weaknesses in the socialist camp than probably any furtive design.

Q: Did you get up to Berlin?

BARKLEY: Oh constantly. I traveled with the ambassador, and of course, all the negotiations took place in Berlin. And because of the unique status of Berlin being under four power rights and responsibilities, we always had to fly up with military aircraft. We could have gone I suppose with civilian aircraft but we didn't. So there were always logistical problems. That was part of my responsibility to make sure things went off smoothly.

Q: How about the train. Did the ambassador still use that, his train.

BARKLEY: Yes, the train was still there. The ambassador tended not to use it. For one thing it was not an overnight ride. The minister in Berlin occasionally used it, but it was basically the Berlin Commandant's train. The commandant, within the status of Berlin is something I think that is now increasingly difficult for people to understand. But the fact that after WWII Germany was divided as you know into four military occupation zones with the British, the French, and the Americans in the west and the Russians in the east. That was replicated in Berlin under the

general belief that anybody who controlled Berlin would control all of Germany. And of course Berlin was in the center of the Russian zone, before it became East Germany. They could foreclose our operations which they tried to do in 1948 during the time of the Berlin Airlift.

Q: Did you find yourself up against in Berlin, there were people in the foreign service who do nothing but deal with Berlin. I mean there was almost like a religious right of how you dealt with things including how far a tailgate could be let down. You know all sorts of things, and the feeling was that if you gave away anything, the Soviets were nibbling away all the time. I mean you must not have been looked upon with great pleasure.

BARKLEY: Well at that time as you may recall Stuart, there was a group known as the old German hands. They were people who had multiple tours in Germany, who understood the unique complexity of the place with East and West Germany and Berlin. At the time (1970-'71) that I entered German affairs, it was the heyday of the old German hands. It turns out that even during this negotiation, they were all in place, names like Jonathan Dean and David Klein and Jim Sutherland and Martin Hillenbrand and Russell Fessenden and all these people who had spent their entire careers defining the quality and limits of our relationship with Germany. On the other hand there were in Russia, the old Russian hands who did the same thing. And of course there was a constant sort of engagement of those two groups in trying to understand what was really going on. The only thing is I would say is both of them had their feet planted firmly on the ground as to Russian intentions. Nonetheless, when you started to tinker with previous arrangements that had been there, even if it led to an improvement, which in fact it did, there is always some fear that we would be taken for a ride.

Q: Did you get any feel for the Soviet negotiations during this time?

BARKLEY: Oh yes. The Soviet negotiator whose name was Abrasimov, was a rather randy but very sly figure. He obviously was closely tied in with the politburo and the ruling elite. They knew precisely what they were doing. And of course like in most negotiations of this sort, the Russians would usually just sit there and say Nyet as we tried to find different kinds of formulas to make sure that our procedures were honored and that they would be promoted in the future. Certainly the driving force of that whole negotiation was Jonathan Dean. "Jock" Dean was just a dynamo and kept at it and kept at it. The negotiations went on several years before they were finally agreed to.

Q: You were the ambassador's aide the whole time...

BARKLEY: The one year I was there. Now the ambassador departed towards the end of my tour in 1972. He was assigned or promoted I guess you could say to be the Deputy Secretary of Defense. So in the spring of 1972, after the negotiations had been almost wrapped up, and would indeed be wrapped up very quickly, he departed. He was replaced by Martin Hillenbrand. I was there through that transition, but I realized I could not be aide for one ambassador and then be aide for another. Besides, ambassador aide jobs are usually one year jobs. You don't want more than that. I had established good personal relations with David Klein in Berlin. He asked me to come to Berlin and work in the mission which I did.

Q: So you were in Berlin from '72 to '74. What was your job?

BARKLEY: I was in the eastern affairs section which was a section that basically monitored what was going on in East Germany. The section had a section head and three officers, actually four officers. Two of them were CIA, however. Three of them were real State Department officers. I was in charge of the domestic political scene in East Germany. Peter Swers was in charge of East German foreign relations. Felix Bloch who became famous later on, was in charge of economic developments in East Germany.

Q: Did you find a different atmosphere in Berlin, in the mission in Berlin than our embassy in Bonn?

BARKLEY: Oh yes, there is always somewhat of a different perspective sitting in Berlin where you think the world revolves around the status of Berlin rather than in Bonn where there were infinitely broader issues to address. It depended of course very much on who the principal officers were at that time. David Klein was a very highly regarded officer in West Berlin. He was the minister in West Berlin. The status of West Berlin was unique in all of the foreign service in that indeed we were actually stationed in an American occupation zone. The ambassador was not only responsible for West Germany but also Berlin. In that role, the commandant in Berlin was his immediate deputy, but he was a military officer. Most ambassadors insisted that all of the political decisions there be in the hands of the minister in Berlin.

Q: Well now, looking at the East German internal thing, how was it in this '72 to '74 period? What was going on there?

BARKLEY: Well, when I arrived in 1972, Erich Honecker was at that time the first secretary of the communist party and for all intents and purposes the dictator, the head of the East German government. He had replaced Walter Ulbricht. Ulbricht was a real toady of the Russians, an old line communist, as indeed was Honecker. Honecker came up through the youth movement which seemed to be one of the natural progressions forward in Soviet style politics. Honecker and his wife were of course, dedicated communists. But at the same time they were looking for position and stature that they didn't have before because they were the new comers on the block at that time. Of course there is no question that Honecker himself was intrigued by the fact that eastern policy would give him a position on the world stage that he never had before. Above all things of course, recognition by major western powers, which he had been striving for his entire life as indeed had most of the East Germans. The idea was that they were trying to create then two individual, particularly distinct, Germanys. So at that time he was particularly curious, and there was a certain opening toward the United States. Now as the officer in charge of domestic affairs in East Germany in the United States, we did not have relations with East Germany at that time. That would flow from the successful completion of the Berlin agreements. And so I was there at a time when certain segments of their government were eager to establish relations. I on the other, was prohibited of establishing direct relations, so there was sort of a coy movement with lower level contacts back and forth. Of course in East Germany everything was state controlled, but there were some units that were more like think tanks. I was also permitted to meet with

people from the university etc. They made a number of people available to me. I was the first officer probably ever in Berlin to have that level of semi-official access.

Q: Were you able to meet with German officials at a Bierstube and things like that.

BARKLEY: You mean East German officials?

Q: East German officials.

BARKLEY: Yes, actually. We worked out a different series of relations. We would actually meet in the offices of their think tanks, but most often we would go to lunch. We had to go to lunch primarily in East Berlin because many of them had difficulty going west. As I established these relations, however, I recall after about a year, I asked them to come over and have dinner at my home, in West Berlin, and I was astonished that they came. As a matter of fact, David Klein decided this was too irresistible, that he would attend too. So we sat around and we had one of those broad political conversations the Germans love to have. We had rather lengthy and rather fascinating discussions at that time. The question of course was are there any levels of independent thinking on the part of the Germans that would separate them, make them distinct from the Russians. The answer was not a hell of a lot but some. It was actually an interesting time, and some of the people I got to know very well ended up in the higher echelons of the East German government. I was able to re-warm this relationship some ten years later. They were indeed people who were sort of on the intellectual fast track in East Germany, to the extent that there was such a group. Many of them were particularly interested in the United States. They had only seen the United States from a distance. Most of them were enormously curious. After all we were the super power of the west. Several of them went on then to become members of the East German embassy in Washington when it opened up there. So these were people outside the foreign office per-se, but obviously connected to it.

Q: Well now, just to get the time frame right. When did we recognize East Germany and set up an embassy there?

BARKLEY: 1974.

Q: Were you all on both sides getting ready for this?

BARKLEY: Oh yes. So it was a very active group preparing for the establishment of relations. The whole question really did come down to where we were going to place our embassy and what the status of that embassy would be. As we always recognized East Berlin was not an integral part of East Germany, but the Soviet sector of Berlin, there was a lot of resistance to putting the embassy in Berlin. Some people thought it should go to Potsdam. In fact the administrative capital of East Germany was East Berlin. So we bit the bullet on that. The French and the British had already moved smartly ahead of us to establish their embassies. As they say, both France and England loved Germany so much they were glad there were two of them. We were much more reluctant. One main question is what would we call our embassy? It could not be our embassy in Berlin because that would imply that Berlin was part of East Germany. So we just called it Embassy Berlin. Then came the question of finding an adequate embassy building,

and I was tasked with that job. The theory was, and it was certainly one I shared (and helped formulate) is the United States as the superpower of the world, could not establish an American embassy and try to hide. We knew we couldn't compete with the Russians, who had a huge embassy in Berlin, but, we wanted something that was the next best, if you will. So we were able to finally secure a building in downtown Berlin which still actually houses the American embassy in a unified Germany. It was a building that had been built prior to the war. It was quite a lovely building on the Neustadtische Kirch Strasse. It had until that time part of the East German labor movement called Haus Des Handwerks, which is the craft guild house. When it came time for us to get a building, they tried to give us a whole bunch of junk. I remember looking at the building and asking what was wrong with that one, and they said, "It doesn't belong to us." I recall my conversation with Volker Laetsch who was the guy in charge of the East German side of the negotiations. I said, "It all belongs to you. You are a communist country." "No, no, we are only on the way to communism," he replied. "Well," I said, "Why don't you let the United States government help you along, and you just confiscate that building and give it to us." About a week later he came back and said, "Were you serious?" Now I was somewhat of course, beyond my pay grade, but, I said, "Yes, I think we are." Sure enough they offered the building. Joan Clark came over with the experts from Washington and looked it over, and that indeed became our chancery.

Q: What were you looking at in East Germany, were you seeing this in the '72 to '74 period, as a viable state? How were things going?

BARKLEY: Well, it had every appearance of being a viable state. It would continue to be viable in terms of our calculations at that time as long as the Soviet Union insisted it be viable. But in fact of course, they were Germans. As they say, if anybody can make a system operate, it is the Germans who will do it. Although it turns out not quite as dynamic as it appeared, compared to all of the other Easter European bloc countries, it really did quite well. It had some inherent difficulties. One is of course, the Russians not only swept everything clean, but they dismantled all of the factories in East Germany and took them back to Russia etc. So East Germany was really a very blighted zone at the end of the war. In the first stages after the war, before the wall was up, there was still a lot of movement of Germans into the west etc. With the construction of the wall, however, the options for the East Germans became very few. They could either continue to be sullen and resist, or they could be sullen and go along with the system, which is what they did. They indeed rebuilt some of the factories. Their productivity was really I think, per capita, the highest in the Soviet bloc. So it was a viable state, but I think our general view of it is where it would go depends totally on Soviet commitment to keep this "jewel" in the Soviet crown alive and well. But in fact of course, it was a great advantage to the Russians because East German efficiency and East German productivity helped the Russian system survive.

Q: What do you think? I mean you weren't really dealing with the economy. In looking at this, were we sort of over impressed by the way things were working? Because I am thinking of a later time when East Germany was absorbed into West Germany, they found, there really wasn't a hell of a lot in East Germany that could stand up to Your western standards.

BARKLEY: Well I think what we discovered later on and what we thought we knew at the time were two different things. When we established relations with East Germany, I don't think there

were any illusions that this was a system that was competitive with western systems. But it was a general belief that it was doing relatively well in terms of productivity, in terms of all of the general standards that economists use to measure production or economic success. It was far and away the most successful of the Eastern Bloc. Now subsequently, 15 years later, we realized there was somewhat of a Potemkin village quality to their economy, and that they had been cooking the books etc. But at the time we established relations, the per capita income in Germany to the extent that anybody could properly measure it was almost as high as the United Kingdom. Now it turns out, of course, that those calculations were very faulty, but at that time it was generally believed that was the case. Now, as we subsequently found out, there was a lot there was less than met the eye. Let's put it that way, but there was a general belief that there was a certain dynamic there, and that of course typically the East Germans were the more vigorous practitioners of the communist system all of the other socialist members. I remember meeting with groups at that time, when the opening took place, from Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc. who used to say to me, sotto voce, that these East Germans are weird. They really believe this stuff! I am not quite sure that was true, but they certainly appeared to.

Q: Well in your time of looking at, watching the East German government, how did you find the hand of the Soviet Union?

BARKLEY: Well, of course I wasn't in the inner-councils. I don't know what went on, but everybody assumed that indeed the Russian embassy was the proconsul of the country. It was quite clear the Russian military force out at Karlshorst, which was a big one, had a great deal of influence on the East German army, which was quite efficient in terms of armies of that time. I think there was a general agreement on the part, of the leadership of East Germany with respect to the Soviet. They understood fully well, that not only their status but their survivability depended very much on the Russians staying forcefully on their side. So there was an agreement by most of the leadership, the communist leadership that they must kowtow, and they should continually show the Russians they were the "best boys on the block".

Q: Did you get any feel sort of on the street for Russian and German relationships?

BARKLEY: No, not on the street so much, but I did pick it up other ways. A member of the Russian KGB actually approached me and wanted to meet. Of course I was very reluctant to do that, but the station chief and others urged me to do so, so we worked out an arrangement. His name was Leonid Taranachev. He was really quite a charming fellow. We worked out an arrangement that we would meet in the American sector one month, and then the Russian sector another month for lunch. That way actually in the course of about 18 months we exhausted all of the culinary expertise of East Germany. That was a fascinating thing, because he would complain about how the Germans would treat him and his family. They went to a park, or if he went fishing, he was a great fisherman etc. people would not talk to him or would leave when they heard them speaking Russian and things like that. That was his perspective on things. Of course I credit that with the view that I didn't know what it was like. But I certainly never heard of any of the people I talked with, who were probably very cautious to make sure that I never heard of any disagreement with Soviet policy or Soviet Per-se. We got that 15 years later, but at that time you heard almost nothing.

Q: These were a controlled people. I mean self control among other things...

BARKLEY: Well one of the things we found out of course, the state security system, the Stasi were everywhere. So everybody was always looking over their shoulder. It was truly a police state; there is no question about it. The depth of that police state, we only found out when we got access to the Stasi files. The Germans have an incredible penchant for documenting all of their sins. They did this in World War Two during the Nazi period. The Stasi did the same thing.

Q: We had the Berlin documents center I remember when I was there in the 50's. They were feeding off that. I mean we knew everything about everything. Apparently the Stasi would recruit husbands and wives separately to report on each other.

BARKLEY: They certainly had a whole category of people then. The largest group was a thing called the Mitarbeiter or people who collaborated. They were people who were forced to collaborate of course. There were enough pressure points they could bring on the society.

Q: How about you know, looking at labor affairs and all that? Were there any problems there? I mean strikes or anything like that?

BARKLEY: NO, no! They shot their wad in 1954. That one year the unions you know actually tried to force some changes in the way things were done. That was crushed forcefully. Then in the factories they had not only all the traditional mitarbeiters, the Stasi etc, but they had indeed a union structure that was totally tied to the government, and to the fact that almost all of the workers were part of the government military force. The workers could be armed at any particular time in units called Worker Brigades. So the unions were integral parts of the government system.

Q: Did you have any feel for, I mean at that time I am going under the assumption that the thought the Soviets might launch a quick attack on us was no longer uppermost in our minds was it?

BARKLEY: No that came a bit later of course, when the Soviets employed their SS-20 missiles. At that time there was a certain optimism, a measure of détente. It was the time actually where the Berlin agreements were reached. Nobody at that time thought in terms of nuclear conflagration. Of course there was always the whole strategy of mutually assured destruction. But that was not a particularly bad time in terms of East-West relations. Of course it was at the same time that President Nixon was getting into a lot of political difficulty at home.

Q: This is the Watergate time.

BARKLEY: Yes. I remember Tiranachev quizzing me in great detail about what was going on. They were quite fond of Nixon. They thought that he was a realpolitiker, and that they could do business with him. They were unhappy with the trial that he was going through. Of course I knew nothing of all that except what I could read in the Herald Tribune etc. So all I could do of course, is read that back to him.

Q: Did Henry Kissinger come by at all while you were there?

BARKLEY: No, and that was interesting. Of course at the time of the Berlin agreements Kissinger was not Secretary of State. He was head of the National Security Council. I was fascinated that during the last elements of the Berlin agreements, where it became quite clear that it was American policy was to conclude the agreements favorably, is that Ambassador Rush and others did not communicate with the White House through the State Department but went straight into the White House through a back channel. So quite clearly Dr. Kissinger was keeping Secretary Rogers, who was one of the more forgettable secretaries we have had out of the loop. Rogers seemed to be a perfectly nice man, but was clearly in the dark on the Berlin negotiations. The President and Mr. Kissinger were dealing directly with us in the Embassy on these issues.

Q: Well in being in Berlin, did you get any feel for the great game of spying that was going on? It seems like every other person was working for the KGB or the CIA.

BARKLEY: Oh absolutely. It was just astonishing. I mean they were falling all over each other. It was true I think of all the western groups in they all had their equivalent to the CIA.

Q: MI-5.

BARKLEY: Well but not only that. As you know in the American intelligence system there is also Defense Intelligence and the NSA. There are all these different groups, and they were represented in great numbers. Sometimes they were falling all over each other. I could not begin to assess the effectiveness of how the operations worked. Of course on the East German side, there was not only the KGB but the Stasi. They made us look like pikers when it came to controlling a population. I mean they were perverse but excellent. We knew nothing about that. That wasn't our modus operandi. But, yes, they were everywhere.

Q: Tell me on this effort, spying on both sides, and on our side obviously the CIA had all sorts of agents all over the place. I mean so did the KGB and the Stasi. But were you the recipient of any of these nuggets of information? Where did you get your information you know, to go about your regular job?

BARKLEY: Well there was more general information and perhaps less wisdom available then you would begin to believe. For example we had the CIVIS system that fed in all the reports that came in on the television. I had to read Neues Deutschland which was the official organ. And indeed by reading it I began to understand what let's say the "Newspeak" was in East Germany. You begin to understand a little number.

Q: Was it the prose as it was in other countries, the pros...

BARKLEY: Yes, pretty much. But there was, we had a number of people actually East German. I mean East Germans who had come west that worked in the mission in Berlin as foreign service nationals. They would write their reports on the basis of a lot of information, they would listen to the television or the radio or whatever it was. Of course, like any society, East Germans within their different ministries published a lot of stuff. Now it was party line, but it did address

problems. It turns out subsequently, everybody now knows that we had tapped into the telephone system, so we knew what was going on between party headquarters and the provinces and things like that. It also turns out of course that we weren't able to tap in as effectively as they did. Nonetheless, there was a lot of information. The problem of course, is not always how much information you have but which of it is true or useful.

Q: Were you able to make trips, swing around through your territory of East Germany?

BARKLEY: Well there was only actually one time a year where we were authorized to go outside of the Soviet sector. I was in East Berlin a lot, two or three times a week. Every time was somewhat uncomfortable. If you have ever gone through Checkpoint Charlie, you would know why. It was a police state; there was no question about it. The theory when you are in Berlin is if anything goes wrong the first thing you do is call a Soviet officer, because you can't deal with the East Germans because of the status question. But every year we were given not a visa, but a piece of paper that we carried in our passport that allowed us to go to Leipzig Fair. I always went. Usually Felix would go. John Kornblum often came along. He was in the political section in Bonn. We would at that time have a chance to go to East Germany. We did that twice. Then we would take side trips to Wittenberg and Halle and places like that. But we couldn't go to many of the places we really wanted to go. Dresden was a place I think we all wanted to go. Kemnitz, Karlmarxstadt, at that time, Meckenberg all of those places that we wanted to go to, but couldn't. But we did get actually into the Leipzig area, and you could see that compared to West German society, things were still basically pretty primitive. For example, they had organized their agriculture into big farms, the LPG's they called them. Whenever the harvest was due, often they would have to bring in the army or different groups, what they would call Sobotnik to bring in the crops. They would come in and work on the harvest, so it was not an efficient society. You just didn't stop into a cute little café along the way. It wasn't like that at all. It was a rather dreary awful society. Now in the cities like in Leipzig, you could go Auerbach's Keller which is the famous place where Goethe writes about Faust. We did get actually to Jena. That was interesting, once again because of Weimar the Goethe relationship there. The cities were somewhat better. The countryside was still in all pretty sad.

Q: What about your colleagues who were covering this from the French or British point of view. I mean the Canadians and Swedish. Did you sort of get together and...

BARKLEY: Well the only ones we tended to get together a little bit were the British. There was a British woman who was in charge of things. I remember we were somewhat astonished that she truly had sort of a romantic affair with East Germany. To be kind she did not have her two feet on the ground approach the GDR.

Q: She had seen the future and it works.

BARKLEY: Yes, that kind of stuff. I think she was just working overtime to be understanding. The French weren't particularly active. Even afterwards they weren't particularly active after they established relations. The foreigners who knew the most like the Yugoslavs and others, knew inherently how the system functioned. But I think without sounding too arrogant, that we knew more than any of them. Now the West Germans always had certain advantages and

understanding of what was going on. Once relations were established, they didn't establish an embassy because of their concept of two states, one nation, but they established a Permanent Representation. The Permanent Representative had the same status as an ambassador did. Once they got established they knew quite a bit. But much of it of course was because of divided families and all of the other ways that they would pick up information.

Q: How did Felix Bloch work out there? He was accused of being a spy, but he hasn't been prosecuted. He was retired without pension from the foreign service. I don't know any of the details.

BARKLEY: Well this was 15 years later.

Q: There is a strong presumption that what happened was an involvement. But how did you find him at the time?

BARKLEY: Well, actually he was quite a charming but a weird duck. I think he was born in Vienna, and his family came over in the thirties. Although his English was perfect, the rhythm of his English was always somewhat strange. He had a very dry, strange sense of humor, a lovely wife and two children. He was really quite a congenial colleague. He did establish very good relations with one guy in the East German trade ministry. Johannes Durling was his name. His name came up later on. I got to know him also quite well. But there was certainly at that time no doubt in my mind that he was loyal to the United States. I mean no different than any of my other colleagues. If there was something going on I certainly did not see it. I cannot prove that, but my assumption is that his discontent with his movement in the foreign service surfaced later, and that is when he went wrong.

Q: It seems to be right you know, looking at the pattern, that seems to be when he was DCM in Vienna I believe ten years later. How about sort of within the mission in Berlin? Was there pretty good esprit de corps? Was it fun?

BARKLEY: Oh, I thought it was certainly one of the finest tours I have had. Of course, I thought I had the most exciting work in the mission. There were two other sections in the mission. One was the economic section; the other was the political section on the western side. A lot of them dealt with a lot of the details like stockpiles and all of those things which are important to the viability of Berlin. It was kind of pick and shovel work that I didn't particularly like. Then there were of course people who always worked on status questions. In embassy Bonn for example, we had a Berlin section that was devoted to harmonizing and understanding what was going on on the issue of Berlin. The legal advisor was extremely active, actually produced an enormous amount of paper on what was going on. I can't say it was a uniquely happy mission, but to the extent that there was any joy, I think it was probably in our section where people got along quite well.

Q: David Klein, what was his background? He was the head of it.

BARKLEY: He was a German hand and a Russian hand as a matter of fact. David was an extraordinarily good officer. He had served in Russia a couple of times and in Germany a couple

of times. I don't exactly know what positions they were in, but he was conversant with both societies quite well and easily. He was a good linguist. I mean I tended to agree with his political views on so many things, so quite obviously he was a wonderful fellow.

Q: he was obviously a brilliant person.

BARKLEY: Exactly. Now there was always a little bit of difference. We has such strong personalities in Jock Dean and Jim Sutherland and David Klein that didn't always agree on everything, but they worked together very well. A very professional leadership.

Q: Well is there anything else we should cover in this time?

BARKLEY: Well the only last thing is before I left, we had now gotten to the point where we had identified our buildings, where our Embassy was going to be. I was active in all of that. Finally I got my first instruction which instructed me to actually enter the East German foreign office. I was the first American official to do that. That is particularly interesting because I was also the last 15 years later, but I remember I was required to go in and urge the East Germans to join ICNAF which was the International North Atlantic Fisheries Convention, because the East Germans like the Poles had these factory fishing vessels that would go in and sweep up a lot of fish. I remember I had to go in and talk to, believe it or not, a Dr. Seuss, who was a legal counselor in there. He was a charming fellow actually from Sudetenland. I of course made the demarche that we wanted them to join and become active members etc. He said, "Well you know that is interesting, Mr. Barkley. We have been trying to join for 20 years, and you have always vetoed us." I said, "Well, that was then; this is now. The political climate, the sweeps of things, of history have changed." So they indeed were eager to join, and they did and were quite responsible members for that short period of time, while at the same time these fish factory things of course not only fed a lot of East Germans but they also provided fertilizer and things that were important. So that was sort of the last thing I vividly recall in my East German tour before I was then transferred back.

NELSON C. LEDSKY
Germany Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1970-1972)

Ambassador Ledsky was born in Cleveland, Ohio and was educated at Case Western Reserve University and Columbia University. After serving in the US Army, he joined the Foreign Service in 1957, serving in Georgetown, Guyana; Enugu, Nigeria; Bonn and Berlin, Germany and in the State Department in Washington. In his various assignments he was closely involved in matters concerning the status of Berlin and West Germany as well as on the persistent Greece-Turkey conflict over Cyprus. Among his other assignments, the Ambassador served on the Department's Policy Planning Staff. Ambassador Ledsky was interviewed by Thomas Stern in 2003.

Q: Your time was usually taken up by what kind of issues?

LEDSKY: I think it was a myriad of issues. Every other week, there was a “Bonn group” meeting, attended by representatives, usually the political, or deputy counselors from the British, French and American embassies and the German foreign ministry. Jim Sutterlin was our representative, although when he moved up to being the political counselor we were represented by Jack Shaw. The agenda for these meetings was agreed upon ahead of time. It was that agenda which took much of my attention during a working day.

The first item on the agenda was usually what was called “temporary travel documents.” I spent a lot of time on these documents. This was another term for passports, issued by the three western allies to an East German who wanted to travel to the West. Since we did not recognize East Germany as a sovereign state, we could not recognize passports issued by it as valid documents. There were several reasons for this non-recognition, not the least of which was the strong objections of the West German government. So, the three western powers set up an office in West Berlin to issue temporary travel documents, or TTDs, to East Germans, who could cross the Wall to pick up these documents. On these TTDs, visas to specific western European countries and as far as we were concerned, anywhere in the world, were stamped. The allies, including the Soviets, had established criteria for the issuance of these TTDs; they were administered by the three western representatives in West Berlin.

The embassies in Bonn were the “appeal courts” which heard appeals from East Germans who were denied a TTD by one of the Berlin missions. So, every day on my desk, I would find TTD applications that had been turned down by one or another of the three western missions in Berlin. I and my counterparts would review these appeals and make our recommendations to our representative on the “Berlin group,” which had the final authority. Most of the TTD applications were adjudicated by our Berlin missions; we usually got the very difficult cases which might involve a prominent East German political figure or some other prominent personage. Those would usually come to Bonn and therefore became the first item on the agenda of the “Bonn group.” We would discuss each appeal case and reach some conclusion about the TTD application before us. I must say that some of the applications we reviewed and acted upon had international ramifications. For example, one application might come from an East German cabinet officer who wanted to travel to India on a trade mission. The West Germans would object and we might go along, eliciting a outburst from the Indian embassy. Sometimes, we would approve the application and the West German government would let us know that it was not very happy with our decision. So, we would periodically run into political firestorms. When such outbursts occurred – or were anticipated – we would consult with the ambassador, who then might take the issue up in the monthly ambassadorial meeting.

I remember that at one time, we had an application from the East German minister for culture, Klaus Gysi, who wanted to visit his mother in France. The French were ready to admit him, but the West Germans objected. That one reached the ambassadorial level. I might just mention that the minister’s son was the leader of the communist party in West Germany. The French finally let him in – with or without a TTD. But there was a furious reaction by the West German government. We were also very unhappy because the French had by-passed the accepted procedures. So, some of these cases took up a lot of time and became serious bones of contention

– although in retrospect, I can now wonder: why all the fuss? This system was still being used when I left Bonn in 1970; it was abolished soon thereafter, when West German attitudes changed and it began to recognize the validity of East German passports and stopped interfering with the use of those documents.

The second item on the agenda of the “Bonn group” had to do with transportation. This included questions of road convoys, railroad and airline travel. We had established a procedure whereby each of the three western powers would notify the other two when they were to dispatch a military convoy or use of the American special train. Those issues took up a lot of time.

Then there were intra-Berlin issues such as shootings at the Wall, travel between East and West Berlin or problems on the S-Bahn (the subway that ran between East and West). As I said, we exchanged information with our allies on travel plans from West German through East Germany to Berlin. This was intended to put us on notice should any of the travel be interrupted by East Germans or Soviets.

The last item on the agenda was a long-forgotten issue: the prison in Spandau. The four powers, Soviet, British, French and us, operated a prison in Berlin, which at the time of my arrival in Bonn, held three prisoners, but which went down to one, Rudolph Hess by the time I left. This was a huge complex, guarded on a rotating basis by troops from the four powers. The chairman rotated on a monthly basis; we held monthly lunches and even more frequent discussions on the health and safety and visiting rights of the prisoners. We had to confront continuous appeals to parole the prisoners. The West Germans, for reasons that I never understood, were very solicitous of the prisoners’ health. So, Spandau showed up on the “Bonn group” agenda every meeting.

Periodically we also used to discuss the issue of contingency planning, which I discussed earlier. When I first got to Bonn, the section was very busy writing these contingency plans for the defense of Berlin and for overcoming any blockades by land, water and air of our access to Berlin from West Germany. It was essentially a tripartite effort with the help of the West Germans. A series of contingency plans were drafted and sent to the “Live Oak” section of NATO, which was only the keeper of the plans, but also the key planner for any military action that a contingency might require. Sometimes, this issue was a matter of daily discussion within our embassy.

The “Bonn group” periodically also used its meetings to exchange information about the situation and events in East Germany. I should mention that East German matters were the responsibility of the Berlin section of the political section; we had one officer who spent his full time on East Germany. That was Peter Semler when I first got to Bonn, then it was Jerry Livingstone. I often got involved in these issues as well because they often spilled over into our responsibilities for West Berlin.

We also discussed the issue of responsibilities assigned to the allies and which were to be turned over to the West Berlin authorities. This was a complicated issue and involved our legal advisor, Joe Von Elbe. Each embassy had a lawyer who devoted his time to Berlin issues. The West German government entered into a series of international agreements; in as many of these as

possible, the West Germans sought to include Berlin. But in fact, Berlin could only be covered by these agreements with the approval of the three western powers who had ultimate sovereignty over West Berlin. So, we had to discuss the applicability of these agreements to Berlin and this became a continuing subject of discussion for the “Bonn group.” There seemed to have been at least one – and sometimes several – agreements at each meeting which needed allied approval. We had criteria which guided the three allies and which sometimes forced us to deny the West Germans’ requests. The issues were usually legal, having to do with who controlled certain aspects of the administration of the city.

Q: Were there tensions between the three allies and the West Germans on the status of Berlin?

LEDSKY: Yes. I wouldn’t call them tensions necessarily, but we did have our disagreements, usually on legal interpretations. The Federal Republic viewed Berlin as an integral part of its country. The city of Berlin was represented in the Bundesrat and the Bundestag as well, although they had limited voting rights in the latter. The three western allies never agreed that West Berlin was part of the Federal Republic. As far as we were concerned, it was part of Germany, but a distinct and separate entity. This difference in views gave rise to legal disagreements. The three allies tried as much as they could to down-play the legal disagreements. We were willing to agree that Berlin should be part of German society and administered as much as possible to conform with West German law. But, obviously, the fundamental difference on the legal status of Berlin gave rise to occasional disagreements. We had to maintain our legal position to protect our interests in Berlin and our international standing.

Q: In 1972, you moved up to become the deputy director of the Office of Central European affairs.

LEDSKY: That is correct. That section handled bilateral issues with Austria, Switzerland, and the two Germanies. The head of the section was Scott George. We had about 8 or 9 officers and I spent sometime on management issues. I worked on a variety of issues as they arose, although most of the heavy lifting on political issues was done by George. Because I had had more experience with German issues than anybody else in the section, I spent some of my time helping the office director with those issues.

The only major issue that I remember dealing with was the CSCE (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe) meeting in Helsinki. CSCE was a work in progress; the Helsinki meeting agenda was filled with German issues. Detente was in full bloom, so we worked on some German-Soviet issues, which resulted in lot of consultations on both sides. Then, there was still some work to be done on Berlin. The agreement did not change the nature of the allied presence in West Berlin. So, we had the normal run of the mill issues that arose from that factor. It is true that whatever interest the Seventh Floor had had in Berlin – which wasn’t really that much during the negotiations – dropped even further after the agreement.

I did get a chance to visit some of the countries for which we were responsible – like Austria and West Germany. I was also in Brussels on a couple of occasions, primarily for “Live Oak” conferences. I also did a certain amount of public speaking in the U.S., which took me around the country. I can’t say that this tour was particularly taxing, time wise. It was not one of my

more exciting tours.

PHILIP H. VALDES
Political Officer
Berlin (1970-1972)

Philip H. Valdes was born in New York in 1921. He received a bachelor's degree in 1942 and a master's degree in 1947 from Yale University. He was a 2nd lieutenant overseas in the U.S. Army from 1943-1946. Mr. Valdes entered the Foreign Service in 1947. His overseas posts included Chungking, Seoul, Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, Bangkok, Berlin, and Munich. Mr. Valdes was interviewed by William Knight on July 11, 1994.

VALDES: I went to Berlin during the talks with the Soviets, which were a good example of what you mentioned previously -- the ability of the Soviets to stick to a point -- endlessly and at enormous length. This process went on for a long time. Eventually, we actually reached a good agreement, which facilitated exchanges with East Berlin, visiting rights, and so on.

We went over to East Berlin a lot, as part of our occupation of Berlin as a city. During the time that I was there, the Soviets didn't really contest that. You would show your ID card in the window of the car to the East German guards and would go through.

On one occasion, I was held up, due to my own stupidity. I was going to East Berlin with my family one weekend. I drove out to the Muggelsee. I had stupidly left behind the West German map of Berlin and had taken with me only an East German map of Berlin. After we would have gotten to the Muggelsee. That was in the Eastern Sector of Berlin -- the city. After we got to the Muggelsee, it looked a lot easier to go up North a little bit and then straight down Frankfurterallee -- which was formerly Stalinallee -- into Berlin to get to the checkpoint. I did this -- went up a little, narrow road, seeing nothing unusual. I was going along the road which became Frankfurterallee when I saw a big sign saying, "Berlin." I had gotten out into the Eastern Zone [of Germany] -- into the GDR [German Democratic Republic]. Then I also saw a checkpoint. Since I saw the checkpoint, I assumed that the officials at the checkpoint had also seen me. So there didn't seem to be any point in making a U-Turn and going back the way we had come originally. I drove up to the checkpoint, stopped there, and explained what had happened.

There was no officer there. One of the guards, a non-commissioned officer, said, "But didn't you see the sign that said that you were leaving Berlin?" I said, "No." One of the other guards said, "Yeah, there is no sign on that road." I had shown it to them on the map. The non-commissioned officer said, "Oh?" So they discussed the matter for a while and said that they had to keep me there until their officer came, because they had to report to him. They said, "But you will be able to go, and your kids will get their dinner on time. Don't worry about it." Then the officer came, and that was it. So I left. Then I had to "confess" this "crime," since my section in the Mission was supposed to keep other people in the Mission from doing this sort of thing. But there was no

problem with it, really.

We could go to the annual Leipzig Fair because we could get a visa stamped on our Fair Card, not in our passport. Somehow, that was construed as not constituting recognition of the GDR [German Democratic Republic]. So we would do that. Pairs of us would go to each Leipzig Fair. One time, when I was down there, I discovered that we could take a bus excursion from the Leipzig Fair to Weimar and Buchenwald. That would be stamped on our Fair Card. We did that, and that was how I got to Weimar. Then, the next time I went to Erfurt. The third time I had applied to go to Meissen and Dresden. We had gotten a place to stay through the Fair Visitors' Office and we would be sent to an apartment. The man who answered the door at the apartment, when we showed him our cards from the Fair Visitors' Office, said, with some annoyance, "I told them I wasn't taking any visitors. My wife is sick! Now, go!" So we went back to the Fair Office and got a new place to stay but meanwhile had registered for this trip to Dresden and didn't think to go to the place where we would be registered for the trip to change our address. So we waited for the bus, where the bus was supposed to pick us up, but no bus appeared. We waited an extra half hour and finally went to the Fair Office. They said that the time had been changed, and it left a half hour earlier than scheduled. They asked if we hadn't gotten a phone call. Then we realized that they couldn't have called us because they would have attempted to contact us...

So we were discussing what we could do. The Fair Office suggested that we could drive. So we drove to Dresden, passing through several "closed zones." That is, zones closed to the Allied Military Missions. No problem at all.

On another occasion we went to what was then still called Karl Marxstadt (now again called Chemnitz) and from there up to Wittenberg, on the way back. So I saw a fair amount of East Germany on the way to and from the Leipzig Fair.

One time we stayed at the Leipzig Fair in someone's apartment in the building that had been owned by the Justice Ministry during the Nazi period. This apartment had been divided in two -- we were in half of it. The whole apartment had been that of the state prosecutor in the Reichstag Fire trial in the early 1930's. The person who lived in it when we were there was an interesting guy. He had been in an American-operated Prisoner of War camp in France, which he thought of as the happiest, freest period of his life. He had been anti-Nazi and wasn't a communist. He said that he had been treated better as a POW. He showed us a lot of mementoes he had of his time as an American POW. He was a painter and painted portraits of officers. They gave him a lot of money while he was there -- more than he earned later.

I saw a lot of the Soviets because, among other things, I was the guy who had to go over to protest every time they or the East Germans did something unpleasant, such as shooting someone trying to get over the Wall. So I spent a lot of time in the Soviet Embassy, working with my counterpart there. He was a pretty interesting and rather pleasant guy to deal with. We solved a few of the problems -- not very many. There would be times when things would improve a good bit.

When I was in Berlin, we realized that East Germany was under strain, that their economy had

very serious problems, and that they were trying to do too much with too little. They were doing it very inefficiently, but we all thought that they would sort of "muddle along" for quite a while. As I say, I went there for the last time in 1966, except for a month I spent escorting a theater group in 1976. Things hadn't reached that stage of dissolution then. In fact, the real "crunch" hadn't occurred because they hadn't really devoted such a great part of their income to armaments, as they did during the last few years under Brezhnev.

As for the geographic breakup of the Soviet Union, I had expected that at some point the Baltic republics [Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania] would break out. And I think that most of the Soviets I knew had accepted the idea that the Baltic states would eventually break out. They didn't feel that the Baltic states were theirs by right. I noticed a lot of nationalism in the Ukraine, but mostly in the Western Ukraine, the parts that had been part of Poland and Czechoslovakia.

When I traveled to Lwow [western Ukraine], I heard more Ukrainian and less Russian. And there was the attitude of factory people and managers I talked to. They just seemed a lot more open and pushing to do more than they were able to do.

In the Baltic states they did say that they couldn't stand the Soviets. They would ask, "When are you going to get the Soviets out of here?" In fact, in the Baltic states, one example of this attitude was the Intourist [Soviet tourist bureau] guide we had. The Intourist guide is assigned to Embassy visitors to keep them out of mischief, essentially, and keep them relatively happy -- not seeing things they shouldn't see or doing things they shouldn't do. The guide we had was an Estonian.

The first indication of this came when we were sitting in the dining room in Tallinn, working out our program with him. In the course of this discussion I asked him if you could receive Finnish television programs. He said: "Oh, it is very difficult. You need a complicated antenna. Oh, no, it's really very difficult." I let that pass. Later, when we were out in the street, he pointed up to the top of a building and said, "There is one." I said, "One what?" He said, "An antenna for receiving television programs from Helsinki." I looked more carefully and saw a sort of Rube Goldberg thing on the roof. And he said, "Look around." I looked around and saw that every house had one of them. He said, "They are our brothers."

On another occasion we went out to the ruins of a church, outside of Tallinn. It had been destroyed a couple of hundred years ago, I guess. When we got there, he explained that it was done by Latvians. This led him into a dissertation on the evils of the Latvians, which ended with his saying, "And in 1917 they fought with the Bolsheviks against us." Which they did. The Latvians had a rifle regiment that fought with the Bolsheviks.

Anyway, nationalism was very open in the Baltic states -- although less so elsewhere. In the Caucasus you had the feeling that the Armenians and the Georgians weren't very happy in the Soviet Union. But I also had a feeling that both the Armenians and the Georgians felt that they could "handle" the Soviets well enough, so they didn't really have a problem.

Then I went to the Consulate General in Munich in 1975, to replace a CIA guy, actually. He had left some time previously.

The work involved seeing that the policy decisions made in the two radio stations didn't conflict with State Department policy toward the Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union. There was a tendency in both radio stations, of course, since they were staffed by refugees from the countries involved, to try and be much more forceful than we felt was "politic" at the time. It was extremely difficult to monitor the large number of radio programs that were being broadcast. I used to get scripts and would go over them, picking some out at random, and then commenting on some if I found something to comment on. Both radio stations had policy staffs, and it was difficult for them, too.

This supervision worked well enough, I think. I don't recall that there was any real damage done. There was material broadcast which some governments would complain about, but that's all right.

We had a number of Congressional visitors. I remember that Senator Hubert Humphrey came over. We took him to visit the radio stations.

The radio stations are still operating. They have changed their role somewhat. Someone from Radio Liberty told me, not too long ago, that their subject matter is often, "How to do something." For example, how you go about existing in a market economy and what you do. In fact, the two radio stations have staff correspondents in Moscow, and, I think, in Eastern Europe, too.

The Czechs -- Vaclav Havel [president of the Czech Republic] -- invited the radio stations to move to Prague -- he was so interested in keeping them going. I don't know what happened. They were thinking seriously of doing it because the costs would be much less than in Munich.

RFE [Radio Free Europe], I think, was very effective. Radio Liberty was less so because of "jamming" by the Soviets, but as time went on, I think that it became more effective. They would carry a lot of things like material written by dissidents -- such as Solzhenitsyn and others. They would read it over the air. We did get some "feed back" from people who came out. The radio stations were clearly listened to and heard. When I was in Munich, broadcasts by the VOA [Voice of America] were no longer being jammed by the Soviet Union. Radio Liberty was still being jammed, but not the VOA. I remember talking to Soviet officials at times, asking them about something, and they would tell me that they didn't know, but had heard on the VOA that...In the 1950's, they were willing to say that they were listening to the VOA. The Soviets mostly have short wave radios. Because the distances within the Soviet Union were so great, most of their radios have short wave bands. So that wasn't a problem. RFE broadcast on medium wave as well, but their distances are much shorter and they can get the medium wave transmissions into their target areas.

Short wave sets are very common in Eastern Europe. It would be hard to buy one -- it used to be hard to buy one -- without short wave.

GEORGE F. WARD
Political Officer
Hamburg (1970-1972)

Ambassador Ward was born and raised in New York City. He attended the University of Rochester and entered the US Marine Corps in 1965. Four years later, in 1969, he entered the Foreign Service and began a career which took him to Germany and Italy. He also held an ambassadorship to Namibia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2001.

Q: You were in Hamburg from when to when?

WARD: 1970-1972.

Q: What was it like going to Germany?

WARD: It was great. My family loved Hamburg, and I loved my job. I feel for the officers these days who have to go to visa mills and sit on a stool behind a window for eight hours a day and make decisions every 30 seconds. I'm not sure what I would have done in a situation like that. In Hamburg, we had 20-odd Americans. We had enough work to keep us busy, but not so much that there was no time for other things. I did consular work, but I also had time for political work. We had a youth program in Germany at the time, which I thought was a wonderful program. It encouraged the junior officers to get out and meet young German politicians and other young leaders. The embassy had a youth committee that met every year. One year we hosted the youth committee in Hamburg. Dick Miles, who at the time was in Belgrade, came up because he was interested in doing something similar in Yugoslavia. Dick's path and mine were to cross again and again.

Q: Hamburg was part of Hanover?

WARD: No, Hamburg was a *Land* on its own, one of the ten *Laender* of the Federal Republic. Politics in Hamburg were dominated by the Social Democrats. I think the Christian Democrats won an election in the mid-'50s or maybe early '60s and after a few months everyone agreed that they were not capable of governing the city. The next election restored Social Democratic control. Later, when I was posted in Bonn, the Christian Democrats had another shot at running Hamburg, but again, after a couple of years, the Social Democrats took over again.

In a way, Hamburg was almost the ideal first post. It would have been still better had it been an embassy, but the Hamburgers took the consulate very seriously, and we got involved in a lot of things. It was fun. As a family, we used the time to see Europe. It was a great place to learn German. It wasn't Bonn, where you could speak English and get by. You had to use German.

Q: There were a lot of protests about Vietnam. How did that impact on you all?

WARD: It really did. In 1970, when we went into Cambodia, there was a large and violent demonstration outside the *Amerika Haus*. We knew it was going to happen. I happened to be

duty officer and they thought, “Well, this guy is a former Marine. He knows how to do this stuff.” So, they sent me down to the *Amerika Haus* to witness a pitched battle between the German police and protesters with a lot of force being used, a lot of injured policemen. I don’t know how many injured protesters there were. There were probably 30 policemen injured fairly seriously and a lot of tear gas. I stood on the roof of the *Amerika Haus* watching it. The week before, a smaller group had actually gotten into *Amerika Haus* and did some damage. Yes, there was that undertone, but not so much that I felt the average German disliked America. I took courses at the University of Hamburg to help my German. I went to class and never felt hostility directed against Americans.

Q: It’s always struck me that the Europeans, particularly in France and Germany, seem to take protests much more seriously than... They dress up for it and there seems to be more of an ideology behind it.

WARD: That was true then and it also appears to be the case now. The people protesting against what they called “globalization” or the Free Trade Agreement are taking things pretty seriously also. But back in the 1970s in Germany there was a very live and strong underground movement of political extremists. It was the time of the Bader-Meinhoff group, when the stage was being set for the assassinations that became endemic in Germany. There were a lot of extremists around, and they were willing to use violence. That night at *Amerika Haus*, force was what we saw, a lot of it on both sides - on the police side, water cannons and tear gas and on the demonstrators’ side, rocks and sticks. They were fighting.

Q: In your youth work or making contact with politicians, what was your impression of the German political class that had emerged?

WARD: I have to say that I had then and still have with some exceptions fairly high regard for German politicians. They tend to be serious people. They tend to be well informed on the issues. Their system is very different from ours and sometimes that causes a lack of understanding on both sides. One understands the freedom that Americans have only when you live in another society, which although constitutionally free is still so much more structured and where form and tradition limit individuals much more. That was certainly true in Germany in 1970, and I think continues to be true in Germany today. When I covered the Greens in 1984-1985, I attended a Green party convention in one of the small cities in the Ruhr district in North Rhine Westphalia. The Greens were a very colorful group. At a Greens convention, you would find men and women knitting, dogs running around, kids running around, people of all shapes and sizes. It was very raucous. But when I looked outside my window that night at a pedestrian crossing - it was pouring rain and there was no traffic - there were probably 30 Greens waiting for the light to change so they could cross a deserted street. I think it was Lenin who said that when the German railroad workers launch a revolution, they would pay for the tickets needed to get on the platform at the railroad station.

You have a society that combines a tradition of obedience to rules with the tendency to act out according to ideological commitment. When ideological commitment bumps up against German society’s rules, the outcome can be surprisingly violent. I do not believe that German extremist groups have lost their potential for violence.

Q: Did you have any particular consular problems?

WARD: I remember a 12-passenger freighter full of American senior citizens that was sold in mid-Atlantic to a company that no longer wanted to transport passengers. When they came into port, we had a situation where the captain and the passengers were not even speaking to each other. The passengers refused to leave. The captain was desperate to get them off because a ship in port costs a lot of money. This gave me my first experience in mediation, shuttle diplomacy. I shuttled between the captain's stateroom and the passengers' dining room trying to cut a deal for the passengers. They got a very sweet deal. The shipping line was desperate to have them off that ship. They finally left with money and free plane tickets and all sorts of things. I also remember dealing with some American deserters who had returned from Scandinavia. Once, an American deserter turned himself in to me. I think he figured that he would fare better if he turned himself in at a consulate than to the Army. While I was talking with him, he looked at my shoes, which were shined, a habit I picked up in the Marine Corps. He said, "Were you ever in the military?" I said, "Actually, I just left the military." I think I ruined his game plan. He had hoped for a more sympathetic ear. I remember testifying at his general court martial later that year. He was convicted of desertion, which is a fairly hard charge to prove in the military, as opposed to simple absence without leave.

Q: Who was your consul general?

WARD: Alexander Johnpoll.

Q: He was political counselor in Belgrade when I was there in the '60s.

WARD: And he had been Deputy Director of German Affairs and had had a significant hand in negotiating the Austrian state treaty. For me, he'll always been the symbol of the old Foreign Service. He was extremely formal. I remember that he made the Fourth of July celebration an affair for which wives - there were no spouses then - were expected to make *hors d'oeuvres*, but were not invited to attend. He was very competent, and the consulate was well run. We passed inspections and so forth. But he was a man of the old school.

Q: I think this is a good place to stop here. This would be 1972. Where did you go?

WARD: I was assigned to the Operations Center.

FRED CHARLES THOMAS JR.
Commercial Officer
Bonn (1970-1972)

Fred Charles Thomas Jr. was born in Arizona in 1927. He served overseas with the Army for two years before graduating from Bucknell University in 1951. He has served at overseas posts in Korea, Pakistan, Germany, Vietnam, and India, as

well as the Office of Strategic Research in Washington DC. This interview was conducted by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1995.

Q: I always like to get the dates. You were in Bonn from when to when?

THOMAS: From 1970 to 1972. So I took a German-language course and was shipped off to Bonn. But, before I could go, I sat in a hotel, because they kept canceling. Every time I was to go, they'd cancel. We sat in a hotel I don't know how many weeks, because I had all these clearances, and nobody would let me go on any plane. In the end, I'm sure the plane they put me on was one of these... You know, there was all this kidnaping or hijacking of planes at that time. My orders were to get off the plane in Frankfurt and take the train north. I think they had sky marshals on that specific flight. So we went to Frankfurt.

Q: We're speaking of an era when there were a lot of hijacking, and there was concern about anybody with clearances or who had access to information that might end up in the hands of one of these terrorist groups.

THOMAS: They had their connections with the Soviets.

Q: They might have had their connection with somebody.

THOMAS: I was told I couldn't go into Eastern Europe; I couldn't go into East Berlin. I could go to Berlin, but I had to go on the train. There were certain rules I had to live by.

The commercial people in Bonn were great to me. I didn't know what the hell I was doing; it was a new thing for me. I looked at it like a political officer looks at things, I wasn't looking at it in the normal commercial officer's way. They were used to putting on trade shows and filling out all these forms. All that bored the hell out of me, so I started trying to figure out new ways to get the German government to help with our balance-of-payments problems.

I remember going around trying to sell the Bundesbahn on buying American toilet paper. They called me the toilet paper man. Then and probably now its "sandpaper" in the "roll" of toilet paper on the German trains. It became my mission to sell American toilet paper in order to service the bottoms of the burghers who rode the Bundesbahn. What an ambition!

Anyway, I set up a series of conferences between the American PX system there, buyers, and the big German department stores.

The bureaucratic politics, which is important in such situations, involved the counselor of embassy for commercial affairs, who was a temporary appointee from the Department of Commerce. Then there was the commercial attaché and an assistant commercial attaché, who were both State officers; both owed their careers to the Department of Commerce and had been looked after by them. I was a commercial officer, but I had no connection with the Department of Commerce. Heading the whole economic-commercial section was the minister for economic and commercial affairs, Chuck Wootton, a State officer. He looked on me as being the person to look after State's interests in this situation, as compared to these other fellows. Therefore, he was

more than happy to give me support for my rather unorthodox ideas. Because of my previous job, I was interested in high-technology sales opportunities. But Pollack, who was the...

Q: Herman Pollack.

THOMAS: He ran the science attaché department in the Department. He wanted nothing to do with commercial things. He wanted his science attachés to be strictly academic, doctorates, you know. The science attaché in Bonn had his doctorate. We hit it off, we were both hunters. He said "Come along. I'm not allowed to be commercial; you can be the commercial side of the science office." So, I joined the science attaché club and got to know a good many people that way. At the same time I was trying to drum up new business.

My big break came. The economic minister assigned me to fill in for him when he did not have the time to represent the Ambassador at various functions. This was due to the fact that the commercial counselor was an introvert, a nice, intelligent man, but very introverted. He couldn't go out and make a speech, so they had me going out and making speeches at these openings of American plants. The ambassador would be invited, but he didn't have the time; the job went to the minister; if he couldn't go, I ended up doing it. Out of this, I got the impression that we were building a hell of a lot of fully owned American plants there in Germany. At about the same time, Mansfield, back here in the Senate, was raising all type hell about pulling American troops out of Europe. This was worrying the hell out of the Germans.

Q: There was a Mansfield amendment that went on and on all the time. Michael Mansfield, the senator from Montana.

THOMAS: Yes, that's right. One evening, there was a dinner party; at that party was a senior official from the finance ministry. I was seated next to him at the dinner table. I started talking about the fact that they were allowing the Americans to build all these plants there, obviously hopeful that this would create some political pressure to protect their investment. I said, "Really, that doesn't do it. You'd be much better off to have your German companies going to the right districts in the United States, where there were senators who sat on the appropriate committees, and having factories in those districts exporting things to Germany; let's say, car parts that were used in automobiles that were made here, under license. You'd get much more political leverage that way."

This guy listened to me, and a few days later, I received a call from him; could he bring some people over to call on me at the embassy, from the ministry. They came and we discussed the idea in depth.

I went to see my State boss, the minister, and explained what I'd said and what had happened. He got all excited, he offered to sponsor a conference in his office for the next meeting. The Germans had said they were going to call me again.

The next call came from a couple of them wanting to come with some people from Volkswagen. It seems that the German government owns a chunk of Volkswagen stock. The Volkswagen people, after listening to us, said, "We don't want to do this directly, but we export a lot of cars to

the United States. Because we buy a lot of parts from Bosch, we're going to ask Bosch to look into having some parts, which we use in our Volkswagens, made in the States."

Bosch came around. Then I sent off my cable to the Department of Commerce. Boy, was I doing great stuff! The minister, Chuck Wootton, was pleased with it all. It proved State officers could really do commercial work. We were getting something done.

It all looked very good until about six weeks later, when the people from Bosch returned and came to call. I said, "What's wrong?"

They said, "We went around to these various companies that make auto parts. Nobody was willing to build stuff to our specifications. They wanted to continue to build this junk they build, that lasts two years and is shot. They refused to go along with our approach to what we wanted built under our name."

I said, "If that's the case, then you better plan on putting in your own factory."

They said, "We'll consider that."

That was the start to Bosch's entry into manufacturing in this country. It had that political basis.

Q: That's very interesting.

THOMAS: Out of this, the minister gave me the job of running a big benefit to make money for the school.

Q: You're talking about the American community school.

THOMAS: Yes. And so I said, If he'd let me run it my way. He said, "You run it any way you want."

I knew the big contracts there were let by the U. S. military, and that many of the American business people's children went to our school. I also knew that if this effort was to be successful, I needed them on board. The minister had made me chairman of this American School Benefit Committee. I went and enlisted as co-chairman, a colonel who, with his German born wife, were very socially active among the German community. He was the senior colonel on General Mearns's MAG staff. Mearns and I were good friends. He was a West Pointer, and he knew my family. So I'd gotten to know him well; he'd introduced me to a lot of Germans to go hunting, and gotten me a jagdschein.

Q: Jagdschein being a hunting license.

THOMAS: And very hard to come by.

Q: Oh, yes.

THOMAS: I enlisted Colonel DeSanto to become the co-chairman. He got some of his junior officers to become the administrative workhorses for this effort. In the end, we made a lot of money. We gave away a car, and we gave away a lot of other things at this banquet. Ford gave us an automobile to give away in a raffle; it was a big moneymaker.

Out of this, I'd become somewhat popular with the school administration. Chuck Wootton wanted me to re-up and stay on. But I wanted to get back to East Asia and Chinese, because here China had just opened up.

Q: Nixon had made his visit there in, what was it?

THOMAS: In 1971. China had opened up. I'd learned Chinese, and I wanted to get back to East Asia and China. In response to every inquiry, came the answer that all the slots were already filled. You've been away from the China crowd for a while. You'll have to come back and do your stint in Vietnam. Because that's where everybody was going. So I thought, well, that's fine.

I gave up this pleasant job, drinking wine on the Rhine and going around Germany and having a good time. Relatively, it was the most pleasant post I've ever had. It wasn't high excitement, but it was fun.

I came back to the States; was put through French-language school and sent off to Vietnam.

JAMES E. TAYLOR
Consular Officer
Munich (1970-1973)

James E. Taylor was born in Oklahoma in 1938. He graduated from the University of Southern California in 1960. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1961-1965 and entered the Foreign Service in 1965. His career included positions in Iran, Germany, the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, and Israel. Mr. Taylor was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on December 5, 1995.

TAYLOR: I went over to Munich. My Personnel counselor said I needed some consular experience, so I went over to Munich, a nice place to be.

Q: From when to when?

TAYLOR: From 1970-73. I spent a year as the visa officer there and then two years as citizen and welfare officer dealing with Americans in trouble. This was kind of interesting for me in dealing with human beings, especially those who were really crazy.

Q: Do any cases come to mind?

TAYLOR: Well there were one or two showing up all the time. We used to have the authority,

when they showed up destitute, to pay their fare back and pull their passports until they paid back their airfare. Well there were two cases who showed up in my office and I don't know how they got new passports even though they had not paid back the original fare.

There were a couple of people also who were really mentally off balance and it was my first experience in dealing with people of that sort. One of the things I learned is that they can sound very, very intelligent, articulate and logical until you pay attention to the words they are stringing together which don't make any sense whatsoever. On a couple of occasions there was concern about physical violence and we had to call the marines and ask them to stand by the doors while we talked with these people.

But I got to see a lot of Bavaria, a big state. For this reason I was allowed to travel to a lot of jails around Bavaria. So, it was an interesting experience. It was the only consular job I ever had.

Q: Who was consul general while you were there?

TAYLOR: Ed Dougherty.

Q: Did you get involved in the political process at all?

TAYLOR: No. We had two officers there, one full time and one of the JOTs sort of circulated through the political operation. And that was enough even though Bavaria was a very important political state with a lot of independent-minded Bavarians, very active politically on the national scene. Probably two people doing political reporting and contact work were enough. And there was a lot of work I was doing on the consular side, but frankly, after two years of doing that it was time to move on to something more substantive. I don't regret having done it.

Q: Where did you go after that?

TAYLOR: I went down to the US Army Russian Institute in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. That has been operating since World War II. It used to be called Detachment R. State had one slot each year and several other agencies had slots. There were about 30 military in each class and about 5 civilians. So I was down there for one year, which is standard for State Department people.

PHILIP S. KAPLAN
Political Officer
Bonn (1970-1974)

Philip Kaplan was born in New Briton, Connecticut in 1937. He graduated from the University of Connecticut (B.A., 1959) and the University of California (J.D., 1962). Mr. Kaplan entered the Foreign Service in 1967. Since 1989 Mr. Kaplan has served as Deputy U.S. Representative to the Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Prior to this, he served in the following positions at the Department of State: as a senior intelligence officer, 1987 - 1989; Minister and

Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Manila, 1985 - 1987; Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Policy Planning, 1981 - 1985; director of multilateral policy at the Bureau of International Organizations, 1979 - 1980; and as a member of the policy planning staff, 1975 - 1979. In addition, Mr. Kaplan has served on the U.S. delegation to the East-West negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions in Vienna, Austria, 1974 - 1975; as political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Bonn, 1970 - 1974; and as an economic officer at the U.S. Mission to the European Communities in Brussels, Belgium, 1968 - 1970. Mr. Kaplan entered the Foreign Service in 1967. Mr. Kaplan was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2014.

KAPLAN: Now I said I was indebted to John Renner. Much earlier, I told him I was studying German and wanted to be assigned next to Bonn. He told me the key man in our Embassy was Jonathan Dean, the political counselor.”

Q: Who I’ve interviewed.

KAPLAN: Yes, in fact I read the interview. Renner advised me to send a short overnight letter to him; (there were no emails or faxes in those days). So I wrote out a letter. “Dear Mr. Dean, I’ve concluded my first assignment. I wish to be assigned to work for you. I would like to come to Bonn to do that. I only want five minutes of your time, and then I’ll go back to Brussels.”

He was astonished. It was sort of the filing system again. I arrived in Bonn by train on gray evening. And it looked like something out of Le Carre’s small town in Germany. At the guesthouse they in Plittersdorf, where the American embassy staff was housed, I turned on the television and watched Willy Brandt and Leonid Brezhnev sign the Russo-German treaty which evoked memories in Washington of the Rapallo treaty of the 1920s. And it looked to me like that the fights between the government and the opposition were really vicious.

The next morning I went in to see Mr. Dean. Frances, his secretary said, “Wait a minute. There’s a doctor who’s coming.” Apparently he had a growth on his neck and he had been unwilling to walk down to the medical unit, which was about a three-minute walk from his office. The doctor came in and Mr. Dean was sitting there reading all his files and the doctor looked at his neck, and said, “This is ugly, it’s got to come off.”

Dean said, “Then get it off. You’ve got one minute.” And so the doctor (*makes slash sound*), and off it came.

I was looking at this, and they put these bandages on his neck. Dean got up, he could be quite gruff, and he said, “Go away,” and the doctor slipped out as quickly as he could.

Frances said, “Your turn.”

I walked in and he said, “All right, I’ve seen your letter. What do you want?”

I said, "I want to work for you."

He said to me, "What do you know about political-military affairs? Have you ever served in the army?"

I said, "No, I haven't, and frankly I don't know a gun from a rake. But inside 30 days I'll know more about it than anybody in the embassy, because I'll work that hard."

He said, "You're hired."

I said, "Thank you, sir," and off I went before he could --

Q: (laughs)

KAPLAN: And that's exactly how I got the job.

Q: Great.

KAPLAN: It was amazing. I can't imagine it happens that way in these days. And I went back to Brussels and in due course I went to Bonn.

Q: Great. OK, well we'll pick this up when you're in Bonn. You were in Bonn from when to when?

KAPLAN: I arrived there in, let's see, '62 -- 1970, 1970 through 1974.

Q: OK.

KAPLAN: And it was a fascinating period.

Q: OK. Today is the 31st of March, 2014 with Ambassador Philip Kaplan. And we have now reached the point where you've made your, your mark with Jonathan Dean.

KAPLAN: Right.

Q: Who, by the way, I have interviewed so you might want to read his account. Great negotiator, he really --

KAPLAN: Yes, he died very recently.

Q: Yeah. Anyway, so you're off to Bonn. Where did you go and what was the period you served?

KAPLAN: Sure. Well, I arrived in Bonn in roughly July or August 1970 and I spent four years there until 1974. I arrived when Willy Brandt had been in power for about a year or so. And I departed one month after Brandt was brought down by the scandal over his aide, Gunter Guillaume, the East German spy. I was assigned to, as I indicated to work on political military

affairs, about which I had very little experience. So I was determined to dig in and really try to learn the subject matter. And --

Q: You were going to learn the difference between a rake and a rifle.

KAPLAN: That's right *(laughs)*.

Q: (laughs)

KAPLAN: And I had to do that because the first job I was assigned was to work on the reform packages being considered for the Bundeswehr, the German Armed Forces. That brought me into contact very frequently with the NATO desk of the Foreign Ministry, the Auswartiges Amt, and the Defense Ministry, the Verteidigungsministerium. The defense minister was Helmut Schmidt who later became chancellor once Brandt departed.

Q: You'd come from Brussels. How would you describe our embassy and sort of the atmosphere there? Was it different than --

KAPLAN: It was an enormous difference, and it's very perceptive of you to put your finger on it. In Brussels I was in the mission to the European Community, now the European Union. The work that was being done was considered to be important and high priority by our administration, it went to the heart of the economic element of the transatlantic relationship, It was multilateral, dealing with all the different constituent parts of the European Community. Because our work dealt with trade issues and investment and financial questions, it didn't involve sensitive national security information. We had five officers in our Economic Section, and the Political Section was similar, and then, of course, the ambassador and the DCM, and some administrative people, labor and agriculture attaches. That was the mission in Brussels. Bonn was one of the biggest embassies in the world. The first day *(laughs)*, somebody walked in with a cable with a top-secret cover page. The next day I got something that said, "Top Secret - Sensitive." I went to my boss and I said, "I thought top secret was a high classification. Why would they call it top secret-sensitive?"

And he said to me, "That's to show that they really mean it."

Q: (laughs)

KAPLAN: About a week later I got something that said, "Top Secret - Very Sensitive."

Q: (laughs)

KAPLAN: And so I went and I asked the same question, and he said, "That's to show that they really mean it."

Q: (laughs)

KAPLAN: So your question is very relevant because immediately it became clear to me that this

was a high powered operation, that the information I was dealing with was at a much higher level of national security sensitivity, and that the issues that were at stake went right to the heart of America's security interests in Europe.

Q: Did you feel that every German was a potential East German agent or I mean -- this was, you know, we're talking about a scandal that later came up.

KAPLAN: Right.

Q: But the East Germans under Mr. Wolf, it wasn't Wolf --

KAPLAN: Marcus Wolff was the lawyer they used; he was close to the Soviets and to the East German leadership, and he was a very smart guy.

Q: But anyway, so I mean you were up against a very sophisticated apparatus and I would think that this would have made you even more aware of espionage and --

KAPLAN: Well, Germany was -- I was there starting in 1970, 25 years after the end of World War II. Germans had become, in effect to use the long German word, *salonfaehig*: they were now considered to be fit to receive in your living room. The stains had begun to be washed away from the Holocaust and all the horrible things that happened in World War II. I threw myself into it headfirst and met a very wide-range of people. Most of the people I dealt with were decent folks, determined to move beyond what their nation had done. I can comment that I've been going back to Germany now since 1970 two or three times a year, every year, and my German had become fluent. I could not arrive, and still to this day, cannot arrive in Germany without reading in the newspapers condemnations of what happened in World War II, something that Japan has never done really. That to me is the greatest safeguard against the concerns that the Germans would go the other way. In fact, they moved more toward a pacifist foreign policy over most of the years, although pacifism isn't, isn't quite a correct description, and now, finally, the united Germany is becoming more engaged in international affairs. In addition, there's the whole East German element; the GDR regime was active during my time in Bonn. and there was one case that I'll mention. I had a good friend who was the director for West European Affairs. He coordinated consultations among EU leaders, the summit meetings, the political directors meetings, the political committee. His secretary turned out to be an East German spy. Once she was flirting with me when I was in the office and thank God I was very careful (*laughs*). He got investigated because of this, as you would expect, and he was completely vindicated. But it was part of the woodwork over there. An East German obviously did not look different than a West German; the accent might be slightly more Berlin-ish than from Stuttgart, but the fact is that that there was East German espionage going on, and for that matter Soviet espionage in West Germany. And one could safely assume that the western powers were trying to find out whatever they could in East Germany as well.

Q: How did you feel about the, quote, Soviet menace, unquote, being in Bonn as opposed to being in Brussels?

KAPLAN: Well, I'll tell you, shortly after I arrived at Embassy Bonn, I was told that I should go

to Heidelberg, which is where the U.S. Army Command in Europe was stationed. They put me on a helicopter and they took me down to Heidelberg. Didn't take long by helicopter. I landed, had my meetings, and then General Mike Davidson, the CINCEUR (Commander in Chief Europe) says, "Well, young man, we're going to give you a little bit of an education." He says, "You've heard of the Berlin Wall, right?"

I said, "Yes, sir."

He said, "We're going to show you another wall."

They put me in another helicopter and flew south down to the southern tip of West Germany and they went straight up north to Hamburg. There was a wall all the way, a dividing line between East and West Germany; in most areas it was a wire fence or, or electrocuted wire fence. While I was on that helicopter I saw a couple of kids from East Germany struggling to slip under the fence, and border guards up in the watchtowers on the East German side shooting at them. There were two that were coming under, one got through, the other got killed. So one had the immediate sense that this was for real.

Q: Yeah. Well, what was your impression of German-American relations? I mean were there points of conflict that one wouldn't think about that -- unless you got right up close?

KAPLAN: Yes. The relationship overall was good, but the relationship between Nixon and Kissinger with their détente policy on the one hand, and Willy Brandt on the other hand, was tense. It was tense for a number of reasons, but let me mention a couple. One was that, when the Berlin Wall went up in 1961 and then Burgermeister (Mayor) Brandt, of Berlin called for President Kennedy to help, he was informed that Kennedy was out sailing near Hyannis Port and couldn't take the call until he got back, and that could take several days. Brandt never forgot that, and in chapter two of his memoirs he made it quite clear that that was the point at which he realized he would have to take care of German interests himself and not rely only on the United States. It wasn't a break in the relationship by any means, because Germany could not defend itself from Soviet power. But it was a clear understanding on his part that something had changed.

The second reason was that Nixon and Kissinger did not trust what Brandt was up to. They thought that he might go too far in terms of softening the relationship between Germany and the Soviet Union. Words like Rapallo were bandied about.

Q: This is referring back to the treaty in early '20s, wasn't it?

KAPLAN: Yes. At the end, the end of World War I when the Russians and the Germans went off to this little nice resort town of Rapallo in Italy while negotiations were going on over the end of World War I. So all that was in the air. And funny things would happen. Again, one anecdote, illuminates more than analysis. I went to the Dresden Hotel for lunch. I was invited by this rather senior fellow in the Social Democratic Party, Brandt's party. Very decent guy, people had told me this is a person you should really get to know. We had lunch at the Dresden, which just happened to be the hotel where Hitler and Chamberlin had met, right on the Rhine, and it was

raining cats and dogs. I mean it was a scene like you'd see in a Le Carré movie about Bonn, the *kleine Stadt in Deutschland*, the small town in Germany. And this SPD official said to me, "You know, "We have a real problem here in Germany."

I said, "Ah! What could that be?"

And he said, "Well, you know, we're really under all this great pressure because every war in Europe has always started from the east and come right at us."

I couldn't believe my ears. Every war in Europe had started in the east and come right at us. In fact WWI and WWII had started in Germany and gone in the other direction. I thought I misunderstood him; he couldn't possibly have meant that. This was not some Nazi or warmonger, and he explained how the Russians had come at the end of World War II and had raped women in Berlin, which of course we knew.

I talked with him for two hours that day. There was nothing evil or awful about this guy, but this was something that was in his DNA, in his head. And I said to myself, you know, "Nothing is quite as clear as what the obvious reality might be. People have different perceptions."

Q: Well, it's like -- there are still not many, but when I was a kid we used to hear people, and I lived in Annapolis, talk about the war of Southern Independence. You know, I -- what the hell are they talking about? It was the Civil War of course.

KAPLAN: Yes.

Q: But did feel you might say -- I realize you were fairly far down the totem pole there.

KAPLAN: Sure.

Q: But did you feel the hand of Kissinger where you were or not, or that relationship?

KAPLAN: Look, I mean this is in one sense another Foreign Service job where we -- there are details we can go into about this, but where one moved back and forth between different government departments and reported on developments and so forth, how the new white book that the German Armed Forces were putting together, the Bundeswehr, and then a lot of other things after about one year. But at the same time, I knew from the minute I got there, from that trip to Bonn the year before, that major events were going on, that this was about how Europe was going to be organized and what the U.S.-Soviet relationship was going to be, and the relationship between the U.S. and the Russians on the one hand and Germany in the other. Brandt was attempting to break the mold and change things in a significant way. I'll be glad to analyze that for you if you want me to.

Q: Yeah, I would like you to.

KAPLAN: Every family in Germany was divided over this. We lived in the so-called *Amerikanische Sidelong*, the American colony in Plittersdorf, which was a suburb of Bonn. I

wasn't keen on living in an American diplomatic ghetto, but that's the way it was. We had this apartment. In the apartment next to us was this fellow who was the parliamentarian of the *Bundesrat*, the upper house of the German parliament, and his wife Gertrud and daughter Christa. They were very charming, and they invited us to dinner the day we got there. There was a row going on among the three of them over whether Brandt was a traitor or a savior. There on the table was a copy of *Tagesspiegel*, which was a Berlin conservative newspaper, and on the front page was a cartoon of Willy Brandt throwing the Berlin bear over the Berlin Wall to a menacing Brezhnev who was waiting to catch it.

Now, that was outrageous, but it was what a lot of people believed. And that immediately said to me this really was deep. This wasn't just a matter between the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats, this is something that's deeply internalized within the entire society. So this was not an ordinary assignment, and sensitive negotiations were going in parallel to this acute societal debate.

The role of Nixon and Kissinger and their key associates, NSC Sovietologists like Hal Sonnenfeldt and Bill Hyland and others was very important. U.S. policy was coming from the White House rather than the State Department. At a certain point, as you know, Kissinger moved over to the post of secretary of state. But in fact he rather than Bill Rogers, the first term secretary of state, was with Nixon was calling the shots from the outset.

Q: Yeah. Goodness. Did you have any dealings with Sonnenfeldt when he came?

KAPLAN: Sure. Sonnenfeldt came to Bonn and I brought him to meet State Secretary Paul Frank, who was about five-foot-one, a portly German with a bald head, striped pants and a morning coat.

Q: Good God.

KAPLAN: Yes, indeed (*laughs*). Very smart. Sonnenfeldt came in, he was also smart and tough, and he sat down. Herr Frank was sitting as straight as a die, all five-foot-one of him, and Hal slouched in the elegant chair, legs apart, the way you see pictures of Putin these days. I thought that was rude, but I didn't say anything. Their conversation was very substantive. Sonnenfeldt tried to lay down the law, as the Americans saw it. Frank, who was very senior, he was in fact the deputy secretary of foreign affairs, deputy minister, but he was not a part of the immediate political entourage of Brandt. The key advisor of Brandt was a fellow named Egon Bahr, who was Brandt's foreign policy guru, back to the days of Tuebingen where Bahr was a professor. Bahr was the one who designed the rationale behind what came to be known as Ostpolitik.

Q: Well, as you saw the, the -- there were -- the Germans were working on a new doctrine for their military.

KAPLAN: Called *innere fuehrung*, which means internal leadership.

Q: Were there any political overtones to this?

KAPLAN: Well, it was about whether or not soldiers or potential conscripts could bail out by saying that they were conscientious objectors. It was about the rigidities of the old Prussian system of leadership and how things had to be more open and democratic. The defense minister, Helmut Schmidt, was as I said before, brilliant. He worked within the prevailing political context as a Social Democrat to get all of that accepted but was not about to, to gut the German Armed Forces on the altar of political correctness. He was a strategic thinker and was able to go toe-to-toe with our top people. He became chancellor and stayed chancellor for sometime after Brandt left. And so he

Q: Yeah. Well, there was this -- I was in Germany in '55 to '58. I was a vice consul in Frankfurt. And I know there was -- had a movie, The Captain von Kopenick.

KAPLAN: Sure.

Q: Which was a satire, but it goes way back, of a --

KAPLAN: Way back.

Q: -- of a streetcar conductor, something like that, putting on a captain's uniform and commanding troops around a city and all. And everybody paid because they had on this --

KAPLAN: That's right.

Q: -- uniform was paying, giving him complete allegiance. And the idea that no more of this sort of thing was sort of prevailing then. And but it does so short of some of the thought processes.

KAPLAN: Well, there were all these things that people would cite as examples of the German mentality. You'd stop at a street corner and the traffic light would turn yellow and nobody would dream of putting a foot into the crosswalk when an American might dash across. No car would dream of going through the caution light, much less a red light. But you know, it was 25 years after World War II, they'd come a long way. They were blessed with a very enlightened leadership in the aftermath of World War II in Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. He was a very formal traditional authority figure who had been in a Nazi concentration camp. He had been Lord Mayor of Cologne before World War II. So he was in his eighties. The country was devastated and stigmatized but under Adenauer the German people started working hard and re-building their economy and a democratic polity.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: And they turned it around, notwithstanding incidents like the at the Dresden Hotel, and the fact that there was all the espionage going on, they turned around their sense of responsibility. They knew they had to earn their way back. There was deep suspicion, which prevailed right up to that point in 1989 when Gorbachev allowed the GDR (German Democratic Republic) to unite with West Germany, with our support and despite the opposition of Mitterrand and Thatcher. So it took nearly a half century.

Q: We had an intern, German girl I think, who was a graduate of the Dachau Gymnasium. And I asked her what they had done, and they, they had gone into this in great detail, you know, I mean coming from Dachau had quite a burden to bear, just the name.

KAPLAN: Quite a burden.

Q: Well, did you talk to our military about their impression of the German Military?

KAPLAN: Sure, as I said, I went shortly after I got this job down to Heidelberg, and I met with General Davidson. I made it my business to go to Wiesbaden to meet with our air force people.

Q: Air force.

KAPLAN: Stuttgart was the so-called EUCOM (European Command) base, it was the integrated base that integrated all the armed forces. So you had to get to know these military leaders and deal with them. And similarly, it wasn't just reporting. I would go to talk to sometimes on instruction, sometimes not, to some of the leaders of the German uniformed military. And some of them I became quite close to, and that became important and certain incidents occurred.

Q: Well, was there -- the feeling certainly was in my time, in the '50s, that the Soviet Army could pour through the Fulda Gap and it was difficult to see how we could stop things. What was the feeling when you were there?

KAPLAN: It was very similar. When I got there I was given a briefing that indicated -- it may have been during that Heidelberg visit -- that if the Soviet Red Army attacked in strength and if they were not challenged with nuclear weapons, they could reach the ports on the North Sea within two weeks. Kissinger wrote a very famous book as a Harvard professor before he came into government. I don't remember the exact title, but it may have been something like Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy in which he advocated, as I recall, the development of tactical nuclear weapons, because obviously the notion of going to strategic nuclear weapons would be sort of a doomsday.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: But if you could use a tactical nuclear weapon which itself would be extremely devastating, then it could take out or impede escalation to all-out nuclear war. It was at the time highly controversial but that was the thinking, and it contributed to a new NATO doctrine known as flexible response, or 14, slash, 3, which would enable us to call on any part of the defense spectrum from conventional up through tactical nuclear weapons to strategic nuclear forces. The Defense Department had war plans, as they do for anything else, but you know, a decision of that sort would be made by the president, under enormous pressure.

Q: What was the impression that you were getting from those who were dealing with it about Kissinger and Nixon as leaders in foreign affairs?

KAPLAN: Well, first of all the Vietnam War was going on. That was deeply unpopular in

Germany among the young people particularly. There was one point in which Der Spiegel, the news magazine, wrote published a cover story entitled “*Amerikanische Kriegsverbrechen in Vietnam*,” American war crimes in Vietnam. Now, coming from a German magazine with World War II as the backdrop, that was a very dramatic headline.

Q: Yes.

KAPLAN: All right. On the other hand, there were a lot of other people who felt that Nixon and Kissinger were very clever strategic thinkers and that they were exercising serious leadership of the alliance. In large part as a way to get out of Vietnam, they had developed the détente policy, which was taking U.S. and western policy in a direction more congenial to the German public. And then there was the factor that I mentioned earlier, that the détente of Nixon and the Ostpolitik of Brandt, while on the surface seemed compatible, there was a certain measure of distrust on both sides, which fortunately, the leaders on both sides were able to more or less manage and control.

Q: Up close, what was your impression of the work of Jonathan Dean. And he worked on the Berlin situation very -- spent a great deal of time sort of, I won't say disarming that, but certainly making it less confrontational.

KAPLAN: Well, here is how it worked. There was a negotiating entity called the Bonn Group, related mainly to Berlin. It was made up of the Americans, the French, the British, and the Soviets. No Germans. Then it related to all the eastern treaties too, including the Inner-German Treaty. Before we would have a meeting with the Soviets and the rest of the Bonn Group, the three western powers would meet with the West Germans. We would brief them and we would consult them, and take account of their thinking. When we went talked to the Russians, either as part of the Bonn Group or on occasion bilaterally as our other partners talked to them bilaterally, we would represent not only the interest of the United States, France or Britain, but also West Germany, even though West Germany wasn't at the table. You can imagine that this made the West Germans a little nervous because they really didn't know exactly what was going on. The West Germans had an excellent representative who was their political director, named Gunter Van Well, who later on became ambassador to the United States; he coordinated with Jock Dean, the UK and French representatives. Egon Bahr on behalf of Willy Brandt had his own private channels to the Soviets.

I was not formally assigned to work on the Bonn Group. I had other responsibilities besides the Bundeswehr that we can talk about later. But I was drawn into it from time to time, because the amount of work was absolutely overwhelming. We were doing the Berlin Quadripartite Agreement negotiation, which was a very big deal. And there were linkages between what was happening on those agreements, which Nixon considered to be imperative that we get this Berlin agreement, and which would enhance access to Berlin. The Russians would put interruptions on access by the autobahns; there were occasions when it looked like they might move to another Berlin blockade. So Nixon linked completion of the Berlin agreement to any of the other Ostpolitik going through.

The way the Bonn Group worked under Jock Dean, who was an absolute demon for hard work,

was that we'd come to work in the morning in Bonn, we'd do our assignments. He had a sprinkling of notes on our desk before the Bonn Group got to work, our tasks for the day. Around noon the Bonn Group would meet with the West Germans and then get on an airplane and fly out to Berlin for meetings with the Soviets, either in the Allied Kommandatura building or in our consulate general in Berlin, or in their embassy in East Berlin. Negotiations would go on until 10:00 at night, and then a plane would return to Bonn and we'd fall into our beds for a few hours, come back into the embassy, and there were all those notes for the next day's assignments. When we got to the final phase, the last few months it was 24/7. Every day. It was exhausting.

Well, that was going on. High-level negotiations were occurring between Nixon and Kissinger, and Brandt and Bahr, and the other key players. The Soviets were all over the place. The Bundestag was going to have to vote on the Berlin Agreement and other agreements, including the eastern treaties. And there was a lot of money that was being passed around. There were some important politicians in the West German Bundestag who were in Brandt's party, who came originally from the east, like Herbert Wehner, the Bundestag leader, and Hans Dietrich Genscher, was the foreign minister. He was from the Free Democratic Party, the third party. And there were Soviet journalists who were a lot more than journalists. There were Americans who took an interest in all of this, and the press, and there were all the people in the country who were agitating on one side of the other. It was a circus. But the stakes were very high.

Q: What did you think about the contribution of the representatives of the CIA and the work that was CIA at that time?

KAPLAN: I'm not sure that I'm able to give you a thoughtful answer on that, or balanced answer. I knew some of the fellows. I didn't know them well. I was pretty busy with our own agenda. The most amusing thing that happened was once Jim Lowenstein and Dick Moose came out. They were working for the senate.

Q: Senator Fulbright's hatchet men at one time.

KAPLAN: They were the sort of fellows who were not to be denied what they asked.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: *(laughs)* I took them on the elevator up on the second floor of the embassy where the Political Section was, then up to the fourth floor where the cafeteria was. And then I think Dick said, "Do you mind if we walk down the two floors? I've had too much to eat."

And I said, "Oh, my goodness." And we walked down. And there on the third floor he saw the office of the CIA *(laughs)*. He took a keen interest in that subject. But not with me. He followed up as I understand it.

But you know, the agency, as I said, there were -- the Soviets were always over the place. I mean we didn't have anything, any kind of access in East Berlin to speak of. Although remind me and I'll come back to that, because one of the things I did in that job was occasionally to go to East Germany. This was all approved and I never showed them my passport and they knew I was

coming. But it was a blip compared to what the Soviets were able to do in West Berlin and Bonn. They would be in the chancellor's office, they would be in the Bundestag, and all that, and, and a couple of these guys were senior KGB officers authorized by their government to carry messages back and forth. Their contact man as best as we could tell was Egon Bahr, the principal advisor to the chancellor.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: You can imagine that the agency guys were trying to follow that as closely as they could and that when reports would hit the White House about this activity it didn't make Nixon feel more grateful to what the West Germans might be up to.

Q: It's hard to reconstruct that or to even imagine that period. A different time. I mean things were both loose but tightly controlled in the sense --

KAPLAN: Well, everything was at stake too.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: Because the Cold War was basically about who would have the greatest influence on the Germans. That was always my view. It was the main reason I wanted to immediately get to Bonn as quickly as I could in my career. Then suddenly along comes Brandt and he decides if they're going to have any chance to bring about the reunification of the country, the reunification of the city of Berlin and the reunification of Europe -- because remember that line went not only through Berlin, not only the whole length of Germany, but between west and east Europe -- so if they were going to have any chance to do that they couldn't do that militarily. It had to be a political process, he had to try to normalize relations with the Russians and with the East European countries so that they would see West Germany as a negotiating partner. The Soviets still had a real distrust of the Germans, they remembered WWII and this overlay of suspicion was omnipresent, not only on the eastern side, not only by the Germans, by the British, the French, but by people in Washington as best as I could make it out.

Q: Well, I know when Kennedy came in to power, I've talked to people who were in Berlin at the time and said they were really very concerned. They thought Kennedy was talking about changes and all.

KAPLAN: He was.

Q: He might give away the store.

KAPLAN: Well, I wasn't there, I was still studying. But I heard the story many times. Basically what I was told, and not just by West Germans, but by American colleagues, is that when Kennedy came in he had all these clever Harvard guys, and they became creative. Sometimes creativity in foreign affairs can be quite dangerous.

Q: They can, absolutely.

KAPLAN: They were looking at land transfers the way some people are talking about now in the Israeli-Palestinian issue, about parts of West Germany they would transfer to East Germany, then something back, almost as though they were redistricting legislative seats. They made one fatal mistake. They never told the Germans they were doing it. When Adenauer found out about it, already remembering Joe Kennedy --

Q: Yeah. Yeah, well in reference to Joe Kennedy, during the battle of Britain and all, Joe Kennedy was basically for making peace with Hitler.

KAPLAN: On Hitler's terms.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: That's right. Adenauer remembered that and his level of distrust of Kennedy was intense. And he was an elder statesman and Kennedy was 43-years-old and --

Q: There was a generational thing. Which played really to the hands of Kennedy as far as popularity in the world. I mean I think far exceeding his actual accomplishments. But that's --

KAPLAN: Well, Kennedy later came to Berlin, after Adenauer was gone and the Soviets erected the Berlin Wall, and he said, "Ich bin ein Berliner," (I am a Berliner), and the crowds in the square went wild.

Q: Yeah. But speaking about this relationship, were you in Bonn when Helmut Schmidt came in?

KAPLAN: Well, I was in Bonn. I dealt with Schmidt a fair amount, although obviously I was a much lower level person than he was, to put it mildly. He was the minister of defense. But I went to see him frequently, usually with a more senior officer or a senator would come in to town and I would be the control officer and I would take him there. One month before the end of my posting, he replaced Brandt as a result of the Guillaume affair. So I was only there during his chancellorship for one month.

Many years later, in early 1981, when Ronald Reagan was president the Polish incident occurred with Jaruzelski. I had been appointed as deputy director of the policy planning staff and was involved in helping write Reagan's speech which announced stiff sanctions. As it happened, I went to, to Europe a day or two before Reagan was to give the speech, and I gave a speech in Brussels, which gave hints of what was to come. Then I went to Bonn and I went to see my old friend Otto von der Gabletzt who at that time had become the head of Schmidt's National Security Council of Schmidt. And I told him -- this was just a few hours before the president was to speak -- I had informed myself what was in the speech again, and I highlighted the substance of what was to come. He said, "Just a minute," and he walked out. The chancellor walked into the office with him and Otto said, "Could you repeat that for the Chancellor," -- which I did.

Q: Uh-huh.

KAPLAN: Schmidt warned that it would be a terrible mistake. I said it was a done deal but that I thought they needed to know ahead of time. Maybe that helped a little bit, who knows.

Q: Well, there had been the tension between Schmidt and President Carter.

KAPLAN: Correct.

Q: I mean tension is probably the wrong word. Well, let's say intense tension.

KAPLAN: Yes, Schmidt detested him. I ran into it in a very specific way. It was about the so-called neutron bomb, the enhanced radiation warhead.

Q: Oh yeah.

KAPLAN: Which would destroy buildings but not people supposedly. We had a big debate over that. I was in the policy planning staff at the time and I advised in the strongest terms that we should not pursue this deployment without the chancellor's approval, and we should think hard about whether we should even ask, because the German public simply would not understand a weapon of this sort, which could only be fired on their territory. I sent a memo to a senior official who -- this was early in the Carter administration -- who said to me, "That's old think. We have to do what we have to do; we're not going to allow the Germans to boss us around." You know, at the beginning of a new administration there's a lot of bravado and chest --

Q: Oh yes.

KAPLAN: And so I said, I'm going to put this in writing because I want this on the record. I didn't publicize it, it was highly classified, but it was a formal memo. Some day it will come out. And so they went ahead with it. The one piece of advice they took was they sent Warren Christopher, deputy secretary of state, over to Bonn. Christopher said allies have to hang together, and Schmidt, after thinking about it, agreed to support the deployment on the absolute assurance that the U.S. would not change the policy. That next weekend Andrew Young visited the president in Plains, Georgia and convinced him that the enhanced radiation warhead would be immoral. The president changed and Mr. Christopher was sent back to Bonn, to say, So terribly sorry.

About three days later a correspondent for U.S. News and World Report, came to my office and showed me an article she was about to publish in which there was a quote attributed to Schmidt that said, "Jimmy Carter is the worst president in the history of the United States." I urged her not to publish that line because it would do serious damage to the bilateral relationship and the personal relationship of the two leaders; it would be a gift to Moscow. She cut it out.

Q: Uh-huh.

KAPLAN: So things take --

Q: Oh yeah.

KAPLAN: -- funny little terms.

Q: Well, how did you -- was there much difference between the SPD, as it is --

KAPLAN: SPD, Social Democrats.

Q: -- and the CDU (Christian Democratic Union).

KAPLAN: That's a very good question. Aside from the usual politics where people seize on the others' failure. The CDU was headed by Rainer Barzel, a very slick politician: smooth as silk, he reminded me a little of this old senator who I had never met as a kid, Everett McKinley Dirksen, who--.

Q: Oh yes.

KAPLAN: people said he spoke in a mellifluous fashion. That was Barzel, and he said he regarded the Ostpolitik as a sellout to the Russians. He did not come across as, as so harsh because he spoke in this silky way.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: But what he had to say was very harsh. And you know, words like traitor were bandied about all the time; there were important media and industrial interests in the country as well as conservative people in Germany who hated what Brandt was doing. As I said, families were divided on this. I got to meet Barzel a few times, with Jock Dean who had the key relationship with him. When the Berlin agreement came to a vote it, it was completely unclear whether the Bundestag would adopt it or not. As it is, it passed by one or two votes, and only because Herbert Wehner, the majority leader of the Bundestag, got down on the floor and like old Big Daddy Jesse Unruh started hauling people into the backroom and giving them the once over, and they'd come back out and vote for the government. I would not say that Wehner was passing money around, but it wouldn't be astonishing to me if deputies received rewards or punishments depending upon the way they voted. I was up there that day in the gallery watching all this, just as I used to do in the California legislature, and there were two or three Soviets up there and those two journalists were up there. So it was really something.

Q: When you talk about Ostpolitik, what was it? And what was the outcome? Was it the Berlin agreement?

KAPLAN: Well, it was a very broad array of negotiations. The Berlin negotiation came first. We were interested in getting access that would be guaranteed, that would not be interrupted the way the Soviets had done many, many times, including during the negotiations. To the great credit of Jock Dean, on one occasion when the Soviets stopped traffic, there was pressure from Washington to interrupt the negotiations, but Jock opposed that, saying, if we do that it will take a White House decision to get them started again and then the whole superstructure could break down. The second thing we sought in the Berlin talks was to increase more contacts between the

people on both sides of the Wall; the West Germans had to pay a lot to the East Germans in return for this. It was understood that, at the end of this four-power agreement, the city and the country would remain under four-power rights and responsibilities. We earlier gave West Germans the right to manage their own affairs in the three sectors that the West controlled, in contrast to East Germany and East Berlin which the Soviets completely controlled. The GDR regime had very little autonomy in their sector. There were some other nasty little issues, like whether the Soviets were going to be able to keep a consulate general in West Germ -- West Berlin, whereas the United States had nothing in East Berlin.

All right, that's the Berlin agreement. Then, remember, the Soviets and the West Germans had already concluded the Moscow Treaty the day that I visited Bonn a year before I arrived on assignment. Negotiations began with the Czechs and with the Hungarians and the Poles. So it was like a three-ring circus, all these negotiations going on and we would be consulting with the Germans, and sometimes they'd tell us what was really happening, and sometimes they wouldn't. Sometimes we'd tell them everything and sometimes we wouldn't. The Soviets were always trying to divide and conquer in every possible way that they could. At a certain point Brandt, in the face of all of this controversy, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, which was an enormous boost for him and his legitimacy. Brandt was an illegitimate child. During World War II he went to Norway, he married his wife Rut, he traveled around as an anti-Nazi agent with false suitcases, with three or four different names. Frahm was his birth name, but he had three or four other pseudo-names, *noms de guerre*. He was a very complex character and in my view deserved a lot of credit, but there were Germans who regarded him a traitor for abandoning his homeland during World War II.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: Even though now those Germans would deny that they had any sympathy for Hitler. I want to be very clear. I felt that what had happened during those 25 years before I took my assignment in Bonn had brought the German government and state to a point where they were a valued and worthy and reliable partner, that all of these divisions I'm talking about were in the nature of the enormous stakes that were involved and the changes that were being made.

Q: Did you see any hint of in the future what became the Helsinki Accords and the Berlin negotiations?

KAPLAN: Yes. I was designated by Jock Dean to coordinate with the German Foreign Ministry, the Defense Ministry, and the Chancellor's Office on development of mandates for the negotiations on security and cooperation in Europe and for mutual and balanced force reductions, the so-called MBFR, which was about conventional force negotiations. So in addition to the Eastern treaty negotiations, and the U.S.-Soviet strategic arms talks (SALT) and other negotiations with the Soviets, there was this third tier, which dealt with European security negotiations. Reaching a mandate for a negotiation position on the part of NATO vis-à-vis the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact on those two negotiations, MBFR and CSCE (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe) required NATO approval. NATO approval was almost entirely dependent on the Americans and the Germans coming together. It was what my job in Bonn, to help facilitate that.

Q: What role during these negotiations and all did you think, did you feel that the, the French and the British played?

KAPLAN: Well, they had very capable and competent negotiators, very professional. They too understood that a lot was at stake. They had their own histories with Germany. And so they picked people who spoke fluent German and were German experts, which I certainly wasn't when I arrived there. They were able to hold their own with Jock Dean and Gunter van Well and the Soviet negotiator, Yuli Kvitsinsky. We each had our own interests, of course, and beside the people in Bonn, were our leaders in capitals: President Nixon, General De Gaulle and Prime Minister Macmillan --

Q: And obviously -- World War II experiences.

KAPLAN: So beyond what we were doing in Bonn, the leaderships were having their own sets of relationships and contacts and channels, which sometimes would seep down to us and sometimes wouldn't.

Q: (laughs) Well, did you feel that -- was there concern about the, the socialist SPD? Although Brandt and then Schmidt was leading this, did sort of below that level there was a softness towards the Soviets, or not, or?

KAPLAN: I don't think that was an overriding concern. I never thought that Brandt and Bahr, for example, were soft on the Soviets. I thought that they had a set of objectives and a game plan designed to advance the cause of German interests and eventual German reunification, although I was convinced and I remained so, that Brandt understood from the beginning that this would take a long time, and he had no idea how long it would take. What he was basically trying to do was to set in motion a set of forces that over time could eventually lead to reunification.

Q: Just asking the question of, of everyone, getting about the same answer, but I'll ask you. Did you have any thought that maybe in 20 years time Germany would be united?

KAPLAN: That was Brandt's goal. I thought that the premise that Brandt was working with, that you set things in motion and then you see, was as far as any person could go. I will make this additional comment. In 1989, when it all came together the changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union collapsed and eventually the reunification of Germany. I don't know of anyone who predicted that the Soviet Union was going to -- about to collapse any time soon. There was one history book that came out, where I was mentioned as having written a memorandum from our Intelligence and Research Office at the time in Washington where I said that here's a series of very remarkable things that are going on that make me wonder whether there may be something big that may be coming. I haven't reread that memo for a long time, but something to that effect. I was sitting there reading the tea leaves every day, and trying to use my experience and intuition at that stage, and that was the best I was able to do.

Q: Did you feel you were getting good temperature readings, or whatever you want to call it, from Moscow? From our embassy analyses back in Washington? Or were you paying much attention to it?

KAPLAN: I found what they were sending useful to read, but remember, they were reporting on what the Russians were telling them and the game was really going on in our town and in Washington.

Q: What was your impression of Kennedy?

KAPLAN: Well, I never met President Kennedy. I was too young at the time. I was stirred by his articulateness and his intellect. I've read a lot of history since that time and came to conclude that it wasn't always successful and that yes, he came out of the Cuban Missile Crisis very effectively in a very dangerous situation, but one wondered whether we would have ever gotten into the Cuban Missile Crisis if he hadn't been beaten up so badly by Khrushchev and then failed to follow up after starting the Bay of Pigs operation.

There's one other event that you may find amusing, though it's not the question you're asking. I was the control officer for Senator Ted Kennedy when he and his first wife, Joan, visited Bonn on the very day that Willy Brandt was re-elected as chancellor, thereby in effect legitimizing his Ostpolitik program. I brought Senator Kennedy to the Chancellor's bungalow, as it was called -- it was actually in the chancellor's office -- so that he could congratulate him. I told him to be sure to congratulate the foreign minister as well as Brandt; Scheel was head of the FDP, Free Democratic Party, and they also had just been reelected, allowing the coalition to continue. I was standing just behind the TV cameras, and *whispered*) "Scheel! Scheel!"

And Kennedy said, "Oh, yes -- I also want to congratulate my dear friend, the Foreign Minister Shield," (*laughs*).

But what was even more bizarre, I went to collect the senator to bring him back to the Cologne-Bonn Airport the next morning. And the flight was at -- I'll make this up to give you the idea -- at 11:00am. We were supposed to leave, according to the chauffeur who did this all the time, by 9am to get there half an hour ahead of time; it took about 45 minutes to reach the airport. Ten o'clock arrived. He still wasn't there. Anyway, the gentleman finally came down at about 10:30. The driver was a big bald guy and he was in a cold sweating. He broke all speed records on the highway and finally arrived at the airport at about three minutes of eleven. I said, "Senator, *please*."

And he sat there finishing postcards to his sister brother.

I said, "Senator, the plane's going to take off."

He said, "Well, get in there and take care of it!"

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: He said, "That's what you're getting paid for, isn't it? *(laughs)* So I went in there and I went up to the gate and somehow or other I convinced them to hold the plane for this very, very important American senator. He waltzed in at about ten after eleven.. He walked around and signed autographs. It must have been quarter after eleven and they were holding the plane. They had the doors still open. And then the, the lady at the desk said, "Well Senator, you are so many pounds over in your luggage. It'll be an extra \$600," or something.

So he turned to me and he said, "Pay it. You're holding up the plane!"

Q: (laughs)

KAPLAN: *(laughs)*

Q: Oh God.

KAPLAN: Well, I got to meet him when I got back to Washington and he was very nice.

Q: Who took care of the --

KAPLAN: I paid it. I got paid back.

Q: Because you know, I've talked to people who dealt with the Kennedys, Robert and Ethel particularly. Kind of left bills behind, you know, they had sort of that deal with rich people --

KAPLAN: Living in another universe then.

Q: Anyway, one last thing. What about your feeling about Richard Nixon?

KAPLAN: Well, you know, I was still a second secretary.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: So I didn't have access to people at that level. I saw Kissinger from time to time, but not a lot. He wouldn't remember. And I observed Nixon, the role that he was playing in the negotiations. He had this reputation among a lot of people, they called him "Tricky Dick," that he was very devious, he did some rather McCarthyite sort of things when he was a young guy in a California congressional election against Helen Gahagan Douglas; he called her the Pink Lady. And then he was defeated in the 1960 presidential election against Kennedy. I was in Berkeley, at law school, and he came there in 1962 because he was running for governor against Pat Brown, and Nixon was defeated. I was in Sproul Plaza, in the center of the university, when he was speaking and the Cal (California) Band started playing, "It Ain't Necessary So." And you know, he dropped that line, "You don't have Nixon to kick around anymore." So it was clear that he had some serious hangups. On the other side, he was a smart guy and had spent a lot of time thinking about international issues, and he had a strategic conception for what he was trying to accomplish to extricate us from Vietnam, improve the relationship with the Soviets, the trilateral relationship with China. There also were domestic reform programs and environment and things

that people would be surprised if they went back and read the record. So he was a very complex character. On a moral and ethical level, Watergate and all that, he'd get very low grades, and he disgraced the presidency. In terms of foreign affairs he was someone that was rather far ahead of a lot of the other people who've tried to handle these issues.

Q: I've had a number of people talking about when Nixon was an outcast he'd lost these various elections after losing to Kennedy, would travel around the world. He really paid attention to world affairs, would go to ambassadors, our representatives, and sit down and ask and take very extensive notes.

KAPLAN: And think about it.

Q: And think about it. You know, it's an impressive picture of a complicated, very complicated, person.

KAPLAN: It shows you that, that none of us are without our blemishes, and it also shows you that people with very serious blemishes can also have other attributes which are worthwhile. It makes one reticent about judging human beings.

Q: Well then, this is probably a good place to stop. You left Bonn in '74, was it?

KAPLAN: I left Bonn in '74, but there are, are two other things which we can talk about now or later --

Q: Well, let's talk about them now.

KAPLAN: -- that I wanted to mention. One was, three weeks after I got there I was made the control officer, I guess my name just came up for that week. AT EC Brussels we hardly ever had control officers because we didn't have those kind of issues.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: I get a call at about 11 p.m. the first night I was control officer from the Com Center, Communication Center, saying, "You've got to come down right away, there's a NIACT immediate. I had no idea what a" --

Q: Night action.

KAPLAN: That's right. In other words, it's urgent.

Q: Yes.

KAPLAN: I said, "Can you read it to me over the phone?"

He said, "You'd better get down here, this is very sensitive."

So I got dressed and went to the embassy. There was a jumbo jet which had been hijacked down to the Jordanian Desert with Americans and West Germans on board, and others. Within a couple of days, there were going to be five of jumbo jets kidnapped, all taken down to the Jordanian Desert. I called up Russ Fessenden, who was our DCM, and he said, "You're going to have to work on this ... you've got the con," which I think is a naval term.

Q: Oh yes.

KAPLAN: "Your job is to get that over with so you can come back and do the things we want you to do," (*laughs*).

Q: (laughs)

KAPLAN: My task was to make sure that the West Germans didn't cave and protect their own people at the expense of the Americans who were on board.

Q: Yeah.

KAPLAN: Cutting a separate deal. I was talking to all kinds of high-level people who I never, never would have had any access to under the circumstances, including Willy Brandt I would go to the Foreign Ministry. I was dealing with the Israeli embassy and the ambassador there, all sorts of people. It was, it was a big adrenaline push. At the end of the day, almost if not all of the passengers were released in a negotiating process.

There was a Palestinian woman named Leila Khaled who was arrested and brought to London. The Swiss were heavily involved; instead of the Bonn Group we called it the Bern Group, because apparently the Swiss had a lot of passengers involved. At the very end, after all the passengers were deplaned, one of the planes was bombed, obliterated. My ambassador at the time, a fellow named Ken Rush who was a former CEO (chief executive officer) of DuPont and a former law professor at Duke of one Richard M. Nixon, said to me, "I wonder who, who did that."

And I said, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, I checked on this and while I don't know for sure, it appears that the planes came from a direction that's roughly where Israel is," (*laughs*).

He said, "Oh my."

So this went on for only a week out of all the time I was there, but it was my introduction into the way things worked there. And I just met a lot of people at the very highest levels that I never ever, ever would have seen maybe at all most of the time I was there.

Q: And the second thing?

KAPLAN: The second thing is that after I'd been there for one year, as I mentioned, Mr. Spotts left and I was assigned to cover all of German foreign policy except the Eastern treaty talks. I had a lot of interesting experiences there and maybe we can hold --

Q: OK, we'll --

KAPLAN: -- pick up that little bit.

Q: So I'll put down on this that we're talking about your leaving in '74 but before we want to talk about your time dealing with German foreign policy.

KAPLAN: That's right, and, and in terms of where I was to go I wanted to go back to Washington. I had never served in Washington in a real job. My son was getting to a certain age and he'd been out of the country for seven years and he was just entering junior high school. So I asked for that and Jock Dean said, "No, you're coming to where I am right now, which is Vienna, right up the road. You can just drive here in a day," because the MBFR talks had begun. Since I had worked for him closely on military matters for some reason he convinced himself that I knew something about this. He in effect conscripted me. I said family comes first." The next day I received a directive from the director general that I was going to Vienna (*laughs*), and I think I know how that came about.

KENNETH P.T. SULLIVAN

**Consul General
Bremen (1970-1974)**

Kenneth P.T. Sullivan was born in Massachusetts in 1918. He served in the U.S. Army. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, the Sudan, Austria, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on October 25, 1994.

Q: In 1970 you were moved to Bremen as consul general.

SULLIVAN: That's right.

Q: What occupied your time in Bremen?

SULLIVAN: It wasn't a duty, but the first thing I did on that assignment was to rejoice because since the mid-fifties I had set my plans to some time in my career be principal officer at Bremen.

Q: You had specifically picked out Bremen?

SULLIVAN: Right. And I wanted to serve as a Foreign Service inspector, which in fact I did after I left Bremen. In fact, while at Bremen I served as an inspector once, I inspected Sweden in the summer time.

It was a nice post to go to for many reasons. First, having worked in practically all of the fields, except specifically commerce, to have what was essentially a commercial post, although heavily

on the agricultural/commerce side, to round out my experience. And Bremen is, of course, somewhat apart from Germany as most people who know it will agree. Much like my hometown of Boston is a little apart from the United States in some similar ways. Identifiable speech, for example. And, again, I was the beneficiary of a staff that was well seasoned and not yet decrepit, although as mandatory health, as practiced in Germany, one of the problems was that the folks all kept coming up with preventative cures in addition to the maximum leave they got. But they covered well for one another. It was a good post.

Q: How would you characterize your relations with the embassy in Bonn?

SULLIVAN: Oh, top notch. I had no problem because they had no problem with Bremen and I had no problem with them. You see, it depends again on the personalities involved. I was serving at the embassy when we had quite an active ambassador, you were there at the same time...

Q: That was Ambassador McGhee.

SULLIVAN: That's right. And who wanted to feel involved in almost everything. This makes a problem if you are in a consular operation. It is much better if the consul can operate fairly independently in his own district, in close accord with whatever the embassy wants to have done, but to do it oneself. If you have some visiting expert, it dilutes the impact the principal officer has in the area and often doesn't help you. Sometimes your better contacts will tell you that if you want to know anything you may send your German employee who understands what I have to say, but keep that minister of yours from Bonn away from me.

Q: So you got the help and direction when you needed it if you needed it.

SULLIVAN: That's right. We had a good front office in the embassy at that time. Of course, you know it was Martin Hillenbrand.

Q: Yes, he had served in his early career years in Bremen.

SULLIVAN: Had started his post-war career in Bremen.

Q: Were there attempts at that time to close Bremen?

SULLIVAN: Yes. There had been a partial closure before with a significant amount of the materials and files and responsibilities transferred to Hamburg and I believe it was after four years it was found that the material transferred up there had not even been unpacked and nobody had done anything with the responsibilities to the area so it came back. It was part of a perennial thing, I think, they have probably been closing Bremen ever since it was opened in 1794. There are pros and cons. At that time it was a useful post to continue to have open largely because we were doing somewhere to the order of \$400 odd million worth of commerce in tobacco and cotton, which were practically monopolies of Bremen. This was certainly enough to pay the rent and the staff pay and we were able to do some breakthrough work in fisheries which was a change from all the previous times when we couldn't do any. Although that wasn't followed up in the States and we lost it all to Canada a few years later. But we got a great deal of help,

particularly on the tobacco end, with the Common Market. Again, that was a federal...tobacco being what it is as a commodity today...but people who do not know the agricultural field do not appreciate how much agricultural expertise can come into play in multi-international negotiations on taxation because customs officials, the ones who open packages, don't know anything about the products. And if you send tax experts to negotiate something in Brussels without knowledge of the contents that their taxes are applied to, you can get screwed. And in our self-interest, Bremen tobacco interests, who knew whenever a seedling was placed anywhere on the face of the earth, kept telling us what we needed to know so we could relay it to the embassy for relay to Brussels, etc.

But, again, my thoughts on the closure of the post at that time, were that they ought to get off the dime and decide if they want to have three posts, they could have Hamburg, they could have an embassy and they could have Munich.

Q: Certainly you would also need Frankfurt.

SULLIVAN: I would say no because Frankfurt has the biggest airport and that is where all the congressmen go and if you are more removed from the airport you are more removed from the congressmen. On the other hand, if you wanted to have more service based upon knowledge of what goes on at the working level, you should probably cut all the post down to the size of Bremen or maybe even smaller. Something like a two man post. The French do it much better. Of course they are located much closer and the Germans can visit France, but the French tend to have...for example, they had in my backyard a French consul which was run by two French persons and two local persons. They had themes they worked on. Of course, one was culture and the other one was trade of a type that sells over time. They could pin point things and with their efforts do a bang up job. The rest of the stuff you just ignored it for the time being or did what was necessary, because France was not that far away.

Q: While you were in Bremen, a US military post was opened in your district, not far from the city. What were your relations with that and was it welcomed by the people?

SULLIVAN: Top notch, for the simple reason of the nature of that post and the nature of the responsibilities that it had meant that willy-nilly the personnel assigned to that post knew that they were part of a radiating operation and they were not small minded about anything. They knew the importance of their function better than many of their users did. Of course, our interests were mutual and the people in Bremerhaven, which was closer to the base than Bremen, had top notch relations. And this went for all branches of the service, too, although the Air Force wasn't up there very much.

C. ARTHUR BORG
Deputy Assistant Chief of Mission
Berlin (1971-1974)

C. Arthur Borg was born in New York in 1926. He graduated from West Point

military academy in 1948. He served in the U.S. Army. His career in the Foreign Service included positions in Japan, Sweden, Austria, and Washington, DC. Mr. Borg was interviewed by Hank Zivetz on June 24, 1991.

Q: Earlier you mentioned broken windows in Stockholm which leads us, I think, almost naturally to Berlin in that period 1971-74 where you were Deputy Assistant Chief of our US Mission. What were the highlights of your tour in Berlin? What was happening that would be noteworthy for this tape?

BORG: Of course, there is just one noteworthy event and that was the negotiation of the Berlin Agreement. I was transferred on a speedup basis from my assignment in Stockholm to join the delegation in West Berlin in 1971, as it entering its closing marathon stage, if you will. Virtually all of my waking hours were devoted to that negotiation. I was a member of the delegation, note taker for the delegation, did a lot of the drafting of the reporting telegrams for the negotiating sessions. It was a tremendously busy period throughout the summer, fall and winter of 1971.

Q: What in your view, now looking back to that period, were the Soviets after? From our point of view, what was their objective and how did that relate to our objectives?

BORG: Well, I think there principal objective was the legitimization of East Berlin's status as the capital of something called the German Democratic Republic. They were in an ironic position because they were on the one hand still loyal, if you will, to their four power rights under conquest from World War II -- the rights they shared with the British, French and us -- and they were interested in preserving those rights in a certain way. But at the same time they were interested in enhancing the status of the GDR and promoting its standing as a new sovereign state with East Berlin as its capital. So there were some contradictory impulses there. Its negotiating posture essentially was to enhance the separate status of East Berlin and on the other side of to give sort of practical advantages to the West in terms of reducing disturbances on the autobahn, buzzing the air corridors, etc. making it easier for East Berliners to visit relatives and that sort of thing. Practical improvements for the West Berliners as opposed to submitting a logical improvement for their legal position.

Q: Were the three Allies, the British, French and ourselves, were we in accord in terms of granting this legitimization of Berlin as the capital of the GDR?

BORG: You have raised THE question and there are probably people better suited than I to give you an authoritative answer, because at the time much of this was being very, very closely held, discussed on a very guarded basis. There were conversations, for example, between Jimmy Sutherland, the German Desk officer, Henry Kissinger as National Security Advisor, about carrying out various aims of the basic National Security Directive. Those kinds of things I am sure you could get a much more authoritative answer from somebody like Sutherland. But it appeared from where I was sitting that there were differences among the Allies. The French, I think, were probably the most pristine in defending a legal position, a very Cartesian way of looking at their French world. The British were inclined to be pragmatic and it appeared that we were the most willing to be flexible in the interest of reaching an agreement especially under pressure from our West German friends who were extremely impatient with proceeding with

their Ostpolitik with the Soviets and normalizing their relations with the Soviets. So they wanted a Berlin Agreement among the Allies with the Soviets in the worst possible way so that they could proceed with their normalization trade and other arrangements with the Soviets.

Q: Were the Social Democrats in power at this time?

BORG: Lets see, yes.

Q: Or was this the grand coalition?

BORG: I can't remember now when Willy Brandt left. Egon Bahr was the chief negotiator and was a Social Democrat. I am not quite certain.

Q: As an observer did you feel that the Soviets were trying to take advantage of differences between ourselves and our Western Allies? Was their negotiating stance one that would try to divide...?

BORG: Yes. Not in any really surprising way. One example perhaps, was the question of the extent of the right of West German officials to represent the rights of West Berliners. The Western side had a strong legal interest in enhancing that right -- the right of the West Germans to speak for West Berliners whereas the Soviets had a very strong interest in trying to minimize that connection and to minimize the legal ties between West Berlin and West Germany. The Soviets did have an interest in exploiting those kinds of legal differences and perhaps found it easier to exploit the US impatience to reach an agreement.

Q: Could you characterize apart from that particular issue any specific issue that was a major hang up in terms of coming to an agreement?

BORG: It seems to me that really was the one that certainly received most of the attention coming down towards the end. The question of this right of this representation was a very important legal point in terms of the ties, as the Germans put it, between the two categories of Germans. In fact there was a great deal of argumentative discussion about the two different German words meaning ties -- "Bindung" literally meaning ties such as tying a knot and "Verbindung", ties such as connections, train connections would be a "Verbindung." The Soviets had a vested interest in promoting the use of the word "Verbindung" to imply a much weaker, sort of organic relationship between the two parts of Germany, that is West Berlin and West Germany, then the Allies did. So that was an issue that went right up to the wire. I recollect that it was finally resolved by a set of letters addressed to various parties to sort of paper the thing over.

Q: If I remember correctly, wasn't this the issue that delayed the final signing and there was some question about our Ambassador's excuse for not being there?

BORG: I believe that is right.

Q: He was supposed to be sick and was out on the golf course. Anyway I remember there was an

issue of that sort and I didn't recall if it was that one.

In the period in which you were involved in these discussions, was there a social side to the negotiations? Did the delegations have an opportunity to socialize with the Soviet delegates?

BORG: When I joined the negotiation, which was about June or July of 1971 and it was going into a pretty hectic phase, our negotiating sessions were going from fairly early in the morning. We would have delegation meetings before the formal sessions began. The delegation meetings would begin around 8 o'clock or so; go in to negotiations between 9 and 10; be at it all day, well into the evening; then come back to the Mission and do the reporting telegrams on these meetings. They were huge affairs since our working head of delegation was Jock Dean was one of those who had, some used to joke, orgasmic delight in over reporting so that these reports were 30-35 pages very often. So it was an all day and well into the night kind of affair. It didn't leave much time for socializing. There were meeting on the fringes during the course of the day. Very often some of the key players, such as Jock Dean on our side, and counterparts, on the Soviet side, would have conversations off on the fringes of a room, very private, trying to work up various deals. But I would say the social aspect took a back seat to the frenzy of the business.

Q: How might you characterize the Soviet representatives as negotiators? Were they effective, were they more hindrances than effectuators?

BORG: Well, we noticed things that had been observed by so many people writing about Soviet negotiating tactics. In the first place they do tend to have a great deal of patience, or they did at that time, not being under the constraints of democratically organized governments that have to be responsive to public opinion and that sort of thing. We observed some of the techniques that many have written about. The tendency to advance a position and then if the other side takes issue with any one detailed aspect of that position to back off the entire deal and say, "All right, we have to start right at the very beginning again," which could become a very, very frustrating kind of proposition. They were skilled negotiators, very tough in hanging there and much more inclined to be patient and not feeling the need to respond to some sort of opinion outside their own government apparatus.

Q: I am curious, did one person do most of the talking for the Soviet side, or would other members of the delegation jump in when he or she felt compelled? Or did all the discussion go through a single individual or leader of the delegation?

BORG: The negotiating sessions were pretty well structured. I would say that that was true for all four parties. That is agendas were pretty much arranged in advance. We generally speaking knew what we were going to be addressing on a particular day. There was a certain program of work. There weren't in that sense too many surprises really. Positions would be presented in a fairly formal way. That is, very often in writing. We did make use of the German language for spoken interventions because German seemed to be the language that all four knew best. When proposals were laid on the table they were done invariably in writing, usually in English as one of the official languages. English tended to be use initially at least and then if some language began to obtain some status it would be reproduced in the other languages as well. It was a rather formal kind of thing. There was not a lot of individual give and take in that sense. Of course,

there was a lot of whispering back and forth with advisers whispering in their ambassador's ear and that sort of thing. But most of the presentation in my recollection was left to the ambassadors.

Q: Am I correct in summarizing what you just said that the written proposals were at the start usually in English and then when they reach a higher plateau they were translated into Russian, French and other languages as well?

BORG: That is my recollection, Hank. Part of that may be due to the mechanics of the negotiation in the sense that in a way we were the demandeur, we wanted this agreement. So it was up to us, the West, to put things forward. The Soviets had the luxury of reacting. We wanted something here. We wanted to improve West Berlin's status. We wanted to open the way for German-Soviet relations to advance. So mechanically that tended to make us much more the presenter of proposals, if you will.

Q: We had a problem of reconciling the positions of two other Allies. When was this reconciliation made? When did the three Allies meet and agree on a respond to a Soviet response?

BORG: Primarily between negotiating sessions. At the end of each day's negotiation, the principal activity was to brief our West German and East German allies respectively. As need be, each of us, that is British, French, American and the West Germans, even though they were not a formal part, would go back to capitals to get approvals for revisions, position and those, of course would come back in a day, two or three days later, whenever, and there would be another negotiating session with the Soviets to take it the next round.

Q: Were the sessions held in the same venue all the time, or did they move to the different sectors?

BORG: Almost entirely in the Allied Control Commission building.

Q: How big a delegation in terms of number of people were in a room?

BORG: I would guess, if you were including everybody, translators, etc., 30 or so.

Q: The translation was done through electronic means for everyone who wanted to pick up the language, or was it...?

BORG: No, it was done by each delegation. Each delegation had its own translators.

Q: Is there any other comment that you would like to make on your Berlin tour?

BORG: Well, I think the only thing that might, from my own point of view, was my personal involvement in the follow-up negotiations for the opening of a Soviet consulate general in West Berlin. That was one of the things that had been agreed to. It was in the Berlin Agreement itself and it was left to we, political advisers in West Berlin, of which, of course, I was the American,

to negotiate the details of opening that consulate general. There were various restrictions on its activities. It was to be limited, if I remember correctly, to a total of 21 personnel. It was not supposed to engage in political activities.

This was really very interesting from my point of view because I was for the first time really an active negotiator and the head of my own little American delegation. We spent several months on this. We found ourselves, again though, with the same criticism that has been made of American negotiating techniques. We found ourselves rather quickly under pressure from Washington to conclude an agreement and not to hold an agreement up for what were alleged to be a number of nicks picking details. Just to get on with it in the greater interest of having the agreement and for opening the way for all the other German-Soviet arrangements.

I found it a straight forward negotiation, however. I found the Soviets in that particular case reasonable interlocutors. There was a lesser amount of ideological argument involved here, but there were practical things that had to be worked out about the activities of these people. Over a period of time we managed it out in a pretty sensible way.

Q: Did this agreement also involve the opening an American consulate general in East....?

BORG: No, that was a separate question.

Q: I see. Where did they ultimately open their consulate general?

BORG: It was in the American sector.

Q: Okay. Is there anything else about Berlin that you would like to comment on before we move on?

BORG: Can't think of anything, Hank.

RICHARD C. BARKLEY
Aide to Ambassador Rush
Bonn (1971-1972)

Political Officer, Eastern Affairs Section
Berlin (1972-1974)

Ambassador Richard C. Barkley was born on December 23, 1932 in Illinois. He attended Michigan State College, where he received his BA in 1954, and Wayne State University, where he received his MA in 1958. He served in the US Army overseas from 1955-1957 as a 1st lieutenant. His career has included positions in Finland, the Dominican Republic, Norway, South Africa, Turkey, and Germany. Ambassador Barkley was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 12, 2003.

Today is June 10, 2003. We are dealing with 1971. You went to Bonn.

BARKLEY: Yes I went to Bonn as the aide to Ambassador Kenneth Rush.

Q: How long were you in Bonn?

BARKLEY: That time? One year.

Q: One year. Let's talk a bit about Kenneth Rush, his background and how he seemed to operate in Germany from your perspective.

BARKLEY: Well this was of course the Nixon administration. Kenneth Rush had been, I understand, a professor of Law at Duke University when President Nixon was there. That is when they apparently met. Subsequently Rush was the President of Union Carbide. He had had no foreign policy experience but obviously a lot of business experience. He landed in Germany I think in 1969. He had been there a year and a half by the time I arrived. My predecessor was John Kornblum.

Q: How did Ambassador Rush use you?

BARKLEY: Because he was not a career officer, he knew very little about the service. I did all of his programming. I did all of his correspondence, all of it. Of course the major activity he was engaged in at that time was the Berlin negotiations, the four power negotiations on the status of Berlin. He knew nothing about the issue at the beginning but he read into it very quickly. His political counselor, Jonathan Dean who was a formidable figure in the foreign service, one of the great experts in German affairs, actually lead the negotiating team. All of the background had been done by the political section. When it came time for a plenary session, the ambassador sat in. I did not sit in on the talks per se. I had to make sure that all of the talking points and everything else he received going into the sessions were clear and understandable. I guess I would say I also somewhat straddled the activities of the political section and the Ambassador's office. And of course, I was his note taker for all of his personal meetings beyond the scope of the four power negotiations themselves.

Q: When you arrived there in '71, how were German-American relations?

BARKLEY: Well this was the time, of course, that the Willy Brandt government come into effect. U.S. relations towards Willy Brandt, and the Social Democrats generally had been somewhat skeptical regarding their foreign policy intentions. But it turned out that actually this was at the same time there was somewhat of a thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations, a certain effort to reach out to the Soviets and try to negotiate something. Of course it all tied in with Vietnam. The Brandt government came up with a rather new and novel idea which was entirely different than previous West German positions. It was basically a rapprochement with central Europe. The concept was not only to negotiate an improved relationship within Berlin, but also to work out what they called a general eastern policy whereby they would also recognize for the first time the existence of East Germany within the concept of two states-one nation. They also wanted to

solidify the boundaries between Poland and Germany which has always been a problem because there are revanchist groups in the FRG that wanted to reclaim German lands far into Poland and of course into East Prussia. So it was a time actually of a great deal of movement. It turns out that German policy and American policy met quite tidily together at that time. It was one of those fortuitous moments I think where things could be done that couldn't have been done probably a year or two years previously.

Q: Well while you were at the embassy, did you pick up any concern that Brandt's aussenpolitik and our trying to open up détente and all of this was maybe going to endanger our position in Germany and all?

BARKLEY: Oh of course. One of the major concerns all along is Germany might be induced to have a go it alone policy. The elements in the Social Democratic Party that had always been there, certain intellectual elements, indeed promoted the idea of a neutral Germany, which of course was a nightmare for NATO. Western policy was based on keeping West Germany anchored in the West. Willy Brandt didn't have that same devotion to the anchor to the west as we did although Adenauer certainly he was anti communist and had a long history and career in that front. But there was always somehow a feeling in certain circles in the west that Social Democracy was full of fuzzy thinkers, and that indeed they never fully understood what the Russians were about.

Q: I was wondering whether you were hearing within the political section and elsewhere muttering within the ranks.

BARKLEY: Oh absolutely. Well it was not only muttering within the ranks, but also muttering within the ranks of the German government too. A number of people, out of protest for the eastern policy, resigned from the German foreign service. There was, I think, a sense of skepticism, because people couldn't see how we could improve our relationship within Berlin and within Germany as a whole by doing this. In fact it turns out that we could. But that had much more to do with the inherent weaknesses in the socialist camp than probably any furtive design.

Q: Did you get up to Berlin?

BARKLEY: Oh constantly. I traveled with the ambassador, and of course, all the negotiations took place in Berlin. And because of the unique status of Berlin being under four power rights and responsibilities, we always had to fly up with military aircraft. We could have gone I suppose with civilian aircraft but we didn't. So there were always logistical problems. That was part of my responsibility to make sure things went of smoothly.

Q: How about the train. Did the ambassador still use that, his train.

BARKLEY: Yes, the train was still there. The ambassador tended not to use it. For one thing it was not an overnight ride. The minister in Berlin occasionally used it, but it was basically the Berlin Commandant's train. The commandant, within the status of Berlin is something I think that is now increasingly difficult for people to understand. But the fact that after WWII Germany

was divided as you know into four military occupation zones with the British, the French, and the Americans in the west and the Russians in the east. That was replicated in Berlin under the general belief that anybody who controlled Berlin would control all of Germany. And of course Berlin was in the center of the Russian zone, before it became East Germany. They could foreclose our operations which they tried to do in 1948 during the time of the Berlin Airlift.

Q: Did you find yourself up against in Berlin, there were people in the foreign service who do nothing but deal with Berlin. I mean there was almost like a religious right of how you dealt with things including how far a tailgate could be let down. You know all sorts of things, and the feeling was that if you gave away anything, the Soviets were nibbling away all the time. I mean you must not have been looked upon with great pleasure.

BARKLEY: Well at that time as you may recall Stuart, there was a group known as the old German hands. They were people who had multiple tours in Germany, who understood the unique complexity of the place with East and West Germany and Berlin. At the time (1970-'71) that I entered German affairs, it was the heyday of the old German hands. It turns out that even during this negotiation, they were all in place, names like Jonathan Dean and David Klein and Jim Sutherland and Martin Hillenbrand and Russell Fessenden and all these people who had spent their entire careers defining the quality and limits of our relationship with Germany. On the other hand there were in Russia, the old Russian hands who did the same thing. And of course there was a constant sort of engagement of those two groups in trying to understand what was really going on. The only thing is I would say is both of them had their feet planted firmly on the ground as to Russian intentions. Nonetheless, when you started to tinker with previous arrangements that had been there, even if it led to an improvement, which in fact it did, there is always some fear that we would be taken for a ride.

Q: Did you get any feel for the Soviet negotiations during this time?

BARKLEY: Oh yes. The Soviet negotiator whose name was Abrasimov, was a rather randy but very sly figure. He obviously was closely tied in with the politburo and the ruling elite. They knew precisely what they were doing. And of course like in most negotiations of this sort, the Russians would usually just sit there and say Nyet as we tried to find different kinds of formulas to make sure that our procedures were honored and that they would be promoted in the future. Certainly the driving force of that whole negotiation was Jonathan Dean. "Jock" Dean was just a dynamo and kept at it and kept at it. The negotiations went on several years before they were finally agreed to.

Q: You were the ambassador's aide the whole time...

BARKLEY: The one year I was there. Now the ambassador departed towards the end of my tour in 1972. He was assigned or promoted I guess you could say to be the Deputy Secretary of Defense. So in the spring of 1972, after the negotiations had been almost wrapped up, and would indeed be wrapped up very quickly, he departed. He was replaced by Martin Hillenbrand. I was there through that transition, but I realized I could not be aide for one ambassador and then be aide for another. Besides, ambassador aide jobs are usually one year jobs. You don't want more than that. I had established good personal relations with David Klein in Berlin. He asked me to

come to Berlin and work in the mission which I did.

Q: So you were in Berlin from '72 to '74. What was your job?

BARKLEY: I was in the eastern affairs section which was a section that basically monitored what was going on in East Germany. The section had a section head and three officers, actually four officers. Two of them were CIA, however. Three of them were real State Department officers. I was in charge of the domestic political scene in East Germany. Peter Swers was in charge of East German foreign relations. Felix Bloch who became famous later on, was in charge of economic developments in East Germany.

Q: Did you find a different atmosphere in Berlin, in the mission in Berlin than our embassy in Bonn?

BARKLEY: Oh yes, there is always somewhat of a different perspective sitting in Berlin where you think the world revolves around the status of Berlin rather than in Bonn where there were infinitely broader issues to address. It depended of course very much on who the principal officers were at that time. David Klein was a very highly regarded officer in West Berlin. He was the minister in West Berlin. The status of West Berlin was unique in all of the foreign service in that indeed we were actually stationed in an American occupation zone. The ambassador was not only responsible for West Germany but also Berlin. In that role, the commandant in Berlin was his immediate deputy, but he was a military officer. Most ambassadors insisted that all of the political decisions there be in the hands of the minister in Berlin.

Q: Well now, looking at the East German internal thing, how was it in this '72 to '74 period? What was going on there?

BARKLEY: Well, when I arrived in 1972, Erich Honecker was at that time the first secretary of the communist party and for all intents and purposes the dictator, the head of the East German government. He had replaced Walter Ulbricht. Ulbricht was a real toady of the Russians, an old line communist, as indeed was Honecker. Honecker came up through the youth movement which seemed to be one of the natural progressions forward in Soviet style politics. Honecker and his wife were of course, dedicated communists. But at the same time they were looking for position and stature that they didn't have before because they were the new comers on the block at that time. Of course there is no question that Honecker himself was intrigued by the fact that eastern policy would give him a position on the world stage that he never had before. Above all things of course, recognition by major western powers, which he had been striving for his entire life as indeed had most of the East Germans. The idea was that they were trying to create then two individual, particularly distinct, Germanys. So at that time he was particularly curious, and there was a certain opening toward the United States. Now as the officer in charge of domestic affairs in East Germany in the United States, we did not have relations with East Germany at that time. That would flow from the successful completion of the Berlin agreements. And so I was there at a time when certain segments of their government were eager to establish relations. I on the other, was prohibited of establishing direct relations, so there was sort of a coy movement with lower level contacts back and forth. Of course in East Germany everything was state controlled, but there were some units that were more like think tanks. I was also permitted to meet with

people from the university etc. They made a number of people available to me. I was the first officer probably ever in Berlin to have that level of semi-official access.

Q: This is tape three, side one with Dick Barkley. Were you able to meet with German officials at a Bierstube and things like that.

BARCKLEY: You mean East German officials?

Q: East German officials.

BARCKLEY: Yes, actually. We worked out a different series of relations. We would actually meet in the offices of their think tanks, but most often we would go to lunch. We had to go to lunch primarily in East Berlin because many of them had difficulty going west. As I established these relations, however, I recall after about a year, I asked them to come over and have dinner at my home, in West Berlin, and I was astonished that they came. As a matter of fact, David Klein decided this was too irresistible, that he would attend too. So we sat around and we had one of those broad political conversations the Germans love to have. We had rather lengthy and rather fascinating discussions at that time. The question of course was are there any levels of independent thinking on the part of the Germans that would separate them, make them distinct from the Russians. The answer was not a hell of a lot but some. It was actually an interesting time, and some of the people I got to know very well ended up in the higher echelons of the East German government. I was able to re-warm this relationship some ten years later. They were indeed people who were sort of on the intellectual fast track in East Germany, to the extent that there was such a group. Many of them were particularly interested in the United States. They had only seen the United States from a distance. Most of them were enormously curious. After all we were the super power of the west. Several of them went on then to become members of the East German embassy in Washington when it opened up there. So these were people outside the foreign office per-se, but obviously connected to it.

Q: Well now, just to get the time frame right. When did we recognize East Germany and set up an embassy there?

BARCKLEY: 1974.

Q: Were you all on both sides getting ready for this?

BARCKLEY: Oh yes. So it was a very active group preparing for the establishment of relations. The whole question really did come down to where we were going to place our embassy and what the status of that embassy would be. As we always recognized East Berlin was not an integral part of East Germany, but the Soviet sector of Berlin, there was a lot of resistance to putting the embassy in Berlin. Some people thought it should go to Potsdam. In fact the administrative capital of East Germany was East Berlin. So we bit the bullet on that. The French and the British had already moved smartly ahead of us to establish their embassies. As they say, both France and England loved Germany so much they were glad there were two of them. We were much more reluctant. One main question is what would we call our embassy? It could not be our embassy in Berlin because that would imply that Berlin was part of East Germany. So we

just called it Embassy Berlin. Then came the question of finding an adequate embassy building, and I was tasked with that job. The theory was, and it was certainly one I shared (and helped formulate) is the United States as the superpower of the world, could not establish an American embassy and try to hide. We knew we couldn't compete with the Russians, who had a huge embassy in Berlin, but, we wanted something that was the next best, if you will. So we were able to finally secure a building in downtown Berlin which still actually houses the American embassy in a unified Germany. It was a building that had been built prior to the war. It was quite a lovely building on the Neustadtische Kirch Strasse. It had until that time part of the East German labor movement called Haus Des Handwerks, which is the craft guild house. When it came time for us to get a building, they tried to give us a whole bunch of junk. I remember looking at the building and asking what was wrong with that one, and they said, "It doesn't belong to us." I recall my conversation with Volker Laetsch who was the guy in charge of the East German side of the negotiations. I said, "It all belongs to you. You are a communist country." "No, no, we are only on the way to communism," he replied. "Well," I said, "Why don't you let the United States government help you along, and you just confiscate that building and give it to us." About a week later he came back and said, "Were you serious?" Now I was somewhat of course, beyond my pay grade, but, I said, "Yes, I think we are." Sure enough they offered the building. Joan Clark came over with the experts from Washington and looked it over, and that indeed became our chancery.

Q: What were you looking at in East Germany, were you seeing this in the '72 to '74 period, as a viable state? How were things going?

BARKLEY: Well, it had every appearance of being a viable state. It would continue to be viable in terms of our calculations at that time as long as the Soviet Union insisted it be viable. But in fact of course, they were Germans. As they say, if anybody can make a system operate, it is the Germans who will do it. Although it turns out not quite as dynamic as it appeared, compared to all of the other Easter European bloc countries, it really did quite well. It had some inherent difficulties. One is of course, the Russians not only swept everything clean, but they dismantled all of the factories in East Germany and took them back to Russia etc. So East Germany was really a very blighted zone at the end of the war. In the first stages after the war, before the wall was up, there was still a lot of movement of Germans into the west etc. With the construction of the wall, however, the options for the East Germans became very few. They could either continue to be sullen and resist, or they could be sullen and go along with the system, which is what they did. They indeed rebuilt some of the factories. Their productivity was really I think, per capita, the highest in the Soviet bloc. So it was a viable state, but I think our general view of it is where it would go depends totally on Soviet commitment to keep this "jewel" in the Soviet crown alive and well. But in fact of course, it was a great advantage to the Russians because East German efficiency and East German productivity helped the Russian system survive.

Q: What do you think? I mean you weren't really dealing with the economy. In looking at this, were we sort of over impressed by the way things were working? Because I am thinking of a later time when East Germany was absorbed into West Germany, they found, there really wasn't a hell of a lot in East Germany that could stand up to Your western standards.

BARKLEY: Well I think what we discovered later on and what we thought we knew at the time

were two different things. When we established relations with East Germany, I don't think there were any illusions that this was a system that was competitive with western systems. But it was a general belief that it was doing relatively well in terms of productivity, in terms of all of the general standards that economists use to measure production or economic success. It was far and away the most successful of the Eastern Bloc. Now subsequently, 15 years later, we realized there was somewhat of a Potemkin village quality to their economy, and that they had been cooking the books etc. But at the time we established relations, the per capita income in Germany to the extent that anybody could properly measure it was almost as high as the United Kingdom. Now it turns out, of course, that those calculations were very faulty, but at that time it was generally believed that was the case. Now, as we subsequently found out, there was a lot there was less than met the eye. Let's put it that way, but there was a general belief that there was a certain dynamic there, and that of course typically the East Germans were the more vigorous practitioners of the communist system all of the other socialist members. I remember meeting with groups at that time, when the opening took place, from Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc. who used to say to me, sotto voce, that these East Germans are weird. They really believe this stuff! I am not quite sure that was true, but they certainly appeared to.

Q: Well in your time of looking at, watching the East German government, how did you find the hand of the Soviet Union?

BARKLEY: Well, of course I wasn't in the inner-councils. I don't know what went on, but everybody assumed that indeed the Russian embassy was the proconsul of the country. It was quite clear the Russian military force out at Karlshorst, which was a big one, had a great deal of influence on the East German army, which was quite efficient in terms of armies of that time. I think there was a general agreement on the part, of the leadership of East Germany with respect to the Soviet. They understood fully well, that not only their status but their survivability depended very much on the Russians staying forcefully on their side. So there was an agreement by most of the leadership, the communist leadership that they must kowtow, and they should continually show the Russians they were the "best boys on the block".

Q: Did you get any feel sort of on the street for Russian and German relationships?

BARKLEY: No, not on the street so much, but I did pick it up other ways. A member of the Russian KGB actually approached me and wanted to meet. Of course I was very reluctant to do that, but the station chief and others urged me to do so, so we worked out an arrangement. His name was Leonid Taranachev. He was really quite a charming fellow. We worked out an arrangement that we would meet in the American sector one month, and then the Russian sector another month for lunch. That way actually in the course of about 18 months we exhausted all of the culinary expertise of East Germany. That was a fascinating thing, because he would complain about how the Germans would treat him and his family. They went to a park, or if he went fishing, he was a great fisherman etc. people would not talk to him or would leave when they heard them speaking Russian and things like that. That was his perspective on things. Of course I credit that with the view that I didn't know what it was like. But I certainly never heard of any of the people I talked with, who were probably very cautious to make sure that I never heard of any disagreement with Soviet policy or Soviet Per-se. We got that 15 years later, but at that time you heard almost nothing.

Q: These were a controlled people. I mean self control among other things...

BARKLEY: Well one of the things we found out of course, the state security system, the Stasi were everywhere. So everybody was always looking over their shoulder. It was truly a police state; there is no question about it. The depth of that police state, we only found out when we got access to the Stasi files. The Germans have an incredible penchant for documenting all of their sins. They did this in World War Two during the Nazi period. The Stasi did the same thing.

Q: We had the Berlin documents center I remember when I was there in the 50's. They were feeding off that. I mean we knew everything about everything. Apparently the Stasi would recruit husbands and wives separately to report on each other.

BARKLEY: They certainly had a whole category of people then. The largest group was a thing called the Mitarbeiter or people who collaborated. They were people who were forced to collaborate of course. There were enough pressure points they could bring on the society.

Q: How about you know, looking at labor affairs and all that? Were there any problems there? I mean strikes or anything like that?

BARKLEY: NO, no! They shot their wad in 1954. That one year the unions you know actually tried to force some changes in the way things were done. That was crushed forcefully. Then in the factories they had not only all the traditional mitarbeiters, the Stasi etc, but they had indeed a union structure that was totally tied to the government, and to the fact that almost all of the workers were part of the government military force. The workers could be armed at any particular time in units called Worker Brigades. So the unions were integral parts of the government system.

Q: Did you have any feel for, I mean at that time I am going under the assumption that the thought the Soviets might launch a quick attack on us was no longer uppermost in our minds was it?

BARKLEY: No that came a bit later of course, when the Soviets employed their SS-20 missiles. At that time there was a certain optimism, a measure of détente. It was the time actually where the Berlin agreements were reached. Nobody at that time thought in terms of nuclear conflagration. Of course there was always the whole strategy of mutually assured destruction. But that was not a particularly bad time in terms of East-West relations. Of course it was at the same time that President Nixon was getting into a lot of political difficulty at home.

Q: This is the Watergate time.

BARKLEY: Yes. I remember Tiranachev quizzing me in great detail about what was going on. They were quite fond of Nixon. They thought that he was a realpolitiker, and that they could do business with him. They were unhappy with the trial that he was going through. Of course I knew nothing of all that except what I could read in the Herald Tribune etc. So all I could do of course, is read that back to him.

Q: Did Henry Kissinger come by at all while you were there?

BARKLEY: No, and that was interesting. Of course at the time of the Berlin agreements Kissinger was not Secretary of State. He was head of the National Security Council. I was fascinated that during the last elements of the Berlin agreements, where it became quite clear that it was American policy was to conclude the agreements favorably, is that Ambassador Rush and others did not communicate with the White House through the State Department but went straight into the White House through a back channel. So quite clearly Dr. Kissinger was keeping Secretary Rogers, who was one of the more forgettable secretaries we have had out of the loop. Rogers seemed to be a perfectly nice man, but was clearly in the dark on the Berlin negotiations. The President and Mr. Kissinger were dealing directly with us in the Embassy on these issues.

Q: Well in being in Berlin, did you get any feel for the great game of spying that was going on? It seems like every other person was working for the KGB or the CIA.

BARKLEY: Oh absolutely. It was just astonishing. I mean they were falling all over each other. It was true I think of all the western groups in they all had their equivalent to the CIA.

Q: MI-5.

BARKLEY: Well but not only that. As you know in the American intelligence system there is also Defense Intelligence and the NSA. There are all these different groups, and they were represented in great numbers. Sometimes they were falling all over each other. I could not begin to assess the effectiveness of how the operations worked. Of course on the East German side, there was not only the KGB but the Stasi. They made us look like pikers when it came to controlling a population. I mean they were perverse but excellent. We knew nothing about that. That wasn't our modus operandi. But, yes, they were everywhere.

Q: Tell me on this effort, spying on both sides, and on our side obviously the CIA had all sorts of agents all over the place. I mean so did the KGB and the Stasi. But were you the recipient of any of these nuggets of information? Where did you get your information you know, to go about your regular job?

BARKLEY: Well there was more general information and perhaps less wisdom available then you would begin to believe. For example we had the CIVIS system that fed in all the reports that came in on the television. I had to read Neues Deutschland which was the official organ. And indeed by reading it I began to understand what let's say the "Newspeak" was in East Germany. You begin to understand a little number.

Q: Was it the prose as it was in other countries, the pros...

BARKLEY: Yes, pretty much. But there was, we had a number of people actually East German. I mean East Germans who had come west that worked in the mission in Berlin as foreign service nationals. They would write their reports on the basis of a lot of information, they would listen to the television or the radio or whatever it was. Of course, like any society, East Germans within

their different ministries published a lot of stuff. Now it was party line, but it did address problems. It turns out subsequently, everybody now knows that we had tapped into the telephone system, so we knew what was going on between party headquarters and the provinces and things like that. It also turns out of course that we weren't able to tap in as effectively as they did. Nonetheless, there was a lot of information. The problem of course, is not always how much information you have but which of it is true or useful.

Q: Were you able to make trips, swing around through your territory of East Germany?

BARKLEY: Well there was only actually one time a year where we were authorized to go outside of the Soviet sector. I was in East Berlin a lot, two or three times a week. Every time was somewhat uncomfortable. If you have ever gone through Checkpoint Charlie, you would know why. It was a police state; there was no question about it. The theory when you are in Berlin is if anything goes wrong the first thing you do is call a Soviet officer, because you can't deal with the East Germans because of the status question. But every year we were given not a visa, but a piece of paper that we carried in our passport that allowed us to go to Leipzig Fair. I always went. Usually Felix would go. John Kornblum often came along. He was in the political section in Bonn. We would at that time have a chance to go to East Germany. We did that twice. Then we would take side trips to Wittenberg and Halle and places like that. But we couldn't go to many of the places we really wanted to go. Dresden was a place I think we all wanted to go. Kemnitz, Karlmarxstadt, at that time, Meckenberg all of those places that we wanted to go to, but couldn't. But we did get actually into the Leipzig area, and you could see that compared to West German society, things were still basically pretty primitive. For example, they had organized their agriculture into big farms, the LPG's they called them. Whenever the harvest was due, often they would have to bring in the army or different groups, what they would call Sobotnik to bring in the crops. They would come in and work on the harvest, so it was not an efficient society. You just didn't stop into a cute little café along the way. It wasn't like that at all. It was a rather dreary awful society. Now in the cities like in Leipzig, you could go Auerbach's Keller which is the famous place where Goethe writes about Faust. We did get actually to Jena. That was interesting, once again because of Weimar the Goethe relationship there. The cities were somewhat better. The countryside was still in all pretty sad.

Q: What about your colleagues who were covering this from the French or British point of view. I mean the Canadians and Swedish. Did you sort of get together and...

BARKLEY: Well the only ones we tended to get together a little bit were the British. There was a British woman who was in charge of things. I remember we were somewhat astonished that she truly had sort of a romantic affair with East Germany. To be kind she did not have her two feet on the ground approach the GDR.

Q: She had seen the future and it works.

BARKLEY: Yes, that kind of stuff. I think she was just working overtime to be understanding. The French weren't particularly active. Even afterwards they weren't particularly active after they established relations. The foreigners who knew the most like the Yugoslavs and others, knew inherently how the system functioned. But I think without sounding too arrogant, that we

knew more than any of them. Now the West Germans always had certain advantages and understanding of what was going on. Once relations were established, they didn't establish an embassy because of their concept of two states, one nation, but they established a Permanent Representation. The Permanent Representative had the same status as an ambassador did. Once they got established they knew quite a bit. But much of it of course was because of divided families and all of the other ways that they would pick up information....

Q: How about sort of within the mission in Berlin? Was there pretty good esprit de corps? Was it fun?

BARKLEY: Oh, I thought it was certainly one of the finest tours I have had. Of course, I thought I had the most exciting work in the mission. There were two other sections in the mission. One was the economic section; the other was the political section on the western side. A lot of them dealt with a lot of the details like stockpiles and all of those things which are important to the viability of Berlin. It was kind of pick and shovel work that I didn't particularly like. Then there were of course people who always worked on status questions. In embassy Bonn for example, we had a Berlin section that was devoted to harmonizing and understanding what was going on on the issue of Berlin. The legal advisor was extremely active, actually produced an enormous amount of paper on what was going on. I can't say it was a uniquely happy mission, but to the extent that there was any joy, I think it was probably in our section where people got along quite well.

Q: David Klein, what was his background? He was the head of it.

BARKLEY: He was a German hand and a Russian hand as a matter of fact. David was an extraordinarily good officer. He had served in Russia a couple of times and in Germany a couple of times. I don't exactly know what positions they were in, but he was conversant with both societies quite well and easily. He was a good linguist. I mean I tended to agree with his political views on so many things, so quite obviously he was a wonderful fellow.

Q: he was obviously a brilliant person.

BARKLEY: Exactly. Now there was always a little bit of difference. We has such strong personalities in Jock Dean and Jim Sutherland and David Klein that didn't always agree on everything, but they worked together very well. A very professional leadership.

Q: Well is there anything else we should cover in this time?

BARKLEY: Well the only last thing is before I left, we had now gotten to the point where we had identified our buildings, where our Embassy was going to be. I was active in all of that. Finally I got my first instruction which instructed me to actually enter the East German foreign office. I was the first American official to do that. That is particularly interesting because I was also the last 15 years later, but I remember I was required to go in and urge the East Germans to join ICNAF which was the International North Atlantic Fisheries Convention, because the East Germans like the Poles had these factory fishing vessels that would go in and sweep up a lot of fish. I remember I had to go in and talk to, believe it or not, a Dr. Seuss, who was a legal

counselor in there. He was a charming fellow actually from Sudetenland. I of course made the demarche that we wanted them to join and become active members etc. He said, "Well you know that is interesting, Mr. Barkley. We have been trying to join for 20 years, and you have always vetoed us." I said, "Well, that was then; this is now. The political climate, the sweeps of things, of history have changed." So they indeed were eager to join, and they did and were quite responsible members for that short period of time, while at the same time these fish factory things of course not only fed a lot of East Germans but they also provided fertilizer and things that were important. So that was sort of the last thing I vividly recall in my East German tour before I was then transferred back.

OSCAR J. OLSON, JR.
Economic and Commercial Officer
Berlin (1971-1974)

Mr. Olson was born and raised in Texas and was educated at the University of Texas, Yale University and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Primarily a Commercial and Economic Officer, Mr. Olson served in Venezuela, Spain, Germany, Mexico, Panama and Ecuador. In his Washington Assignments he dealt with Management issues. Mr. Olson was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 2004.

Q: ...Okay, so you did the economic training at FSI in '71 thereabouts and then you went to West Berlin.

OLSON: To West Berlin, and, believe it or not, by ship. The rules said only by American flag carrier, and by this time the only possibility was a Lykes Lines freighter. So we sailed from New Orleans to Barcelona on the good ship Reuben Tipton. Not really that good a ship, one of the oldest on the Atlantic, and on its way next to Taiwan and scrapping. Anyway we got to visit Barcelona again on our way to Berlin.

Berlin was a very unusual, different sort of foreign service experience. This was occupied Berlin; we were sovereign in the American sector of Berlin. Actually we still considered ourselves sovereign in all of Berlin, as one of the Four Powers victorious in the war. But it actually worked in West Berlin, where we reigned together with the British and the French. The U.S. alternated with its allies so that once every three months we chaired the Allied Kommandatura. That then presented us with unusual responsibilities.

Q: In West Berlin?

OLSON: In West Berlin. Theoretically we had those same responsibilities for all of Berlin, but we weren't able to exercise them in what we termed the Soviet sector, or East Berlin. Among the esoteric responsibilities that fell to me in the economic section of the U.S. Mission was clearing West Berlin's accounts with the Universal Postal Union. West Berlin had its own postal system, issuing its own stamps, separate from West Germany. At the end of each year all members of the Universal Postal Union must settle up accounts based on differences in the amounts of incoming

and outgoing international mail. Again I depended on good help from foreign service national employees.

I was responsible for assigning radio frequencies for taxi cab owners or others needing radio-telephones in the Western sectors. East Berlin authorities would often protest that the particular frequency in question belonged to them. I was the gun control officer. There were strict gun control regulations in effect, and no gun permits were issued to individuals. Hunters, however, were permitted to organized clubs for target practice, and the clubs themselves were licensed to keep rifles. Then when a hunter wanted to go to West Germany or elsewhere to hunt, we issued a special permit for transport of a rifle out of Berlin and its return. So this was all very different bureaucratic stuff. We were of course also interested in economic matters and particularly in the economic viability of the city. We dealt with contingency plans for problems such as another blockade, even that long after the original one. The Soviets were still capable of launching another such attack. We were fearful that they might tighten the noose once again. There were mountains of coal stockpiled in West Berlin, ready in case no more coal was coming in. We also served a very strong American business presence in Berlin. There was one commercial officer in our economic section, Felix Bloch—you may have heard the name. He did most of the work on U.S. export promotion.

Q: Were you involved with civil aviation matters?

OLSON: Very much so. The three sovereign powers had a monopoly on flights in and out of West Berlin—PanAm, British Air, and Air France. We also were involved in the construction of the new Tegel Airport in West Berlin to alleviate the crowding and other problems at the very congested old airport, Tempelhof, which was used for the airlift. Schoenefeld was the East German airport. The Austrians, Austrian Airlines, had decided by that point that they would like to fly in and petitioned the three allied powers. It was sometime after we left before they finally did allow other airlines into West Berlin. I believe they did that before we gave up sovereignty.

Q: Lufthansa was not serving West Berlin?

OLSON: No, Lufthansa was not serving West Berlin.

Q: A lot of what you did was unusual. Probably no where else in the world were such things being done in terms of making decisions, some very bureaucratic, some very routine I'm sure. And some very sensitive.

OLSON: Yes. And happily we had the most marvelous German staff who really did understand how the Universal Postal Union worked and knew all about the legalities that permitted the East Germans to operate the S-Bahn, elevated rail system, in West Berlin.

Q: Now to what extent were you involved in going to the east zone, to East Berlin, or involved in Four Power meetings as opposed to Three Power with the British and French?

OLSON: I was involved marginally in the Four Power meetings. Minister David Klein was in charge of the State Department side of the U.S. Mission and was deputy to the U.S. commanding

general for the American Sector. Kline chose me to assist Kenneth Rush, our ambassador to West Germany, when Rush was in Berlin. The Ambassador was spending much of his time in Berlin because of the important Four Power talks on the status of Berlin which resulted in the Four Power Agreement that was signed in Berlin, I guess in '73.

Q: When you were still there?

OLSON: Yes, I was still there. When Rush was in Berlin he trusted two of us in the mission to be available to be with him, to escort him, and to do whatever the ambassador needed done. That was Felix Block and I. I do recall that I was to go to a meeting in Paris of economic officers assigned to Western European posts. I was looking forward to that, but it coincided with an ambassadorial visit to Berlin. Felix was away, on home leave I believe. I missed the trip to Paris. That's your reward for being indispensable.

Q: Did the ambassador bring along his own aide or staff from Bonn?

OLSON: He did not.

Q: He relied on you.

OLSON: Right. I recall we were often arranging to get "Henry" on the phone for him. Henry Kissinger was still the National Security Adviser at that time. I guess I failed to mention that Harvard University is one of the co-sponsors of Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and not just Tufts University where it is located. Thus Fletcher students are able to enroll in Harvard classes as well. So I had signed up for a "seminar" with Professor Henry Kissinger. This seminar ended up in the biggest room they could find, a conference room in the law school. It had a very long table that maybe would seat about 20 people. Harvard students taking the course for credit sat at the table and then spilled over into the second row. Then Harvard students auditing the course were in the next row. Finally Fletcher students taking it for credit would be behind and then Fletcher students monitoring or...

Q: Auditing.

OLSON: Yes, those auditing would be in the fourth row of chairs at the table. So this "seminar" enrolled at least 80 people. Professor Kissinger mostly brought in other people rather than lecturing himself. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara was one of them. This was during Viet Nam, and I recall that he got into our building through the steam tunnels, the utility tunnels. There were so many anti-Viet Nam demonstrators when McNamara reached the campus that he couldn't walk through the normal door.

Q: So, but when you were in Berlin you helped Ambassador Rush reach your former professor.

OLSON: Exactly. Then when Secretary Rogers, William Rogers, came for the signing of the Four Power Agreement, someone decided that it had been a long time since a Secretary of State had visited the Soviet sector of Berlin. So Rogers should venture over to the other side of the Wall. This visit shouldn't appear to be a big deal, since our 'theology' maintained that the U.S.,

as one of the four original occupying powers, was still sovereign throughout the whole city. So for a routine, low-key visit, it wouldn't be appropriate for the commanding general to accompany the Secretary to East Berlin, and perhaps not even appropriate for David Klein, the Mission head, to go with him. So Oscar Olson went with him as his escort. There were a number of American tourists in East Berlin who recognized him. We visited the war memorial on Unter den Linden with the goose-stepping ceremonial guard. We went to the much bigger war memorial that the Soviets had built immediately after the war while the city all around lay in ruins. And we visited the famous Pergamon Museum in the center of town. He had a good time.

Q: Were the Soviets notified that he was going to do this?

OLSON: We did let them know that he was coming. That the big black Fleetwood Cadillac, the ambassador's limousine, would be coming through Checkpoint Charlie with the Secretary of State.

Q: But he didn't stay overnight.

OLSON: He did not.

Q: And did not go outside East Berlin.

OLSON: He did not go outside of East Berlin, nor did any of us at the mission normally get into the forbidden territory of East Germany. Poland was about 80 miles to the west, excuse me, to the east, but we could get there only by way of Frankfurt and Copenhagen. Potsdam was five miles from where I lived but was unknown territory. Until, that is, we attended the Leipzig Trade Fair. "Commerz Uber Alles" (Commerce Over All). We were able to arrange special permission to get into East Germany to go to the Leipzig Fair. This was the most important trade fair in Eastern Europe, and so we would have a significant presence there from the Berlin mission.

Q: So you got permission? Permission from whom?

OLSON: We arranged it through our Soviet buddies; they would then tell the East Germans we were coming. We made the trip, not in big black Cadillac limousines, but in big black Fords. Since we were sovereign in West Berlin, each had a license plate that simply said "Department of State" in English. No numbers, not even U.S., simply Department of State. So we were very conspicuous. No chance of not being noticed when we went into East Germany to go to Leipzig. We entered East Germany with an extra page in our passport, which as I recall, was something similar to travel between Jordan and Israel at one point. You would get an entry stamp on that extra page. In this case the East Germans would feel good that they had stamped our passports, as if we recognized their existence. And we would rip the page out as if nothing had happened. Again, it's part of what I called our 'theology' of that time. It was fascinating to be in Leipzig, and once we were there we could get permission to visit other parts of East Germany. It was almost as if we were getting visas for these other cities. We would then get permission to go to the places like Weimar, Dresden, and even Potsdam, in our own backyard. So we did get to visit Potsdam, but only on the way home from Leipzig.

Q: Now you do quite a bit of reporting when you make those trips?

OLSON: Yes.

Q: Twice a year?

OLSON: Right. We were sure we would be followed to some extent on our visits to Leipzig, but the city was overrun with visitors so it was hard for them to keep up with everyone. I never met anyone who actually stayed in a hotel. We would be assigned to private homes, which was even more interesting because you got to talk to real East Germans. The East German authorities may have been capable of picking out who we would be living with, but I certainly never had the sense that we were pre-assigned. We encountered various, interesting situations. The one I remember most, perhaps, was during the '72 Olympics. I was with an engineer with the East German railroad. He would talk about the fact that the railroad system was very important to the country's leaders, and so he was able to get the latest equipment, the newest communications innovations, and whatever--he would get scarce foreign exchange to buy all this from the West. "But do you think the bureaucracy would allow me then to bring in spare parts to maintain any of this?" He would continue on this line but in a slightly different vein as we would be watching the Summer Olympics from Munich. These were the first games where the East Germans did very, very well. He was very proud of the East German team, but then he would turn to me and say, "Do you know how much it is costing us as taxpayers? You would not believe what we spend on these athletes, to get these athletes up to speed." I thought, wow, maybe taxpayers around the world are not all that different.

Q: How long would you be in Leipzig and East Germany? A week or two weeks?

OLSON: No, I don't think it was as much as a week. I think we would be maybe three days, three or four days at the fair and then a couple extra days for a side trip. I think for the most part we probably only did one side trip per visit. I was in Berlin three years, and I'm pretty sure I went to the Leipzig Fair six times.

Q: Other than the Leipzig Fair period, you didn't go into East Germany. But you did go into the Soviet zone...

OLSON: Soviet sector.

Q: Soviet sector of Berlin routinely? Without notification? Or did you always have to sort of let them know?

OLSON: No notice was given. Routinely I went through Checkpoint Charlie to take visitors or to go to the opera. But not all that often, because it was a hassle. You couldn't buy opera tickets or theatre tickets in West Berlin, so it usually meant two trips. One trip to go buy tickets, and a second trip to go. We had a lot of visitor's, personal visitors; and we had lots and lots of official visitors. I escorted Governor Jimmy Carter on his visit to Berlin. He was there over Armed Forces Day when there was a big parade and a reception at the Charlottenburg Palace. I recall afterwards we were going for a meal, and he said, "I would like to go to the most typical Berlin

restaurant you can think of.” I said, “Okay.” We went to a typical Berlin eatery, and then he wanted to order something very typical of Berlin. I believe he ended up with ox shank, something strange, but he was going to take advantage of being in a different place.

Q: Was he pleased with the dinner?

OLSON: Reasonably so. He was in Germany to lobby Volkswagen to build the plant that they were planning for the U.S. in Georgia. As I recall, they built it someplace else.

Q: South Carolina, maybe.

OLSON: South Carolina.

Q: The first one.

OLSON: Let’s see. One other visitor was Eleanor Dulles, the State Department’s expert on Germany and sister to John Foster. Another visitor I escorted was Terry Sanford, who had just completed his term as Governor of North Carolina and was seriously considered as a candidate for the democratic presidential nomination. He was visiting Germany and had asked for an appointment with West German Chancellor Willy Brandt. The scheduling didn’t work out while he was in Bonn, so Sanford came to Berlin. We took the helicopter trip along the Wall and the other normal elements of an official visit. Probably took him over to East Berlin. Then we found that Willy Brandt was back home over the weekend in West Berlin, and so Sanford was granted his missed meeting with the Chancellor there. And I got to sit in on it. The most interesting part was the two politicians talking about campaigning. Brandt not that long ago had been in the States and had been with Hubert Humphrey in Minnesota. Brandt accompanied Humphrey as the latter was addressing some mid-western group, and Brandt was asked to say a few words. He started in English, then some German, and finally Norwegian to this Minnesota crowd. He was fluent in Norwegian, having spent years in exile there. Brandt then reported to his visitor the fact that Hubert Humphrey had quipped, “Thank goodness you aren’t campaigning against me here.”

Q: You went to East Berlin, to the Soviet sector, for private reasons, and you took visitors; did you ever go to do economic work, economic reporting?

OLSON: Not really, although I shared observations with the Mission’s Eastern Affairs section. These officers were visiting East Berlin regularly and doing that type of reporting. I did more, as far as reporting, after visiting the Leipzig Fair than I did routinely just on what was happening with the economy in East Berlin.

Q: You mentioned that David Klein was the Minister, the Chief of Mission, and he was also the Deputy to the U.S. Military Commander. What was the office called, the State Department office? Was it called a Mission?

OLSON: Yes, it wasn’t an embassy or a consulate, so it had to be a Mission. We were in an old Luftwaffe headquarters on a street that was renamed Clay Allee, after U.S. General Lucius Clay. The economic section was right by the front gate of this complex of buildings. When one of the

three allied commandants departed Berlin, there was a ceremony with a salute. Not a twenty-one gun salute, but rather a one tank salute. The tank would be parked just beneath our windows at the front gate and would fire its cannon, a blank I assume. Anyway it would always blow out all of the economic section's windows. We were prepared, with everyone evacuated and workers standing by with new windowpanes ready to be installed. The picture of German efficiency. The Germans in fact were paying for it because as an occupying power we were still able to charge quite a bit of current expenses to the German taxpayer.

Let me mention also a very important part of our life in Berlin and that was that my wife, Pat, who came with a degree in radio/television. She was asked to put on a television program for our Armed Forces Network station there. She called it People, Places and Pat. It was...

Q: People, Places and Pat.

OLSON: People, Places and Pat. The Air Force was in charge of the Armed Forces Network outlet in Berlin. Someone must have noticed that there was not a female face anywhere on the broadcasts and ordered one to appear. I'm sure what they had in mind was a program for the dependents on how to use your leftover turkey after Thanksgiving or reporting the meeting of the Woman's Sewing Guild. But when she was approached she explained that she would like to do a show that would highlight the fabulous city in which we were residing, to try to encourage those that would tend to stay in the PX and the commissary and the housing area to get out and get to know Berlin. She wanted to point out the ease of transportation, the fact that there were people who spoke English, and that there were all sorts of fabulous things to do and see. She interviewed folks from the museums, the opera, the zoo, the 'volkfests,' and lots of different people talking about what was going on in Berlin. Then she got to visit a lot of these places, which was fun for both of us. And we both got to meet some interesting people through this effort. She also interviewed visitors to town, which included James Michener, who was on some kind of a tour for USIS.

Q: Did she ever have you on the program?

OLSON: No. I got to go along once when she actually got up in a helicopter to do filming along the Wall, from the West Berlin side of course. This took some doing because before that females were forbidden to go up in the helicopters. As I recall, when Eleanor Dulles visited earlier, I was not able to include the helicopter tour as part of her VIP (very important person) tour because she was, obviously, female. I think at one time the helicopter pilots, then all male, were using the helicopters as party pads, and that's how the prohibition came about. But finally it got overturned by People, Places and Pat.

Q: Okay, was there anything else you wanted to say about Pat's television program? Was it on in the evening or the daytime?

OLSON: It was on in the evening.

Q: Live?

OLSON: It was live and once a week, as I recall. Before tape, or at least before Armed Forces Network in Berlin was able to tape things. We had some kinescope film of a few of her programs. I guess they just had a movie camera pointed at the TV screen.

Q: How big was the economic-commercial section? You mentioned Felix Bloch. Was there someone else who was the head of it?

OLSON: Yes, Bill Root was our boss, and there were three of us that were in the section besides Bill. We were four altogether.

Q: Okay, anything else we should say about your time in West Berlin, '71-'74?

OLSON: We had a very nice house, farther away from the Mission than anyone else, in a completely German neighborhood. Our only furnished quarters in the foreign service. Requisitioned from the Germans at the end of the war. We later learned that it had been built in the 1930s by one of the German generals executed in the unsuccessful plot to kill Hitler in 1944. Most of the remaining requisitioned houses occupied by Americans were huge barns, hard to keep up. Our house was perfect for our family and bordered on the Grunewald, Berlin's huge green natural area, and a beautiful lake, the Schlachtensee.

THOMAS F. JOHNSON
Director of Information Center, USIS
Heidelberg (1971-1975)

Thomas F. Johnson was born in Illinois and was educated at Union College and the Free University of Berlin. He entered the Foreign Service in 1967 and has served in various posts in Paraguay, Germany, Liberia, Mexico and Singapore. In Washington, DC, Johnson served in the USIA as Inspector, Deputy Director of Acquisitions and Area Personnel Officer for Europe. Mr. Johnson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.

Q: Then in '71, whither?

JOHNSON: In late 1970 I learned that the position of Student Affairs Officer would be eliminated under the BALPA program which was intended to reduce Foreign Service staff and improve our nation's balance of payments. What a stupid idea. A few diplomats abroad had no discernable impact on our balance of payments. However I was ready to leave Asuncion, but did not have my onward assignment. Eventually Don Besom, my Career Counselor, sent me an apologetic cable noting that my paperwork had surfaced and that he had good news for me. I was to depart Asuncion in April for home leave and consultations Washington before proceeding to Heidelberg to be the Information Center Director. My immediate reaction was negative. I did not really want to serve in a city with such a strong American presence.

Carolyn and I arrived in the university city in July with a new Volkswagen which we had picked

up from the factory in Wolfsburg. I had introduced her to Germany by taking her to first to Berlin. Carolyn was pregnant. I was in charge of imposing three story Amerika Haus with a library and meeting rooms. I had 12 employees and an ample budget. Carolyn found for us one of the nicest homes in Heidelberg, the ground floor of a sandstone villa at the corner of Bergstrasse and the Philosophen Weg. We had two bedrooms, a den, a huge living room and an extensive garden, plus the usual bath and kitchen. The garden had been the site of a temple during the years the Romans ruled Heidelberg. The rent was 1,000 DM per month, about \$300, which was at the high end of the scale at the time. As was the custom, the previous tenants took most of the light fixtures with them. Shortly after we moved in she noticed a couple of bare wires sticking out of the wall above a sink and being more tidy than technical, she rapped the ends together. The shock knocked her backwards. A few days later Patrick, our first child was born. He has always had straight hair. Coincidence? I don't think so.

I was full of energy and idealism but did not have a clue how to run my own post. No one in Washington had briefed me on conditions I was to encounter. I had a short meeting in Stuttgart with the Branch Public Affairs Officer, but he was not very helpful nor were most of my colleagues at our embassy in Bonn. Everyone seemed very busy. I am not complaining. That is just the way USIA operated, at least in Germany: sink or swim. In its wisdom USIA assigned an officer to be Amerika Haus director in Saarbruecken. The poor guy had just lost his wife to cancer and as the only official American in the city, had no one to turn to for support. He lapsed into alcoholism which ended his career.

The Amerika Haus in Heidelberg was the target of numerous protests against the Vietnam War. My predecessor, a sensitive and cultured old gentleman, retired upon leaving Heidelberg, having aged far beyond his years. His mentally unstable wife remained in Heidelberg. I was given authority to have her committed to the local military hospital should I deem it necessary. The noisy anti-Americanism had contributed to his wife having an apparent nervous break down and the dissolution of their marriage. Fortunately I had Carolyn whom I could turn to when I had had a hard day and there were many to come, particularly in Heidelberg.

Heidelberg, Frankfurt and Berlin were the main centers of the anti-war/anti-U.S. movement. Marxism was very much in vogue at the Heidelberg University. I spent many Saturday mornings in the Amerika Haus with a dozen German riot police. The students sometimes threw a few stones at the building but they never attacked it. Perhaps they knew that there were restless policemen inside itching for action.

The police were concerned about my safety and advised me not to go the university, at least in any official capacity. I kept a low profile, but never felt that I was personally in danger. The main threat to Americans was the Red Army Faction (RAF) or Bader-Meinhof terrorist group, which had carried out a series of well publicized acts of terrorism. I reasoned I was too unimportant to merit their attention. However on May 24, 1972 the German police informed me that they had a credible but unspecific threat again American interests in the city. Theo Sommer, the editor of the nation's leading weekly Die Zeit, was scheduled to speak that evening at the Amerika Haus. The police advised me to move the event to another venue, which I did. My German staff searched the Haus from top to bottom and informed me that they could find no evidence of a bomb being placed on the premises. As a precautionary measure I closed the Haus

early and sent my staff home. I was at my desk at 5:30 p.m. when I heard two booms in the distance. I quickly learned that the detonations were from car bombs that had been smuggled into USAREUR headquarters in automobiles. The bombs killed a captain and two enlisted men. The perpetrators, members of the Bader-Meinhof organization, who were later caught and served 20 years in prison. The program with Theo Sommer went off without a hitch. However the evening has always haunted me. I thought about calling a colonel at USAREUR headquarters when I learned of the bomb threat, I didn't. I left that call to the German police and the German police apparently never alerted headquarters. I still have a sense of guilt that had I called my army contact, security at headquarters might have been increased and either the bombers might have been scared off or they might have been caught. I can't tell you how much I wish I had made that phone call.

Q: Each of us has a closet somewhere with a ghost. You are not alone. Was the bombing the only threat you had in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: We had several of bomb threats called in but, as I recall, none caused the evacuation of the Haus. However a few weeks after the bombing of headquarters, we received a parcel from Beirut. It was wrapped in brown paper stained with oil, tied up with heavy twine and covered in an irregular pattern with stamps, all the characteristics of a possible bomb. I called the German police who carefully removed the parcel for examination. The next day the head of the bomb squad called me to ask me if I wanted the remains of several copies of the USIA publication Problems of Communism. Apparently the USIA Regional Service Center in Beirut sent advanced copies of the magazine to several posts and the parcels were packed between some well lubricated automobile parts. The German official said that his unit was more than willing to deal with any suspicious parcel we might receive.

Q: How was attendance at programs at the Haus when you arrived?

Lectures in the Amerika Haus in the early 70s drew only a relatively small number of students and were subject to interruptions. The first event I attended concerned American animated films, a soft topic. Shortly after the speaker began his illustrated presentation, a well aimed rock hit me in the back of the head. I winced and did not move. I was not going to give in to the provocation. There were no further attempts to disrupt the program and I was never subject to assault again. In an effort to draw more young professionals and professors, I made some events "by invitation only", which helped draw a more select audience and saved postage. I also held programs in the spacious living room of my apartment. I would have liked to have had many programs at my home but my representation allowance was only a couple hundred dollars a year.

Q: So did you spend much of your own money for entertaining in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Cumulatively quite a bit, but we enjoyed it and were not paying rent or utilities. Sometimes we combined the official with the unofficial. For example, we had quite a garden party after Patrick's baptism which my father performed in a medieval church in the old city. The Germans, to my disgust, mixed orange juice with the fine French champagne I served.

Q: Moving from Asuncion to Heidelberg must have been quite a cultural adjustment.

JOHNSON: We had to get used to German punctuality. Shortly after we moved into our new digs, we invited some academics and their wives to dinner at 7:00 p.m. At seven I was still in my skivvies fixing the bar and Carolyn was in the shower and the doorbell rang. "Who the hell's that," I wondered. Our guests were lined up outside the door.

Q: How was the Fulbright program faring in Heidelberg in 1971?

JOHNSON: The Fulbright program in Heidelberg was in shambles. During the Vietnam War it was not "in" to study in the United States. I sat on the selection panel for the scholarships. In 1972 the panel turned down all the candidates as unqualified. A re-announcement brought better candidates.

Q: Did the Amerika Haus serve only Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Fortunately my geographic area of responsibility, which was the northern part of the state of Baden-Wurttemberg, included Mannheim, which was about 20 miles west of Heidelberg. The University of Mannheim had departments of American-English Studies and Economics. Mannheim was a conservative city and the university was tranquil compared to Heidelberg. I spent a lot of time there.

Q: Tell me about your German staff.

JOHNSON: The German staff at the Amerika Haus was demoralized. My secretary, a thoroughly pernicious woman, dedicated herself to office politics, and when I did not seek her advice, she started sniping at me. I was eventually able to fire her and to retire my graphic artist, who did no discernable work. My most senior assistant, my program director, was a Sudeten German. Rudi Tshipula was devoted to the Amerika Haus and completely loyal to me. Unfortunately he was addicted to nicotine and alcohol and died in 1973. I will never forget his funeral. When we arrived at the cemetery, Rudi's estranged wife and her family stood on one side of the open grave. His mistress and my staff stood on the other side. Carolyn and I diplomatically placed ourselves at the foot of the grave. German custom called for each of us to drop a scoop of dirt on the casket. When the little shovel was handed to me, my hand shook noticeably. I was in mortal fear that I would drop the shovel into the yawning abyss.

Tshipula was replaced as program manager by a former employee who had taken a few years off work to start a family. Although she was not able to put in 40 hours a week, she was a wonderful advisor and colleague. The staff gradually coalesced into a team and morale improved greatly.

A: What was the physical plant of the Amerika Haus like?

JOHNSON: It was four storey villa at the edge of the old part of the city. I am sure it had 5,000 square feet of floor space. My spacious office overlooked a park. Shortly before I arrived the pop artist Christo showed up in Heidelberg. He asked the Lord Mayor Zundel if he could wrap the castle in plastic. No, the OB told him, the castle was partial ruin and it was hard to maintain. Next Christo asked if he could wrap the Rathaus in plastic. Zundel patiently explained that he

presided over a coalition an imposing sandstone villa around the corner of the main post office. Zundel called my long suffering predecessor and told him that the Amerika Haus was about to be famous, at least for a day or two.

Christo wrapped the Haus in plastic and was very pleased with himself. A passing student demonstration added anti-US and anti-war graffiti to his work of art. The solid burgher of Heidelberg were apparently not impressed.

Q: Did Bonn provide you with a car?

JOHNSON: Each Amerika Haus was supplied with a van or sedan. Heidelberg had a big black Chevy van. We parked it in a garage just down the street from the Haus. Unfortunately the vehicle was a little too high for the exit so we kept the tires slightly under inflated. Because of the black flat top, the van was hot on sunny days in the summer. Since the van had no resale value, I crawled up on its roof and gave it a good coat of white enamel. The van was easy to spot in a parking lot.

Q: You and your wife had one child while you were in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: We had three. Patrick was born on Fasching (Carnival) Tuesday, February 15, 1972. I announced his birth at a reception at city hall. I think the Germans were amused when I gave them the traditional cigar. "Next time how about a nice big American steak?" asked one.

Erik was born on Watergate Wednesday, August 8, 1974 a few hours before Nixon resigned. During her brief labor Carolyn had to contend with excited updates from AFN. We had a third son, Mark, who was born premature and died after three days.

Q: Heidelberg is such a lovely city. It must have been a great privilege to be assigned there.

JOHNSON: It was hard not to be enthralled with Heidelberg. I walked to work every morning across a bridge over the Neckar. I never tired of glancing up at the castle. There were wonderful outdoor markets and restaurants. We took many trips to Alsace to enjoy its cuisine and mountains. We were invited to a Grosse Zapfenstreich (a torch light parade) put on by the German Army on the terrace of the castle. Dating back to medieval times, the ceremony formally closed the taps on the beer and wine kegs. Over the years it incorporated a battalion of infantry to carry torches and a marching band. It is quite a show. One evening we attended a candle light dinner in the King's Hall of the Heidelberg castle. When we left the dinner we found the courtyard covered with new fallen snow. It was a magical evening which we will never forget.

Q: Did you get back to Berlin while you were in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: A couple times a year. Bob Blucker, an old friend from my student days, was serving at the Mission, the second of a record four tours in Berlin. On one memorable trip we arrived at the American Army check point at Helmstedt where we replaced the consular plates with US military plates so we would be under Soviet and not East German control. The NCO told me that there was a British officer who needed to be escorted to Berlin and had been waiting

for some one to drive along behind him. I did not ask what the gentleman's rank or position was, for it was clear that he was important and occupied a very sensitive post. I was warned not to ever lose sight of him- no matter what. The sergeant also reminded me that I was not to exceed the 100 km per hour speed limit and that the minimum transit time was two hours and the maximum was four hours. I nodded politely to the mysterious Englishman and off we went. I quickly surmised that the Brit was in a big hurry. The speedometer of my VW station wagon climbed past 100 kmph to 120 and to 140. As we shot past trucks and other cars, I was sure the Vopos would take notice and chase us. I kept the Englishman in my crosshairs as we skimmed over the rutted highway. Carolyn smiled grimly and Patrick rattled his car seat happily.

Upon arriving at Drei Linden, the check point out of East Germany, a burly Soviet sergeant quickly processed the Brit who then disappeared down the autobahn toward the British, French and American check point. I drove slowly up to the guard house. The Russian saluted me and I handed him my papers. After a moment his eyes fixed on the stamp of the time I entered East Germany. He shook his head and announced solemnly, "Sir, you are much too early here." I grinned sheepishly and then motioned to the carton of cigarettes lying on the back seat. His face brightened and he erased the entry time and wrote in an earlier time. "Mistakes. Always mistakes," he muttered for my benefit. We were invited into the Soviet guard house "to use the facilities". When we returned, the cigarettes were gone. I wondered what it would cost to get a Russian to change Patrick's ripe diaper.

Q: You were in Heidelberg. Where was your boss?

JOHNSON: Good question. I had many supervisors, both American and German. In the USIA scheme of things I worked for Nelson Stephens, the Branch Public Affairs Officer in Stuttgart, my first two years. He was supportive but not overly interested in my efforts. He had his own problems. In 1973 USIA was reorganized. I reported to Bruce Koch in Bonn. Bruce had been Amerika Haus Director in Tuebingen. We had a very productive relationship.

The last two years of my tour of duty, 1973-75 was a time of great turmoil within USIA Germany. The CPAO (Country Public Affairs Officer) was McKinney Russell, marvelous linguist and a fine human being. However he and our common boss, Jay Gildner, the European Area Director, decided to reorganize USIA Germany along the lines of USIA Japan. They called the reorganization the "new design". Most of us in the field promptly termed it the "new disaster." Staff and resources were stripped from the posts in the field and centralized at the embassy in Bonn. No one asked the German employees what they thought of the reorganization. Hundreds of thousands of dollars of our scarce resources were wasted on useless renovations and "super graphics" in the libraries. Meanwhile and the quality of programming declined. As a taxpayer I was furious. As a public affairs professional I was disgusted.

Since the Amerika Haus Heidelberg was also a German-American Institute and received considerable support from the Germans, my operation was not greatly impacted by the shift in personnel and resources. I got half or probably three quarters of my budget from Germans. The USIA provided me with my salary, apartment, vehicle, program support, and books for the library. Meanwhile the Germans provided the Amerika Haus, utilities and funds to pay my German staff. I had a budget of over a quarter of a million dollars and for a second tour officer it

was quite a responsibility

Q: Were you required to submit many reports to USIA Bonn?

JOHNSON: I sent reports on what I was doing on an ad hoc basis. During the last two years of my tour of duty I was appalled by the exaggerated reporting going to Washington from Bonn. I refused to contribute to the monthly cables. Finally Alvin Cohen, the Deputy Country Public Affairs Officer, called me on the carpet but I stood my ground.

Q: So dissent was tolerated?

JOHNSON: I had a good working relationship with McKinney Russell, who respected constructive dissent. His deputy, Alvin Cohen, and I had a less cordial relationship. McKinney visited me every few months and enjoyed meeting my contacts. He spoke excellent German and had a phenomenal memory. He impressed journalists and academics by reminding them what they had been talking about during his last visit and then picking up the dialogue exactly where they had left off. I was promoted when I left Heidelberg. When I returned to Washington, McKinney asked me to work for him. We have remained friends.

Q: Who controlled your budget?

JOHNSON: Because the Heidelberg Amerika Haus was a bi-national institution, it received most of its funding from the German federal, state and city governments. USIA paid my salary and housing. USIA also provided me with a mini-van and many of my programs. Because I was beholden to the Germans, I also answered to a board of directors, which included the Lord Mayor of Heidelberg, his deputy, the director the American/English studies program at the University of Heidelberg, a senior official from the labor unions, the president of the chamber of commerce, a mid-level bureaucrat from the cultural ministry Baden-Wurttemberg in Stuttgart, the Political Advisor to the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Army in Europe, a dean of the overseas program of the University of Maryland and my USIA boss.

The board met quarterly. I reported to the board on programs and administrative issues. My secretary had ingratiated herself to several German members of the board, which made it difficult to get their permission to fire her. On the other hand, the board was also a wonderful resource for advice. When I was having problems with the Social Democrats, I sought out the wise counsel of the labor union official. The president of the chamber of commerce provided me many good contacts to the business community. I worked closely with the University of Maryland dean on several major seminars. Hal Ekern, the USAREUR political advisor (POLAD), and I became close friends. We collaborated on numerous civil-military events. However my most satisfying relationship was with the Deputy Mayor, Hans-Georg Gerken. When the Haus was under attack by leftist students and budget-cutting bureaucrats, he always stood by me. I remember after one particularly bleak assessment, we retreated to a Gasthaus for wine. He turned to me and said, "We are friends. Call me Georg." In a culture where distance accompanies rank, I accepted his offer gratefully and took it as a real compliment.

Q: Did you have funding problems?

JOHNSON: USIA Bonn was continually looking for ways to cut costs and the German-Americans Institutes were always under the gun. The Germans, on the other hand, never wavered in their commitment to the GAIs. In the late 1980s USIA-Germany pulled out the American officers who were directors of the GAIs and cut off all funding. I am not certain how the other GAIs have fared, but the German board of directors of the Heidelberg house hired a very able German director and was very successful in raising millions of DM. Today the Heidelberg GAI, renamed the Schurmann Gesellschaft, is a very important cultural and educational organization. In fact, the building is more attractive than ever.

Q: Getting back to the student protests, was there a driving force behind these protests or did this just sort of rise up?

JOHNSON: There were several forces, including genuine indignation about U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. Many of the ideas and tactics of the student protesters were copied from Berkeley and the protest movement in the United States. I think it's fair to say the Gaullist movement from France influenced the protests inspiring anti-US sentiments. The French gained a certain favor among the German students without, perhaps, their even knowing it. There was a long history of pacifism in Germany in the post-war period. It was not the first anti-war movement. There had been a major anti-war movement when Germany rearmed and joined NATO. Marxism and German romanticism were factors in the protest movement. Someone once said that the French armies control the continent, the British navy dominates the sea, and the Germans command the clouds. German university towns were full of fuzzy-minded Marxist philosophers, some of whom were eventually victimized by hard-liners. In the 1970s Herbert Marcuse was treated very rudely in Germany.

There was one more factor motivating the protesters which is often overlooked. The leadership of the protest movement was from my generation, children of parents who were soldiers and civil servants during the Third Reich. Unlike Japan and Austria, during the 1950s and 1960s, Germany underwent a successful reeducation process during which it confronted Nazi crimes. The U.S. had been the foremost finger-wagger. During the Vietnam War young Germans, who were tired of feeling guilty for the crimes of their parents, saw Americans mistreating innocent civilians and backing a corrupt authoritarian regime. Young Germans washed their hands of their parents' deeds. It was payback time.

By the 70s most of the original leaders of the student revolt had burned out. Not long after we arrived in Heidelberg, I received a call from Hannelore, a secretary I had worked with in RIAS when I was a student at the Free University. She told me that she was studying sociology at the FU and would like to visit me. Would it be okay if she brought her friend, Eckert, former student revolutionary, she asked. I responded that I looked forward to seeing her and meeting her friend. By the end of the weekend, Hannelore and I were no longer speaking to one another. She spouted one Marxist cliché after another and was full of self-righteousness. Eckert, on the other hand, told me he liked his job at IBM and thought that the student revolt had become self-destructive. He and I got along famously. Eckert and Hannelore, who has shed her former radicalism, are still in contact with Carolyn and me.

Q: Did the protesters ever take you by surprise?

JOHNSON: Just once. It was the first day of the spring semester in 1973. I had left the Amerika Haus to visit a sick employee. After I left his home I decided to have lunch with my family. I drove by the Amerika Haus at about noon and I saw the Viet Cong flag hanging for the balcony of the Amerika Haus. Being a very perceptive person, I surveyed the situation and thought that it was odd, so I went to the nearby police station. The police told me that students had quietly and quickly taken over the Haus. It was a brilliant commando operation. About 50 students had come down in small groups down the Hauptstrasse. My near sighted cloak room attendant thought they had come to see to an exhibit. One employee however had barricaded herself in my office on the third floor and had called the police.

A German police unit, called a "Hundertschaft," a 100 policemen in riot gear, had been mobilized. The Deputy Mayor and I joined the police across the street from the Amerika Haus. For about an hour we let the students weigh the consequences in case they were thinking about sacking the Haus. Time was on our side. The Deputy Mayor, Chief of Police and I agreed to allow the students to return to the university provided they caused no damage to the Haus. Meanwhile the policemen rattled their clubs against their shields. In good German fashion, the leaders of the action stationed themselves at the door and confiscated any books or other property the youngsters attempted to liberate. My staff and I were impressed with the thoughtful selection of books the students had wanted to pilfer. The Amerika Haus had the last laugh: The occupation of the Haus had clearly been a publicity stunt. Ironically, for the first time since the war, the newspapers went on strike that day. Thus by the time dailies resumed publication later in the week the occupation of the Amerika Haus was no longer newsworthy.

Q: I assume the German police were very supportive of our official presence.

JOHNSON: I had wonderful relations with the local and state police. They were middle class people who detested student radicalism and who appreciated the guarantee against Soviet expansionism which American forces provided their country. Once to show my gratitude I invited a group of uniformed police to the American Rod and Gun Club. I also invited an equal number of U.S. Army MPs from USAREUR headquarters. I asked both the Americans and the Germans to bring their side arms. I owned a pistol, although I never carried it for self-protection. I placed the Germans on one side of a long table and the Americans on the other side. I said "Put your guns down on the table, now walk around the other side of the table and take the other guy's gun and go out and shoot." The Germans had never fired a big 45. Kaboom, kaboom, kaboom, although they were not hitting anything they were having wonderful time firing big pistols. The MPs on the other hand had never fired a Walther, a much smaller weapon than the Colt 45. Pop, pop, pop the German pistol kicked less and made much smaller holes in the target but was more accurate than the Colt. After the shooting I provided lots of beer and sausages. We had a lot of fun that afternoon.

Q: Did you do any consular work in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Very little. I had not taken the consular course in Washington and was not

authorized to act as a consular officer. I did verify the identity of a number of US citizens submitting absentee ballots during the 1972 election and facilitate the replacement of lost passports. One Saturday morning I received a call from the police informing me that an American woman had been killed the previous evening by a bus. It seems that – I have forgotten her name – was living with a couple of Germans at the edge of town and that she had gotten off a bus in the dark and walked into the path of a car. She was dead on arrival at the local hospital. The authorities could not find any identification on her and her German companions could not provide the address of her next of kin. Later that morning our mystery was solved when a Turkish taxi cab driver turned in her purse which he had seen at the edge of the road. In addition to her US drivers license, the purse contained several hundred dollars in American and German currency. Her remains were repatriated a few days later.

Q: Speaking of Americans, did you encounter any “ugly Americans” in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: The city had its share of noisy GIs, but they were a minor nuisance. The only time I had a confrontation with one of our countrymen was in Ecuador in 1969. After attending a Student Affairs Officers’ conference in Quito, I was on my way to Guayaquil by train-tram. It was a beautiful trip on narrow gage railroad from the nation’s political capital to its commercial capital. On one particularly steep decline we rounded a curve and in front of us on the track was a campesino on a mule with pack horse. Instead of bailing out and rolling into the ravine, the farmer tried to outdistance the tram, which in spite of squealing brakes, quickly overtook him, killing his horse and slamming him into stone wall along the tracks. Crew and passengers got out to help the poor fellow. A policeman put his mule out of its misery. As several men gently placed the campesino on a blanket and lifted him onto the tram, an American tourist began to take pictures. The Ecuadorians looked at the gringo in angry disbelief. I ordered him to immediately put away his camera. For some reason, he threatened “to report me to the embassy.” I told him I was the embassy. Had he persisted in taking pictures, the Ecuadorians might well have attacked him.

Q: Back to the Vietnam War, how did you feel personally about that conflict?

JOHNSON: Not wise enough, not soon enough. I was never a hawk, but I guess I just didn’t know enough about it to realize how un-winnable it was until it was too late. But it certainly affected my staff, and limited our programming. As I mentioned earlier, my staff and I had very limited access to the University of Heidelberg. I opened the House to skeptical youth. I was told I was doing so at a risk. For example, at a time when sit-ins were popular, I advertised a “play-in”-- a jam session. Turn out was excellent, as was press coverage. I found that I could reach small groups of students with carefully targeted programs on culture and the humanities.

If I may skip ahead a couple years, I will relate how I finally got onto the University of Heidelberg campus officially. A student contact asked me to give a talk on American voting patterns at a club. I prepared a provocative presentation. The morning of the event, I turned on American Forces Network and heard President Nixon announce that American forces had just mined the harbors of Hanoi and Haiphong. I phoned my contact and offered to cancel my program. He urged me to come anyway. He thought that the students were as weary of protesting

the war as the U.S. was of fighting it. I arrived exactly on time, ordered a stiff drink and read a short press release from the White House describing the military action the president had just ordered. Silence. The students looked at one another and shrugged. Most had not heard the news. Most did not read a newspaper. I gave my talk and engaged in lively discussion with my audience. Afterwards I joined some students at the bar when one very large fellow approached me a bit menacingly. "Do you know what I am?" he slurred.

No I responded but I suspect you will tell me," I replied.

"I am a Communist. (Pause) Do you know why I am a Communist?" he belched.

"Okay, why are you a Communist?" I asked.

"Because my father is a big deal in the Christian Democratic Union." (a conservative political party).

I am not sure what I responded but Otto became "my Red". He accepted invitations to events at the Amerika Haus and greeted me warmly when we ran into one another on the street. Like most radicals of his generation, I assume today that Otto belongs to the Rotary Club and drives a Mercedes at environmentally-degrading speeds on the autobahn.

Q: Were you able to put on any purely cultural events at the University of Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Of course we arranged for poets and writers to speak on campus. One evening the head of culture for the city of Mannheim and I offered a John Cage concert in the prestigious great hall of the university. The program drew a fairly large audience. I am not sure if we impressed or confused our listeners. The music was pretty strange. A few days later my secretary came hurrying into my office with a very worried expression on her face. It seems at Dr. Dr. von something or another demanded to speak to me and he was furious. I listened to about a half hour of a you-Americans-have-no-culture tirade, before I got in a word and then an apology. It seems that the piano we used for the concert and had retuned for the Cage music belonged not to the university but to the Bach Society and that the tuner had failed to retune the instrument as promised. Thus when the staid members of the Bach Society had their Thursday evening rehearsal, the great Steinway produced some very unexpected sounds.

Q: That was headquarters of our forces in Europe?

JOHNSON: The overall headquarters, EUCOM, European Command, was in Stuttgart. In Heidelberg we had the U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) and 7th Army headquarters. The commanding general was a four star, Michael Davidson, who had led our incursion into Cambodia. He was a fine officer and an inspiring leader. Carolyn and I were friends with Davidson's deputy, Art Collins, a three star, and his wife. Collins, a gifted organizer and a strong motivator, worked tirelessly to raise morale and restore professionalism in USAREUR. The Collins occupied a modest house just outside the fence from headquarters. When terrorists struck the compound in 1973 the blast blew in the picture window of their dining room while the couple was enjoying an early supper. Both dived under the table when they saw the flash. The drop leaf of the oak table was down which protected them from a lethal barrage of glass. When we sat at

the table I could see the spot where one of the bombs went off, which was probably less than 50 yards away.

Davidson and Collins faced a real up hill battle rebuilding USAREUR., which was starved for material and human resources during the Vietnam War. The U.S. Army was at its low point. Many of the soldiers assigned to Germany had served in Vietnam and brought their drug addiction with them. We had particularly severe problems in the cities with soldiers trafficking and consuming drugs and sometimes victimizing German civilians. Robberies of taxi drivers were an all too common occurrence. To combat drug abuse, the army introduced random drug testing. One unit that showed a particularly high rate of abuse was a helicopter maintenance unit, something I thought of every time I rode in an army chopper.

Q: How were the enlisted men faring in Germany in the early 70s.

JOHNSON: Because particularly the Army had put nearly all its resources into the Vietnam War, USAREUR had been starved for funds. Much of our equipment was in terrible shape. For example, I took some German journalists to a firing exercise. When a cobra helicopter hovered overhead fired its Gatling gun, one round escaped the muzzle before the weapon jammed. A tank took up the fire support mission but it broke down and had to be hauled away. Our men were living in barracks that had housed the Hessians before they departed for the New World to fight George Washington and his men. One evening Carolyn and I were watching the film "The French Connection" at a barracks movie theater. During one of the final scenes the good guys are chasing the bad guys through an abandoned warehouse in which plaster is peeling from the walls and filthy water is leaking from the ceiling. One GI brought down the house when he shouted, "Hey, that's my barracks."

During the four years I was in Heidelberg the value of the dollar kept dropping which was really hard on the enlisted men who had brought their families over at their own expense and were paying rent which got more expensive from month to month.

Q: So were you involved in civil-military affairs as director of the Amerika Haus?

JOHNSON: Perhaps more by chance than design. USIA Germany was very loosely administered out of our embassy in Bonn. Those of us in the field (Cologne, Hamburg, Hanover, Berlin, Nuremberg, Munich, Tuebingen, Stuttgart, Freiburg, Saarbrucken and Heidelberg) had precious little input into the annual country plan, which was USIA Germany's contract with USIA Washington. USIA Bonn allowed the bi-national center directors (Cologne, Hanover, Nuremberg, Tuebingen, Freiburg, Saarbrucken and Heidelberg) to program independently. The Branch Public Affairs Officers in Berlin, Munich, Hamburg and Stuttgart were subject to greater control by the Country Public Affairs Officer and his deputy. The lack of communication was in part due to poor management by our bosses in Bonn and in part a tradition of letting the officers in the field act on their own initiative.

Several of us in posts near large military units worked closely with American Army and Air Force personnel to develop civil-military programs. USAREUR established a youth group called KONTAKT for enlisted men. (There still were not many women in uniform.) KONTAKT

brought together young Germans and GIs for social gatherings and civic projects. I helped establish the Heidelberg chapter of KONTAKT, but given my age – I was in my early 30s – and my rank – USAREUR treated me as a colonel, although my equivalent grade was only that of a major – I did not participate in KONTAKT events, many of which took place in the Amerika Haus. While KONTAKT probably never had a total of more than a few hundred members, it was significant in that after a hiatus caused by the Vietnam War, the organization helped get GIs out of the barracks and back into touch with German civilians.

Once I got to know my way around headquarters USAREUR, I decided to foster ties between German and American professionals in law, education and medicine. In law, I brought together the law school of the University of Heidelberg and the Max Plank Institute for Comparative Law with the USAREUR Adjutant General office. My chief allies were the director the Max Plank Institute, whose name I have forgotten, and Brigadier General Will Pearson, the USAREUR Adjutant General. German professors and American military attorneys conversed about legal issues at gatherings at the Max Plank Institute and at the Amerika Haus. One speaker was a young captain who had helped defend Lieutenant Calley at his war crimes trial. Following a luncheon program at the American officers' club we visited an U.S. Army stockade in Mannheim. One of German law students had long hair and a beard. The stockade guards wondered if he might be dangerous. I told them that Hartmut was a co-president of the local chapter of the American Field Service and was quite friendly. Today he is a senior judge in Hannover.

In the area of education, I fostered ties between the American Studies programs of the universities of Heidelberg and Mannheim with the University of Maryland extension program at USAREUR. I set up numerous programs at the Amerika Haus and invited visiting American professors to dinners at my home with their German counterparts. I also established a series of weekend seminars at a retreat house in the rustic village of St. Martin on the Weinstrasse about 50 miles west of Heidelberg. The themes of the seminars focused on American Jewish and Black authors as well as current trends in American writing. About 50 professors and students participated in each seminar which started with a wine tasting Friday evening and concluded at noon on Sunday. Each evening there was fierce competition between Bacchus and Minerva. Accordingly I asked that Saturday evening everyone walk, and not drive, into and back from nearby St. Martin.

In the area of medicine, the Germans were much better equipped than the Americans. The only U.S. medical facility in the area was a modest hospital. George Patton died there following a car accident in 1945 outside Mannheim. However the hospital had a number of excellent American doctors and a strong administrative staff, including Lt. Bill Orbello, whom I served with in Asuncion. I arranged visits by the Germans and Americans to one another's facilities. The Germans were in the process of building a multi-billion DM polyclinic at the University of Heidelberg, which had facilities that made the cash-strapped Americans roll their eyes with envy.

During my four years in Heidelberg I worked with two State Department political advisors (POLADs) to USAREUR, Hal Ekern and Jim Moffett. Hal, a veteran of the Italian campaign in World War II, was the best POLAD I ever knew. He had a drawer full of commendations and a head full of knowledge regarding military issues that encompassed grand strategy and small unit

tactics. He also knew Germany and its political system. Most POLADS are treated with deference by the military, but Hal Ekern was accorded the honor of being an insider. I had Hal speak to political scientists and invited him and his gracious wife Marge to many dinners at my home. He sat on the board of directors of the Amerika Haus and was a source of much cautious counsel. If I needed a contact in USAREUR, Hal and his efficient secretary Ingrid put me in touch with the right person. Hal died in March 2006 and was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

USIA Bonn recognized the importance of civil-military affairs and encouraged officers in the cities with a U.S. military presence to cooperate fully with their American and German counterparts. We had several conferences at EUCOM Stuttgart hosted by “Doc” Larson, a senior Department of Defense civil servant, and the EUCOM PAO Navy Captain Picket Lumpkin, a very able public affairs professional. Larson’s specialty was civil-military affairs. He was a best civil-military affairs officer I ever worked with. Lumpkin was a first-class press officer. Both were completely fluent in German.

Prior to a conference at EUCOM Lumpkin warned us that we might be disturbed by a lunatic brigadier general, who was prone to shouting and taking over conference rooms. He said we should ignore him. Lumpkin confided to me after the meeting that the officer in question was George Patton Jr.

Q: How would you rate the quality of the US military public affairs officers you worked with?

JOHNSON: Public affairs was not a prestigious assignment in our armed forces. Most PAOs in the military did it as a secondary specialty. An officer got promoted for commanding troops or moving material, not cultivating journalists who, particularly in the Vietnam War era, were often viewed as the enemy. Neither the Army nor Air Force devoted much effort to training officers in foreign languages. For example, the night USAREUR Headquarters was bombed none of the public affairs officers was able to read a statement in German to the waiting media. Military officers were reluctant to deal with political issues. They were deathly afraid of embarrassing their command by making a misstatement. One public screw up could end an officer’s career. Soldiers tend to think in quantitative terms, e.g. so many rounds of such and such a caliber shell on X amount of terrain and the enemy will be neutralized. In the Foreign Service we were much better prepared to deal with issues that were inherently ambiguous. I couldn’t always convince my counterparts in uniform that although we were confronting no-win situations, we needed to simply persevere.

Sometimes the most sincere military public affairs officer made a mess of things. The worst press the local command received in Heidelberg concerned a youthful indiscretion on the part of one of our soldiers. One Sunday afternoon a couple young GIs and their German girlfriends were picnicking on the banks of the Neckar. Apparently no one was feeling any pain when one of the girls said she wanted to pet one of the swans swimming nearby. No problem. The gallant soldier waded into the river and swam out to the birds. Apparently feeling threatened, one of the swans pecked fiercely at the soldier who panicked and broke its neck. The mortal combat was witnessed by a number of animal-loving Germans. The MPs were summoned and the GI was arrested.

The officer in charge of community relations at the local barracks had a swan brought down from somewhere near the US base at Bremerhaven. With great fanfare and abject apologies to the community, the bird was released onto the Neckar. Unfortunately the local swans vigorously rejected the newcomer. The German press had a field day at our expense.

Q: Were you consulted by your military colleagues regarding this matter?

JOHNSON: Fortunately I was out of town or I might have shared in the fiasco.

Speaking of fiascos, while on home leave in Portland, I noticed that a local firm called itself the Heidelberg Brewery. I phoned the marketing director and explained that I was the director of the American center in Heidelberg and that I would much appreciate it if he would send me some promotional material. Upon my return to Heidelberg I found a large box of coasters, mugs, ash trays and T-shirts. I distributed the items to German contacts, including to the director the local brewery. I ran into the executive on the street a few days later and asked cheerfully, "Dr. Weber, I hope you received the Heidelberg Beer mug and ash tray I sent you last week."

"Oh, thank you so much, Herr Johnson, we are suing them," he declared.

"You are what?!" I asked in disbelief.

"We are suing them," he continued, "an Oregon brewery has nothing to do with Heidelberg!"

"Herr Dr. Weber," I responded wearily, "I trust you realize that you will need a favorable verdict in an American court. Lots of luck."

Q: Did you cooperate with German military civil affairs officers?

JOHNSON: My counterpart in Heidelberg was a Captain Gieseke, a former U-boat officer who said his first view of the United States was through a periscope. "Jacksonville looked so peaceful." He was the spokesman for the Territorial Command South HQ, which coordinated the activities of the very excellent ready reserves in the southern half of the FRG. I went on several maneuvers with Gieseke. We had a great time hiking through the forest behind the troops. Once he played a very cruel joke on me. As we were headed up a long hill, he told me to go ahead and that he would catch up. As I was innocently walking past a patch of dense underbrush a machine gun firing blanks opened up on me. I must have jumped two feet in the air. Gieseke and the ambushers reveled in their "Schadenfreude" (mirth caused by pain).

I also befriended the French liaison officer, a lieutenant colonel, at USAREUR. I regret that I don't recall his name. He told me that he had been in Indo-china during the post-war years and had fought at Dien-Bien-Phu. Prior to being transferred to Heidelberg he had been at Fort Benning where he taught counter-insurgency warfare. He was convinced of the futility of our involvement in Vietnam and said it would tear his heart out when he saw the shiny sedans with the two officers drive slowly through the streets of the housing area at Fort Benning on their way to break the awful news to a spouse that she was a now a widow.

Q: What was the reaction of your contacts in USAREUR when Saigon fell?

JOHNSON: That was a night to remember. Carolyn and I were invited to the home of a colonel for a dinner. We were the only civilians. Our host and the other colonels had all served several tours in Vietnam. They had lost a lot of comrades in the war. Carolyn and I thought the dinner would be a real downer. Actually there was a feeling of relief in the room. The war had certainly not ended as the officers had wanted it to, but at least it was over. There was a feeling of closure.

Q: What were your relations with the media?

JOHNSON: Heidelberg had two dailies and Mannheim had one. There was no local radio station nor TV station in the city. Although I developed excellent relations with three newspapers, opportunities to place material with the German media were very limited. The German edition of the German language edition of the now defunct magazine "Psychology Today" was edited in Heidelberg. I got to know the editor. One day he dropped by my office and asked for my comments regarding an article he planned to include in the next edition. I don't recall the nationality of the author, but the writer argued that Americans had become a war mongering people. I asked the editor if he would make use of material refuting the article. He responded that he always tried to be fair and that if the text I provided were credible, he would print both pieces in the same issue. I explained my problem to USIA Bonn. My colleagues in Bonn sent an urgent request to USIA Washington which produced a most rational refutation of the war mongering piece. The war mongering piece was never printed in "Psychology Today."

One institution which I inherited from my predecessor and carried on with some success was the German-American Press Lunches, which met quarterly at a local Gasthaus. The Amerika Haus provided speakers on timely issues. German reporters, public affairs officers from USAREUR, and community leaders attended the round tables.

I cultivated several top journalists, including the editor of a Heidelberg daily. We spent a lot of time together. One Sunday he and I set off to an air show at the American air base at Ramstein. Traffic on the Autobahn slowed to a crawl 50 kilometers from the turn off. We assumed that there had been a serious accident. To our amazement nearly all the cars were headed to the air show. Thus at the height of American involvement in Vietnam, the Ramstein air show attracted over 300,000 Germans. These were mostly middle class families. The Germans love American ice cream and of course hot dogs and hamburgers, but particularly ice cream. Mounds of ice cream wrappers six feet high covered garbage cans. I am sure they also enjoyed the static exhibits and stunts by our fliers. Our outing generated a feature story noting that grass roots German-American relations were really pretty solid.

I organized field trips for journalists to attend joint military field exercises and tours of the iron curtain along the German-Czech border. USAREUR provided air and ground transportation and knowledgeable guides. I recall one dismal evening I was driving a group of newsmen to a briefing at a well concealed command center. As I rounded a curve on a back road I sighted a small red reflector in my path. I skidded to a halt only a few feet behind an American armored personnel carrier. I jumped out and banged on the side of the APC with a tire iron. I soldier

opened a hatch. “You are parked in the middle of a farm road, “I roared, still shaking from fright.

“No, I am not,” he retorted, “This a field... isn’t it?”

I hit the thin layer of asphalt with the tire iron. “Does this sound like a field,” I shouted.

“Damn, I am sorry, Sir,” the soldier replied. The hatch banged shut and the APC lumbered off in a cloud of smelly exhaust toward some nearby woods. We continued on to our briefing and then enjoyed a hearty dinner in a Gasthaus. Accidents between civilian and military vehicles were common during maneuvers. The results were predictable. Sedans are no match for tanks.

Q: How serious was drug abuse among GIs in the early 70s?

JOHNSON: I never saw any statistics but I know from talking with USAREUR officers I know that it was regarded a serious impediment to the readiness of our forces. Some of the soldiers brought their addiction to Europe from assignments to Vietnam. Others were already abusing drugs when they entered the service and still others turned to drugs out of boredom while on duty in Germany. After the introduction of spot check tests using urine analysis, one disheartening report listed a helicopter maintenance unit near the top of list of units with the highest rate of drug abuse. I suspect that alcohol however remained the number one drug of choice throughout this period. Sometimes the military was its own worst enemy. For example, service clubs routinely provided happy hours with ten cent drinks. A simple DUI conviction ended the careers of many officers and NCOs.

Q: How did drug abuse in the US forces play in the German media?

JOHNSON: There were not many stories in the Heidelberg and Mannheim press. However the public and particularly the city governments were well aware of the problem and I certain there was a good deal of apprehension in the German public. Journalists realized that the US Army had a much worse problem than the Air Force and that the closer the Army units were to the Czech and East German borders, the greater their level of readiness.

Incidentally during the cold war East Germany not only gave safe haven to terrorists of the Bader-Meinhof gang but it also facilitated the flow of narcotics to the Federal Republic. In the 1970s a very large portion of the drugs, particularly heroin, being consumed in Germany was coming from Turkey, which was still growing a lot of opium poppies. Turkish couriers would fly into Schoenefeld Airport in East Berlin and take the subway into West Berlin and then continue their trips by land to West Germany.

Q: Weren’t there border controls coming into West Berlin from East Berlin?

JOHNSON: No. The US, UK, France and the West Germans maintained that Berlin was one city and that the border (wall) had been built illegally by the East Germans, therefore the western authorities did not subject people coming out of East Berlin to customs control. Another reason why there was no customs control by the west is that S-Bahn and U-Bahn trains ran under East Berlin on their way from one West Berlin destination to another, i.e. a portion of East Berlin

bulged into West Berlin in the center of the city.

Q: There must have been some negative coverage of race problems in our military.

JOHNSON: There was and again the number of race related incidents was far higher in the Army than in the Air Force and worse around training areas and in garrison cities. Many German bars discriminated against black soldiers, in part because they didn't want fights between whites and black GIs on their premises. It was against the law in Germany to refuse someone entry to a public establishment because of the color of their skin. I remember stories in the local press about black soldiers being turned away from bars. On several occasions a black two star general in charge of personnel at USAREUR put on an afro wig to test the entry policy of Heidelberg bars. If he was turned away, he called the lord mayor and complained.

One more point on the subject before we leave it. There was a lot of prejudice on the part of Germans toward non-whites. We endured plenty of very hypocritical finger wagging by our hosts regarding racial tensions in our military and in the United States. Offspring of black GIs and Germans endured insults by their German classmates.

Q: You were in Germany during the summer Olympics of 1972. Did you attend the games in Munich?

JOHNSON: No I dislike crowds, but I spent a lot of time at the Paraplegic Olympics which were held in Heidelberg about a month before the Munich games. The US fielded a large contingent of very determined athletes. A number of the athletes were Vietnam vets. The ambassador and many of the USAREUR generals attended events. I tried unsuccessfully to get the wives of the officers to join the appreciative audiences, but few responded to my invitations. Perhaps the human vestiges of the Vietnam War were too painful for them to witness.

Q: Were journalists suspicious of you?

JOHNSON: I had to confront suspicion everywhere. In fact, academics were generally more difficult to approach than reporters. But sometimes journalists could be rather blatant in their mistrust. I recall one instance during a garden party at my home when a reporter asked to use my phone. I directed her to the phone in the den. In a few minutes she returned to the garden and said, "You are still out here." I responded, "Does that surprise you?"

"Well," she replied, "I heard a click on the phone and thought you were listening to my conversation." Germans can be so tactful.

Q: You mentioned earlier in the interview that Germans listened to the American Forces Network. Did AFN have a large audience in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Many Germans tuned in AFN for the music. Journalists told me they also monitored the news which they judged to be factual. I personally was very impressed with the quantity and quality of coverage of the Watergate scandal on AFN. For me it was AFN's finest hour. I encouraged my German contacts to listen to the Watergate

hearings on AFN.

Q: Were you much involved with student exchanges at the secondary school level?

JOHNSON: I had very good relations with the American Field Service. We did a lot of events with AFS at the Amerika Haus. The chapter president and his wife are the god parents of our older son. We remain close friends. For reasons I never understood, Youth for Understanding, which also runs a student exchange program, kept its distance from the Heidelberg Amerika Haus. Later when I served in Frankfurt, YFU refused my overtures to host joint events.

I tried unsuccessfully to implement contacts between Heidelberg secondary schools and the local U.S. Army high school. The Germans wanted American pupils to attend classes and participate in weekend seminars but the American youngsters would not come out of their ghetto. It was a shame, because we could have developed some very useful programs at that grassroots level.

Because the German secondary schools were plagued with a lot of drug abuse, I brought teachers together with experts from USAREUR. One American expert was a chaplain who spoke fairly good German. The Germans referred to pot as “shit”, which was the accepted German slang, but it took a while for the man of the cloth to realize what they were talking about. Finally it dawned on him and he used the American word several times with great emphasis.

Incidentally I organized a series of lectures on German-American relations for the PTA of the American school in Heidelberg. Response was tepid. Anti-U.S. demonstrations and a radical devaluation of the dollar caused the American military families to stay in their ghettos and many were not interested in hearing about the host country. I spoke to the PTA on problems in German-American relations both domestically and internationally. My carefully crafted presentation elicited no questions. Finally a woman strode up to me purposefully and asked if I could respond to something that had been bothering her all evening. I was delighted. I had reached some one after all. Her question was, “Why do you wear your wedding ring on your right hand?” Completely deflated, I responded that I had courted my wife in Paraguay where wedding bands are worn on the right hand and after leaving that country I had not switched the ring to my right hand.

Q: Did you do much public speaking to German audiences while you were in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: The U.S. Army had helped build a conference center in St. Martin, a lovely village in the Pfalz. I spoke to seminars for military personnel on a regular basis on the American political process. I also addressed an audience of German officers in Heidelberg. In retrospect I don't think my presentations were very good, but at least I became a better public speaker. Incidentally one of the differences I noticed between State and USIA officers was that while the former are more adept at report writing, the latter are better at public speaking.

In 1974 I tried to give a course in writing at the University of Heidelberg but student radicals warned the director of the institute that they would disrupt my classes, so the course was canceled.

Q: When you were running the Institute, what were the students, not just the students but other people, what sorts of things were they interested in about the United States? What did they like, didn't like?

JOHNSON: I think the one thing that always stood up was the quality of our higher education. I counseled many German students about studying in the United States. Most students wanted to go to Cornell, Harvard, Princeton, Berkeley. My job was to persuade students to look at other options, such as the University of Indiana for music, the University of Tennessee for geology and Washington University in St. Louis for journalism. Everyone wanted scholarships and I was able to find quite a bit of money. In spite of the Vietnam War, a university master's degree from an American university, an MA or Ph.D. was very highly regarded in Germany.

Q: Did you get any impression -- you had the very famous University of Heidelberg there -- about German education at the university level at that time? That is, how it worked, how the professors operated?

JOHNSON: As I mentioned earlier, I did my master's degree at the Free University in Berlin so I had some first-hand knowledge of higher education in Germany. The university system when I entered the FU in 1962 was still quite elite and small. When the Social Democratic (SPD) government came to power in 1972, it opened admissions to the universities. Within in a few years, university enrollment quadrupled and, in spite of a massive building program, the universities were not prepared for huge increase in the number of students. So I think the quality of education dropped in many disciplines. Medicine, dentistry, architecture and a few other subjects were protected from the onslaught by rigorous entrance exams, but many colleges of social sciences and humanities were overwhelmed.

Students were frustrated because they could not get the courses they needed. There were too few professors and lecture halls were overcrowded. Too few dorm rooms were available, forcing students to compete for scarce apartments and private rooms which became increasingly expensive. The failure to implement a well planned increase in the size and diversity of the universities drove some students into the arms of the radical Left.

It was time for the university professors to be de-deified. Unfortunately, and it happened more in Berlin which was far more radical than Heidelberg, there was a lot of intimidation and even physical threats. A wonderful professor of mine, Richard Loewenthal, was a victim of the self-righteous purges by the radical Left. Loewenthal, a Jew, escaped Germany in 1934 and spent the war in the United States. He was a leading authority on the Soviet Union. During the time I was at the FU, one had to get to the lecture hall early to find a seat. In the late 1960s he was harassed and forced to leave the building through a window, which was deeply humiliating. Kurt Sontheimer, another famous political scientist, quit the FU for quieter surroundings at the University of Munich. I can't name all the professors who were persecuted by the bigots. The University of Heidelberg was less radical than the FU.

Q: Was there a corresponding increase in activities by right-wing students in reaction to the leftist radicalism?

JOHNSON: No. In the minds of post-war Germans the radical right was associated with Nazism. There was no discernable neo-Nazi movement at German universities. The neo-Nazi groups in the Federal Republic were blue collar, based in southern Germany and very small. Most of their propaganda came from Nazi groups in the United States. The Germans would have liked for the US Government to have cracked down on the tiny but noisy American Nazi movement, but Uncle Sam was constrained from doing so by our constitution.

The “schlagende Verbindungen”, (dueling fraternities), ala “The Student Prince”, still existed in Heidelberg and other universities, but although politically conservative, they devoted themselves to drinking and professional advancement, not politics.

When I was a student at the Free University it was revealed that Eberhard Diepgen, the president of the student body, an important position in a university founded on co-determination among students, faculty and administrators, was a member of dueling fraternity. Opponents of the dueling fraternities organized an “Urabstimmung”, a recall vote, and Diepgen, was voted out of office. Unfortunately the action occurred just before JFK spoke at the FU, thus there was no student body president to be part of the welcoming delegation. Diepgen however had the last laugh. He eventually became Lord Mayor of Berlin on the Christian Democratic (CDU) ticket.

Q: While you were in Germany in the early 70s the radical right did make a sort of comeback politically, didn't it?

JOHNSON: There was the German National Party and the Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann but neither amounted to anything. The Federal Republic learned from the Weimar Republic that lots of little parties lead to instability which in turn opens the door to radicalism, thus to be represented in a state or in the federal parliament, a party needs to garner 5% of the vote. And if you look back at the history of Nazism, you will note that it was full of factions and that one man who held the party together and made it a national movement was Adolf Hitler. In the post-war years the radical right was hamstrung by petty infighting and by the lack of a charismatic leader. Moreover the German government came down hard on anti-democratic organizations. I am reminded of the satirical column by Art Buchwald in which the American Communist Party elected an FBI agent as its leader because the FBI has so many men in the organization that it formed the strongest faction. The same was true of the radical right in Germany, only it was the Bundesverfassungsschutz (Federal Constitutional Protection Agency) that kept a very active surveillance of neo-Nazi activity and of course also on the radical Left.

Q: Did you have any contacts with the dueling fraternities in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: The dueling fraternities were conservative but never radical, much less Nazi. In fact, they were banned during the Third Reich, because the Nazis had an absolute monopoly on power. I never attended a duel but participated in a couple of “Herrnabende” (gentlemen's evenings) with students and well heeled alumni. We drank a lot of beer and talked. I could not identify with these institutions which were clearly relics of a bygone era. I preferred to devote my time and energy to trying to reach members of the center and the moderate Left.

But one final reference to the fraternities, every time I visited one of the villas that housed a

fraternity I was drawn to old photos of the students in their regalia, which included special hats, colored sashes and sabers. Once I turned over photos from 1913 and 1914. There were crosses after most of the names—mute evidence of the very high toll World War I took among the graduates. Since, as already noted, the Nazis banned the fraternities, there were no similar photos from the years leading up to World War II.

Q: Did you do a lot of official entertaining in your home and garden?

JOHNSON: We had many dinner and garden parties. I received a miserably small allowance from USIA Bonn thus I paid most of the costs myself, which was very unjust. Our home was one of the few places in Heidelberg where university professors, labor leaders, business executives, journalists and military officers could meet as equals. We had some wonderful parties. Carolyn and I enjoyed watching the Germans from different social classes interact. In Heidelberg and later when we served in Frankfurt our home seemed to be one of very few places where high level corporate executives would break bread with labor union organizers.

My father baptized our older son in the Peter's Church in the old city. Although it was a warm spring day, it was cold inside the medieval church. Patrick, clad only in a light baptismal gown lent to us by his German God mother, was not a happy camper. Afterwards we hosted a reception in our garden. One of the guests was one of Werner Von Braun's V-2 team at Peenemuende. To my horror many German guests mixed orange juice with the fine French champagne I had purchased from the French commissary in nearby Speyer. The French, by the way sold Wonder Bread in their commissary. Perhaps they used it to fatten their geese.

Q: Did Germans imbibe much at your parties?

JOHNSON: Their real vice was American ice cream which they put away by the gallon. Meanwhile they had not lost their fondness for liquor and so a lot of Scotch and gin was consumed. However Germans are responsible drinkers and they were aware of stiff penalties for drunk driving. No driver's license. No car. Cars and dogs- certainly not children- are at the center of German society.

Early in my tenure in Heidelberg I discovered that the Class VI Agency had its headquarters near the PX. The Class VI provided the U.S. military with liquor. It was a separate agency from the PX. As a Foreign Service Officer I was exempted from the monthly ration of five quarts of liquor. Any time I needed liquor, I presented a cashier's check with a long and thoroughly meaningless obligation number printed on its face. The brand name gin cost 95 cents a liter, bourbon \$1.50 and Scotch \$1.75. Sometimes I supplied colleagues in Bonn with liquor. One shipment, destined for McKinney Russell, the Country Public Affairs Officer, was intercepted by the embassy and he was forced to pay the full retail price by the embassy commissary.

I did use my source of inexpensive Bourbon to foster US exports. I learned as much as I could about the whiskey, purchased a wide selection of Bourbons, and conducted tastings at the Amerika Haus and at professional organizations. I doubt my efforts had much of impact on our trade gap with the Federal Republic but the tastings were a lot of fun and allowed me to address other issues, such as US-Soviet relations.

Q: One would wonder how you stayed sober with liquor that cheap.

JOHNSON: Although the almighty gave me a fondness for wine, beer and liquor he also gave me a propensity for getting terrible hangovers, thus I have never had a drinking problem.

Q: Did you know alcoholics in the Foreign Service?

JOHNSON: Yes. I worked for three. I suspect alcoholism still is a major problem, and not just with officers but also with spouses. The work exposes one continually to drinking. Then there is the stress, loneliness and, in many posts, a lack of social support. I had one colleague who lost his wife to cancer and then was assigned to a one person post where he began to drink heavily. He got smashed just before an interview for an onward assignment to a very desirable job at a post in Scandinavia and of course did not get the job. The last time I saw him, he was sitting in a windowless office at USIA three sheets to the wind at 10:00 a.m.

Q: Did you travel officially outside your consular district?

JOHNSON. I took six political science professors o NATO Headquarters in Brussels for two days of briefing. We traveled in the Chevy van which USIA provided me as my "Dienstwaggon" - office car. USIA at NATO organized substantive briefings by knowledgeable officers from several countries. We spent our evenings enjoying Belgium's tasty beers. It was a terrific program. On the way back to Frankfurt, we stopped in Luxembourg and I showed the professors the American military cemetery with its more than 5,000 white marble crosses and Stars of David. One grave at the front of the cemetery was set apart from the others: General Patton's. One academic said to me, "I had no idea the Americans had lost so many men." I reminded him that the Battle of the Bulge, or the Ardennes Offensive as the Germans called it, was the US's most costly battle during World War II.

Q: How about unofficial travel?

JOHNSON: I won't bore you with the great vacations we enjoyed, but we traveled widely. One trip that is perhaps worth relating was to Budweis to visit my Czech friend Rudi and his family. Rudi had informed the authorities that I was coming and soon after we crossed the border a rather dirty Skoda began tailing us. State security service kept us under observation for three days we were in the area, which in fairness included a major Warsaw Pact airbase. Once I made an unexpected U-turn which almost caused the Czech security officer to have an accident. I immediately stopped and indicated that I had meant no harm.

I also spent a week in the GDR in early 1975. I think I received one of the first diplomatic visas issued to an American after Washington established formal diplomatic relations with East Germany. (There had been a lot of informal contact between State Department officers and the Communist regime but we kept the dialogue very low key.) I drove to Leipzig via Erfurt and Weimar. In Erfurt I met two university students who were delighted to have a long talk with a US diplomat. I warned them that they could get in trouble if they were seen in my company. They were well informed about conditions in the FRG but had lots of questions about the United

States, particularly our economy and political system. That evening I was turned away from a student club because I could not prove I had a university degree. I asked the student doorman how the club's exclusivity jibed with the classless society which the communist regime espoused. He responded with an embarrassed shrug.

Weimar embodies the best and the worst of the German character. It is the city of Goethe and Schiller and birth place of an ill fated democracy. Just outside the city is the concentration camp Buchenwald. Built and used by the Nazis it was also used by the communists after 1945. I met a former inmate who gave me a very personalized tour of the camp. "Hans" was in his early 70s. The Nazis imprisoned him in Buchenwald because he was a Communist. He was liberated by the US Army and although he was a staunch communist, had never forgotten the kindness the GIs showed him. Afterwards Hans invited me for coffee at the train station's café. The waiter ignored Hans's calls for service. Finally Hans confronted the man and announced, "I am an old party member and a survivor of Buchenwald. How dare you embarrass me in front of my American friend!" The waiter took our order with studied indifference. As we parted, Hans said to me sadly, "It wasn't supposed to turn out this way."

In Leipzig I had to turn my windshield wipers on although it was not raining, at least not water. There was fine hail of lignite (brown coal) dust falling from smoke stacks all over the city. Lignite was East Germany's only indigenous fuel supply, and although it was high in sulfur, it was burned with abandon, much to the detriment of the health of the people and their forests.

Q: Did you belong to any civic organizations in Heidelberg or Mannheim, such as Rotary?

JOHNSON: Ah, you touch a raw nerve with that question. A friend of mine invited me to attend a lunch at Rotary so the members could size me up as a possible member. I agreed to speak on "Problems of US-German Relations". I dealt with several rather sensitive issues in my talk, I did not clear the text of my presentation with the embassy. I asked that my remarks be regarded as "off the record." I don't remember what I said but I was candid and provocative. Very pleased with myself, I offered to respond to questions. The silence was deafening. Afterwards I asked my sponsor what I had done wrong. He replied, "You didn't address the subject they wanted to hear about."

"What subject was that?" I asked.

"The roll back of Communism in Europe," he replied.

"But containment, not roll back has been US policy since the late 40s," I sputtered.

"I know. I know. But that does not matter to these guys," he responded wearily.

I was a little hurt by the rejection. However Carolyn told me sweetly that I did not belong in Rotary. She was right.

Later I joined Toastmasters International which met monthly in a gasthaus on the Neckar to help members improve their public speaking skills. There were about 30 Germans and Americans in

our club. Most of the Americans worked at USAREUR. The Germans were primarily business executives who were fluent in English. Although we tried to keep criticism of one another's presentations constructive, a bit of "Schadenfreude" was often present. While the Americans had a better command of English, the Germans were more experienced public speakers and better debaters. Germans appreciate rhetorical flourishes.

Q: Was Marxism a solid force at Heidelberg University?

JOHNSON: At certain institutes, yes. In economics and sociology departments Marxism was quite prevalent. Heidelberg has a very fine school of theology, but the radical left never made inroads there. My father, who was a university professor, spoke to professors and advanced students of theology on religious cults in the United States. I held the very successful program in the garden of our apartment. His thoughtful presentation opened doors for me at the theology school.

Q: Were there any famous authors living in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: No novelists or poets. But Heidelberg was the ancestral home of Albert Speer who, after a stint as Hitler's favorite architect, was promoted to be the minister of armaments during much of World War II. He was a native Heidelberger, and I drove by his house many times, which was on the road behind the castle. One day I just called him up, told him who I was, and said, "May I visit you?" Speer responded, "By all means. Are you married? I said yes and he said bring your wife and we'll have sherry. I asked Speer some questions about his experiences as "Reichsminister" and he signed my copy of his memoirs. We had him to dinner a couple of times at our home and maintained a discreet relationship. I had coffee with him on the last day of my tour of duty in Heidelberg. He was clearly a remarkable intellect. As a young architect he made a pact with the devil and spent 20 years in Spandau Prison.

Q: Did any famous American authors come to Heidelberg while you were there?

JOHNSON: I hosted the Pulitzer Prize winning poet W.D. Snodgrass, but his appeal was limited. James Baldwin and Langston Hughes spoke before a large a large audience in Stuttgart. I don't remember who invited them, but perhaps because they were critics of the administration, USIA did not sponsor the program. I attended the event which consisted mainly of give and take with the audience. Hughes was very frail and left most of the talking to Baldwin, who was at the height of his popularity and was living in Paris. I wanted to ask Baldwin why he didn't return to the United States and participate in the civil rights struggle, but several black GIs were sitting behind me and I remembered that my car was parked a distance from the auditorium.

Q: What about university exchanges? You were mentioning that you were having trouble with the Fulbright. This has always been a very important element in the German/American relationship.

JOHNSON: Apart from the Fulbright program, there were a number of university-to-university exchanges, which were adversely affected by anti-Americanism during the Vietnam War. Another area of exchange concerned purely scientific ties between German and American

institutes. For example the Max Plank Institute for Geophysics was located at the edge of Heidelberg. The institute worked closely with NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration), analyzing moon rocks. I served as a go-between, a glorified courier. Lunar mineral samples were sent by secure means to USAREUR headquarters. My job was to retrieve the rocks from a vault and deliver them to the Max Plank Institute. One of my shipments contained a small quantity of pink lunar dust which looked like women's make-up mixed with ashes.

Q: What about books? Were there problems with books? There certainly were in my days when we had to deal with those clowns from McCarthy's staff. There are books and books. Who chose the books and were there problems in choosing them?

JOHNSON: We received lists of books available from USIA Washington and my librarians choose which books to order. I frequented the "Stars and Stripes" newsstand at the PX and purchased books off the rack, particularly paperbacks. I was criticized by USIA Bonn for buying works that contained material hostile to President Nixon. I responded that the books lent credibility to the library and moreover that I had used funds provided by the Germans to purchase the books. I put Playboy in my library, not because the students were interested in the pictures, and I suppose they were, but because there were excellent interviews in those days.

I made friends with the PX newsstand supplier in Darmstadt, which is half way between Heidelberg and Frankfurt. The supplier provided text books to the universities training Army and Air Force personnel. I worked out an agreement with the supplier whereby I could have surplus text books and professional books free of charge provided I guaranteed that I would only give them to Germans. During my tenure in Frankfurt I distributed hundreds of these books to contacts at the universities of Heidelberg and Mannheim.

Q: How did German-American bilateral relations change during your four years in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: The big change was that we exited Vietnam, which removed a major irritant in our relations with the Germans. Nixon was replaced by Ford who was defeated by Carter. Of the three presidents Ford was probably best liked by the Germans. Ford was quiet and steady. Watergate wrecked Nixon's standing and Carter came off as sanctimonious to many Germans. Particularly educated Germans admired the way our political system handled Watergate. They praised the process for its transparency. During the four years I was in Heidelberg the image of the United States as a nation with a rich culture improved, not that I had very much to do with that change. However vestiges of "Eurosnobism" still lingered.

Q: I think one of the things that always impressed me has been that at our high school level we don't do such a good job in education, but when you get to the university, then there's this tremendous leap compared to the education that most students get in European universities.

JOHNSON: I think that with few exceptions the German gymnasiums are much superior to all best the very best American high schools. At the university level I would like to note a tremendously important U.S. export to Germany after the war which was open stack libraries. The library is the heart of the American university. Nearly all libraries at German universities

close at five or six p.m.. They are rarely open on weekends and access to the stacks is heavily restricted. There's nothing like wandering around the stacks, and you find stuff you never dreamed you would be interested in. In fact, my first federal job I was a desk attendant at the Library of Congress and having that library card and taking stuff out of the Library of Congress was a thrill I'll never have again. And the openness of professors to give and take, the accessibility of professors and their encouragement of the students were far more prevalent in the US than in Germany. I think the German system offers greater academic initiative to undergraduates. When I went to the Free University, I didn't let my studies get in the way of my education. As an undergraduate in United States, I just studied my butt off to pass exams, which provided me with a good basic education. At Free University I read all the books I wanted to read. I didn't have that pleasure again until I retired.

Q: Did you have any connection with the American diplomatic establishment in Germany while you were there in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: No diplomatic establishment. The only other diplomat, other than Hal Ekern at USAREUR, was my French colleague, the Director of the Institut Français. I attended some of his programs and we socialized. I had a bigger operation than he did. French influence in Germany has been waning steadily. When the Germans and the French established a fast reaction military unit, they found their common language was not German or French, but English. And if I may jump ahead a few years, while I was in Frankfurt an Assistant Minister of Education and Culture in France called on me. I didn't know the purpose of his visit. But I think it was basically to lament, "You know the last gymnasium in the state of Hessen that required French has dropped it." I felt sorry for the poor man. English was absolutely on the ascendency. I wish someone would write a Ph.D. on the role of American Forces Network as a English teacher in post-war Germany. It was just tremendously important because the students all listened to AFN. Young people tuned in AFN for its music. They found German radio overly instructive

Q: Were you aware that English was the preferred second language of Germany, at least from your perspective?

JOHNSON: Yes, absolutely, and there was a little competition, sort of under the surface between English learned and spoken in England and American English, and it would go like this; the Germans who spoke proper British English said "We're cultured," and the ones who spoke American English would respond, "Yes, but you are obsolete."

Q: I assume that over the intervening years you have been back to Heidelberg. Is there a Tom Johnson legacy?

JOHNSON: In public diplomacy it is very hard to judge effectiveness. Carolyn and I made many friends and I believe we overcame a lot of hostility among students and professors. However every time I return to Heidelberg, the current director the German-American Institute, a German, reminds me that what I am really remembered for is a project that had nothing to do with the cold war: the "Schlossspiele," the castle festival. In February 1973 the Lord Mayor of Heidelberg asked Nils Koersen, the City Director of Tourism, and me to resurrect summer theater in the Heidelberg castle. We didn't know what the Lord Mayor's rationale was but our deadline was

clear: July and August that year. We had no idea what we were doing, and we proceeded to prove it. However we arranged for a production of Man of La Mancha to put on ten performances. The lead roles and the orchestra were professional, while the chorus was made up of amateurs. Performances were in the King's Hall in the castle. Some nights we sold out. At the end of the season, we had run a deficit of about 10,000 DM. Koersen and I were the co-producers and stage hands. We did absolutely everything. I cut my home leave short, which to this day I regret. That autumn we turned the project over to professionals. The new director-producer shrewdly put on a production of "Student Prince" and – as I recall – a Mozart Opera. The Schlossspiele have continued and have attracted audiences totaling well over 300,000.

ALBERT L. SELIGMANN
Political Advisor
Berlin (1971-1975)

Albert Seligmann was born and raised in New York City where he also attended Columbia University's School of International Affairs. He entered the Foreign Service in 1955 after serving in the US Army during World War II. His career included posts in Japan, Thailand, and Germany. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2000.

Q: Today is 21 March 2000. Al, Berlin. You were there from 1971 to when?

SELIGMANN: 1975.

Q: So what was your job there?

SELIGMANN: I was deputy political advisor. Berlin, as I am sure you know from others, was a peculiar place administratively. Title-wise to use that horrible "wise" phrase, everybody had at least two titles and sometimes more, and none of them were what they appeared to be on the surface. The deputy political advisor was the political counselor in charge of the political section. Berlin, however, was not an embassy. It was a "mission," United States Mission Berlin. The chief of mission was the ambassador in Bonn, and the deputy chief of mission was the Commandant, who was a two-star general. The real head of the State Department mission was the minister, who was also the deputy commandant with the additional title of assistant deputy chief of mission. The post as a whole was considered administratively to be equivalent to an embassy. Okay, that should be clear as mud.

Q: Were you the chief of the political section?

SELIGMANN: Yes. By the way it turned out that it was one of the largest, if not the largest political section in the world, which I didn't realize when I took the job.

Q: This is we are now about three years into the Nixon administration, his first term. What was the status of Berlin? I mean how was Berlin at the time you arrived there?

SELIGMANN: We were at the opening stage of what was familiarly known as Ostpolitik, opening to the east. Considerably before I arrived, the process had begun with the negotiation of the Berlin agreement. This was a negotiation by surrogate, in effect, between East and West Germany, the surrogates being the allied powers on the one hand, Great Britain, France, and the United States, and the Soviet Union on the other, consulting closely in turn with their respective German allies, but also making sure their own rights and interests were protected. By the time I arrived in the summer, we were nearing the tail end of the talks on what the Europeans commonly called the Four Power Agreement (Berlin Agreement). The negotiations were difficult. It was tough slogging all the way, with haggling over each comma. Then what the Soviets failed to gain in negotiations, they would try to reclaim in translation, so you had to keep an eagle eye out to make sure that whatever you thought you had negotiated did not get unstuck.

Q: Well, who was doing the negotiating?

SELIGMANN: It was carried out on different fronts. The four ambassadors were involved, the allied ambassadors in Bonn and the Soviet ambassador to the GDR, resident in East Berlin. Within Berlin, there was close consultation with the Berlin government, the Berlin Senat, because much of what the agreement was about involved the West Berliners. The agreement was designed to provide a number of improvements in access between West Germany and West Berlin and between West Germany and West Berlin and East Berlin. West Germans had been able to visit East Berlin; West Berliners had not. There were many other provisions, some involving minor territorial adjustments, all designed to ease tension and better relations between the two Germanies. In the back of everybody's mind was the thought that this might be the beginning of a more general improvement in relations between east and west, and it did in fact lead to the admission of both Germanies to the United Nations, and mutual recognition. Seen in retrospect, it was the beginning of the thaw in the Cold War, culminating in the tumbling of the Berlin wall almost twenty years later.

Q: Well, you were not you know, one of the priests of Berlin. I mean we had developed almost a Berlin cult. How far the tailgates could be lowered and all this. This is not done facetiously. This is done because of the concern about salami tactics. You had to be very strong. I would have thought you being the new boy on the block would have found that there were a bunch of people dealing with Berlin not only in our mission but also in others who had been around for a long time mumbling in their beers and grumbling about we were giving away the store and you know, I mean it was the change. Did you find this sort of thing?

SELIGMANN: Absolutely.. I was the new boy on the block as you suggest, surrounded by old Berlin hands mostly fluent in German, who had had a fair amount of experience in Berlin and/or Bonn. When it came to giving away the shop, there was much more concern in the U.S. Mission about what might be given away in Washington or Bonn or by our allies, than anything likely to emerge locally. Dave Klein, the minister, was prepared to hang tough and his spirit was infectious. One of the things that made this job such a joy for me was the way I was received by Dave, who was supportive and encouraging. The kind of detail you alluded to fell into the category of what my British colleague used to call "Berlinery." Apart from negotiation of the Berlin Agreement, a myriad of day-to-day developments called for constant awareness of detail

and precedent. You got caught up in that very fast, and even though you might not have been working on Germany for five, ten, or fifteen years, you learned very quickly. You became immersed in this, and it became part of your life. And each time you thought you were beginning to master "Berlinery," our Legal Advisor or Public Safety Advisor or Senat liaison officer would come up with a bit of esoterica or precedent about which you were unaware. You gained an appreciation of the importance of good archives.

The very makeup of the political section demonstrates what I am talking about. Nobody, in the section had an ordinary title. There was the public safety officer - these are all Foreign Service officers by the way - who in theory was in charge of the police in the American sector of Berlin. Of course in practice he wasn't, but he maintained the closest liaison with the police and every police promotion had to be signed by him.

Q: Yes. I have interviewed Bruce Flatin.

SELIGMANN: He had that job, although not while I was there. Okay, you had the political-military officer. His duties were more like those you would anticipate from the title, but he also combined many of the functions implied in my own title of deputy political advisor. He was really the political advisor to the Berlin command. Not the Commandant Berlin, but the brigade commander of the troops in Berlin, working on all the problems that go with a military presence in a large city.. It was a full time job. You had generally superior caliber military personnel in Berlin, who had passed through the so-called Berlin screen: a certain IQ level and behavior record so as to minimize untoward incidents in a politically sensitive place.

Q: Oh, absolutely, I mean...

SELIGMANN: You had one of the two or three remaining overseas State Department legal advisors, as opposed to legal attachés, in Berlin. On a number of matters reserved for allied occupation control, they still drafted legislation, in addition to which they scrutinized for approval legislation passed by the Berlin Senat. To be applied in West Berlin, any treaty signed by the FRG had to have the explicit sanction of the Allied legal advisors. We used to have legal advisors at a fair number of major posts, but Berlin and Bonn - perhaps London and Paris - were the only posts left to which they were still assigned. In the more traditional role of legal advisors, they played an important part in drafting the Berlin agreement and the implementing documents.

The old Allied Council building remained in the American sector. The British, French, and Americans met there regularly at various levels, starting with the commandants, and including about four or six other categories such as my own deputy political advisors. An empty chair was left for the Soviets; a portrait of the current Commander of Soviet Forces in Germany hung on the wall with those of the three Western Allied Commandants; and a place was left for the Soviet flag on an empty flagpole - but of course, the Soviets never came. When we met with them, it was usually one on one at another location, with the Western ally in the chair representing the other two - and it never included military representatives. To get around their unwillingness to acknowledge the authority of the Allied Council and its components, the Soviets were amenable to meet at an appropriate level with their counterparts represented by the allied power in the chair for the month.

Q: How long did that go on?

SELIGMANN: As far as I know until the reunification of Germany and the end of the “occupation” of Berlin, but I am not certain. You couldn’t disturb the arrangements made in 1945 lest the Soviets have a pretext for saying other four-power agreements or arrangements were no longer valid. That was one of the reasons for this close scrutiny of everything that went on. If we were meticulous, I would say the British were even more so. For example, there were to be no German aircraft in Berlin. On one occasion, a model helicopter made of wood was on display at a German trade fair. It couldn’t fly but the British went up in smoke and insisted that it be removed. We thought this was pretty silly, but it was in their sector. We would battle over things like this as well as more serious matters. The protocol officer was also in the political section. His job was not to decide who sits where at the table, although curiously enough, he got into a little of that. The main job of the allied protocol officers was to serve as a low-level liaison channel to the Soviets through the Soviet protocol officer stationed in the Soviet embassy in East Berlin. If you had a problem and you didn’t want it to escalate, you sent your protocol officer over to talk to the Soviets and see if you couldn’t iron it out, or whoever was in the chair would take on the task. The Senat liaison officers had second offices at the Berlin city hall. The Berliners being pretty feisty, they wanted to stretch the limits of their authority, but the allies had to make sure they didn’t exceed them. Now that might have gone against the grain of what we would have liked, but nevertheless it was important. On the other hand, sometimes we would have to argue to try to rein in the French, particularly, who wanted to keep a tighter hand on the West Berlin authorities than we did.

Q: Well, I would have thought with the public safety officers acting on promotions, the allies watching this all these things...were the West Berliners restive under this or did everybody know the game so what could have been sort of a difficult, almost semi- colonial position was accepted by all because this was part of the price they had to pay to be free.

SELIGMANN: The Berliners understood the game. We were still welcomed and liked. Our presence was something the Berliners very much favored and supported and expressed infinite concern about being maintained. Much of what I have been talking about was not oppressive in any way as far as the life of the Berliners was concerned, and aware of West Berlin’s isolation from the FRG, the allied military presence, especially that of the U.S., which had the only force that was a bit more than symbolic, was something they liked to see. City officials were not always happy at having the Allies look over their shoulder. And, yes, the residents of Zehlendorf did not like to hear our tanks rumbling in the streets in the early morning on their way out to maneuver in the Grunewald - that was the kind of thing we had to worry about and in response to complaints try to work out a compromise, e.g., have the tanks set out at a better hour or not so often or take another route. But while I was there the 25th anniversary of the Berlin airlift was celebrated. The emotions that poured out in support of the allied forces at that time was impressive. In fact our air force commander at Tempelhof was the so-called candy bomber, Colonel Halverson, who was known for dropping chocolate bars as his plane came in during the airlift.

Q: Did they fly in a C-54 and all of that?

SELIGMANN: We probably did. I know that the open house at Tempelhof drew hordes of Berliners, including many old ladies who had helped unload the coal and other supplies that were flown in by the lift and were eager to gush over any uniformed American in sight.

Q: When you got there in 1971, was it understood by mutual consent that because of the negotiations that were going on, this was not a particular period of testing on the part of the Soviet forces and the allied forces?

SELIGMANN: Not in the sense of risking a major crisis, but there was a certain amount of testing. We still played all kinds of games. For example, we still had our military mission based in Potsdam outside of Berlin in East Germany, just as the Soviets had a military mission based in Frankfurt - we would rotate our people in and out of West Berlin, where they were quartered and they would stay at the Mission house in Potsdam for a week or so at a time. The four missions (the British and French had their own) were supposedly free to move around the respective host countries and observe, but they were not free to go into classified military installations. Both sides being in the intelligence business, however, they tested the limits. For example, when an American major attached to our mission was found too close to some air facility, he was returned to us trussed up like a pig on a pole. That's demeaning and embarrassing. He shouldn't have been where he was, but that was the game. They knew it, we knew it, and this sort of thing went on. You had occasional testing of air-corridor procedures, or the nightly duty train to Frankfurt would be halted in East Germany for an hour or two, but, again, no major incidents while I was there. Part of the political section's bailiwick was the BASC (Berlin Air Safety Center), which functioned day-in, day-out, and was one of a few vestiges of Soviet presence in West Berlin. Three Allied and a Soviet air controller sat around a table in the old Allied Command Authority building, the only active office in that sprawling, otherwise ghost-like edifice. They handed cards back and forth noting departures and arrivals from the four airfields serving greater Berlin so that you didn't have collisions. That functioned well, even though the Soviets from time to time would scrawl on a card that they could not guarantee air safety, e.g., if they objected to some expansion of air service by the allied carriers that operated the only civilian air services in West Berlin - or they might announce the closing of an air corridor for maneuvers, which we would protest and ignore. As I indicated, these threats were not consummated on my watch. You still had Spandau prison, down to one prisoner, Rudolph Hess, who regrettably (for the sake of historians) wouldn't talk about what his wartime mission to Britain was all about, at least until released. The Soviets would not agree to that (presumably to keep this bit of a West Berlin perk going) and Hess died without divulging the story. The allied powers, including the Russians, each furnished a team of prison wardens and each month alternated a company of military guards. It was the custom to have the changing-of-the-guard ceremony followed by a party hosted by the outgoing side. Our parties got smaller and smaller, but the Russian party remained lavish with endless drinking designed to immobilize the attendees for the rest of the afternoon. The Soviet's would invite a long list of military and civilians from each of the allied missions, but we scaled down our attendance until we had a token representation: the legal advisors, responsible for the political side of Spandau and one or two others to keep him company. I went to one party for the experience, but refused to go to any more.

Q: Who was the head of the mission while you were there?

SELIGMANN: David Klein, a German hand who had also served in Moscow. He has published a book the Berlin Agreement which I should have read but have not. I thought Dave was a remarkable man, feisty but understanding of the underlying issues. He was a guardian of non-erosion if you will, of existing rights and was not going to see them whittled away, especially at the expense of the West Berliners. In the negotiation he stood up to American officials at various levels who were so enamored of the concept of Ostpolitik that they tended to get impatient with arguments over language or seeming minutiae that they saw as holding up progress. He felt correctly that if you were not careful, you could lose in the details some of the improvements you were trying to achieve.

Q: Well, I think there was the feeling by some, that behind Henry Kissinger's maneuverings and all there was a general feeling because he was a creature of the Vietnam, you know, pulling out of there at the time, essentially that the United States' commitment abroad including Germany was diminishing, and in a way it was almost a pessimistic thing that the United States didn't have an unlimited amount of time to be around so we better cut a deal while we could. I don't know if that was concern or was this felt at all?

SELIGMANN: It may well have been looked at that way. I saw it more as his desire to be a hero and the author, the achiever of Ostpolitik, and therefore let's not bother with all of this trivial detail. What does it matter anyway. For example, toward the very end of the negotiation, he made a trip to Moscow. Without consulting anybody he signed off on a joint communiqué in which he let the Soviets slip in a reference to some point on which we had struggled for weeks to pin the Soviets down on language, in effect reversing what had been achieved. My memory is fuzzy on the details, but it may have had to do with the strengthening of ties between West Berlin and the FRG. We were appalled and eventually retrieved the situation, but he just did not see any need for this sort of "haggling."

Q. Who was the chancellor of Germany at the time?

SELIGMANN: Willy Brandt. Ostpolitik is a phrase associated in the first place with Willy Brandt.

Q: What was the feeling that you were getting from your colleagues about Willy Brandt?

SELIGMANN: I think many German conservatives felt there was a little bit of what I was just talking about in Willy Brandt, in that he wanted to get on with the job and get Ostpolitik on the road, but even if they argued he should take a stronger stance, I don't think anyone felt he was seriously going to sacrifice Berlin interests.

Q: Of course he had been mayor of Berlin and he had stood firm at that job.

SELIGMANN: True, although some might have argued he was tainted by a Bonn perspective in which West Berlin was perhaps a smaller part of the picture.

Q: Well, there is always the accusation that the United States in its diplomacy wants a quick fix

and quick results, and sometimes we can be led down the garden path a bit because we lack the patience to hang on. I suppose this is a concern.

SELIGMANN: By and large we stood more steadfast than the British were inclined to. The French in turn could be pretty stubborn about making any concessions to the Soviets. Everyone had their own motives. After all the French-German relationship was something special, as was the British-German relationship. We were in a sense more dispassionate about some of this. So there was a lot of interplay there on many matters.

Q: What was your impression of let's say the British representation and working with them.

SELIGMANN: At my level it was very good. I had excellent relationships with my successive counterparts, whom I found for the most part like-minded. At some levels it was more difficult. As acting political advisor I had gone to Bonn to attend a meeting of the "Bonn Group," created by the three allied embassies to mastermind the negotiations. I no longer remember the subject, but we emerged from the meeting with some matter pending that had to be referred back to our respective capitals. I know we in the Berlin Mission were not entirely enthralled by the recommendation. On the plane back to Tempelhof, Teddy Jackson, the British Polad, started to tell me that when I got back I would have to get off a telegram saying XYZ. Aware that this was not likely to be what Dave Klein would recommend, I ignored the fact that he outranked me, turned to him, recalling John Quincy Adams's famous quote, and said, "You know, I am not a cockboat in the wake of a British man 'o war." So we had that kind of interplay. By the way, one of the unique features of Berlin was you had a very open, frank, occasionally caustic channel of communication known as "IBs" or Inner Berlin messages. These were encrypted telegrams,, just like those sent to Washington, except they were exchanged among counterparts in the three allied missions and didn't go outside of Berlin. I hope some of these will be open reading if they are not already because they provide unvarnished, sometimes humorous insights into relations among the allies.

Q: What about dealing with the French?

SELIGMANN: We had nicknames for some of our more obstreperous colleagues, but my counterpart was fine. I had no problems; he was easy to deal with. There were others who were not. The minister as I recall was a very good and easy man. The political advisor was difficult.

Q: Well, it is just that so often basic policy, the French you know by our light seemed to deliberately go out of their way to take a different course. Taking something like Berlin, this was not a place to play around.

SELIGMANN: They didn't play around but they made life needlessly complicated. You sometimes had the feeling that the French would not agree to something just because the British and Americans agreed to it.

Q: How would you operate, I mean you, yourself? What were you doing? What would almost a typical day be?

SELIGMANN: There was a good deal of variety built into the job by virtue of the broad range of responsibilities of the individual members of the political section. Especially where the allies could not agree among themselves or where there was a problem with German counterparts, the deputy political advisors often attempted to resolve problems at their level. This made for a full agenda, especially when the U.S. was in the chair every third month. I might be asked by our Senat liaison officer to intervene with a higher ranking Senat official, short of what would be the equivalent of the mayor or deputy mayor. On the military side, I worked closely with key staff officers and the brigade commander - the commandant's office was just down the hall, so there was a good bit of easy, informal interplay. We had a full reporting load with the usual editing and review responsibilities. Despite the peculiar structure of the mission and the absence of a normal diplomatic corps in Berlin, in order to reinforce the status of West Berlin, we encouraged as much foreign representation as possible in the form of allied "military missions" that had been maintained by some countries since the end of World War II, or consulates - this often meant trying to persuade these representations not to close down. The FRG foreign ministry had a representative with the rank of ambassador in Berlin. The minister would see him, but others of us would talk to him too, socialize at parties and what not. You did everything you would do in a normal political section except you were preoccupied with these very special conditions.

Once the Quadripartite Agreement was signed in September 1971, the pace of work picked up considerably, inasmuch as it would not go into effect until the crucial inner-German agreements were finalized, specifying the many modalities required for implementation. This meant daily close consultation with the Senat, which of course, was working closely with Bonn on the negotiations. In addition to facilitating transportation between West Berlin and the FRG and visits by West Berliners to East Berlin, there were also some minor territorial adjustments to be made. It also meant working together with political advisor, Buck Borg, on negotiations with the Russians on arrangements for the establishment of the consulate general and commercial offices they were permitted to set up by terms of the agreement.

Q: I would think that there would be I mean sort of you know, we might do the normal diplomatic things, but in a way you were all on a team. I am talking about Germans, French. I mean you had it was much more collegial than just sort of separate powers dealing with each other.

SELIGMANN: Absolutely. The basic objectives, after all, were the same. By the same token, there were nuances. Here were the four powers negotiating a Berlin agreement that we all felt would lead at least to mutual recognition of the two Germanies. While unification seemed a long way down the road, we pledged allegiance to it on the allied side - I don't think the Russians ever did. I used to quip, and I think there is still some truth in this, that probably with the possible exception of the United States none of the other parties involved, meaning the French, the British, and the Russians really wanted it I wasn't sure about ourselves.

Q: At one time I remember you know, we had two very firm policies. One was the unification of Germany and the other was the unification of Korea, and the question was I think, the longer we can keep them apart the better. I mean these were two tigers that we didn't particularly want to let loose.

SELIGMANN: Yes. I think we were ambivalent on the subject. I am not sure about the others.

Q: Did you have much dealing with your Soviet counterpart?

SELIGMANN: Quite a bit, yes. I had more later on in my tour when I was moved up to be the political advisor. At that point I dealt with the Soviet political advisor, but I did see my counterpart, his deputy fairly often. As is so often the case, he was a KGB man and therefore much more cosmopolitan, pleasant and easier to deal with than some of the career diplomats.. The Soviets would turn it on and off. You might have very easy relations for a time, and then they would try to make a point by tightening up and making life tough; if not causing an incident, at least taking advantage of one. Incidents happened all the time and it was how you managed them. You could do so smoothly at a low level or you could escalate them and make it difficult. It was almost like football. They would put in their offensive team or their defensive team. At one time, they sent back to Berlin as their political advisor an old German hand - I can't remember his name anymore - who had a reputation for being extremely nasty and tough. They did it to make a point.

Q: In the normal relations with Berlin at that time the whole thing with its apparatus besides the negotiations were sort of going on in a way over your head, was it a pretty static time? I mean it was none of the or was there any great testing or...

SELIGMANN: Not so much military testing - I mentioned the occasional probing of allied rights in the air and land corridors - as legal testing. Apart from improving conditions for the West Berliners and easing communication, a major purpose of the Berlin Agreement was to put an end to challenges to the status of West Berlin. The Soviets, for example, often objected to the application of FRG laws or treaties to West Berlin, even though special procedures had been followed for allied approval to assure there was no intrusion on certain reserved areas, such as air rights. These challenges always had to be answered or you would risk acquiescing in a Soviet or GDR position by default. Once the inner-German agreements were in place and the final protocol activating the Berlin agreement was signed by the Foreign Ministers in the spring of 1972, there was still a breaking-in period before everything ran smoothly, but by and large it worked well.

There was a less tangible area that we and the Berliners were much concerned about, that is the future of the city. As long as Berlin was a focal point of cold-war tension, the Berliners were assured full attention from the western allies. They were also the recipients of a variety of subsidies from the FRG. Also, for a time, thanks in large part to the presence of Siemens, Berlin was still the largest industrial city in West Germany. But not much investment was coming into West Berlin, it was an artificial situation, and people worried whether the agreement wouldn't result in the city being neglected or forgotten in the greater scheme of things. There were ideas that West Berlin should become an East-West trade center, a concept that never materialized. There was also much emphasis on the city's cultural assets: theater, museums, the Philharmonie and our own RIAS (Radio in the American Sector) orchestra, which was first rate. Aspen Institute, after the agreement, established a branch conference center in Berlin, headed by Shep Stone, a prominent old Berlin hand. So there was much interest and support for all of these cultural activities, backed by Dave Klein's personal engagement. Let's see, what was the other part of your question?

Q: Well, I was wondering, most of this was in a way was a fairly normal period, not one of great testing on the part of particularly the Soviets trying to close down highways or change things around.

SELIGMANN: Occasionally the American duty train, which had run every single night since 1945 or whenever this started between Frankfurt and Berlin would be held up. (The French and British had their own duty trains: the former running once a week to Strasbourg, and the latter during the daytime on a short run to Braunschweig or New Brunswick, i.e., Checkpoint Alpha, but ours was by all odds the most important.) Once in awhile they would stop that. The train would stop at the checkpoints on the GDR border where it was boarded by the Soviets, who occasionally held it up on one pretext or another. Then tensions would flare up and our operation center would alert the Mission duty officer. Usually the train rolled on before too long, but if it was delayed an hour or more we might protest to the Soviets at the working level. At least while I was there, such incidents never escalated. In the air corridors, the Soviets might alert us to maneuvers by their air force, which we protested, noting that we held them accountable for air safety. They might then follow up with some "near misses," but, again, while I was there, not so near as to become major incidents. (In earlier times there had been much more serious incidents.) You also had the question of exfiltration, GIs smuggling East Germans out of East Berlin in their cars. The East Germans and Soviets knew this was going on and we did our best to discourage it, making it clear that such activity would be the end of anybody's career, because the GIs were doing this for the most part, not for humanitarian purposes but for money. Once when I was political advisor, the Soviet political advisor called on me, a bit unusual to begin with, bringing along an album of pictures showing a car with U.S. military plates being stopped by East German police in East Berlin just short of Checkpoint Charlie; the trunk being opened; and an East German "escapee" being found. It was pretty clear the whole operation was a setup. This being a don't-roil-the-waters period, the Soviet Polad was considerate of our embarrassment; did not thump the table; and made his protest more in sorrow than in anger, but they held the GI concerned. As tension built up while we demanded his release admitting no wrong-doing, the boy's father flew in from Hong Kong. Our general policy was to contain an incident; try to iron it out at the lowest possible level, starting with protocol officers; and move up the line only as required. Of course, we kept the embassy in Bonn and, if necessary, Washington informed each step of the way, but as long as they were satisfied with what we were doing, they did not micromanage incidents. In this instance following repeated representations, the culprit was released after two or three days.

Q: How about the Berlin Wall per se. I mean were there escapes around there? Were things pretty well sealed up in East Germany when you were there?

SELIGMANN: They were never totally sealed. Once in awhile there would be a spectacular escape into West Berlin of some sort, by balloon, or underwater across the demarcation line where it was a waterway, but that sort of thing had become more and more difficult. Escapes across the GDR's non-wall boundaries were marginally easier. One of the interesting things in the Berlin agreement was that by inadvertence, when they divvied up Berlin into the four sectors, we did not immediately occupy Steinstücken, a little island village geographically detached from the rest of Berlin but administratively part of the American sector. Later we caught up with this

lapse and helicoptered an MP detachment there to signify we regarded it as part of West Berlin. Subsequently, arrangements were made so that the postman, doctors, certain tradespeople, etc., could travel back and forth with special permits. The Berlin agreement provided for a corridor of access, which turned into a road-width extension of the wall.

Q: This is tape six side one with Al Seligmann. You were saying as part of this agreement, was the agreement signed while you were there?

SELIGMANN: The agreement proper was signed in September 1971, and the final protocol putting it into effect was signed in June 1972. Finding a venue for the signing in September was a bit of a problem. They settled on the old Allied Kommandatura building, which had not been used except by the BASC since the Russians walked out. The only trouble was that the building was in disrepair, and there was nothing much left in the way of furniture, et al. Being located in the American sector, it fell our lot to furnish at least a few rooms of that vast building; we scrounged about to the point that some of the dining room chairs in our house were borrowed along with furniture from other houses - my wife helped with the flower arranging. At one point while we were still haggling over last-minute language adjustments, two things occurred: first, the British Foreign Minister (Heath) was grouse hunting in Scotland and "unreachable" for consultation; then Ken Rush, our Ambassador, who had made a quick turn-around trip to consult with President Nixon in San Clemente, returned exhausted and was ordered by his doctor to stand down. Although he was quite ill, no one believed it and Rush was credited with an astute bout of diplomatic illness. Last-minute obstacles cleared away, the agreement was signed, but the incident illustrates the attention paid by all parties, particularly the Berliners themselves, to every detail.

Q: You caught Berlinamania or whatever it was.

SELIGMANN: Very contagious. I became a true believer in no time, which was easy, fighting for a good cause.

Q: Well, it worked.

SELIGMANN: It worked. The inner-German agreements arranged the modalities, procedures for visits, transit, exchanges of territory, and the like, much of which had to be tested in practice: for example, how many Deutsche marks do you have to exchange for east German currency when you go to visit East Berlin. As I mentioned earlier, one of the provisions permitted the Soviets to open certain offices in West Berlin, so we had to provide office space as well as housing for their Consul General. The British and French were happy to have them locate in the American Sector, which meant we had to take on the job. The Senat came up with property they either owned or could make available, which we would look at and then show the Soviets. We acted generously for our part, but for a while, I felt like a real estate agent.

Q: Well, did you find that you all were acting as the screeners, advisors working on the details. I mean they would be worked out supposedly at a higher level, but you were the people on the ground for a lot of this stuff and looking at it very closely?

SELIGMANN: Right. At the same time, partly because Dave Klein was minister for this period and had the big picture very much in mind, we acted purposefully, and were not just out to be nit-pickers

Q: Did the Watergate business affect, I mean was there concern because Nixon left in 1974. I mean there was the year of 1973. Was there a concern this quite strong president in foreign affairs and we were in the middle of some crucial agreements on Germany. Did this have any effect on us?

SELIGMANN: It was strange, you know. We were all following Watergate closely, but at the same time it seemed much more remote than if we had been in Washington. This much was certainly true in Berlin as it was in many other parts of the world: our German friends couldn't understand what we were doing to this fine man, Nixon. He had accomplished so much and had such a good grasp of foreign policy: why were we foolish Americans undermining this man?

Q: Oh, yes. I was in Greece and getting the same thing.

SELIGMANN: That definitely was part of the climate. As far as affecting policy and where we were going in a more fundamental serious sense, I don't think it became an issue, but there was concern it might. There was another eye-opening internal aspect to Watergate. I soon discovered that many of our top military officers felt vehemently that Nixon was being undermined by subversive political forces; Watergate was not a good subject for dinner-table conversation. The thought even crossed my mind that some sort of military intervention in politics, a development I had always considered inconceivable, could not totally be ruled out.

Q: Were you watching the ebb and flow of the population? Was there a concern that West Berliners might, too many might leave and all the young people and all that?

SELIGMANN: It was happening and once the agreement went into effect, that concern escalated if anything. While West Berlin was an attractive place to live and work, new jobs were not opening up and opportunities seemed limited compared with the rest of Germany during what was otherwise a period of economic growth. Frei Universitat, Free University, while attractive in many ways, was a haven for draft-dodgers because Berlin still remained after the agreement as before, a demilitarized city: a young person who was there would not be drafted. The two seemed to go hand in hand. It became a hotbed of left-wing activity to the point that professors were leaving who didn't want to have much to do with this. So, yes, there was a feeling there was no future for Berlin. Now that everything was peaceful and security was guaranteed, no one was going to pay any attention to Berlin. A spirit of vibrancy was lacking.

Q: Were the Helsinki accords negotiations going on about this time or not.

SELIGMANN: I don't recall.

Q: Well, probably they may have come...

SELIGMANN: A little later I think.

Q: Yes, I think they were under Ford. How did you find...was there us and them as far as our embassy in Bonn? How well were we working together at that time?

SELIGMANN: Pretty well. There was tension during the negotiation, less afterwards, but there was always a certain amount of tension between Bonn. Part of it was personality. Both Jock Dean, who played a key role in the negotiations and Dave were strong willed people. More fundamentally, we in Berlin felt we were guardians of the Berlin birthright and that if you weren't careful Bonn (and Washington), in the name of detente might underestimate the significance of what might seem on surface to be minor concessions.

Q: Were you getting a lot of Congressional delegations or people coming over and getting their picture taken at the Berlin Wall?

SELIGMANN: Not much of that.

Q: I mean, this is...

SELIGMANN: And that was part of the problem. Americans didn't come to Berlin. They didn't fuss over Berlin.

Q: You were beginning to feel you were a little off the way.

SELIGMANN: Eleanor Dulles might. Kissinger finally made his Berlin visit, as I recall in 1974.

Q: Odd that he didn't make it for so long.

SELIGMANN: We thought so. Even then, there were some interesting episodes. For one thing, we had to plead for him to have the traditional meeting with the American troops. No ranking U, S, official could visit Berlin and not include such a symbolic event. He didn't want to do it, but pressed hard, he reluctantly agreed to a brief meeting with a contingent in the courtyard of the mission. He wouldn't go and see them. By happenstance, both General Cobb, the commandant, and the minister (the deputy commandant) were at the NATO war college at the time of the visit, so I was acting commandant. I had received strict instructions that Kissinger, known to be paranoid on the subject, did not want to be exposed to any threat and did not want to be out on the streets of Berlin any more than could possibly be helped. We had originally wanted him to drive around the city but insofar as was feasible, but we kept him on the staatbahn, as the autobahn is known in Berlin, and on other direct routes lined with security police behind every bush. The German authorities had a big lunch at the Orangerie in Schloss Charlottenburg. Everything went smoothly, but when I got back to my office about an hour after he departed, I had a call from Ambassador Hillenbrand asking what went wrong. He said that Kissinger had complained that he had not had an opportunity to interact with the Berliners. I explained what had happened, and gratefully, he backed me up. One other incident. Kissinger turned down a request for a meeting with the press, but said he would have a plane-side press conference at Tegel airport before he left. The press contingent was waiting around the plane when he drove up; Kissinger hopped out and ran up the steps and the plane immediately took off, leaving the

unhappy press stranded.

Toward the end of my tour, following the mutual recognition of the FRG and GDR and our consequent recognition of the GDR, we opened our mission in East Berlin, our embassy to the GDR (we were careful never to say “in the GDR,” inasmuch as we hewed to the end to our theology that Berlin was one city under four-power occupation.) We in West Berlin were not much involved in the actual setting up of the mission, but we were prepared to help to the extent we could, provide logistical support and whatnot. John Sherman Cooper was named as our first ambassador, but Mrs. Cooper didn't want to have anything to do with West Berlin. She understood the Berlin theology and all, but he was the ambassador to the GDR, and she did not want to dilute his standing. So she flew to Paris to have her hair done, and would do no shopping at the West Berlin commissary or PX. The British and French were pragmatic about this, but it made it difficult for the rest of the staff in East Berlin. One day when the minister was absent from post, I got a call from Mrs. Cooper. She wanted the army band in Berlin to come over and play at the embassy's July 4 reception. I thought that was a marvelous idea because it met our tenet that there was only one Berlin. So I readily agreed and set it up - no problem. But then Brandon Grove, the DCM called with follow-up instructions on what they were to play: I said the Star Spangled Banner was fine, and the Star Spangled Banner, followed by the GDR national anthem. I said that they could play anything else, but they could not play the GDR national anthem because that would indicate we regarded East Berlin as part of East Germany. The issue escalated, Mrs. Cooper called Ambassador Hillenbrand, but he backed us up.

Q: This strikes me as the theology really going astray. We had an embassy in a place which was not considered part of, I mean an embassy to a country in a place which was not considered by us to be part of that country.

SELIGMANN: That is correct.

Q: I mean, it sounds like Alice in Wonderland.

SELIGMANN: Yes. Well, much of this was Alice in Wonderland.

Q: Well, how did we square this particular circle?

SELIGMANN: As far as the band was concerned, they came over in dress uniforms on an army bus, which doubtless raised a few East German police eyebrows at the checkpoint, but all went famously. As for the larger issue, as far as I know, we never did resolve it until the wall came down. I am not familiar with the pragmatic relations between the Embassy and the Mission in the rest of the period up to 1990. I should find out because it would be interesting if any of this changed. Embassy children in due course were allowed to take a bus to the army school in West Berlin, but this was an exception at the time. Dave Klein had to return to the States for personal reasons for an extended period after the arrival of the Coopers. I called on the Ambassador at his office, and tried several times to extend hospitality to the Coopers but with no success.

Q: But the basic point was that although we had an embassy in Berlin, we still were very careful not to acknowledge that this was a separate...

SELIGMANN: Not to erode allied rights, because you risked eroding what we had negotiated: use of the access routes as opposed to the transit routes between West Berlin and West Germany and other things. To give an example of testing the Berlin Agreement: it provided for direct access through East Germany to Eastern Europe. Say you wanted to go to Poland or Czechoslovakia, foreigners could always do this with passports, but until the Berlin Agreement, the allies would not accept stamps from the East Germans in diplomatic or official passports at the border of Berlin. We could only travel on transit routes passing through Soviet controls, not on access routes. With the recognition of the GDR, there was no reason why allied officials shouldn't travel directly to Czechoslovakia, Poland, wherever. It was months, however, before the British, French, and ourselves could agree on a procedure to test the waters. If possible, we wanted to use the checkpoints at the access routes headed toward Hamburg and to the south, while avoiding, at least initially, the border at Dreilinden, where the allies had always passed through Russian controls on the "transit route," as opposed to GDR controls on the same road in its capacity as an "access route." The French, I think, were adamant that you must travel only on the access routes. All of us agreed that would be ideal, but the deputy political advisors (I was still in that position) finally worked out a compromise whereby if we were turned down on the access routes, we would go through GDR controls at Dreilinden. It was also agreed that I would be the guinea pig, traveling with my family to Poland. So, GDR visas in hand, we arrived in the dark at about five in the morning at the checkpoint leading to Hamburg. A sleepy East German official came out of the control booth, scratched his head, took our passports and went back in. After about fifteen minutes, during which he presumably called some higher official, he came back with our passports and stamped visas and asked in a friendly way why we wanted to head toward Hamburg, which was hardly the direct route to Poland. We told him that we liked to see the countryside in the early morning and planned to connect with the ring road, equivalent to a beltway, around Berlin, and then head for Poland. He shrugged his shoulders and sent us on our way. We drove first to Krakow crossing the GDR border to the south, and all went well until we turned up on the way back from Warsaw at the checkpoint at Frankfurt-am-Oder to the north. In the interim, the GDR officials concerned had done their homework, and when we said we wanted to reenter West Berlin at the same checkpoint we had used before, they refused and marked our visas good only for exit at Dreilinden, a procedure acceptable to the US Mission from the start.

Q: Well, what about East Berlin? We made quite a point didn't we of getting our people into East Berlin and out to make sure we weren't losing access rights?

SELIGMANN: Absolutely, although the British and French did not permit their military, or at least their enlisted men, to enter with their own cars. We had modalities worked out long before my tour, which we continued to observe after the Berlin Agreement, whereby you showed a so-called flag card issued through the Soviets to the East German guards, without opening your car window, thereby preserving the fiction that we were not submitting to East German controls on a border within Berlin. We would occasionally go over to opera, theater, or a museum, or just go sightseeing. With the Berlin agreement in effect, you could also travel in East Germany, which some of our people began to do. We went to Potsdam on a GDR visa. Before the agreement, it had been possible for at least a year or two to obtain via the Soviets a GDR visa on a separate piece of paper, i.e., not in our passports, to visit the Leipzig spring and fall fairs. Once in

Leipzig, you could obtain extension visas to visit other parts of the GDR. Mission staff covering East Germany did this regularly; we made one such trip, going on to Weimar and Dresden.

Q: Was the Soviet army as you traveled about very evident or did they keep them pretty well tucked away?

SELIGMANN: We didn't do that much traveling in East Germany; when we did, they seemed reasonably well tucked away. Within East Berlin, you had the feeling you were being followed wherever you went. My very first trip there was a bit harrowing. At the time our military license plates gave away just who you were by the simulated rank and initials: in my case ALS 003 (this changed later on for security reasons). Never having soloed before through Checkpoint Charlie, we did so on a Sunday morning when there would be little traffic just to see what East Berlin looked like. Before long I found myself being tailed by a Soviet jeep: first it would stay half a block away and then six inches. This went on for some time. It was very unpleasant. I pulled into a parking lot, and he followed me into the parking lot. After a while we gave up and went home. That was early in the game right after we arrived, leaving us with the feeling that they were sending a message that they knew who you were and what you were doing. It was, however, the only time we had such an experience.

Q: Did you have any contact with East Berlin officials? I mean were you dealing with East Berlin officials?

SELIGMANN: Never. That was a no-no that did not change while I was there. You dealt with them to the extent of showing your flag card at the checkpoint. It changed just a bit after the agreement. Whereas we previously kept the car window tightly rolled up and flipped the page of the flag card in response to a gesture to do so, after the Berlin Agreement went into effect, we would roll down the window just a bit and the guard might ask if we were going to the opera; on the way back he would ask if we had enjoyed the performance. So relations were a little more civil and less stiff. But even after the agreement, my daughter was out to visit, and a friend had given her a postcard to mail to a friend in East Germany. She told her she was going into East Berlin and would drop it into a postbox while she was there. On the way back to Checkpoint Charlie, we stopped by the curb where there was a large post box in front of what I believe was the main post office; it was a Sunday and there was no traffic in sight. An East German policeman appeared out of nowhere and said, "You can't stop here." When I protested that we were only stopping a moment to mail a postcard, he drew himself up and said that "in unsere teil der staat" ("in our part of the city") you had to follow the rules. I thought this was great, inasmuch as it substantiated our view that it was one city with four sectors. Apart from officials, you could visit other East Germans and we had a few contacts through introductions. That could be painful, because we had the feeling on at least one occasion, that they wanted help in getting out. We were not about to play games and jeopardize our position.

Q: I suppose you had the usual problem with GI's getting drunk and getting in difficulties that way?

SELIGMANN: Occasionally, but not too often. I mentioned exfiltration. There were a couple of other incidents that were more serious. Going back to early occupation days the three allies sent

armed MP patrols daily into East Berlin, asserting our rights of access to a single city; the Soviets similarly had a jeep go over to the West. I am not sure whether this continued until the Wall came down but I suspect so. One of our patrols was probably where it shouldn't have been, near a GDR kaserne (barracks.) The next thing you knew it was blocked by a GDR jeep in front and in short order by another behind it. It was one of only two times while I was in Berlin that we opened the Emergency Command Center for other than drill purposes. By chance, on both occasions I was acting commandant. (the only place in the world where a Foreign Service officer can be a commandant). Some of the military wanted immediately to put another armed patrol into Berlin to demonstrate our access rights. I vetoed this, suggesting instead that we prepare such a patrol immediately, have it ready near Checkpoint Charlie in sight of the East Germans, but hold off while we protested, starting at the protocol-officer level. I do not recall whether we escalated the level of our protest beyond that, but in an hour or two, the patrol was permitted to go on its way. We kept the embassy and our allies fully informed, but I was pleased that Bonn let us work our way out without intervention. Something of a similar order happened one other time, but I do not remember the details. These were the kind of incidents which if handled carelessly had the potential of becoming nasty incidents, but nothing resembling a nasty incident happened while I was there - both sides were in a restraint mode.

Once I had to "rescue" our high school principal, who was caught by our MPs, not by the other side, black-marketing. It was a profitable business to go over to East Berlin to buy clocks for resale in West Berlin. He got caught bringing in a couple of grandfather clocks. The trouble was he was an outstanding principal, far better than his predecessor, highly regarded by students and parents alike. If he had been no good as a principal, I would have had no problem at all: off with his head. I believe we let him off with a reprimand and deprived him of his right to visit East Berlin, but kept him on as principal.

Q: You left this, was there anything else we should discuss on this? Did your job change really much after our embassy was set up in East Berlin?

SELIGMANN: Not a great deal. We kept in close professional, if not social touch, but continued for our part to deal through the Soviets rather than directly with GDR officials.

Q: You left there in 1975. Did you think there would be a united Germany in the foreseeable future in your estimation and maybe your colleagues?

SELIGMANN: I think most people felt that someday there would be a united Germany. I think nobody felt it would happen any time in the near future.

Q: I am talking about 15 years later.

SELIGMANN: It was already an anomaly to have a military presence in a city like Berlin 30 years after the war, but who could tell in 1975 whether our troops would be there for another 30 or 60 or 100 years. There was just no way of knowing. At least that was my feeling.

Q: I don't think anybody who had, you know, knew the situation thought of this as being over the horizon.

SELIGMANN: No, and I don't think any of the Germans did either as far as I know.

Q: What about political life in Berlin?

SELIGMANN: It was vibrant. The socialists were in power, although that didn't persist. There were strong political feelings; Willy Brandt either in Bonn or Berlin was not universally liked by all the powers that be. There were very strong anti-socialist feelings on the part of the conservatives. So there was good political competition. It was a stable situation in the sense that there was no domestic political unrest.

THOMAS F. JOHNSON
Director of Information Center, USIS
Heidelberg (1971-1975)

Born in Illinois and raised in the Mid-West and New York State, Thomas of Johnson entered the Foreign Service in 1967. He served in Paraguay, Germany, Liberia, Mexico, and Singapore. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.

Q: Then in '71, whither?

JOHNSON: In late 1970 I learned that the position of Student Affairs Officer would be eliminated under the BALPA program which was intended to reduce Foreign Service staff and improve our nation's balance of payments. What a stupid idea. A few diplomats abroad had no discernable impact on our balance of payments. However I was ready to leave Asuncion, but did not have my onward assignment. Eventually Don Besom, my Career Counselor, sent me an apologetic cable noting that my paperwork had surfaced and that he had good news for me. I was to depart Asuncion in April for home leave and consultations Washington before proceeding to Heidelberg to be the Information Center Director. My immediate reaction was negative. I did not really want to serve in a city with such a strong American presence.

Carolyn and I arrived in the university city in July with a new Volkswagen which we had picked up from the factory in Wolfsburg. I had introduced her to Germany by taking her to first to Berlin. Carolyn was pregnant. I was in charge of imposing three story Amerika Haus with a library and meeting rooms. I had 12 employees and an ample budget. Carolyn found for us one of the nicest homes in Heidelberg, the ground floor of a sandstone villa at the corner of Bergstrasse and the Philosophen Weg. We had two bedrooms, a den, a huge living room and an extensive garden, plus the usual bath and kitchen. The garden had been the site of a temple during the years the Romans ruled Heidelberg. The rent was 1,000 DM per month, about \$300, which was at the high end of the scale at the time. As was the custom, the previous tenants took most of the light fixtures with them. Shortly after we moved in she noticed a couple of bare wires sticking out of the wall above a sink and being more tidy than technical, she rapped the ends together. The shock knocked her backwards. A few days later Patrick, our first child was born.

He has always had straight hair. Coincidence? I don't think so.

I was full of energy and idealism but did not have a clue how to run my own post. No one in Washington had briefed me on conditions I was to encounter. I had a short meeting in Stuttgart with the Branch Public Affairs Officer, but he was not very helpful nor were most of my colleagues at our embassy in Bonn. Everyone seemed very busy. I am not complaining. That is just the way USIA operated, at least in Germany: sink or swim. In its wisdom USIA assigned an officer to be Amerika Haus director in Saarbruecken. The poor guy had just lost his wife to cancer and as the only official American in the city, had no one to turn to for support. He lapsed into alcoholism which ended his career.

The Amerika Haus in Heidelberg was the target of numerous protests against the Vietnam War. My predecessor, a sensitive and cultured old gentleman, retired upon leaving Heidelberg, having aged far beyond his years. His mentally unstable wife remained in Heidelberg. I was given authority to have her committed to the local military hospital should I deem it necessary. The noisy anti-Americanism had contributed to his wife having an apparent nervous break down and the dissolution of their marriage. Fortunately I had Carolyn whom I could turn to when I had had a hard day and there were many to come, particularly in Heidelberg.

Heidelberg, Frankfurt and Berlin were the main centers of the anti-war/anti-U.S. movement. Marxism was very much in vogue at the Heidelberg University. I spent many Saturday mornings in the Amerika Haus with a dozen German riot police. The students sometimes threw a few stones at the building but they never attacked it. Perhaps they knew that there were restless policemen inside itching for action.

The police were concerned about my safety and advised me not to go the university, at least in any official capacity. I kept a low profile, but never felt that I was personally in danger. The main threat to Americans was the Red Army Faction (RAF) or Bader-Meinhof terrorist group, which had carried out a series of well publicized acts of terrorism. I reasoned I was too unimportant to merit their attention. However on May 24, 1972 the German police informed me that they had a credible but unspecific threat again American interests in the city. Theo Sommer, the editor of the nation's leading weekly Die Zeit, was scheduled to speak that evening at the Amerika Haus. The police advised me to move the event to another venue, which I did. My German staff searched the Haus from top to bottom and informed me that they could find no evidence of a bomb being placed on the premises. As a precautionary measure I closed the Haus early and sent my staff home. I was at my desk at 5:30 p.m. when I heard two booms in the distance. I quickly learned that the detonations were from car bombs that had been smuggled into USAREUR headquarters in automobiles. The bombs killed a captain and two enlisted men. The perpetrators, members of the Bader-Meinhof organization, who were later caught and served 20 years in prison. The program with Theo Sommer went off without a hitch. However the evening has always haunted me. I thought about calling a colonel at USAREUR headquarters when I learned of the bomb threat, I didn't. I left that call to the German police and the German police apparently never alerted headquarters. I still have a sense of guilt that had I called my army contact, security at headquarters might have been increased and either the bombers might have been scared off or they might have been caught. I can't tell you how much I wish I had made that phone call.

Q: Each of us has a closet somewhere with a ghost. You are not alone. Was the bombing the only threat you had in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: We had several of bomb threats called in but, as I recall, none caused the evacuation of the Haus. However a few weeks after the bombing of headquarters, we received a parcel from Beirut. It was wrapped in brown paper stained with oil, tied up with heavy twine and covered in an irregular pattern with stamps, all the characteristics of a possible bomb. I called the German police who carefully removed the parcel for examination. The next day the head of the bomb squad called me to ask me if I wanted the remains of several copies of the USIA publication Problems of Communism.

Apparently the USIA Regional Service Center in Beirut sent advanced copies of the magazine to several posts and the parcels were packed between some well lubricated automobile parts. The German official said that his unit was more than willing to deal with any suspicious parcel we might receive.

Q: How was attendance at programs at the Haus when you arrived?

Lectures in the Amerika Haus in the early 70s drew only a relatively small number of students and were subject to interruptions. The first event I attended concerned American animated films, a soft topic. Shortly after the speaker began his illustrated presentation, a well aimed rock hit me in the back of the head. I winced and did not move. I was not going to give in to the provocation. There were no further attempts to disrupt the program and I was never subject to assault again. In an effort to draw more young professionals and professors, I made some events “by invitation only”, which helped draw a more select audience and saved postage. I also held programs in the spacious living room of my apartment. I would have liked to have had many programs at my home but my representation allowance was only a couple hundred dollars a year.

Q: So did you spend much of your own money for entertaining in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Cumulatively quite a bit, but we enjoyed it and were not paying rent or utilities. Sometimes we combined the official with the unofficial. For example, we had quite a garden party after Patrick’s baptism which my father performed in a medieval church in the old city. The Germans, to my disgust, mixed orange juice with the fine French champagne I served.

Q: Moving from Asuncion to Heidelberg must have been quite a cultural adjustment.

JOHNSON: We had to get used to German punctuality. Shortly after we moved into our new digs, we invited some academics and their wives to dinner at 7:00 p.m. At seven I was still in my skivvies fixing the bar and Carolyn was in the shower and the doorbell rang. “Who the hell’s that,” I wondered. Our guests were lined up outside the door.

Q: How was the Fulbright program faring in Heidelberg in 1971?

JOHNSON: The Fulbright program in Heidelberg was in shambles. During the Vietnam War it

was not "in" to study in the United States. I sat on the selection panel for the scholarships. In 1972 the panel turned down all the candidates as unqualified. A re-announcement brought better candidates.

Q: Did the Amerika Haus serve only Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Fortunately my geographic area of responsibility, which was the northern part of the state of Baden-Wurttemberg, included Mannheim, which was about 20 miles west of Heidelberg. The University of Mannheim had departments of American-English Studies and Economics. Mannheim was a conservative city and the university was tranquil compared to Heidelberg. I spent a lot of time there.

Q: Tell me about your German staff.

JOHNSON: The German staff at the Amerika Haus was demoralized. My secretary, a thoroughly pernicious woman, dedicated herself to office politics, and when I did not seek her advice, she started sniping at me. I was eventually able to fire her and to retire my graphic artist, who did no discernable work. My most senior assistant, my program director, was a Sudeten German. Rudi Tshipula was devoted to the Amerika Haus and completely loyal to me. Unfortunately he was addicted to nicotine and alcohol and died in 1973. I will never forget his funeral. When we arrived at the cemetery, Rudi's estranged wife and her family stood on one side of the open grave. His mistress and my staff stood on the other side. Carolyn and I diplomatically placed ourselves at the foot of the grave. German custom called for each of us to drop a scoop of dirt on the casket. When the little shovel was handed to me, my hand shook noticeably. I was in mortal fear that I would drop the shovel into the yawning abyss.

Tshipula was replaced as program manager by a former employee who had taken a few years off work to start a family. Although she was not able to put in 40 hours a week, she was a wonderful advisor and colleague. The staff gradually coalesced into a team and morale improved greatly.

Q: What was the physical plant of the Amerika Haus like?

JOHNSON: It was four storey villa at the edge of the old part of the city. I am sure it had 5,000 square feet of floor space. My spacious office overlooked a park. Shortly before I arrived the pop artist Christo showed up in Heidelberg. He asked the Lord Mayor Zundel if he could wrap the castle in plastic. No, the OB told him, the castle was partial ruin and it was hard to maintain. Next Christo asked if he could wrap the Rathaus in plastic. Zundel patiently explained that he presided over a coalition an imposing sandstone villa around the corner of the main post office. Zundel called my long suffering predecessor and told him that the Amerika Haus was about to be famous, at least for a day or two.

Christo wrapped the Haus in plastic and was very pleased with himself. A passing student demonstration added anti-US and anti-war graffiti to his work of art. The solid burgher of Heidelberg were apparently not impressed.

Q: Did Bonn provide you with a car?

JOHNSON: Each Amerika Haus was supplied with a van or sedan. Heidelberg had a big black Chevy van. We parked it in a garage just down the street from the Haus. Unfortunately the vehicle was a little too high for the exit so we kept the tires slightly under inflated. Because of the black flat top, the van was hot on sunny days in the summer. Since the van had no resale value, I crawled up on its roof and gave it a good coat of white enamel. The van was easy to spot in a parking lot.

Q: You and your wife had one child while you were in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: We had three. Patrick was born on Fasching (Carnival) Tuesday, February 15, 1972. I announced his birth at a reception at city hall. I think the Germans were amused when I gave them the traditional cigar. "Next time how about a nice big American steak?" asked one.

Erik was born on Watergate Wednesday, August 8, 1974 a few hours before Nixon resigned. During her brief labor Carolyn had to contend with excited updates from AFN. We had a third son, Mark, who was born premature and died after three days.

Q: Heidelberg is such a lovely city. It must have been a great privilege to be assigned there.

JOHNSON: It was hard not to be enthralled with Heidelberg. I walked to work every morning across a bridge over the Neckar. I never tired of glancing up at the castle. There were wonderful outdoor markets and restaurants. We took many trips to Alsace to enjoy its cuisine and mountains. We were invited to a Grosse Zapfenstreich (a torch light parade) put on by the German Army on the terrace of the castle. Dating back to medieval times, the ceremony formally closed the taps on the beer and wine kegs. Over the years it incorporated a battalion of infantry to carry torches and a marching band. It is quite a show. One evening we attended a candle light dinner in the King's Hall of the Heidelberg castle. When we left the dinner we found the courtyard covered with new fallen snow. It was a magical evening which we will never forget.

Q: Did you get back to Berlin while you were in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: A couple times a year. Bob Blucker, an old friend from my student days, was serving at the Mission, the second of a record four tours in Berlin. On one memorable trip we arrived at the American Army check point at Helmstedt where we replaced the consular plates with US military plates so we would be under Soviet and not East German control. The NCO told me that there was a British officer who needed to be escorted to Berlin and had been waiting for some one to drive along behind him. I did not ask what the gentleman's rank or position was, for it was clear that he was important and occupied a very sensitive post. I was warned not to ever lose sight of him- no matter what. The sergeant also reminded me that I was not to exceed the 100 km per hour speed limit and that the minimum transit time was two hours and the maximum was four hours. I nodded politely to the mysterious Englishman and off we went. I quickly surmised that the Brit was in a big hurry. The speedometer of my VW station wagon climbed past 100 kmph to 120 and to 140. As we shot past trucks and other cars, I was sure the Vopos would take notice and chase us. I kept the Englishman in my crosshairs as we skimmed over the rutted highway. Carolyn smiled grimly and Patrick rattled his car seat happily.

Upon arriving at Drei Linden, the check point out of East Germany, a burly Soviet sergeant quickly processed the Brit who then disappeared down the autobahn toward the British, French and American check point. I drove slowly up to the guard house. The Russian saluted me and I handed him my papers. After a moment his eyes fixed on the stamp of the time I entered East Germany. He shook his head and announced solemnly, "Sir, you are much too early here." I grinned sheepishly and then motioned to the carton of cigarettes lying on the back seat. His face brightened and he erased the entry time and wrote in an earlier time. "Mistakes. Always mistakes," he muttered for my benefit. We were invited into the Soviet guard house "to use the facilities". When we returned, the cigarettes were gone. I wondered what it would cost to get a Russian to change Patrick's ripe diaper.

Q: You were in Heidelberg. Where was your boss?

JOHNSON: Good question. I had many supervisors, both American and German. In the USIA scheme of things I worked for Nelson Stephens, the Branch Public Affairs Officer in Stuttgart, my first two years. He was supportive but not overly interested in my efforts. He had his own problems. In 1973 USIA was reorganized. I reported to Bruce Koch in Bonn. Bruce had been Amerika Haus Director in Tuebingen. We had a very productive relationship.

The last two years of my tour of duty, 1973-75 was a time of great turmoil within USIA Germany. The CPAO (Country Public Affairs Officer) was McKinney Russell, marvelous linguist and a fine human being. However he and our common boss, Jay Gildner, the European Area Director, decided to reorganize USIA Germany along the lines of USIA Japan. They called the reorganization the "new design". Most of us in the field promptly termed it the "new disaster." Staff and resources were stripped from the posts in the field and centralized at the embassy in Bonn. No one asked the German employees what they thought of the reorganization. Hundreds of thousands of dollars of our scarce resources were wasted on useless renovations and "super graphics" in the libraries. Meanwhile and the quality of programming declined. As a taxpayer I was furious. As a public affairs professional I was disgusted.

Since the Amerika Haus Heidelberg was also a German-American Institute and received considerable support from the Germans, my operation was not greatly impacted by the shift in personnel and resources. I got half or probably three quarters of my budget from Germans. The USIA provided me with my salary, apartment, vehicle, program support, and books for the library. Meanwhile the Germans provided the Amerika Haus, utilities and funds to pay my German staff. I had a budget of over a quarter of a million dollars and for a second tour officer it was quite a responsibility

Q: Were you required to submit many reports to USIA Bonn?

JOHNSON: I sent reports on what I was doing on an ad hoc basis. During the last two years of my tour of duty I was appalled by the exaggerated reporting going to Washington from Bonn. I refused to contribute to the monthly cables. Finally Alvin Cohen, the Deputy Country Public Affairs Officer, called me on the carpet but I stood my ground.

Q: So dissent was tolerated?

JOHNSON: I had a good working relationship with McKinney Russell, who respected constructive dissent. His deputy, Alvin Cohen, and I had a less cordial relationship. McKinney visited me every few months and enjoyed meeting my contacts. He spoke excellent German and had a phenomenal memory. He impressed journalists and academics by reminding them what they had been talking about during his last visit and then picking up the dialogue exactly where they had left off. I was promoted when I left Heidelberg. When I returned to Washington, McKinney asked me to work for him. We have remained friends.

Q: Who controlled your budget?

JOHNSON: Because the Heidelberg Amerika Haus was a bi-national institution, it received most of its funding from the German federal, state and city governments. USIA paid my salary and housing. USIA also provided me with a mini-van and many of my programs. Because I was beholden to the Germans, I also answered to a board of directors, which included the Lord Mayor of Heidelberg, his deputy, the director the American/English studies program at the University of Heidelberg, a senior official from the labor unions, the president of the chamber of commerce, a mid-level bureaucrat from the cultural ministry Baden-Wurttemberg in Stuttgart, the Political Advisor to the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Army in Europe, a dean of the overseas program of the University of Maryland and my USIA boss.

The board met quarterly. I reported to the board on programs and administrative issues. My secretary had ingratiated herself to several German members of the board, which made it difficult to get their permission to fire her. On the other hand, the board was also a wonderful resource for advice. When I was having problems with the Social Democrats, I sought out the wise counsel of the labor union official. The president of the chamber of commerce provided me many good contacts to the business community. I worked closely with the University of Maryland dean on several major seminars. Hal Ekern, the USAREUR political advisor (POLAD), and I became close friends. We collaborated on numerous civil-military events. However my most satisfying relationship was with the Deputy Mayor, Hans-Georg Gerken. When the Haus was under attack by leftist students and budget-cutting bureaucrats, he always stood by me. I remember after one particularly bleak assessment, we retreated to a Gasthaus for wine. He turned to me and said, "We are friends. Call me Georg." In a culture where distance accompanies rank, I accepted his offer gratefully and took it as a real compliment.

Q: Did you have funding problems?

JOHNSON: USIA Bonn was continually looking for ways to cut costs and the German-Americans Institutes were always under the gun. The Germans, on the other hand, never wavered in their commitment to the GAIs. In the late 1980s USIA-Germany pulled out the American officers who were directors of the GAIs and cut off all funding. I am not certain how the other GAIs have fared, but the German board of directors of the Heidelberg house hired a very able German director and was very successful in raising millions of DM. Today the Heidelberg GAI, renamed the Schurmann Gesellschaft, is a very important cultural and educational organization. In fact, the building is more attractive than ever.

Q: Getting back to the student protests, was there a driving force behind these protests or did this just sort of rise up?

JOHNSON: There were several forces, including genuine indignation about U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. Many of the ideas and tactics of the student protesters were copied from Berkeley and the protest movement in the United States. I think it's fair to say the Gaullist movement from France influenced the protests inspiring anti-US sentiments. The French gained a certain favor among the German students without, perhaps, their even knowing it. There was a long history of pacifism in Germany in the post-war period. It was not the first anti-war movement. There had been a major anti-war movement when Germany rearmed and joined NATO. Marxism and German romanticism were factors in the protest movement. Someone once said that the French armies control the continent, the British navy dominates the sea, and the Germans command the clouds. German university towns were full of fuzzy-minded Marxist philosophers, some of whom were eventually victimized by hard-liners. In the 1970s Herbert Marcuse was treated very rudely in Germany.

There was one more factor motivating the protesters which is often overlooked. The leadership of the protest movement was from my generation, children of parents who were soldiers and civil servants during the Third Reich. Unlike Japan and Austria, during the 1950s and 1960s, Germany underwent a successful reeducation process during which it confronted Nazi crimes. The U.S. had been the foremost finger-wagger. During the Vietnam War young Germans, who were tired of feeling guilty for the crimes of their parents, saw Americans mistreating innocent civilians and backing a corrupt authoritarian regime. Young Germans washed their hands of their parents' deeds. It was payback time.

By the 70s most of the original leaders of the student revolt had burned out. Not long after we arrived in Heidelberg, I received a call from Hannelore, a secretary I had worked with in RIAS when I was a student at the Free University. She told me that she was studying sociology at the FU and would like to visit me. Would it be okay if she brought her friend, Eckert, former student revolutionary, she asked. I responded that I looked forward to seeing her and meeting her friend. By the end of the weekend, Hannelore and I were no longer speaking to one another. She spouted one Marxist cliché after another and was full of self-righteousness. Eckert, on the other hand, told me he liked his job at IBM and thought that the student revolt had become self-destructive. He and I got along famously. Eckert and Hannelore, who has shed her former radicalism, are still in contact with Carolyn and me.

Q: Did the protesters ever take you by surprise?

JOHNSON: Just once. It was the first day of the spring semester in 1973. I had left the Amerika Haus to visit a sick employee. After I left his home I decided to have lunch with my family. I drove by the Amerika Haus at about noon and I saw the Viet Cong flag hanging from the balcony of the Amerika Haus. Being a very perceptive person, I surveyed the situation and thought that it was odd, so I went to the nearby police station. The police told me that students had quietly and quickly taken over the Haus. It was a brilliant commando operation. About 50 students had come down in small groups down the Hauptstrasse. My near sighted cloak room attendant thought they

had come to see to an exhibit. One employee however had barricaded herself in my office on the third floor and had called the police.

A German police unit, called a "Hundertschaft," a 100 policemen in riot gear, had been mobilized. The Deputy Mayor and I joined the police across the street from the Amerika Haus. For about an hour we let the students weigh the consequences in case they were thinking about sacking the Haus. Time was on our side. The Deputy Mayor, Chief of Police and I agreed to allow the students to return to the university provided they caused no damage to the Haus. Meanwhile the policemen rattled their clubs against their shields. In good German fashion, the leaders of the action stationed themselves at the door and confiscated any books or other property the youngsters attempted to liberate. My staff and I were impressed with the thoughtful selection of books the students had wanted to pilfer. The Amerika Haus had the last laugh: The occupation of the Haus had clearly been a publicity stunt. Ironically, for the first time since the war, the newspapers went on strike that day. Thus by the time dailies resumed publication later in the week the occupation of the Amerika Haus was no longer newsworthy.

Q: I assume the German police were very supportive of our official presence.

JOHNSON: I had wonderful relations with the local and state police. They were middle class people who detested student radicalism and who appreciated the guarantee against Soviet expansionism which American forces provided their country. Once to show my gratitude I invited a group of uniformed police to the American Rod and Gun Club. I also invited an equal number of U.S. Army MPs from USAREUR headquarters. I asked both the Americans and the Germans to bring their side arms. I owned a pistol, although I never carried it for self-protection. I placed the Germans on one side of a long table and the Americans on the other side. I said "Put your guns down on the table, now walk around the other side of the table and take the other guy's gun and go out and shoot." The Germans had never fired a big 45. Kaboom, kaboom, kaboom, although they were not hitting anything they were having wonderful time firing big pistols. The MPs on the other hand had never fired a Walther, a much smaller weapon than the Colt 45. Pop, pop, pop the German pistol kicked less and made much smaller holes in the target but was more accurate than the Colt. After the shooting I provided lots of beer and sausages. We had a lot of fun that afternoon.

Q: Did you do any consular work in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Very little. I had not taken the consular course in Washington and was not authorized to act as a consular officer. I did verify the identity of a number of US citizens submitting absentee ballots during the 1972 election and facilitate the replacement of lost passports. One Saturday morning I received a call from the police informing me that an American woman had been killed the previous evening by a bus. It seems that – I have forgotten her name – was living with a couple of Germans at the edge of town and that she had gotten off a bus in the dark and walked into the path of a car. She was dead on arrival at the local hospital. The authorities could not find any identification on her and her German companions could not provide the address of her next of kin. Later that morning our mystery was solved when a Turkish taxi cab driver turned in her purse which he had seen at the edge of the road. In addition to her US drivers license, the purse contained several hundred dollars in American and German

currency. Her remains were repatriated a few days later.

Q: Speaking of Americans, did you encounter any “ugly Americans” in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: The city had its share of noisy GIs, but they were a minor nuisance. The only time I had a confrontation with one of our countrymen was in Ecuador in 1969. After attending a Student Affairs Officers’ conference in Quito, I was on my way to Guayaquil by train-tram. It was a beautiful trip on narrow gage railroad from the nation’s political capital to its commercial capital. On one particularly steep decline we rounded a curve and in front of us on the track was a campesino on a mule with pack horse. Instead of bailing out and rolling into the ravine, the farmer tried to outdistance the tram, which in spite of squealing brakes, quickly overtook him, killing his horse and slamming him into stone wall along the tracks. Crew and passengers got out to help the poor fellow. A policeman put his mule out of its misery. As several men gently placed the campesino on a blanket and lifted him onto the tram, an American tourist began to take pictures. The Ecuadorians looked at the gringo in angry disbelief. I ordered him to immediately put away his camera. For some reason, he threatened “to report me to the embassy.” I told him I was the embassy. Had he persisted in taking pictures, the Ecuadorians might well have attacked him.

Q: Back to the Vietnam War, how did you feel personally about that conflict?

JOHNSON: Not wise enough, not soon enough. I was never a hawk, but I guess I just didn’t know enough about it to realize how un-winnable it was until it was too late. But it certainly affected my staff, and limited our programming. As I mentioned earlier, my staff and I had very limited access to the University of Heidelberg. I opened the House to skeptical youth. I was told I was doing so at a risk. For example, at a time when sit-ins were popular, I advertised a “play-in”-- a jam session. Turn out was excellent, as was press coverage. I found that I could reach small groups of students with carefully targeted programs on programs on culture and the humanities.

If I may skip ahead a couple years, I will relate how I finally got onto the University of Heidelberg campus officially. A student contact asked me to give a talk on American voting patterns at a club. I prepared a provocative presentation. The morning of the event, I turned on American Forces Network and heard President Nixon announce that American forces had just mined the harbors of Hanoi and Haiphong. I phoned my contact and offered to cancel my program. He urged me to come anyway. He thought that the students were as weary of protesting the war as the U.S. was of fighting it. I arrived exactly on time, ordered a stiff drink and read a short press release from the White House describing the military action the president had just ordered. Silence. The students looked at one another and shrugged. Most had not heard the news. Most did not read a newspaper. I gave my talk and engaged in lively discussion with my audience. Afterwards I joined some students at the bar when one very large fellow approached me a bit menacingly. “Do you know what I am?” he slurred.

No I responded but I suspect you will tell me,” I replied.

“I am a Communist. (Pause) Do you know why I am a Communist?” he belched.

“Okay, why are you a Communist?” I asked.

“Because my father is a big deal in the Christian Democratic Union.” (a conservative political party).

I am not sure what I responded but Otto became “my Red”. He accepted invitations to events at the Amerika Haus and greeted me warmly when we ran into one another on the street. Like most radicals of his generation, I assume today that Otto belongs to the Rotary Club and drives a Mercedes at environmentally-degrading speeds on the autobahn.

Q: Were you able to put on any purely cultural events at the University of Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Of course we arranged for poets and writers to speak on campus. One evening the head of culture for the city of Mannheim and I offered a John Cage concert in the prestigious great hall of the university. The program drew a fairly large audience. I am not sure if we impressed or confused our listeners. The music was pretty strange. A few days later my secretary came hurrying into my office with a very worried expression on her face. It seems at Dr. Dr. von something or another demanded to speak to me and he was furious. I listened to about a half hour of a you-Americans-have-no-culture tirade, before I got in a word and then an apology. It seems that the piano we used for the concert and had retuned for the Cage music belonged not to the university but to the Bach Society and that the tuner had failed to retune the instrument as promised. Thus when the staid members of the Bach Society had their Thursday evening rehearsal, the great Steinway produced some very unexpected sounds.

Q: That was headquarters of our forces in Europe?

JOHNSON: The overall headquarters, EUCOM, European Command, was in Stuttgart. In Heidelberg we had the U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) and 7th Army headquarters. The commanding general was a four star, Michael Davidson, who had led our incursion into Cambodia. He was a fine officer and an inspiring leader. Carolyn and I were friends with Davidson’s deputy, Art Collins, a three star, and his wife. Collins, a gifted organizer and a strong motivator, worked tirelessly to raise morale and restore professionalism in USAREUR. The Collins occupied a modest house just outside the fence from headquarters. When terrorists struck the compound in 1973 the blast blew in the picture window of their dining room while the couple was enjoying an early supper. Both dived under the table when they saw the flash. The drop leaf of the oak table was down which protected them from a lethal barrage of glass. When we sat at the table I could see the spot where one of the bombs went off, which was probably less than 50 yards away.

Davidson and Collins faced a real up hill battle rebuilding USAREUR., which was starved for material and human resources during the Vietnam War. The U.S. Army was at its low point. Many of the soldiers assigned to Germany had served in Vietnam and brought their drug addiction with them. We had particularly severe problems in the cities with soldiers trafficking and consuming drugs and sometimes victimizing German civilians. Robberies of taxi drivers were an all too common occurrence. To combat drug abuse, the army introduced random drug testing. One unit that showed a particularly high rate of abuse was a helicopter maintenance unit,

something I thought of every time I rode in an army chopper.

Q: How were the enlisted men faring in Germany in the early 70s.

JOHNSON: Because particularly the Army had put nearly all its resources into the Vietnam War, USAREUR had been starved for funds. Much of our equipment was in terrible shape. For example, I took some German journalists to a firing exercise. When a cobra helicopter hovered overhead fired its Gatling gun, one round escaped the muzzle before the weapon jammed. A tank took up the fire support mission but it broke down and had to be hauled away. Our men were living in barracks that had housed the Hessians before they departed for the New World to fight George Washington and his men. One evening Carolyn and I were watching the film "The French Connection" at a barracks movie theater. During one of the final scenes the good guys are chasing the bad guys through an abandoned warehouse in which plaster is peeling from the walls and filthy water is leaking from the ceiling. One GI brought down the house when he shouted, "Hey, that's my barracks."

During the four years I was in Heidelberg the value of the dollar kept dropping which was really hard on the enlisted men who had brought their families over at their own expense and were paying rent which got more expensive from month to month.

Q: So were you involved in civil-military affairs as director the of Amerika Haus?

JOHNSON: Perhaps more by chance than design. USIA Germany was very loosely administered out of our embassy in Bonn. Those of us in the field (Cologne, Hamburg, Hanover, Berlin, Nuremberg, Munich, Tuebingen, Stuttgart, Freiburg, Saarbrücken and Heidelberg) had precious little input into the annual country plan, which was USIA Germany's contract with USIA Washington. USIA Bonn allowed the bi-national center directors (Cologne, Hanover, Nuremberg, Tuebingen, Freiburg, Saarbrücken and Heidelberg) to program independently. The Branch Public Affairs Officers in Berlin, Munich, Hamburg and Stuttgart were subject to greater control by the Country Public Affairs Officer and his deputy. The lack of communication was in part due to poor management by our bosses in Bonn and in part a tradition of letting the officers in the field act on their own initiative.

Several of us in posts near large military units worked closely with American Army and Air Force personnel to develop civil-military programs. USAREUR established a youth group called KONTAKT for enlisted men. (There still were not many women in uniform.) KONTAKT brought together young Germans and GIs for social gatherings and civic projects. I helped establish the Heidelberg chapter of KONTAKT, but given my age – I was in my early 30s – and my rank – USAREUR treated me as a colonel, although my equivalent grade was only that of a major – I did not participate in KONTAKT events, many of which took place in the Amerika Haus. While KONTAKT probably never had a total of more than a few hundred members, it was significant in that after a hiatus caused by the Vietnam War, the organization helped get GIs out of the barracks and back into touch with German civilians.

Once I got to know my way around headquarters USAREUR, I decided to foster ties between German and American professionals in law, education and medicine. In law, I brought together

the law school of the University of Heidelberg and the Max Plank Institute for Comparative Law with the USAREUR Adjutant General office. My chief allies were the director the Max Plank Institute, whose name I have forgotten, and Brigadier General Will Pearson, the USAREUR Adjutant General. German professors and American military attorneys conversed about legal issues at gatherings at the Max Plank Institute and at the Amerika Haus. One speaker was a young captain who had helped defend Lieutenant Calley at his war crimes trial. Following a luncheon program at the American officers' club we visited an U.S. Army stockade in Mannheim. One of German law students had long hair and a beard. The stockade guards wondered if he might be dangerous. I told them that Hartmut was a co-president of the local chapter of the American Field Service and was quite friendly. Today he is a senior judge in Hannover.

In the area of education, I fostered ties between the American Studies programs of the universities of Heidelberg and Mannheim with the University of Maryland extension program at USAREUR. I set up numerous programs at the Amerika Haus and invited visiting American professors to dinners at my home with their German counterparts. I also established a series of weekend seminars at a retreat house in the rustic village of St. Martin on the Weinstrasse about 50 miles west of Heidelberg. The themes of the seminars focused on American Jewish and Black authors as well as current trends in American writing. About 50 professors and students participated in each seminar which started with a wine tasting Friday evening and concluded at noon on Sunday. Each evening there was fierce competition between Bacchus and Minerva. Accordingly I asked that Saturday evening everyone walk, and not drive, into and back from nearby St. Martin.

In the area of medicine, the Germans were much better equipped than the Americans. The only U.S. medical facility in the area was a modest hospital. George Patton died there following a car accident in 1945 outside Mannheim. However the hospital had a number of excellent American doctors and a strong administrative staff, including Lt. Bill Orbell, whom I served with in Asuncion. I arranged visits by the Germans and Americans to one another's facilities. The Germans were in the process of building a multi-billion DM polyclinic at the University of Heidelberg, which had facilities that made the cash-strapped Americans roll their eyes with envy.

During my four years in Heidelberg I worked with two State Department political advisors (POLADs) to USAREUR, Hal Ekern and Jim Moffett. Hal, a veteran of the Italian campaign in World War II, was the best POLAD I ever knew. He had a drawer full of commendations and a head full of knowledge regarding military issues that encompassed grand strategy and small unit tactics. He also knew Germany and its political system. Most POLADS are treated with deference by the military, but Hal Ekern was accorded the honor of being an insider. I had Hal speak to political scientists and invited him and his gracious wife Marge to many dinners at my home. He sat on the board of directors of the Amerika Haus and was a source of much cautious counsel. If I needed a contact in USAREUR, Hal and his efficient secretary Ingrid put me in touch with the right person. Hal died in March 2006 and was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

USIA Bonn recognized the importance of civil-military affairs and encouraged officers in the cities with a U.S. military presence to cooperate fully with their American and German

counterparts. We had several conferences at EUCOM Stuttgart hosted by “Doc” Larson, a senior Department of Defense civil servant, and the EUCOM PAO Navy Captain Picket Lumpkin, a very able public affairs professional. Larson’s specialty was civil-military affairs. He was a best civil-military affairs officer I ever worked with. Lumpkin was a first-class press officer. Both were completely fluent in German.

Prior to a conference at EUCOM Lumpkin warned us that we might be disturbed by a lunatic brigadier general, who was prone to shouting and taking over conference rooms. He said we should ignore him. Lumpkin confided to me after the meeting that the officer in question was George Patton Jr.

Q: How would you rate the quality of the US military public affairs officers you worked with?

JOHNSON: Public affairs was not a prestigious assignment in our armed forces. Most PAOs in the military did it as a secondary specialty. An officer got promoted for commanding troops or moving material, not cultivating journalists who, particularly in the Vietnam War era, were often viewed as the enemy. Neither the Army nor Air Force devoted much effort to training officers in foreign languages. For example, the night USAREUR Headquarters was bombed none of the public affairs officers was able to read a statement in German to the waiting media. Military officers were reluctant to deal with political issues. They were deathly afraid of embarrassing their command by making a misstatement. One public screw up could end an officer’s career. Soldiers tend to think in quantitative terms, e.g. so many rounds of such and such a caliber shell on X amount of terrain and the enemy will be neutralized. In the Foreign Service we were much better prepared to deal with issues that were inherently ambiguous. I couldn’t always convince my counterparts in uniform that although we were confronting no-win situations, we needed to simply persevere.

Sometimes the most sincere military public affairs officer made a mess of things. The worst press the local command received in Heidelberg concerned a youthful indiscretion on the part of one of our soldiers. One Sunday afternoon a couple young GIs and their German girlfriends were picnicking on the banks of the Neckar. Apparently no one was feeling any pain when one of the girls said she wanted to pet one of the swans swimming nearby. No problem. The gallant soldier waded into the river and swam out to the birds. Apparently feeling threatened, one of the swans pecked fiercely at the soldier who panicked and broke its neck. The mortal combat was witnessed by a number of animal-loving Germans. The MPs were summoned and the GI was arrested.

The officer in charge of community relations at the local barracks had a swan brought down from somewhere near the US base at Bremerhaven. With great fanfare and abject apologies to the community, the bird was released onto the Neckar. Unfortunately the local swans vigorously rejected the newcomer. The German press had a field day at our expense.

Q: Were you consulted by your military colleagues regarding this matter?

JOHNSON: Fortunately I was out of town or I might have shared in the fiasco.

Speaking of fiascos, while on home leave in Portland, I noticed that a local firm called itself the Heidelberg Brewery. I phoned the marketing director and explained that I was the director of the American center in Heidelberg and that I would much appreciate it if he would send me some promotional material. Upon my return to Heidelberg I found a large box of coasters, mugs, ash trays and T-shirts. I distributed the items to German contacts, including to the director the local brewery. I ran into the executive on the street a few days later and asked cheerfully, "Dr. Weber, I hope you received the Heidelberg Beer mug and ash tray I sent you last week."

"Oh, thank you so much, Herr Johnson, we are suing them," he declared.

"You are what?!" I asked in disbelief.

"We are suing them," he continued, "an Oregon brewery has nothing to do with Heidelberg!"

"Herr Dr. Weber," I responded wearily, "I trust you realize that you will need a favorable verdict in an American court. Lots of luck."

Q: Did you cooperate with German military civil affairs officers?

JOHNSON: My counterpart in Heidelberg was a Captain Gieseke, a former U-boat officer who said his first view of the United States was through a periscope. "Jacksonville looked so peaceful." He was the spokesman for the Territorial Command South HQ, which coordinated the activities of the very excellent ready reserves in the southern half of the FRG. I went on several maneuvers with Gieseke. We had a great time hiking through the forest behind the troops. Once he played a very cruel joke on me. As we were headed up a long hill, he told me to go ahead and that he would catch up. As I was innocently walking past a patch of dense underbrush a machine gun firing blanks opened up on me. I must have jumped two feet in the air. Gieseke and the ambushers reveled in their "Schadenfreude" (mirth caused by pain).

I also befriended the French liaison officer, a lieutenant colonel, at USAREUR. I regret that I don't recall his name. He told me that he had been in Indo-china during the post-war years and had fought at Dien-Bien-Phu. Prior to being transferred to Heidelberg he had been at Fort Benning where he taught counter-insurgency warfare. He was convinced of the futility of our involvement in Vietnam and said it would tear his heart out when he saw the shiny sedans with the two officers drive slowly through the streets of the housing area at Fort Benning on their way to break the awful news to a spouse that she was a now a widow.

Q: What was the reaction of your contacts in USAREUR when Saigon fell?

JOHNSON: That was a night to remember. Carolyn and I were invited to the home of a colonel for a dinner. We were the only civilians. Our host and the other colonels had all served several tours in Vietnam. They had lost a lot of comrades in the war. Carolyn and I thought the dinner would be a real downer. Actually there was a feeling of relief in the room. The war had certainly not ended as the officers had wanted it to, but at least it was over. There was a feeling of closure.

Q: What were your relations with the media?

JOHNSON: Heidelberg had two dailies and Mannheim had one. There was no local radio station nor TV station in the city. Although I developed excellent relations with three newspapers, opportunities to place material with the German media were very limited. The German edition of the German language edition of the now defunct magazine "Psychology Today" was edited in Heidelberg. I got to know the editor. One day he dropped by my office and asked for my comments regarding an article he planned to include in the next edition. I don't recall the nationality of the author, but the writer argued that Americans had become a war mongering people. I asked the editor if he would make use of material refuting the article. He responded that he always tried to be fair and that if the text I provided were credible, he would print both pieces in the same issue. I explained my problem to USIA Bonn. My colleagues in Bonn sent an urgent request to USIA Washington which produced a most rational refutation of the war mongering piece. The war mongering piece was never printed in "Psychology Today."

One institution which I inherited from my predecessor and carried on with some success was the German-American Press Lunches, which met quarterly at a local Gasthaus. The Amerika Haus provided speakers on timely issues. German reporters, public affairs officers from USAREUR, and community leaders attended the round tables.

I cultivated several top journalists, including the editor of a Heidelberg daily. We spent a lot of time together. One Sunday he and I set off to an air show at the American air base at Ramstein. Traffic on the Autobahn slowed to a crawl 50 kilometers from the turn off. We assumed that there had been a serious accident. To our amazement nearly all the cars were headed to the air show. Thus at the height of American involvement in Vietnam, the Ramstein air show attracted over 300,000 Germans. These were mostly middle class families. The Germans love American ice cream and of course hot dogs and hamburgers, but particularly ice cream. Mounds of ice cream wrappers six feet high covered garbage cans. I am sure they also enjoyed the static exhibits and stunts by our fliers. Our outing generated a feature story noting that grass roots German-American relations were really pretty solid.

I organized field trips for journalists to attend joint military field exercises and tours of the iron curtain along the German-Czech border. USAREUR provided air and ground transportation and knowledgeable guides. I recall one dismal evening I was driving a group of newsmen to a briefing at a well concealed command center. As I rounded a curve on a back road I sighted a small red reflector in my path. I skidded to a halt only a few feet behind an American armored personnel carrier. I jumped out and banged on the side of the APC with a tire iron. A soldier opened a hatch. "You are parked in the middle of a farm road," I roared, still shaking from fright.

"No, I am not," he retorted, "This a field... isn't it?"

I hit the thin layer of asphalt with the tire iron. "Does this sound like a field," I shouted.

"Damn, I am sorry, Sir," the soldier replied. The hatch banged shut and the APC lumbered off in a cloud of smelly exhaust toward some nearby woods. We continued on to our briefing and then enjoyed a hearty dinner in a Gasthaus. Accidents between civilian and military vehicles were common during maneuvers. The results were predictable. Sedans are no match for tanks.

Q: How serious was drug abuse among GIs in the early 70s?

JOHNSON: I never saw any statistics but I know from talking with USAREUR officers I know that it was regarded a serious impediment to the readiness of our forces. Some of the soldiers brought their addiction to Europe from assignments to Vietnam. Others were already abusing drugs when they entered the service and still others turned to drugs out of boredom while on duty in Germany. After the introduction of spot check tests using urine analysis, one disheartening report listed a helicopter maintenance unit near the top of list of units with the highest rate of drug abuse. I suspect that alcohol however remained the number one drug of choice throughout this period. Sometimes the military was its own worst enemy. For example, service clubs routinely provided happy hours with ten cent drinks. A simple DUI conviction ended the careers of many officers and NCOs.

Q: How did drug abuse in the US forces play in the German media?

JOHNSON: There were not many stories in the Heidelberg and Mannheim press. However the public and particularly the city governments were well aware of the problem and I certain there was a good deal of apprehension in the German public. Journalists realized that the US Army had a much worse problem than the Air Force and that the closer the Army units were to the Czech and East German borders, the greater their level of readiness.

Incidentally during the cold war East Germany not only gave safe haven to terrorists of the Bader-Meinhof gang but it also facilitated the flow of narcotics to the Federal Republic. In the 1970s a very large portion of the drugs, particularly heroin, being consumed in Germany was coming from Turkey, which was still growing a lot of opium poppies. Turkish couriers would fly into Schoenefeld Airport in East Berlin and take the subway into West Berlin and then continue their trips by land to West Germany.

Q: Weren't there border controls coming into West Berlin from East Berlin?

JOHNSON: No. The US, UK, France and the West Germans maintained that Berlin was one city and that the border (wall) had been built illegally by the East Germans, therefore the western authorities did not subject people coming out of East Berlin to customs control. Another reason why there was no customs control by the west is that S-Bahn and U-Bahn trains ran under East Berlin on their way from one West Berlin destination to another, i.e. a portion of East Berlin bulged into West Berlin in the center of the city.

Q: There must have been some negative coverage of race problems in our military.

JOHNSON: There was and again the number of race related incidents was far higher in the Army than in the Air Force and worse around training areas and in garrison cities. Many German bars discriminated against black soldiers, in part because they didn't want fights between whites and black GIs on their premises. It was against the law in Germany to refuse someone entry to a public establishment because of the color of their skin. I remember stories in the local press about black soldiers being turned away from bars. On several occasions a black two star general

in charge of personnel at USAREUR put on an afro wig to test the entry policy of Heidelberg bars. If he was turned away, he called the lord mayor and complained.

One more point on the subject before we leave it. There was a lot of prejudice on the part of Germans toward non-whites. We endured plenty of very hypocritical finger wagging by our hosts regarding racial tensions in our military and in the United States. Offspring of black GIs and Germans endured insults by their German classmates.

Q: You were in Germany during the summer Olympics of 1972. Did you attend the games in Munich?

JOHNSON: No I dislike crowds, but I spent a lot of time at the Paraplegic Olympics which were held in Heidelberg about a month before the Munich games. The US fielded a large contingent of very determined athletes. A number of the athletes were Vietnam vets. The ambassador and many of the USAREUR generals attended events. I tried unsuccessfully to get the wives of the officers to join the appreciative audiences, but few responded to my invitations. Perhaps the human vestiges of the Vietnam War were too painful for them to witness.

Q: Were journalists suspicious of you?

JOHNSON: I had to confront suspicion everywhere. In fact, academics were generally more difficult to approach than reporters. But sometimes journalists could be rather blatant in their mistrust. I recall one instance during a garden party at my home when a reporter asked to use my phone. I directed her to the phone in the den. In a few minutes she returned to the garden and said, "You are still out here." I responded, "Does that surprise you?"

"Well," she replied, "I heard a click on the phone and thought you were listening to my conversation." Germans can be so tactful.

Q: You mentioned earlier in the interview that Germans listened to the American Forces Network. Did AFN have a large audience in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: Many Germans tuned in AFN for the music. Journalists told me they also monitored the news which they judged to be factual. I personally was very impressed with the quantity and quality of coverage of the Watergate scandal on AFN. For me it was AFN's finest hour. I encouraged my German contacts to listen to the Watergate hearings on AFN.

Q: Were you much involved with student exchanges at the secondary school level?

JOHNSON: I had very good relations with the American Field Service. We did a lot of events with AFS at the Amerika Haus. The chapter president and his wife are the god parents of our older son. We remain close friends. For reasons I never understood, Youth for Understanding, which also runs a student exchange program, kept its distance from the Heidelberg Amerika Haus. Later when I served in Frankfurt, YFU refused my overtures to host joint events.

I tried unsuccessfully to implement contacts between Heidelberg secondary schools and the local

U.S. Army high school. The Germans wanted American pupils to attend classes and participate in weekend seminars but the American youngsters would not come out of their ghetto. It was a shame, because we could have developed some very useful programs at that grassroots level.

Because the German secondary schools were plagued with a lot of drug abuse, I brought teachers together with experts from USAREUR. One American expert was a chaplain who spoke fairly good German. The Germans referred to pot as “shit”, which was the accepted German slang, but it took a while for the man of the cloth to realize what they were talking about. Finally it dawned on him and he used the American word several times with great emphasis.

Incidentally I organized a series of lectures on German-American relations for the PTA of the American school in Heidelberg. Response was tepid. Anti-U.S. demonstrations and a radical devaluation of the dollar caused the American military families to stay in their ghettos and many were not interested in hearing about the host country. I spoke to the PTA on problems in German-American relations both domestically and internationally. My carefully crafted presentation elicited no questions. Finally a woman strode up to me purposefully and asked if I could respond to something that had been bothering her all evening. I was delighted. I had reached some one after all. Her question was, “Why do you wear your wedding ring on your right hand?” Completely deflated, I responded that I had courted my wife in Paraguay where wedding bands are worn on the right hand and after leaving that country I had not switched the ring to my right hand.

Q: Did you do much public speaking to German audiences while you were in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: The U.S. Army had helped build a conference center in St. Martin, a lovely village in the Pfalz. I spoke to seminars for military personnel on a regular basis on the American political process. I also addressed an audience of German officers in Heidelberg. In retrospect I don't think my presentations were very good, but at least I became a better public speaker. Incidentally one of the differences I noticed between State and USIA officers was that while the former are more adept at report writing, the latter are better at public speaking.

In 1974 I tried to give a course in writing at the University of Heidelberg but student radicals warned the director of the institute that they would disrupt my classes, so the course was canceled.

Q: When you were running the Institute, what were the students, not just the students but other people, what sorts of things were they interested in about the United States? What did they like, didn't like?

JOHNSON: I think the one thing that always stood up was the quality of our higher education. I counseled many German students about studying in the United States. Most students wanted to go to Cornell, Harvard, Princeton, Berkeley. My job was to persuade students to look at other options, such as the University of Indiana for music, the University of Tennessee for geology and Washington University in St. Louis for journalism. Everyone wanted scholarships and I was able to find quite a bit of money. In spite of the Vietnam War, a university master's degree from an American university, an MA or Ph.D. was very highly regarded in Germany.

Q: Did you get any impression -- you had the very famous University of Heidelberg there -- about German education at the university level at that time? That is, how it worked, how the professors operated?

JOHNSON: As I mentioned earlier, I did my master's degree at the Free University in Berlin so I had some first-hand knowledge of higher education in Germany. The university system when I entered the FU in 1962 was still quite elite and small. When the Social Democratic (SPD) government came to power in 1972, it opened admissions to the universities. Within in a few years, university enrollment quadrupled and, in spite of a massive building program, the universities were not prepared for huge increase in the number of students. So I think the quality of education dropped in many disciplines. Medicine, dentistry, architecture and a few other subjects were protected from the onslaught by rigorous entrance exams, but many colleges of social sciences and humanities were overwhelmed.

Students were frustrated because they could not get the courses they needed. There were too few professors and lecture halls were overcrowded. Too few dorm rooms were available, forcing students to compete for scarce apartments and private rooms which became increasingly expensive. The failure to implement a well planned increase in the size and diversity of the universities drove some students into the arms of the radical Left.

It was time for the university professors to be de-deified. Unfortunately, and it happened more in Berlin which was far more radical than Heidelberg, there was a lot of intimidation and even physical threats. A wonderful professor of mine, Richard Loewenthal, was a victim of the self-righteous purges by the radical Left. Loewenthal, a Jew, escaped Germany in 1934 and spent the war in the United States. He was a leading authority on the Soviet Union. During the time I was at the FU, one had to get to the lecture hall early to find a seat. In the late 1960s he was harassed and forced to leave the building through a window, which was deeply humiliating. Kurt Sontheimer, another famous political scientist, quit the FU for quieter surroundings at the University of Munich. I can't name all the professors who were persecuted by the bigots. The University of Heidelberg was less radical than the FU.

Q: Was there a corresponding increase in activities by right-wing students in reaction to the leftist radicalism?

JOHNSON: No. In the minds of post-war Germans the radical right was associated with Nazism. There was no discernable neo-Nazi movement at German universities. The neo-Nazi groups in the Federal Republic were blue collar, based in southern Germany and very small. Most of their propaganda came from Nazi groups in the United States. The Germans would have liked for the US Government to have cracked down on the tiny but noisy American Nazi movement, but Uncle Sam was constrained from doing so by our constitution.

The "schlagende Verbindungen", (dueling fraternities), ala "The Student Prince", still existed in Heidelberg and other universities, but although politically conservative, they devoted themselves to drinking and professional advancement, not politics.

When I was a student at the Free University it was revealed that Eberhard Diepgen, the president of the student body, an important position in a university founded on co-determination among students, faculty and administrators, was a member of dueling fraternity. Opponents of the dueling fraternities organized an “Urabstimmung”, a recall vote, and Diepgen, was voted out of office. Unfortunately the action occurred just before JFK spoke at the FU, thus there was no student body president to be part of the welcoming delegation. Diepgen however had the last laugh. He eventually became Lord Mayor of Berlin on the Christian Democratic (CDU) ticket.

Q: While you were in Germany in the early 70s the radical right did make a sort of comeback politically, didn't it?

JOHNSON: There was the German National Party and the Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann but neither amounted to anything. The Federal Republic learned from the Weimar Republic that lots of little parties lead to instability which in turn opens the door to radicalism, thus to be represented in a state or in the federal parliament, a party needs to garner 5% of the vote. And if you look back at the history of Nazism, you will note that it was full of factions and that one man who held the party together and made it a national movement was Adolf Hitler. In the post-war years the radical right was hamstrung by petty infighting and by the lack of a charismatic leader. Moreover the German government came down hard on anti-democratic organizations. I am reminded of the satirical column by Art Buchwald in which the American Communist Party elected an FBI agent as its leader because the FBI has so many men in the organization that it formed the strongest faction. The same was true of the radical right in Germany, only it was the Bundesverfassungsschutz (Federal Constitutional Protection Agency) that kept a very active surveillance of neo-Nazi activity and of course also on the radical Left.

Q: Did you have any contacts with the dueling fraternities in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: The dueling fraternities were conservative but never radical, much less Nazi. In fact, they were banned during the Third Reich, because the Nazis had an absolute monopoly on power. I never attended a duel but participated in a couple of “Herrnabende” (gentlemen’s evenings) with students and well heeled alumni. We drank a lot of beer and talked. I could not identify with these institutions which were clearly relics of a bygone era. I preferred to devote my time and energy to trying to reach members of the center and the moderate Left.

But one final reference to the fraternities, every time I visited one of the villas that housed a fraternity I was drawn to old photos of the students in their regalia, which included special hats, colored sashes and sabers. Once I turned over photos from 1913 and 1914. There were crosses after most of the names—mute evidence of the very high toll World War I took among the graduates. Since, as already noted, the Nazis banned the fraternities, there were no similar photos from the years leading up to World War II.

Q: Did you do a lot of official entertaining in your home and garden?

JOHNSON: We had many dinner and garden parties. I received a miserably small allowance from USIA Bonn thus I paid most of the costs myself, which was very unjust. Our home was one of the few places in Heidelberg where university professors, labor leaders, business executives,

journalists and military officers could meet as equals. We had some wonderful parties. Carolyn and I enjoyed watching the Germans from different social classes interact. In Heidelberg and later when we served in Frankfurt our home seemed to be one of very few places where high level corporate executives would break bread with labor union organizers.

My father baptized our older son in the Peter's Church in the old city. Although it was a warm spring day, it was cold inside the medieval church. Patrick, clad only in a light baptismal gown lent to us by his German God mother, was not a happy camper. Afterwards we hosted a reception in our garden. One of the guests was one of Werner Von Braun's V-2 team at Peenemuende. To my horror many German guests mixed orange juice with the fine French champagne I had purchased from the French commissary in nearby Speyer. The French, by the way sold Wonder Bread in their commissary. Perhaps they used it to fatten their geese.

Q: Did Germans imbibe much at your parties?

JOHNSON: Their real vice was American ice cream which they put away by the gallon. Meanwhile they had not lost their fondness for liquor and so a lot of Scotch and gin was consumed. However Germans are responsible drinkers and they were aware of stiff penalties for drunk driving. No driver's license. No car. Cars and dogs- certainly not children- are at the center of German society.

Early in my tenure in Heidelberg I discovered that the Class VI Agency had its headquarters near the PX. The Class VI provided the U.S. military with liquor. It was a separate agency from the PX. As a Foreign Service Officer I was exempted from the monthly ration of five quarts of liquor. Any time I needed liquor, I presented a cashier's check with a long and thoroughly meaningless obligation number printed on its face. The brand name gin cost 95 cents a liter, bourbon \$1.50 and Scotch \$1.75. Sometimes I supplied colleagues in Bonn with liquor. One shipment, destined for McKinney Russell, the Country Public Affairs Officer, was intercepted by the embassy and he was forced to pay the full retail price by the embassy commissary.

I did use my source of inexpensive Bourbon to foster US exports. I learned as much as I could about the whiskey, purchased a wide selection of Bourbons, and conducted tastings at the Amerika Haus and at professional organizations. I doubt my efforts had much of impact on our trade gap with the Federal Republic but the tastings were a lot of fun and allowed me to address other issues, such as US-Soviet relations.

Q: One would wonder how you stayed sober with liquor that cheap.

JOHNSON: Although the almighty gave me a fondness for wine, beer and liquor he also gave me a propensity for getting terrible hangovers, thus I have never had a drinking problem.

Q: Did you know alcoholics in the Foreign Service?

JOHNSON: Yes. I worked for three. I suspect alcoholism still is a major problem, and not just with officers but also with spouses. The work exposes one continually to drinking. Then there is the stress, loneliness and, in many posts, a lack of social support. I had one colleague who lost

his wife to cancer and then was assigned to a one person post where he began to drink heavily. He got smashed just before an interview for an onward assignment to a very desirable job at a post in Scandinavia and of course did not get the job. The last time I saw him, he was sitting in a windowless office at USIA three sheets to the wind at 10:00 a.m.

Q: Did you travel officially outside your consular district?

JOHNSON. I took six political science professors to NATO Headquarters in Brussels for two days of briefing. We traveled in the Chevy van which USIA provided me as my "Dienstwagen" - office car. USIA at NATO organized substantive briefings by knowledgeable officers from several countries. We spent our evenings enjoying Belgium's tasty beers. It was a terrific program. On the way back to Frankfurt, we stopped in Luxembourg and I showed the professors the American military cemetery with its more than 5,000 white marble crosses and Stars of David. One grave at the front of the cemetery was set apart from the others: General Patton's. One academic said to me, "I had no idea the Americans had lost so many men." I reminded him that the Battle of the Bulge, or the Ardennes Offensive as the Germans called it, was the US's most costly battle during World War II.

Q: How about unofficial travel?

JOHNSON: I won't bore you with the great vacations we enjoyed, but we traveled widely. One trip that is perhaps worth relating was to Budweis to visit my Czech friend Rudi and his family. Rudi had informed the authorities that I was coming and soon after we crossed the border a rather dirty Skoda began tailing us. State security service kept us under observation for three days we were in the area, which in fairness included a major Warsaw Pact airbase. Once I made an unexpected U-turn which almost caused the Czech security officer to have an accident. I immediately stopped and indicated that I had meant no harm.

I also spent a week in the GDR in early 1975. I think I received one of the first diplomatic visas issued to an American after Washington established formal diplomatic relations with East Germany. (There had been a lot of informal contact between State Department officers and the Communist regime but we kept the dialogue very low key.) I drove to Leipzig via Erfurt and Weimar. In Erfurt I met two university students who were delighted to have a long talk with a US diplomat. I warned them that they could get in trouble if they were seen in my company. They were well informed about conditions in the FRG but had lots of questions about the United States, particularly our economy and political system. That evening I was turned away from a student club because I could not prove I had a university degree. I asked the student doorman how the club's exclusivity jibed with the classless society which the communist regime espoused. He responded with an embarrassed shrug.

Weimar embodies the best and the worst of the German character. It is the city of Goethe and Schiller and birth place of an ill fated democracy. Just outside the city is the concentration camp Buchenwald. Built and used by the Nazis it was also used by the communists after 1945. I met a former inmate who gave me a very personalized tour of the camp. "Hans" was in his early 70s. The Nazis imprisoned him in Buchenwald because he was a Communist. He was liberated by the US Army and although he was a staunch communist, had never forgotten the kindness the GIs

showed him. Afterwards Hans invited me for coffee at the train station's café. The waiter ignored Hans's calls for service. Finally Hans confronted the man and announced, "I am an old party member and a survivor of Buchenwald. How dare you embarrass me in front of my American friend!" The waiter took our order with studied indifference. As we parted, Hans said to me sadly, "It wasn't supposed to turn out this way."

In Leipzig I had to turn my windshield wipers on although it was not raining, at least not water. There was fine hail of lignite (brown coal) dust falling from smoke stacks all over the city. Lignite was East Germany's only indigenous fuel supply, and although it was high in sulfur, it was burned with abandon, much to the detriment of the health of the people and their forests.

Q: Did you belong to any civic organizations in Heidelberg or Mannheim, such as Rotary?

JOHNSON: Ah, you touch a raw nerve with that question. A friend of mine invited me to attend a lunch at Rotary so the members could size me up as a possible member. I agreed to speak on "Problems of US-German Relations". I dealt with several rather sensitive issues in my talk, I did not clear the text of my presentation with the embassy. I asked that my remarks be regarded as "off the record." I don't remember what I said but I was candid and provocative. Very pleased with myself, I offered to respond to questions. The silence was deafening. Afterwards I asked my sponsor what I had done wrong. He replied, "You didn't address the subject they wanted to hear about."

"What subject was that?" I asked.

"The roll back of Communism in Europe," he replied.

"But containment, not roll back has been US policy since the late 40s," I sputtered.

"I know. I know. But that does not matter to these guys," he responded wearily.

I was a little hurt by the rejection. However Carolyn told me sweetly that I did not belong in Rotary. She was right.

Later I joined Toastmasters International which met monthly in a gasthaus on the Neckar to help members improve their public speaking skills. There were about 30 Germans and Americans in our club. Most of the Americans worked at USAREUR. The Germans were primarily business executives who were fluent in English. Although we tried to keep criticism of one another's presentations constructive, a bit of "Schadenfreude" was often present. While the Americans had a better command of English, the Germans were more experienced public speakers and better debaters. Germans appreciate rhetorical flourishes.

Q: Was Marxism a solid force at Heidelberg University?

JOHNSON: At certain institutes, yes. In economics and sociology departments Marxism was quite prevalent. Heidelberg has a very fine school of theology, but the radical left never made inroads there. My father, who was a university professor, spoke to professors and advanced

students of theology on religious cults in the United States. I held the very successful program in the garden of our apartment. His thoughtful presentation opened doors for me at the theology school.

Q: Were there any famous authors living in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: No novelists or poets. But Heidelberg was the ancestral home of Albert Speer who, after a stint as Hitler's favorite architect, was promoted to be the minister of armaments during much of World War II. He was a native Heidelberger, and I drove by his house many times, which was on the road behind the castle. One day I just called him up, told him who I was, and said, "May I visit you?" Speer responded, "By all means. Are you married? I said yes and he said bring your wife and we'll have sherry. I asked Speer some questions about his experiences as "Reichsminister" and he signed my copy of his memoirs. We had him to dinner a couple of times at our home and maintained a discreet relationship. I had coffee with him on the last day of my tour of duty in Heidelberg. He was clearly a remarkable intellect. As a young architect he made a pact with the devil and spent 20 years in Spandau Prison.

Q: Did any famous American authors come to Heidelberg while you were there?

JOHNSON: I hosted the Pulitzer Prize winning poet W.D. Snodgrass, but his appeal was limited. James Baldwin and Langston Hughes spoke before a large audience in Stuttgart. I don't remember who invited them, but perhaps because they were critics of the administration, USIA did not sponsor the program. I attended the event which consisted mainly of give and take with the audience. Hughes was very frail and left most of the talking to Baldwin, who was at the height of his popularity and was living in Paris. I wanted to ask Baldwin why he didn't return to the United States and participate in the civil rights struggle, but several black GIs were sitting behind me and I remembered that my car was parked a distance from the auditorium.

Q: What about university exchanges? You were mentioning that you were having trouble with the Fulbright. This has always been a very important element in the German/American relationship.

JOHNSON: Apart from the Fulbright program, there were a number of university-to-university exchanges, which were adversely affected by anti-Americanism during the Vietnam War. Another area of exchange concerned purely scientific ties between German and American institutes. For example the Max Plank Institute for Geophysics was located at the edge of Heidelberg. The institute worked closely with NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration), analyzing moon rocks. I served as a go-between, a glorified courier. Lunar mineral samples were sent by secure means to USAREUR headquarters. My job was to retrieve the rocks from a vault and deliver them to the Max Plank Institute. One of my shipments contained a small quantity of pink lunar dust which looked like women's make-up mixed with ashes.

Q: What about books? Were there problems with books? There certainly were in my days when we had to deal with those clowns from McCarthy's staff. There are books and books. Who chose the books and were there problems in choosing them?

JOHNSON: We received lists of books available from USIA Washington and my librarians choose which books to order. I frequented the “Stars and Stripes” newsstand at the PX and purchased books off the rack, particularly paperbacks. I was criticized by USIA Bonn for buying works that contained material hostile to President Nixon. I responded that the books lent credibility to the library and moreover that I had used funds provided by the Germans to purchase the books. I put Playboy in my library, not because the students were interested in the pictures, and I suppose they were, but because there were excellent interviews in those days.

I made friends with the PX newsstand supplier in Darmstadt, which is half way between Heidelberg and Frankfurt. The supplier provided text books to the universities training Army and Air Force personnel. I worked out an agreement with the supplier whereby I could have surplus text books and professional books free of charge provided I guaranteed that I would only give them to Germans. During my tenure in Frankfurt I distributed hundreds of these books to contacts at the universities of Heidelberg and Mannheim.

Q: How did German-American bilateral relations change during your four years in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: The big change was that we exited Vietnam, which removed a major irritant in our relations with the Germans. Nixon was replaced by Ford who was defeated by Carter. Of the three presidents Ford was probably best liked by the Germans. Ford was quiet and steady. Watergate wrecked Nixon’s standing and Carter came off as sanctimonious to many Germans. Particularly educated Germans admired the way our political system handled Watergate. They praised the process for its transparency. During the four years I was in Heidelberg the image of the United States as a nation with a rich culture improved, not that I had very much to do with that change. However vestiges of “Eurosnobism” still lingered.

Q: I think one of the things that always impressed me has been that at our high school level we don’t do such a good job in education, but when you get to the university, then there’s this tremendous leap compared to the education that most students get in European universities.

JOHNSON: I think that with few exceptions the German gymnasiums are much superior to all best the very best American high schools. At the university level I would like to note a tremendously important U.S. export to Germany after the war which was open stack libraries. The library is the heart of the American university. Nearly all libraries at German universities close at five or six p.m.. They are rarely open on weekends and access to the stacks is heavily restricted. There’s nothing like wandering around the stacks, and you find stuff you never dreamed you would be interested in. In fact, my first federal job I was a desk attendant at the Library of Congress and having that library card and taking stuff out of the Library of Congress was a thrill I’ll never have again. And the openness of professors to give and take, the accessibility of professors and their encouragement of the students were far more prevalent in the US than in Germany. I think the German system offers greater academic initiative to undergraduates. When I went to the Free University, I didn’t let my studies get in the way of my education. As an undergraduate in United States, I just studied my butt off to pass exams, which provided me with a good basic education . At Free University I read all the books I wanted to read. I didn’t have that pleasure again until I retired.

Q: Did you have any connection with the American diplomatic establishment in Germany while you were there in Heidelberg?

JOHNSON: No diplomatic establishment. The only other diplomat, other than Hal Ekern at USAREUR, was my French colleague, the Director of the Institut Français. I attended some of his programs and we socialized. I had a bigger operation than he did. French influence in Germany has been waning steadily. When the Germans and the French established a fast reaction military unit, they found their common language was not German or French, but English. And if I may jump ahead a few years, while I was in Frankfurt an Assistant Minister of Education and Culture in France called on me. I didn't know the purpose of his visit. But I think it was basically to lament, "You know the last gymnasium in the state of Hessen that required French has dropped it." I felt sorry for the poor man. English was absolutely on the ascendancy. I wish someone would write a Ph.D. on the role of American Forces Network as a English teacher in post-war Germany. It was just tremendously important because the students all listened to AFN. Young people tuned in AFN for its music. They found German radio overly instructive

Q: Were you aware that English was the preferred second language of Germany, at least from your perspective?

JOHNSON: Yes, absolutely, and there was a little competition, sort of under the surface between English learned and spoken in England and American English, and it would go like this; the Germans who spoke proper British English said "We're cultured," and the ones who spoke American English would respond, "Yes, but you are obsolete."

Q: I assume that over the intervening years you have been back to Heidelberg. Is there a Tom Johnson legacy?

JOHNSON: In public diplomacy it is very hard to judge effectiveness. Carolyn and I made many friends and I believe we overcame a lot of hostility among students and professors. However every time I return to Heidelberg, the current director the German-American Institute, a German, reminds me that what I am really remembered for is a project that had nothing to do with the cold war: the "Schlossspiele," the castle festival. In February 1973 the Lord Mayor of Heidelberg asked Nils Koersen, the City Director of Tourism, and me to resurrect summer theater in the Heidelberg castle. We didn't know what the Lord Mayor's rationale was but our deadline was clear: July and August that year. We had no idea what we were doing, and we proceeded to prove it. However we arranged for a production of Man of La Mancha to put on ten performances. The lead roles and the orchestra were professional, while the chorus was made up of amateurs. Performances were in the King's Hall in the castle. Some nights we sold out. At the end of the season, we had run a deficit of about 10,000 DM. Koersen and I were the co-producers and stage hands. We did absolutely everything. I cut my home leave short, which to this day I regret. That autumn we turned the project over to professionals. The new director-producer shrewdly put on a production of "Student Prince" and – as I recall – a Mozart Opera. The Schlossspiele have continued and have attracted audiences totaling well over 300,000.

Q: By 1975, what happened to you?

JOHNSON: I would've loved to have stayed in Heidelberg, but I was sure I was headed for Ecuador, and I would be Branch Public Affairs Officer in Guayaquil, a bustling city I had visited after attending a student affairs officers' conference in Quito in 1969. Carolyn however thought we were going to Africa. As I mentioned earlier we had two children by then.

Q: In the 97th General? I have a daughter who is an alum of the 97th General in Frankfurt.

JOHNSON: In the same building where General Patton died. In fact, I have to tell the story about Patton in Heidelberg. He was on his final day on duty and decided to do some grouse shooting. His sedan hit the side of a truck near Mannheim and he was thrown forward -- he was asleep, I think -- and he snapped his neck on the roll bar inside the sedan. He was taken to the hospital where shortly before Christmas 1945 he expired of a heart attack. There was an army magazine that I subscribe to, and I pulled out the article, sent it to the Lord Mayor, and thinking he was a busy man I would never hear from him. It turned out the Lord Mayor, at the end of the war, couldn't go to school because they had closed the school. He was fourteen years old. A GI asked Zundel if he would like a job in the Bad Homburg which is just north of Frankfurt, and he said, "Sure." The young Reinhard Zundel was Patton's private elevator operator. Zundel accompanied Patton to his car that morning. He was very grateful for the article.

Back to my onward assignment, I received orders to go to the Monrovia as cultural affairs officer. Carolyn was right again. After leaving the Heidelberg Amerika Haus in the tender care of my successor, we went on home leave. Following two weeks of consultation in Washington, I joined Carolyn and the boys in Portland, Oregon, her home.

Q: Did you participate in the Department's public speaking program while you on home leave between Heidelberg and Monrovia?

JOHNSON: I gave talks at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth and at the Air Force Academy outside Colorado Springs. When I arrived in Denver I needed to rent a car to drive to the academy. I noticed that my New York State license had expired so I presented my German license. The man behind the counter asked, "What's this?"

"A German driver's license," I replied.

After studying the alien document, he finally responded, "If you are good enough for the Autobahn, you are good enough for our highways. Have a nice trip."

MCKINNEY RUSSELL
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Bonn (1971-1975)

McKinney Russell was born in New York City in 1929. He graduated from Yale University in 1950 and served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1951-1953. His

Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, the Congo, the Soviet Union, Brazil, Spain, and China. Mr. Russell was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt on May 10, 1997.

RUSSELL: I got back into the country without difficulty but not for many years. I next spent '71 to '75 in Bonn as PAO, and never was reassigned back to the Soviet Union. There is one Agency officer who has that distinction. Ray Benson was PAO for 3 or 4 years, came out and went back again...altogether he was in charge of USIS for 7 or 8 years. He gained a very fine reputation for his work there

As for the Bonn assignment, it presented some real and complex challenges, very different from situation in Moscow. I had 4 officers and 2 locals in the Soviet Union. In Bonn, at that time, the total American officer contingent was 31 or 32 and there were something over 200 German local employees. In a sense USIS had been invented after WW II in Germany and Japan. In both places, the American effort at re-education and engaging many USIA officers in seminal cultural and information roles, meant that a very high percentage of USIA officers served in Germany or Japan, especially in Germany.

For me, it was a big jump to take over the German program. The four years there were rather heavy going in two areas: politics and post structure. There had been enormous agency and government investments in Germany starting in 1945. We had major America House presence in 1971 in Germany, in West Berlin, Hamburg, Hannover, Cologne, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Munich, in addition to which we had America Houses which were called German-America Institutes, headed by Americans but with German staff, and a lot of German funding in Nuremberg, Heidelberg, Tuebingen, Freiburg, and Saarbrücken. It was a genuine challenge to manage that large an operation because of all of these presences all over the country, in America Houses, and attached to the Consulates General. There were at least two Americans in the main cities and in Frankfurt there were three.

It was extremely difficult to run the country from the Bonn office because the staff there was so small. We were perhaps six or seven people at the start. There was the Country Cultural Affairs Officer, Michael Weyl, the Country Information Officer, Victor Olason, and only a few others. It seemed to me and to European Area Director Jay Gildner, an activist, energetic officer who had opened the America House in Berlin back in 1959, that in those cities where we had big America Houses, we could profitably move the Branch PAO out of the Consulate General and into our own USIS presence, the America House. Where we had two officers, we reduced the USIS officer presence to one, and we moved positions to Bonn to create a new Program Division there that did programming for the whole country. The effort was to create a coherent program so that the informational messages and the cultural activities had something coherent to do with each other. Until then, each of the big America Houses acted much like an independent fiefdom.

Strengthening the country post in this way wasn't easy and it created a great deal of difficulty with the Consuls General. Traditionally, the people who headed those big districts, Frankfurt, Munich, Stuttgart, Hamburg, etc., were Class I, that is to say, MC, Minister-Counselor, level officers from the State Department who, under other circumstances, might have been Ambassadors and so they thought of themselves to some extent as Ambassadors. When this

reorganization was proposed, it came up against a great deal of opposition from them. I learned one thing in this process that I believe is fundamental to being an effective PAO, and that is how vital it is to get the Ambassador and the DCM on your side and keep them there.

As this whole process was going forward, I made a special point of making sure that the DCM, Frank Cash, and the Ambassador, Martin Hillenbrand, knew exactly what I was doing and why, so that they would be supportive when blistering telegrams would come in from the Consul General in Munich, for instance, saying, "You can't do this to me! We represent the U.S. in Bavaria!" The shifts resulted in a lot of changes. We reorganized our office space in Bonn to accommodate additional officers. We saved a great deal of money by getting out of the Consulates General because inside them we had been paying very high rents indeed. We had had a Branch PAO, a secretary and two or three locals sitting in the Consulate General in Munich, for example. By putting them into our own America House, which was a very large and comfortable building, we saved ourselves a great deal of money and we used that money to set things up in Bonn. Those four years were full of tensions and questioning and changes. It was altogether the toughest job that I had yet in the Agency.

Q: What do you think was the major addition to economic savings, or the major results of the shift? What did it do for the program?

RUSSELL: I think it made the program a great deal stronger because we could now plan programs for the various component elements of the program centrally, in the way that got the best out of the speakers and other resources. We could make sure that the major issues that related to German-American relations were centrally formulated clearly and reflected what one could learn at the Embassy which one couldn't learn at the Consulate General because of the direct line that Bonn had back to Washington.

In making these changes, we made a number of mistakes. We believed that the creation of an open, large Area Office for USIS in the Bonn Embassy was a good idea. It turned out to be a bad idea. It didn't take into account traditional ways the German staff had worked and it wasn't very well executed. Originally, when we knocked down a number of walls and planned to make partitions, the designer whom we hired, an American, came up with an idea of suspending materials very much like mattresses from the ceiling, which proved to be a perfectly rotten idea. We left the mattresses suspended from the ceiling, for about two days, saw it didn't work at all, and pulled them all down, disposed of them, and did more traditional partitioning instead. I understand that since then, some of those offices that had partitioning walls have been rebuilt because, as you know, succeeding PAOs often see things quite differently.

The politics were very important at the time because this was the early '70s when the German Government was developing a new set of political initiatives towards Eastern Europe, and particularly towards East Germany. It was very important that we know what was going on and that American perspectives were clearly heard and published in the country. We had a large political and cultural AMPART program of speakers in the America Houses and in the German-American Institutes.

One of the things about those years that particularly come to mind is that, because Germany had

been such a large program for so long, a lot of people back in Washington, at State and in USIA, felt it had to be cut, that there had to be a way to reduce our presences there. During the four years I was in there, from the middle of '71 until the middle of '75, we had a double grand slam of inspections generated in part by this belief. . We had two full-scale Agency inspections, two full-scale State inspections, two Inspector General visits, and two inspections as I recall by the OPM (Office of Personnel Management). It was a constant period of people coming in and pulling things out of the ground to see if they were growing and working. I still remember the Agency inspection team with Gordon Winkler on it. The evening he arrived and came around for a drink at my place, the first words that came out of his mouth were, "OK, Russ. Which post do we close?" He had come to decide: This has got to go; that has got to go.

There were serious questions raised by a lot of people back in Washington about these proposed cuts, and I was very glad to have an extremely effective and supportive Area Director at that time. But there was a fair amount of blood spilled, a lot of questioning about the whole approach. I think that out of it came a much stronger program. Many of the locations that we then had, for example, had fixed seats which meant very inflexible seating, to say the least. Thus, if you had a small group of 25 or 30 having a political discussion, all you could do was have your audience sitting in the first two rows of an amphitheater that held 250 seats. We took all the seats out of the America House in Cologne and others, for example, and created for better program space. Among other things, the libraries were all color-coded by specific thematic areas and there were other major changes during those whole four years. It was a period of great Sturm und Drang.

Q: Did these changes then survive into succeeding years?

RUSSELL: Many of them did; all of them not. Within a few years, the five German-American Institutes lost their American officers and locally hired American expatriates were brought in. But the fact that we created one national program, the fact that libraries became up-to-date resource centers, that informational and cultural programs were far better integrated... I think that a good deal more remained than was put back into old ways. It certainly had the effect of shaking things up and getting everybody to ask questions about what the best way of doing things was.

Q: What do you think were the special benefits of that change?

RUSSELL: I think that we had a great deal of more unified approach, a better focus on the issues that were most important to Germany and the United States. We looked at our posts as a single USIS rather than as individual entities with separate local perspectives, and there was a strong spell-out of policy issues and of the problems that needed to be addressed in the bilateral relationship that we sent from Bonn that had never been there before. And we built up the country post by bringing FSOs in from the individual posts to Bonn-for example, George Henry, a Branch PAO in Hamburg, was brought down to be head of the Program Division in Bonn, and his younger colleague, Tom O'Connor, who was head of the America House became Branch PAO and the head of the America House at the same time. So those years were full of changes and challenges. I was glad, frankly, after two very intensive years in the Soviet Union and four years in Bonn to come back in 1975 to Washington.

GEOFFREY W. CHAPMAN
Office of German Affairs
Washington, DC (1971-1973)

Political Officer/Liaison & Protocol
Berlin (1973-1976)

Geoffrey Chapman was born in England and raised in England and Boston. He became a naturalized American citizen in 1957 and attended Bowdoin College and Princeton. He later entered the Foreign Service in 1971 and served in Germany, the USSR, and England. He also held several positions within the State Department. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: Did you have any place in mind where you wanted to go, and then what actually happened?

CHAPMAN: Essentially my whole academic and linguistic experience was European, so that's where I wanted to end up. At that time, there was no requirement for taking an initial consular tour, so personnel had to come up with political assignments for the ten political officers in the class. They could come up with only about four such assignments overseas so the remainder of us were put into Department jobs, and I ended up in what was then the Office of German affairs, working on Berlin matters.

Q: Oh boy.

CHAPMAN: So that's how I ended up in my first overseas assignment to Berlin.

Q: Well, you know I've talked to many people who have been involved with Berlin; it's really like a priesthood. You learned a theology of Berlin, and all that...

CHAPMAN: I learned it over the years, initially from the office director, Jim Sutherland, and the head of my unit, Nelson Ledsky. I began in German affairs just after the Quadripartite Agreement had been concluded and as talks were getting underway between the two German states aimed at putting more flesh on the bones of the agreement. I recall writing summaries of these inner-German negotiations for the then assistant secretary, Martin Hillenbrand. Otherwise I was called upon to write briefing papers on all manner of subjects and to fill in for anyone in the office who was absent on leave or for some other reason. So I had to become acquainted with a fair cross-section of substantive matters and functions within the office.

Q: Well, I would imagine that, as you say, that after the quadripartite agreement, there was a lot of work in putting this into practical instruction. Was there a feeling at that time that we have lanced the Berlin boil and this is no longer going to be the most dangerous spot?

CHAPMAN: I think so. The idea was that we could reach, not a final solution of the Berlin issue, but a reasonable modus vivendi with the Soviets, resulting in a more tolerable situation without the tensions that had marked the fifties and the sixties. There was the hope, particularly among

the West Germans, of an improvement in inner-German relations that would allow for greater interaction on a societal as well as a governmental level – provisions for regular visits to the East and for practical improvements in the lives of Berliners. Berlin would not longer be a major bone of contention among the United States, Soviet Union, Britain and France. We could and did have differences of interpretation with the Soviets on particular provisions of the agreement; but our hope was that these would remain at the theological level and allow us to move ahead in a practical sense. One consequence of the agreement was our decision to recognize the GDR and open an embassy in East Berlin, the latter being a major theological issue in itself -- how can you open an embassy in the capital of a country when you don't recognize that capital as part of the country, but rather as an occupation zone. All kinds of dancing around on pinheads had to be done to reconcile such issues. When I arrived in Berlin in January 1973 for my first overseas assignment I got increasingly drawn into issues of interpretation of the Quadripartite Agreement, of which there were many. And that was when I received my real practical training in becoming and Berlin and German expert.

Q: I think it's a tailgate issue, you know, how far you lower the tailgates of a truck. Well know, did you sense a division between the German club of West Germans and the Berlin group, or was there enough exchange back and forth so that they were all thinking more or less along the same lines?

CHAPMAN: There were some differences. I think it was largely a matter of "where-you-sit-is-where-you stand". The people in Berlin on the spot tended to think more in specifically Berlin terms, and in terms of sustaining our legal position in Berlin. In Bonn and in Washington they were thinking of a larger framework of relations with Germany and relations with the Soviet Union and other parts of Europe. But that said, a lot of the people in Bonn had served in Berlin and vice-versa so they had the same intellectual formation and the same experiences in their background.

Q: You did this for two years, just about?

CHAPMAN: Three-and-a-half years in Berlin.

Q: Two-and-a-half years in Washington?

CHAPMAN: I was on the desk there for just over a year.

Q: And then off to Berlin?

CHAPMAN: I was there from January '73 to July '76. I started out as a junior officer in the political section; helping out in practically all of the specialized functions in the section. After about nine months I was given the job of Liaison and Protocol Officer. The Protocol Officer function was largely a formal one, with responsibility for relations with the various foreign consulates situated in the American sector. But it got me invitations to all kinds of receptions around town, much more than a first-tour officer would normally receive. The liaison function meant that I was the primary contact with the Soviet embassy in East Berlin on all Berlin matters. So, I was sort of thrown into the center of substantive Berlin matters fairly early on, and

spent quite a lot of time in discussions with the Soviets.

Q: Now who was the head of the West Berlin office?

CHAPMAN: He bore the titles of both Minister, in Foreign Service terms, and Deputy Commandant, as part of the Allied occupation structure still in effect. The Commandant was a two-star Army general, but in practice he exercised little more than a formal role in political issues regarding Berlin. Moreover our Ambassador in Bonn was the Commandant's superior on non-military matters. Basically we were an autonomous unit, responsive to the embassy in Bonn.

Q: Who was the Minister over there?

CHAPMAN: David Klein, succeeded in 1974 by Scott George. The ambassador in Bonn then was Martin Hillenbrand, whom I got to know fairly well as I served as his aide when he came up to Berlin, which he did quite often. I would serve as note-taker for his periodic meetings with the Soviet Ambassador in East Berlin, generally held over lunch.

Q: What was your impression of Martin Hillenbrand; how did he operate?

CHAPMAN: He was a quiet, low-key diplomat; and gave the impression of being a scholar rather than a forceful, hard-charging diplomat. But he was very effective precisely because he was extremely competent and extremely knowledgeable. And he had no compunction about challenging the Soviets when that was needed. He ran afoul of Henry Kissinger and certain others at various times in his career, but he was sort of a mentor to me, and I admired him greatly. He was very kind, very gracious.

Q: How much were we involved at this point with matters in the governing of Berlin? I know at one time we had people who were very much involved with the police and that sort of thing....

CHAPMAN: Essentially what we provided was a legal cover. Berlin had its own elected city government which performed the whole range of normal functions of a local government. The West German constitution considered Berlin to be a West German state. The Allies had negated that portion of the basic law, but to all practical intents and purposes West Berlin was a part of West Germany. But there were certain issues having to do with the status of the city that were reserved for the Allies, and there was a formal decision-making structure involving us, the British and the French to make decisions on such issues. There were certainly differences between the Allies and the Berlin authorities, but we rarely if ever got involved in the real substance of local government and relations with the Governing Mayor and his officials were generally very smooth. There were officers at the Allied missions who supervised the police in their respective sectors and who had to approve certain police actions. For instance, the Berlin police were allowed to carry weapons when making an arrest; but due to some quirk in occupation law they couldn't carry machine pistols without express authorization. So they would call up the relevant Allied officer to request permission, which was automatically given. So it was largely putting a judicial and legal gloss on actions that were normal actions of the city government at the time. There were in addition certain reserved areas where the Allies were alone competent to act. These generally had to do with the borders of Berlin. In my liaison job

with the Soviet embassy; I was often involved in very practical issues of access to East Berlin by Americans. There were some American troops stationed in Berlin who got caught up with exfiltration rings -- smuggling East Germans out across the wall. Sometimes they would get caught by the East Germans, and there then be a protracted legal tussle. Since we did not recognize East German control in East Berlin, we would deal only with the Soviets on such matters. The Soviets would initially refuse to get involved, asserting that East Berlin was under GDR control. But eventually they would relent and take charge of the case. I recall going to visit U.S. servicemen detained at the Soviet garrison in East Berlin to check on their well-being. I would then work out their release with the Soviets, who were generally amicable while making the expected political points. This was the height of the Cold War and here was I, a junior FSO, dealing with Soviet colonels at one of the checkpoints on the wall. This was exciting stuff. While the Soviets made a great show of upholding GDR sovereignty in East Berlin and proclaiming friendship with their German socialist brothers, deep down they relished exercising their imperium in East Berlin and putting the East Germans in their place. This was, after all, not so long after the end of the war, and memories of what the Germans had perpetrated on the USSR were still very much alive.

Q: How'd you find the Soviets, the ones you were dealing with?

CHAPMAN: They were difficult to deal with, some more so than others, but they probably found us difficult to deal with as well. We would assert our legal view on a given issue and they would assert theirs. We'd get into controversies over us holding the Soviets responsible for a lot of things going on in East Berlin, and they'd say "Oh no, we're not responsible for those things, it's all a matter for the sovereign East German government; we wash our hands of those things". And eventually after you'd push them a lot they'd come back and acknowledge they could help out, maybe "we could persuade the East Germans to do this, that, or the other. There was clearly an acknowledgement of a residual Soviet role in the city. Our language of business was German; I don't recall any of the Soviet diplomats speaking English, and at that point I didn't speak Russian. They were products of their system, of course, and weren't open to free-ranging discussions. We'd often have lunch together in either East Berlin or West Berlin; and they would religiously go through their instructions from Moscow to ask about U.S. policies on issues A, B, C, and D. You'd hear them go through the litany in their minds, and you would explain to them U.S. views or what our general thinking was, but you wouldn't get anything back from them. They were just taking note of what you had said, so they could report it back. There was no real exchange back and forth; I don't think there was ever any letting-your-hair-down and pushing back and having a drink together and that sort of thing. I also dealt with the Soviets in West Berlin. The Quadripartite Agreement provided for them to set up a Consulate General in West Berlin, and since they chose to locate this in the U.S. sector I, as U.S. protocol officer, was involved with them in a number of concrete arrangements regarding accreditation, privileges and the like. The Soviets were all the time pressing to be accorded greater privileges than other members of the consular corps in West Berlin, which we would not allow. So there was a constant battle to pare them back to what was their proper level. And those were some difficult people to deal with, several of the key people with whom I dealt being KGB officers.

Q: Did it penetrate to your level the sort of spy vs. spy atmosphere of Berlin at that time? Did you see any KGB and every other intelligence out or?

CHAPMAN: I knew that certain Soviets I dealt with were KGB people, rather than diplomats, but there certainly was no attempt on their part to recruit me. The Soviet Consulate General in West Berlin was largely an intelligence operation; there was little consular work for them. Plus it was a status question.

Q: How about dealing with the French and British officials?

CHAPMAN: We were very close with the British, but not so with the French. We and the British saw eye-to-eye on most things. The French tended to keep to themselves a bit more and to be a lot more theological than even we were, in term of Berlin as an occupied city. Their attitudes towards the Berliners were different from ours, and they tended to assert their prerogatives much more than we did. I knew a few of them, not particularly well. They had the best officer's club in town, and it was a delight to go there and enjoy a good French meal at rock-bottom prices. A fair amount of the funding of the Allied presence in Berlin came from the West Germans, so-called "occupation costs". The French would really abuse that privilege, charging the Germans for things that we or the British would never consider charging. It was the French practice was to bring all of their new army recruits up to Berlin for their initial training and to charge all the costs to the German government, which we all thought was a little egregious. Maybe that was part of the French psyche, a product of the vicissitudes of Franco-German relations over the centuries.

Q: How about relations with the Germans in Berlin; how did you find that?

CHAPMAN: I thought it was an easygoing relationship; I don't recall any major issues over status. We recognized them for what they were, the government that was in practice in charge of the city. They accepted our role and recognized that the United States, and to a certain extent, Britain and France, were the ultimate guarantors of Berlin's freedom and political system. So I think it was an easy working relationship. They were very forthcoming with information; they took us into their confidence, and I don't remember any major controversies between us and the Germans in Berlin at that time.

Q: When did we recognize East Germany?

CHAPMAN: We established diplomatic relations in mid '74 and then had opened an embassy later in the year.

Q: So, this was after you'd left?

CHAPMAN: No, I was there. And in fact I had a peripheral role in helping Felix Bloch, a name that might be familiar to you.

Q: Oh yes.

CHAPMAN: He was then at the mission in West Berlin, and was given the job of working out the practical arrangements for the opening of the embassy, in terms of finding office premises

and accommodations, settling details of privileges and immunities, that sort of thing. And I'd go with him occasionally to meet with the East Germans to make these arrangements.

Q: Were the Bader Meinhof group and that sort of thing going on?

CHAPMAN: Oh yes.

Q: How did the affect? These are urban, home grown urban terrorists.

CHAPMAN: During the time I was in Berlin, there was the famous kidnapping of the president of the Berlin house of representatives, Peter Lorenz. He was held for about 4 or 5 days, maybe a week, and then released unharmed. I'm not sure whether ransom money was paid or not, or whether there was some quid pro quo. There was certainly a Bader-Meinhof presence in Berlin. Whenever our ambassador was in town he would have a Berlin police escort, and I think the minister did as well. The Amerika Haus, which was in the center of town, was a target of some minor low-level terrorism while I was there. The Mission proper was on the outskirts and escaped any such attacks.

Q: What was your impression of going over to East Berlin? What was it like there.

CHAPMAN: Going over to East Berlin got to be a routine for me. The U.S. military had very strict rules about how you were supposed to handle yourself going through Checkpoint Charlie, perhaps necessary for the average serviceman doing it for the first time but somewhat overkill for those of us crossing over all the time. The rule was not to roll down your car window at all but simply display in the window our flag card, as it was known, and allow the East German policeman to take down the name. Because of my frequent crossings, I got to know all the East German guards at the checkpoint. I'd roll down my window and chat with them back and forth. It was pretty easy-going. Over there in East Berlin, it was a different world obviously. The place smelled different, partly because of the soft brown coal that the East Germans used for heating and power generation. The smell would often blow over into West Berlin too. Obviously things looked very different in East Berlin: the way people dressed, the way they behaved, the paucity of cars in the streets, the goods in the stores. It was almost a totally different world.

Q: Did you go much, travel around East Berlin much?

CHAPMAN: In those days we didn't travel much in the GDR except to use the autobahn to go west to Helmstedt. I must have done that a dozen times. It wasn't a very good road, but you could cover the distance in a couple of hours. We did make provision to attend the annual spring fair in Leipzig. In order to avoid the complication of having an East German visa in a diplomatic passport – a theological faux pas in the days before recognition of the GDR – we worked it out through the Soviets for the East Germans to give us the visa on a separate sheet of paper. That kept us theologically sound. We would enter the GDR directly from West Berlin, bypassing East Berlin and thus avoiding further theological complications. Most of us who made the trip didn't spend much time at the fair; we traveled around Leipzig and the surrounding area, trying to figure out what was going on, talking with the local citizenry, etc. I took a bus trip down to Dresden and was regaled by the tour guides with tales of the destruction Allied bombings had

wrought – which was still plainly visible. In 1975 I crossed over the GDR on the way to Poland and then back from Czechoslovakia.

Q: By the time you left there in seventy?

CHAPMAN: 76, July 76.

Q: Did Kissinger make appearances there?

CHAPMAN: Kissinger visited Berlin in 1975, largely a mission to demonstrate the American commitment to the city.

Q: Did you have a good number of congressional visits and other visits. People coming and posing on the Wall?

CHAPMAN: I seem to remember a fair number of congressional visits. You would usually take the congressmen to the Wall, where they would climb up on the viewing platforms and look over the death strip and into East Berlin.

GERALD J. MONROE
Deputy Civil Air Attaché
Bonn (1971-1976)

Gerald J. Monroe was born on October 13, 1933 in New York State. He attended City College in New York where he received his BA in 1955. Mr. Monroe served in the US Army as a 2nd lieutenant from 1955-1956. His career has included positions in Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Germany, China, Switzerland, and Italy. Mr. Monroe was interviewed by Raymond Ewing on March 22, 1999.

Q: Okay, so you went to Bonn. What was your job there? Was this pretty much directly after Hong Kong?

MONROE: This was after a lengthy home leave, after some treatment, diagnostic stuff. We did get there in about March of '71. Left Hong Kong in January. We immediately, I went out there as the deputy civil air attaché which was a job I hadn't asked for, but I thought I was going to be doing some economic work in Frankfurt, but that is not the way it turned out. I was almost immediately plunged into the four power talks. I don't know how well known those talks were, but I think they actually represented a crucial event in the cold war. Willy Brandt's opening to the east. Ambassador Rush, the ambassador at that time, was leading the U.S. delegation, flying frequently to California to consult with the President. The Germans were participating at a level that had not occurred before, primarily because Willy Brandt had made the decision that for the foreseeable future, East Germany would remain a separate state, and that the best way to assist East Germans, and as mayor of Berlin, he was well aware of their situation. He decided that it was a trade off to recognize East Germany. Let them join the [Warsaw Pact]. West Germany

could join [NATO] and take the benefits that whatever the East Germans and the Soviets conceded, which were basically in the humanitarian area, the reuniting of families and so forth, opening up of more ground traffic, and any number of other areas that the West Germans or at least the SPD, the socialists thought would be, would make a valuable contribution to preparing East Germans for eventual reunification which they didn't expect in their lifetimes.

Q: They, the West Germans?

MONROE: Yes, I think Willy Brandt was a brilliant man in many respects. He had his weaknesses. He was a very interesting man, and really quite a hero of our time. He had difficulty in German which was interesting because he had spent so much of his life in Norway, his formative years in Norway as a resistance fighter. So, he spoke a sort of stilted, difficult German. Germans themselves didn't like it. I loved it because he spoke so slowly. It was easy to perfect one's German listening to Willy Brandt. But, he was a brilliant man. He really understood as did his successor Helmut Schmidt, but more on the financial side than Brandt. But, Brandt understood what problems, I think he foresaw what is happening now, I mean the problems of integrating East Germans into a capitalist democratic society. But in any case, it was extremely important to him to reach out to the East Germans at this early date.

Q: You don't think that he foresaw that unification was something that would happen within 20 years.

MONROE: No. We didn't foresee that. He foresaw reunification; he thought it was inevitable, but not in any near term. In many ways, he was correct because the weight of his argument was that whatever we do in terms of recognizing East Germany was not going to impact on ultimate reunification. And it didn't, so...

Q: When you say four power talks, this was the United States, France, Britain, and the Federal Republic of Germany.

MONROE: No, and the Soviet Union. And the Soviet Union...

Q: So it doesn't include the Federal Republic, either Germany.

MONROE: No, it frequently didn't, but they were very influential. Both sides were influential. Within the aegis of this or under the aegis of this four power event, within it, the Germans were talking to one another, so there were visits to Berlin by Bonn and visits by whoever, Honneker to Bonn and so forth. I guess initially they did it at the foreign minister level.

Q: Now, to what extent, help refresh my memory, to what extent was the United States in dialogue with the German Democratic Republic or had that not yet started?

MONROE: Well, yes, because out of that, out of the four power agreement, there was recognition of both by either side. Not that the Soviets hadn't recognized West Germany; they had, but of course, neither of the allies had, not France. So we moved. Incidentally, it was a great era of cooperation between the three countries. France was a very constructive partner. These

were the Pompidou days.

Q: Much of this dialogue that you were involved with took place at an embassy level in Bonn.

MONROE: Something called the Bonn group which I am sure you are familiar with. But we were a subcommittee of the Bonn Group, the civil air attaché group.

Q: That is what you were particularly in?

MONROE: That's right. We ran the corridors for the Germans. We ourselves, had a four power group which included the Germans, the Berlin air advisory group.

Q: The Soviets were not part of that.

MONROE: No. This was an interesting time in cold war history. Actually I visited many times, because nominally I was in command of it. I controlled the Berlin air safety center.

Q: As the civil air attaché at the Embassy in Bonn.

MONROE: Yes. Since there was a lot of technical stuff, there was an Air Force colonel who was doing the thing. But if you can envisage a huge table of mahogany in the basement of the court where the Germans held their show trials, the Prussian Law courts in Berlin where those infamous trials of the conspirators, the July '44 conspirators. The table like this with the bundling board going this way and a board coming this way. Each of the four powers had a colonel level air force officer sitting at either side. We threw IBM cards at one another which were flight plans. Occasionally the Soviet officer would stamp it in three languages, the safety of flight not guaranteed. Then I did become involved, because what did this mean? Was the safety of the flight really not guaranteed or generally. Someone before me fortunately had done a study pointing out that it only happened or 99% of the time it was a flight that was going beyond Germany.

Q: A flight that was going...

MONROE: Beyond Germany. It was going to Majorca or something like that.

Q: Whereas did the four power arrangement for the corridors flights were supposed to go from Berlin to..

MONROE: In general a German destination. Now even that was something the Soviets were unhappy about. These were really corridors designed to re supply the garrisons. But they did accept what we called the internal German service which was a scheduled service run by Pan Am, Air France, and what was then BOAC.

Q: Lufthansa wasn't yet flying.

MONROE: No. No German, no one else, just the three of us.

Q: What airport did they fly to?

MONROE: They flew to Templehoff where I had an office. In the meantime, I had become a civil air attaché because at one point I was taken out and made, not long after I arrived, I was made staff aide to the ambassador. The ambassador was Hillenbrand. He wanted a somewhat more senior, I am talking about by more mid career level as a staff aide, rather than the usual junior officer. So I went on for six months, seven months. I don't remember the exact time, until he found the person he wanted. He said he would keep me around if I wanted to, but he would send me back as civil air attaché if I wanted to because the senior had just left. The senior air attaché had just gone out. He didn't like any of the people who were named. So, he just went back and said don't fill it. It was a two grade stretch as they say. But I did go back into this marvelous world of residual rights and what have you requiring close reading of memoranda between Zhukov and Eisenhower and God knows what all because we also had responsibility for clearing Soviet flights flying over West Germany, Soviet military flights, which was another thing that would wake me up at odd hours.

Q: Soviet military flights coming to West Germany or beyond West Germany?

MONROE: Beyond West Germany, of which there were many.

Q: To where?

MONROE: Paris, Cuba. A lot of them stopped, you know Russian officials of all stripes traveled extensively. If they could travel; they traveled. There was a group that I later worked with who I later found out made a lot of these flights on something called export cleve. Being the Soviet Union, of course, export cleve actually went out and bought commodities. Anyway, they flew frequently on Soviet chartered aircraft. Of course, they were always cleared with the proviso that the Soviets put an English speaking navigator. Of course, they never did. If he did speak English, he wouldn't. The Germans were surprisingly tolerant of that sort of thing. I never dealt with one who complained about that. What they complained about more importantly was dollars and cents which I find kind of interesting. The obvious qualification of sovereignty implied by having a foreigner clear flights across your airspace was not seen as an issue. The fact that they were subsidized, the internal German service, was a matter of great concern to them. That was why we formed, the three of us, my French colleague, my British colleague and I, and we bonded very much, we became great friends, decided that we would write a joint message to our governments that sort of crossed them, so that the Department saw my British and French colleagues were saying, that we should have an institutionalized presence at least our economic meetings when we were discussing fare levels and so forth. While reserving the right to make the decision, nonetheless, we thought the Germans should be given the complete picture of what the economic necessity was forcing upon us and so forth. That worked extremely well.

Q: And that, too, was accepted.

MONROE: It was accepted because it was at that period of openness. And I must also add that in my judgment, Germany was at it apex, its economic apex. Its sense of well-being. West

Germany was riding high in the state of things. Of course the dollar was collapsing during that period. As soon as I got there, the dollar devalued. Of course everything immediately was, cost of living was always a problem.

Q: Of course it was a problem for Pan American to operate...

MONROE: A dreadful problem for Pan American because we also had the energy crisis in '73. Having the energy crisis the fuel then became a much larger component of the overall cost so that leaving an aircraft on the ground as they would, you know, became a more attractive option than flying an aircraft that was empty or half empty or what have you.

Q: Was Pan American obliged to follow a certain schedule or operate a certain frequency every day?

MONROE: Yes, they had to serve each destination every day. Some lines paid for the other lines. Frankfurt always paid for say Stuttgart.

Q: So, Frankfurt was economic.

MONROE: Frankfurt was always economic.

Q: But Stuttgart was not. How many destinations did they have about?

MONROE: Roughly five, about there. I think it increased while I was there, but they did Hamburg, Frankfurt, Cologne. Well, Cologne was done for the civil air aspect. It was the closest airport to Bonn, I think.

Q: So when you went to Berlin, that is where you would go.

MONROE: Yes. Well, there were certain oddities about the job. You could fly foreign aircraft. That is to say, you could fly to Berlin on Air France or BOAC, because the kinds of observations you were making which included whether Russian Foxbats were actually buzzing the aircraft as they periodically claimed. And of course we all had offices in Berlin and went for monthly meetings of the Berlin air safety center.

Q: That would be your two other embassy colleagues and yourself would go once a month for a meeting in Berlin relating to the air safety center for which you were responsible.

MONROE: That's right. And then there was another organization which was broader in scope, and concerned itself with politics as well as the technical aspects of the service. I have forgotten what that was called over there, the Berlin air safety advisory center or something along that line. That met twice a month when I first got there. They were concerned with such matters as can we convince the Soviets to please change frequencies before they take off from, God, I can't remember the name of the eastern airport, Schoenfeldt. There was about 20 seconds when the Berlin air safety people were not in touch with an aircraft taking off from Schoenfeldt. They would never switch their frequencies until they were airborne.

Q: The air traffic controllers in West Berlin the air safety center, whatever it was called, weren't in touch with the controllers at Schoenefeldt.

MONROE: That's right.

Q: Because that was East Germany or the GDR.

MONROE: Well, I think it is safe to say they were listening to each other. I mean I argued that you don't need this. You know and I know if you are listening to them, they are listening to you. The question of raising this and making an issue of it is probably not what we need at this particular point. We had so many balls in the air.

Q: Well you had a combination of preserving, maintaining, safeguarding rights that had gone back to the immediate post war period. The occupation powers, the four powers, the three western powers, and at the same time you have Willy Brandt's auspolitik, complete re...

MONROE: Realignment of Germany's attitude toward the east.

Q: Which we were basically respecting and supporting and not trying to fight.

MONROE: Absolutely not. I think in my judgment, that administration was, the Nixon administration was very sensible. Of course, one of the characteristics of the post at that time was that Henry Kissinger was there all the time. So, if I were inclined to tell Henry Kissinger stories which I am not, I could.

Q: Did he take an interest in something like the corridors and the air traffic?

MONROE: No. He didn't. I don't think he was aware of them. I mean, I think he was aware of the notion that the three allies were flying into Berlin and not Lufthansa and that was a sensitive area. We certainly briefed him on those issues. He was attentive. It was generally the aura around him that was so difficult to deal with, as one of many control officers. You know, who sat where and that sort of thing on the helicopter. Of course, everything was taped, so we would listen, in the long hours of the night we would listen to discussions that had gone on the day before. What we found interesting was that Kissinger could start off in totally unaccented German, just beautiful German, and then switch to English. Sonnenfeldt, who didn't speak, who didn't have quite the ear, the accent, to go on in German as long as, to have a whole exchange in German. It was sort of odd. Kissinger sounded like a native German for about three minutes.

Q: But then would switch to English.

MONROE: Then would switch to English. We presumed that he spoke adolescent German and didn't want to make mistakes in front of people, Helmut Schmidt. Helmut Schmidt spoke beautiful English as Willy Brandt did. Many people argued that Willy Brandt spoke better English than German. German being the kind of language it was, you could place bets on whether he was going to get the last word in and whether it would be in the correct form, the

verb would be in the correct form by the time he got to the end of those convoluted sentences of his. They weren't always.

Q: You must have had to work a lot with the Air Force. You mentioned the colonel at the control center, and also with Pan American I suppose.

MONROE: Oh, a very close working relationship with Pan American. The Frankfurt station chief, as they called him, was great. I even remember his name, Tony Balokian. He was marvelous to deal with. We had the usual assortment of legally trained types coming to Pan Am headquarters who were somewhat more difficult to deal with.

Q: Now was the civil air attaché position pretty much entirely related to things on Berlin or were you involved also with other airlines or Pan American flying into the Federal Republic from the United States: Lufthansa wanting to go to new places, new destinations in the U.S.

MONROE: Depending on the timing, yes I was responsible for them. We didn't have as many problems then as we did later to develop [landing rights]. Actually a good part of the time, I had a very experienced local employee, a German who had to do it for me. The aviation bureau at the Department that part of the Bureau of Economic Affairs handled aviation., about three offices, the deputate, were very understanding. They recognized that Berlin was the major part of this job, and that it was compelling and that it was all hours. But whenever possible I met and went to these meetings. The Department as usual was losing purchase on the whole function. It was going to DOT more fully. CAB was being eliminated.

Q: With deregulation. But, on the Berlin side, there you pretty much had a lot of authority, responsibility, You didn't get a lot of instructions or guidance from either the State Department or the Department of Transportation or anybody else?

MONROE: Well, the Department of Transportation stayed out of it. They were scared of it. Well there was nothing they were qualified to do. The Department which was boiled down to the few officers involved was if anything quite content to take instructions from the post, because the QR's as we called them, the residual rights and the amount of materials you have to read to become familiar with the history and the background and what you could do and what you couldn't do. Very few people know there were Carders going in the other direction, but there were, and theoretically, they still could have been used. The whole question of 10,000 [foot ceiling], which was no longer, was chosen as a DC-6 altitude.

Q: That was the ceiling?

MONROE: Yes, there was a ceiling. The corridor was not only laterally defined, it was defined by altitude. They couldn't fly above 10,000 feet, which was not an economic or comfortable altitude for a jet to fly in. The ride was bumpy and expensive. Pan Am as the other airlines made the point that since you are keeping us at 10,000 feet, the government has to subsidize us for the additional fuel required.

Q: The government of...

MONROE: They meant us or anyone. They didn't care. They just had to be subsidized. In fact, it was the German government. Of course, they were a lot easier with this situation when they were more informed. I think one of the things I am proud of in that period was we did open that door, or help open it with politics to a greater German participation in and knowledge of the problems that were confronting the airlines who had to do that service.

Q: Was there a lawyer in the embassy that...

MONROE: Yes, there was a lawyer whom I dealt with occasionally. He was extraordinarily busy. I mean residual rights covered a lot of areas and so forth. Fortunately, the DOD had its own lawyer dealing with the forces, because we had liaison with the forces, and we had a series of contingency exercises which led me into all kinds of problems with the USACOM since the military suddenly decided they were working for a civilian, I mean me. At least where these exercises were concerned. They were perturbed, I mean it led to negotiations between the American commander, the American CIC and Ambassador Hillenbrand, who was greatly amused by it all and myself and other Air Force officers who fortunately never put two and two together about the Berlin air safety center. They were more concerned about certain kinds of contingency operations where we met once a year to talk about what we would do if corridors were closed or something of that nature. They were very upset that the embassy took the lead. These were treated as political matters rather than military matters.

Q: Now then, were you in the embassy in Bonn when some of this relating to East Germany came to a conclusion, and the United States got involved in discussions, negotiations with the GDR authorities on establishing an embassy.

MONROE: Yes, I was there for the whole thing.

Q: And were you involved with that or not, in the civil aviation area?

MONROE: Not really, because one of the things we had to do which was curious. We had to keep the internal German service as it was called intact and unblemished. If we were to go to Schonfeldt which we could after recognition, but it would have to be from, you know, as I recall, and this was some years ago when it wasn't an area of particular concern to me except late in my stay there, We'd stop in Brussels and then go into Schoenfeldt.

Q: No American carrier, Pan Am or no one else was interested in serving that.

MONROE: That is exactly right, so effectively there was no service by an American group. There was the odd charter and so forth all of which was permissible. The Germans didn't like that so of course we were, I mean the West Germans. We were constrained.

Q: But preserving Berlin rights was very important. In the aviation area that is what you were doing.

MONROE: That's right.

Q: Did you pretty much do that until the end of your assignment to Bonn, and when did you leave Bonn?

MONROE: Well, I was staff aide twice off and on, both while I was still deputy, shortly after I arrived.

Q: First with Ambassador Rush and then with Hillenbrand...

MONROE: Rush very briefly, but I happened to be there, and that is how I know Brandt knew me. When he brought in one person a year went by and that person went somewhere else and then he brought me back, and I lasted there for until he thought it wasn't doing me any, you know. I had gotten the most out of it that I could. It was interesting in its way, you know.

The front office Johnnys, the guys were always hanging outside the ambassador's office.

Q: You were aware of everything.

MONROE: Yes, for sure. Working for a man like Hillenbrand was a magnificent experience. I had an experience in the UB where it was not quite as thrilling intellectually or otherwise. This fellow was, Is, I think he is still alive. He must be very old. He replaced Secretary Rusk as Professor something or other at the University of Georgia. I presume he has long since retired now. He must be getting close to 90, or in his late 80s, but an extraordinarily brilliant man.

Q: It is really an exciting time to be involved in things German in the period that you were there. There was a lot of change, a lot of the economic situation was booming, but this opening to the east.

This is May 3, 1999. This is an oral history interview with Gerald Monroe being conducted at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center. My name is Raymond Ewing. Gerry, I think when we finished the other day we were just coming to the end of your assignment in the Embassy in Bonn. We had been talking about the civil aviation matters, the effort to negotiate air matters relating to Berlin with not only the Federal Republic of Germany but with France and Great Britain and perhaps even the Soviet Union. Is there anything more you wanted to say about that or other aspects of your time in Bonn which ended I think in 1976.

MONROE: That is correct. I did leave in the summer of '76. Having been asked to stay on an extra year by the ambassador because there were issues remaining from the four power agreement and its effect on Berlin that he wished to have treated by an experienced Berlin cum aviation person. I think what I took away with me from the assignment particularly the last year when in fact the Soviets were testing the new arrangements, they had in return for western recognition of East Germany, the Soviets had given up their traditional that is post war control of Berlin, and undertook to avoid the number of provocations most of which were trivial but some of which were worrisome that they had enjoyed performing for almost a period of over thirty

years. The one really important lesson that I left Germany with was that, one there is a fundamental basis of agreement among countries dealing with a very sticky problem, a problem that was not necessarily resolvable in its broadest context, but was at least tolerable, could be made tolerable. Since the French, British, and the United States were all interested perhaps for different reasons in making the four power agreement work, as were the Soviets. It goes without saying that both governments were themselves interested. Some of the more bizarre aspects of the Berlin air services were accepted by all parties, and we were able to work out in a rather elegant fashion these issues, both economic and technical in a way which I suspect would not have been possible had there not been this underlying objective sense of accomplishing an objective. I think that was something I hadn't focused on before, but it certainly helped me much later when I was dealing in international organization matters.

Q: You were in effect establishing some models, precedents, for the subsequent period because what you were dealing with was occurring fairly soon after the four power agreement came into effect which was what about 1971, '72?

MONROE: Exactly. '72 was the exact date. Yes, I think what we did do in a technical sense and perhaps a psychological sense as well was the groundwork for an eventual take over of the service by the Germans without. Just for example among the things we did do was close Tempelhof Airport to civilian traffic and leave the whole operation over to Tegel which was something no one was very anxious to do initially for any number of reasons, but Tegel's location lends itself to enhancement, improvement, lengthier runways and so forth; whereas, Tempelhof was impossible. Tempelhof was in a residential neighborhood effectively, and there was no way one could do much with it without tearing down an important part of the city.

Q: Tegel was in the British?

MONROE: Tegel was in the French zone. I don't think there was ever any question of France's technical capacities in this area. I don't want to give that impression, but I think France had had slightly more friction with their German colleagues than we had. The Germans, for example, were quite pleased with Tempelhof as the main civil airport in Berlin, and were only persuaded to move or to acquiesce in a move when it became clear that it was no longer a safe airport. I think that was clear to anyone who sat on the flight deck and landed in an aircraft. So that was one example where teamwork paid off. I mean, people at the technical and working level such as ourselves, the civil air attaches and the civil heads of airports and so forth were able to do the job without too much interference from those who were "making policy."

Q: But yet you were involved with political issues and also with technical and economic as well.

MONROE: I think if there was a problem there, and I am not in terms of advancement and so forth, it was the fact that economic officers who came out to inspect and what have you, had a very hard time grasping what was economic about it. On the face, except for the aviation economics, which are rather esoteric and very specific, industry specific, it was overwhelmingly a political genre. Whereas most of the economic people who came out both in consultation and one inspection that we had were more interested in the section that was reporting on finance and so forth. Perhaps correctly so. They recognized it more readily. In those days we were doing

macro economic reporting on a periodic basis and so forth. That said, it was as nice an assignment as I could have had. Incidentally, I was offered another aviation assignment in an attractive European capital, but I decided that I had had the best job in the field and chose not to go on in aviation.

Q: Is there anything else you want to say about your five years in Bonn?

MONROE: I don't think so. It might be putting too much weight on it. It was a period of importance to us both to my family; my daughter started her schooling there and started to grow there. It was the last post where my wife acted as a traditional Foreign Service wife which she enjoyed enormously. She didn't mind giving parties and going to teas. As a matter of fact, her social life contributed a good deal to our professional lives. She did meet some very interesting people, and in taking German lessons which I don't think she really needed, she met and became friendly with the wives of other colleagues who later proved quite helpful. She did a lot of work with the aged, visiting German old people's homes and so forth. She learned a lot about how they structure care delivery for the older population, and had a lot of human interest things with good people.

Q: I have to ask you one retrospective question. Not more than a decade, a little bit more than a decade after you left Bonn, Germany was unified. The wall came down in Berlin. Did you and your colleagues in the embassy in 1976 anticipate that that might happen ever or certainly that soon?

MONROE: Probably not. I think we did anticipate dramatic changes. I think that was, because we were watching them begin to happen in terms of East Germany as a more stable partner. I think in some respects recognizing East Germany as a separate entity and dealing with it probably hastened the ultimate unification. That said, I am quite certain that my French and British colleagues did not envisage because it wasn't what they really wanted in my judgment. I know the French didn't. I guess the answer has to be no. We knew there were going to be changes. There simply had to be, but Berlin was going to become a different place; and it did very quickly. It was quite amazing. By the time I left it had lost a lot of that siege mentality and atmosphere.

Q: I think what you are saying is the answer isn't quite so clearly no. You really did see things happening of substantial significance. It probably was lost on the part of some of the other European countries and probably the general public in the United States as well that the quadripartite agreement, the recognition of the German Democratic Republic, increased interaction between the two Germans. All was creating some significant changes.

MONROE: As was the provisions of that [understanding] addressed family invocation. There was a lot less jamming, so that by the time I left, and I visited East Germany not infrequently, East Berlin I should say, it was possible to watch and listen to programming from either side almost the whole day by the time I left.

Q: Were you finding less testing, less raising of issues, somewhat provocative issues in the context that you were dealing with, the civil aviation area as time went by would you say?

MONROE: I think it probably was subsiding, particularly the rather nerve wracking event of getting a card thrown at you by set up which was a flight plan, by card I mean flight plan thrown at you across the table by a dour looking Soviet colonel saying safety of flight not guaranteed stamped on it. Those were always distressing incidents because you know you did have to make a decision. No, those things became fewer. I think the issue that was really perhaps the most symbolic was that the Soviets became more and more tolerant of flights going beyond Germany that initiated in Berlin and ultimately ended up in the Canary Islands. Those were flights that they had held for years were illegal under the four power arrangements, the 1946 four power arrangements. And if they start to tolerate every other one we felt that was progress. Of course, by the time I left, they seemed to have accepted as a matter of course, that Berliners wanted to go directly to their vacation areas without necessarily stopping in Frankfurt.

Q: Were in the period that you were in Bonn, did you see, could you sort of feel a ratcheting up of the tension with the Soviets and perhaps the East Germans at a time of broader international crisis which was the '73 war in the middle east or on the opposite side when there was a notable relaxation of the international climate of détente. I am thinking now of the '75 Helsinki final act conference.

MONROE: I think the latter point is the one I would subscribe to. That is to say, the '73 war was viewed more as an inconvenience in terms of the shortages that it led to rather than an east-west issue. Despite the concerns the Soviets had and made them very explicit. I think the German government was very well informed. I think it was one of the first times that U.S. policy makers treated the German government with regard and a sense that they deserved to be fully briefed on these issues of great global importance.

Q: At the time of...

MONROE: At the time of the '73 war, for example, Kissinger stopped by with continuous shuttle diplomacy. One aspect was it might have been the closest U.S. facility, but also because he genuinely liked Helmut Schmidt. They did have a good relationship where history has shown that was totally justified I am not sure. I wouldn't think when I was there that Schmidt was a, what is the most delicate way to put this, I don't think he was an unqualified friend of the United States. Let me put it that way. I think he was inclined to be overly critical on many issues, particularly economic issues which was his main focus of interest. He was an economist. He was very effective. I think his principal, one of the reasons he was effective was because he spoke English well and his wife spoke English very well, and because he was a man who had a certain flair for getting on with what I suppose one would call the common man. He had very little security, even after a fright in 1972 at the very beginnings of the Bader Meinhoff kind of problem. His wife had almost no security which always amazed me. Nothing ever happened, fortunately, but he was a man who liked to shake hands which surprised everyone because he was clearly more at home with his Giscard D'Estang than he was with Pompidou. In any case, I think Germany was growing up very quickly. It was certainly the very apex. I may have said this earlier. If I did, I apologize, it was this very apex of her economic ascendancy. From there it was downhill.

Q: Germany was booming.

MONROE: Germany was booming beyond belief.

Q: Do you have any reflections on Hans Deitrich Genscher or any other German personalities that you particularly had first hand experience with?

MONROE: I clearly didn't have a close relationship with Genscher. He was known as a pragmatist, and he came from a very unusual political party, the FDP, what the Germans called the liberal party. What it was, of course was comprised of a broad spectrum of beliefs which just didn't fit. They were either too left for the socialists or too right for the Christian Democrats. Both maintained influence a lot longer than either the electoral support or the consistency and coherence of their policies would have indicated. Genscher came out of that milieu, and I think his response to it was considerable pragmatism. Understand, he was a consummate negotiator. I have never experienced that, but I was told that.

Q: But he did not speak English. He understood it, but certainly could not speak it.

MONROE: I did, in fact, meet him in a coffee shop quite interestingly. That was another issue. I will say this about the foreign office. The quality was very high. Some of the people whom I dealt with who were junior officers then in an hour I can think of German foreign affairs. I was extremely impressed, much more impressed than I had been in my first tour in Germany with both the younger officers and some of the survivors of the WWII time. As in any service, there was the odd one, but they rose rather rapidly as in any [service]. That said, the German foreign office as German television was top notch at that point in post war German history.

PETER B. SWIERS
Protocol
Berlin (1972-1973)

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

Q: I've done an interview very recently with Kempton Jenkins who I think came from Berlin to Moscow because they needed somebody who knew the Berlin issues. Was this an effort to put somebody who knew about Moscow into Berlin?

SWIERS: You know to this day, I don't why the assignment was made. Pratt Byrd had this job in Berlin. We had in the Berlin mission an the eastern affairs section, which was a combination of the functions of the historical liaison between ourselves and the Soviets in Berlin, and was also in effect a shadow embassy to East Berlin. By the time I arrived, the Quadripartite agreement had been concluded, and it was only a matter of time before we opened an embassy in East Berlin.

There were all sorts of very interesting formulations about our duties because we were not going to say we were the embassy in the GDR, but that is fact what we were. We wanted to avoid any recognition of East Berlin as the capital of the GDR so that formally we were not located there. It set an interesting precedent, and I hope the people who are working on Arab-Israeli affairs will look back to the Berlin situation and see its similarity with Jerusalem, because we in effect said then "Well, our embassy is located in East Berlin. That does not mean we recognize East Berlin as the capital of the GDR." However, we eventually did recognize the GDR.

Q: But the time you were there, you were there from '72-'73, we did not, it was still...?

SWIERS: It was still in our mission in West Berlin, but I came just as the process was starting. I think it's useful for the record to show that when I reached Berlin it was very clear that I was not going to the job I was supposed to have which had been called "chief of protocol," which meant that I was the one who went over to protest to the Soviets at the action level. If it was a very serious matter, then the senior State Department person - his formal title was assistant chief of mission - would go see the Soviets.

The chief of mission was our ambassador in Bonn, even though he would not formally acknowledge that himself. The Soviet ambassador was his counterpart. The Allied Control Council still existed and the British, the French and the Americans ran it like so the their ambassadors to the West Germany were the formal representative on the Control Council as successors to the High Commissioners for Germany. The deputy chief of mission was the commandant in Berlin - a military person. The senior State department person in the mission in Berlin was called formally assistant chief of mission.

In practice, though, the deputy chief of mission - the military person - was de facto subordinate to the State Department person. The ambassador wasn't in Berlin all the time. In theory if the senior State person disagreed with general, he could carry his case to the ambassador in Bonn. It was very rare that you had that case in which the general would try to formally assert his authority over some political questions. In theory though, that possibility was there.

When I got to Berlin, I discovered (I won't deal with names and personalities at least until everybody's dead), very quickly that the assistant chief had wanted somebody else for the job and that I in effect had been imposed on him. Actually he did bring in the person he had wanted who was an old German hand, whom he had known for a long time; he brought him in in another capacity. In any case as my record shows, I left Berlin slightly more than a year later because it was clear that the embassy wasn't opening soon and I would be in an rather an awkward situation.

In retrospect I'm quite disappointed by what happened because I had turned down the NSC possibility where I probably would have ended up working with Hal Sonnenfeldt who was a very dear friend for years and years. Later in my career - in 1974 - he had actually wanted me to work for him but got to the State Department after Win Lord, who had already hired me for the policy planning staff. I ran into Hal one day and he was furious over it.

But Berlin was interesting because we were in this transition period. We were trying to open

contacts to the embassies that were in East Berlin which was extremely difficult. They were reluctant to deal with us. At the same time we were also maintaining the allied control system in terms of the relations with the Soviets. We did the reporting on the situation in the GDR, to the extent you could do any; it was difficult because we could not have any meetings with people in the GDR ministries.

Q: So you were precluded from talking to official East Germans, is that it?

SWIERS: Somehow I have in the back of my mind that we did work out some formula for talking to people in the GDR foreign ministry. I'm not sure I visited the foreign ministry. I'll have to think about it; I really can't remember. We did visit various institutes in the GDR, and it seems to me I was in touch with somebody in the GDR foreign ministry at some point or other. There were all these tasseled lines we drew; the East Germans and the Soviets naturally liked to tease us a bit to try and force in little ways to get us to try and recognize the GDR which we generally refused to do.

In light of today some of our actions are quite amusing, but on the other hand they were also very sad. There was a group of Czech-Americans who were on their way home from a visit to Czechoslovakia. They were a member of one of the sects, perhaps it was an old Hussite type of sect, that lived in upstate New York; they were driving between Dresden and Meissen in their way back to the west in a Volkswagen bus. The roads then were still cobblestoned in the GDR - quite picturesque - but they slipped in the middle of the night in the road; a couple of them were killed and others were seriously injured.

There was one young girl who was totally paralyzed from the waist down. She was in the famous old Sonkahorge Clochen house in Leipzig - I think that's probably the place where Edith Hamilton's sister studied. There was quite a dramatic old building. We talked to the Soviets and worked out on a humanitarian basis the means to go down and visit her, and then ultimately to bring her back. We had get flag orders which were the means by which one traveled by car or by train between Berlin and Helmstead. In theory we could get flag orders and by approaching the Soviets we could go anywhere else. I decided to experiment and did up flag orders from Berlin to Leipzig and back for the purpose of visiting this young lady, and to my great surprise, the Soviets simply agreed to it, and we went back and forth twice under flag orders.

When we visited the Leipzig fair, we used to have an arrangement with the Soviets where you went out an entry point and then the East Germans would issue a visa on a separate sheet of paper and thus you traveled back and forth to Leipzig. Actually, one time they stamped my passport and we thought it was a provocation, but it turned out that the guard had just made a mistake. They got all upset with themselves, but of course I had to cancel the passport and use a different one when we returned.

But in this case, we went back and forth and actually brought the young woman back under flag orders in an American military ambulance. So you had this rather unusual scene of an American military ambulance going along the autobahn with the siren on until we reached the Soviet checkpoint and back into Berlin. It was rather interesting and a very sad situation.

Our dealings with the Soviets were, once the Quadripartite agreement was over, largely dedicated to the efforts that the GDR was making, with or without the support of the Soviets (that was never clear) to undermine our free access to and from West Berlin. There was a shooting incident at Checkpoint Charlie. I think they didn't kill the German who was trying to get through, but a bullet went through the famous Checkpoint Charlie booth. If an American had happened to be standing there at that time, we would have had somebody seriously wounded or killed and a major incident. Fortunately, there wasn't, but naturally we used that to great effect in terms of protest, and the brutality of the wall.

Despite incidents such as that, I think we were beginning to see changes. The wall was just such so brutal; it is difficult to describe what is like to see this thing in the middle of the city, tearing a city in half. Guards on the GDR side were rarely from Brandenburg or Berlin. By their accents, we believed that they were mostly Saxon. The GDR was probably were worried, since a large percentage of the people who would try to get across the wall were indeed from Berlin. So they were uncertain whether Berliners might be willing to shoot other Berliners, and therefore used Saxons who as you know do have a reputation for being rather nasty in any case.

There's really not too much else to say about Berlin because we were in that transitional period. Toward the end, I began to establish some relations with a few of the embassies in the GDR. The most interesting part of Berlin in retrospect was the fact that Felix Bloch was there.

Q: Would you talk a little bit about Felix Bloch?

SWIERS: Yes, I'll talk about it because it was an interesting...

Q: You might explain who he is and why...

SWIERS: Felix Bloch was the American foreign service officer who has been accused but never convicted, of not formally spying for the Soviet Union, but having turned something over to the Soviets. The case came out when he in his last position in the Foreign Service as director of the office in the Department of State Bureau of European Affairs, responsible for the European union - an office called EUR/RPE.

While the French were carrying out a surveillance on a Soviet in Paris, he was observed with another person who left a briefcase or other document holder. The Soviet took the briefcase. Bloch has maintained to this day that it was stamps or something of that nature. But whatever the situation was, it was clear that while there was not sufficient evidence to bring him to a trial, there was sufficient evidence to allow then Secretary Baker to fire him on national security grounds. Bloch has not challenged that finding nor has he challenged the denial of his pension. He is living in North Carolina where he has been picked up for shoplifting a few times since then.

When I arrived in Berlin, Felix Bloch had already been in Berlin for a year or two in the economics section of the mission. Just after I arrived, he was transferred to the eastern affairs section as the economic officer in that section. I remember this rather vividly for rather a stupid reason which is again an illustration of how dumb the Foreign Service could be. I had been

assigned to what was in effect the second largest State Department office because I was an FSO-04 at the time. Dick Barkley was in another office, the next office after that, and then there was a fourth office which was just maybe a few square feet smaller than the office Dick was in, right next to him.

Suddenly one day, Alex Zakalofski who was the chief of our section and very conscious of protocol (maybe Felix was conscious of it, too), came into me and noted that Bloch, who I had just met, was being moved into our section, and since he outranked me - I think he was a couple of pay grades higher - I would have to vacate my office, and then Dick would have to vacate his office for the fourth one. I told Alex he really didn't have to worry about that; Dick did not have to move out. I would simply move into the fourth office which was empty. I stayed there. I thought that this was absolutely absurd.

Q: It's just not done much in the Foreign Service; I mean this is not that, normally.

SWIERS: It was very interesting because in retrospect the move into this office had not also been consonant with protocol, or whatever you call it - the hierarchy - but it enabled Bloch to observe the comings and goings of all personnel in the section.

Q: One of our concerns of course is was that some of our activities in the mission were not just straight diplomatic activities, and that meant it could compromise some of our programs - Berlin being an extremely sensitive place.

SWIERS: That is an understatement in terms of not only the sensitivity of the place and especially the sensitivity of the eastern affairs section. The personnel of the eastern affairs section possessed top security clearances because of the access to information which they had. If in fact Bloch was an agent and was already an agent at the time he was in Berlin, this was a really, in my judgment, a major compromise of American security. It is interesting because after all we basically were assigned to posts even then as old FSO-04s - today I guess they're called FSO-02s - for not more than two to three years. Bloch ended up staying in West Berlin and East Berlin for a combined five years, I believe.

Q: He was Austrian-born.

SWIERS: That is interesting because he always kept a certain aloofness; he was a brilliant tennis player as was his wife. We did not play tennis, so we didn't see much of them. He was quite aloof. Most of us simply laughed at it or attributed it to the fact of his being Austrian. He was like a very old-worldly, stiff Austrian, very stiff in his manner, and you wonder today what that all meant. Did that cover up something?

The one I feel most sorry for is the wife and the daughters. The wife has since divorced him and I sincerely hope the State Department would frankly honor her claim that since she was a spouse under the old personnel system, that even though his pension is denied, she certainly is entitled to some part of it. It's not quite the Spike Dubbs analogy, but nevertheless, this is a woman whose career might have been substantially otherwise if she hadn't been following her husband around. We'll see. Very, very sad.

Bloch was a very active part of the eastern affairs section at the time. I've often wondered whether or at what point it was determined that he became or is believed to have become a security risk.

Q: Yes, it's still one of those things that is very much up in the air. You left Berlin, in 1973, because it just wasn't a good fit, which happens sometimes.

SWIERS: It wasn't a good fit. I left. I probably would have stayed if it appeared that in the near future the embassy in East Berlin would have opened. That did not occur for about another year or two. No, it was not a good fit.

Q: You were looking towards being kind of the Soviet expert at the embassy in East Germany.

SWIERS: Yes, I was. An interesting comment on the Foreign Service: another reason I went to Berlin rather than take the NSC offer was on the advice from senior people in our embassy in Moscow that my career had been too "seventh-floor like," and also too consular. I was running the consular section as an operational job, and I really needed an analytic job. Of course, Berlin turned out not to be entirely that. I would say in many ways you should follow your own instincts. The people in Moscow were wrong, and clearly I would have been much better advised to have gone to the NSC rather than to Berlin.

Q: Sometimes the old Foreign Service steered clear of the NSC, but ...

SWIERS: Also, the operational jobs; they always thought one had to write the big think papers and all that. There was an element of that, but the other side of it was looked down upon, and many of us were better at that. I think I was. I could do the reporting, but frankly I was much more interested in the policy execution rather than the policy analysis. I think this is where we've made a mistake in the Foreign Service; we certainly do not have the influence we could or should have because too many of us did not like to do policy execution; we simply wanted to do policy analysis.

Q: One of the greatest accolades in the Foreign Service has been "wonderful drafter" which has always struck me as "Oh, well that's kind of interesting," but what does the drafting accomplish? It was an emphasis at least in one part of the Foreign Service, but not on the real movers and shakers. I've never heard anybody ever say Larry Eagleburger was a great drafter.

SWIERS: I think he was, but in a different way. I know somebody who has made it to ambassador and deputy assistant secretary, and if the Bush administration had been reelected would probably have gone on further. I helped his career. He had been assigned to the Vietnam delegation in Paris and he was not considered a great drafter because he was not one of these brilliant analysis drafters; yet he did absolutely brilliant work for the delegation. I in effect drafted the efficiency report that Harriman that ultimately signed.

He was also quite different in the way he functioned in the Service. I think we might say that his career turned around as a result of that. I don't want to use his name, but I can tell you he has had

a very good career. He's not the most popular fellow. He's basically a nice person but with a very strong personality, quite abrupt, and excellent policy judgement, and his career, he did very well.

CLINT A. LAUDERDALE
Administrative Officer
Bonn (1972-1975)

Ambassador Clint A. Lauderdale was born in 1932 and raised in Texas. He attended Tarleton State, a branch of Texas A & M University. At the onset of the Korean War, he joined the U.S. Army, serving in Germany. Following his military service, he graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, receiving a degree in political science. Ambassador Lauderdale's Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Mexico, Brazil, Belgium, Spain, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on August 16, 1964.

Q: Then off you went again. Clint, we're now going to Bonn, where you served from '72 to '75. How did that job come about, and what were you up to?

LAUDERDALE: Well, I was in the Department. I was working for Joan Clark at that time, who was Executive Director, and the question of my assignment came up. I wanted to go to Vienna, but she wanted to send somebody else. She wanted me to go to Moscow and be Admin. Counselor. I said: "I have two high school children and Moscow has no high school. So I don't want to go to Moscow." She said: I want you to go to Moscow! We need you." So I said "I have two teenaged children and I don't want to send them to boarding school." So she said okay, we'll send you to Bonn. So off I went to Bonn and served three years. Marty Hillenbrand was the Ambassador at that time. Actually, he went out when I went out. So we went out together.

Q: What had you heard about Marty Hillenbrand in the corridors?

LAUDERDALE: He was a top-flight, career officer Ambassador. At that time he was Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, highly respected, a German expert by the way. He had served there earlier in his career several times. I got to know him personally and really liked him. He was kind of self-effacing, low key, completely non-aggressive. More of a passive personality, but a real professional. That by the way was what got him fired later. That kind of personality and approach... I'll jump forward to two or three years later when Henry Kissinger was Secretary of State, and during those years he came to Bonn 13 times during my time there. And because of Hillenbrand's very low-key approach, because of his, one might say, really diplomatic dealing with the German government, he wasn't tough enough for Kissinger, and Kissinger basically said so.

Q: Were you there at the time? Did you see this developing?

LAUDERDALE: I was there, but I wasn't in on...you know when Secretary Kissinger comes he meets with Foreign Minister Genscher, and he meets with the Chancellor and the President.

Hillenbrand was in some of those meetings and I was not. So I don't have any first hand...in fact I don't even know what the issue was. I know Kissinger had come back after shuttling through the Middle East to put the heat on the Germans about something, I don't remember, but I do know that the word got around that Hillenbrand didn't present the issue to the Germans forcefully enough. So he basically said: "He's not tough enough, so we're going to let him go and get somebody else."

Q: *Who came in?*

LAUDERDALE: You know, I don't remember. A little bit later it was Stoessel, but I think there was an Ambassador in between. I left.

Q: *When you were out there in '72 how did you find...because we're looking not only at the political situation but also at how the system runs. What was your impression about how our Bonn Embassy, a huge Embassy, was run at that time?*

LAUDERDALE: A couple of the things that came up. After the war, HICOG was in Frankfurt, a big institution settled in Frankfurt in confiscated offices and so forth. The German government had been given the contractual agreement i.e. sovereignty, of the three Western occupied areas, and they decided to set up headquarters in Bonn. So the U.S. government built a big complex there under two different circumstances. They built a big housing complex on land that the United States government owned. They had either purchased it or the government gave it to them. I don't know what the arrangement was. But I know that the U.S. government owned the land under a 400 or 500 unit apartment complex, with shopping center, school, club, service organizations, movies, a church. A town, a little town. The office building was a little bit different circumstance. We built the building on German land, with the understanding that we would have the building for as long as we wanted it. That was the circumstance in Frankfurt also.

When I went, the office complex that had been built in '48 was much too big for the Embassy. We had given almost half of it back to the Germans and we occupied the other half. Also, by that time it was almost 30 years old. It had to be rehabilitated, a major face lift. Or we had to build a new chancery. So there was a proposal in the mill to build a chancery in Bonn. That came to a head about the time Hillenbrand and I came to Germany.

Q: *Just some historical background. Nobody was even foreseeing that Germany would be unified at any point in the foreseeable future at that time.*

LAUDERDALE: No. It became more clear later. Within about five years there was a consensus that Germany would never be reunified. And Kissinger and some others at some point said that there was no reason to believe that Germany would ever be reunified. However, there was also always that glimmer of hope. Hillenbrand killed the new chancery project, for exactly the reasons we're discussing here. His public reason was that it would send the wrong signal politically. It would tell the Russians and the East Germans and the eastern bloc that the U.S. has accepted the division of Germany and they have built a 100-year chancery in Bonn. He didn't want to send that signal, even though nobody believed reunification would occur in the near future, he said we're not going to do anything like this that sends a signal of acceptability and

stability in Bonn. No. No chancery. So eventually they rehabilitated the office building. And it turned out that was wise. Because what happened in the '90s was completely unexpected! I thought they'd made a bad mistake, that we were going to build a new chancery in the parking lot so we'd have a place to live while it was under construction, and when the chancery was finished we'd tear down the old stuff. But it didn't happen, we stayed in the old windy chancery. It was really what was called a temporary building, like the old buildings on Constitution Ave. that were built during World War II and then kind of hang on forever. That's the kind of building it was.

Q: Well, how did you find dealing with the Germans? On the official side, first.

LAUDERDALE: Very pleasant, very cordial, very responsive. I dealt with them mostly on management issues of course, including security, property issues. They were very cooperative. I don't want to overstate the case, but we got just about everything we wanted.

Q: You spoke of security issues. Was this the period when you had terrorists, like the Bader-Meinhof gang? These were basically radical "students" who were going around killing and bombing and doing things. Basically anarchists. They were quite a threat. Can you talk about this?

LAUDERDALE: Yes I can and I can tell you about an incident that occurred that kind of clarified our policy on the issue. The Bader-Meinhof gang were setting off bombs and doing other terrorist acts throughout Germany, mostly against the Germans or against the American military. A bomb went off in Frankfurt, at Rhein Main Air Base. And threats were made against the American Embassy. We just had German civilian guards, as I recall they were unarmed. And no great number, a couple of guards at the gate, that's it. It was perceived that there was a need for much more security, so when...actually I think it was just before I came when the Admin. Counselor was away from the post, something happened, and the Embassy brought in the American Military Police. He came back to the post and the Embassy was surrounded by American Military Police, and he knew that this was not right. This is not how we protect our Embassies abroad. Protecting our Embassies abroad is the responsibility of the host government, and a lot of things can go wrong if you have the American Military Police surrounding it. So he convinced the Ambassador, the one before Hillenbrand to get the Military Police out of our compound. We talked to the Germans and got them to send the Bundeswehr, the border police. So the border police came in, this was in April or May of '72, and guarded the Embassy and they have been doing it ever since, to this day.

Q: Were there any actual incidents against the Embassy while you were there?

LAUDERDALE: No. We spent a lot of energy and time and effort on security. We built a fence around the compound, the border guards brought armored cars, tank-looking like vehicles, in the housing compound which was five miles down the road, no fence around the property, no real armed presence. That was all beefed up. More police. In subsequent years a fence was built, barriers were built and so forth. But no incident while I was there.

Q: Did we have Marines there?

LAUDERDALE: Yes, but they had no role at all in the housing compound, except to live there. They were chancery oriented. Their duty stations were in the chancery, they didn't really provide perimeter security. Unless you have a fence, then within that compound they protect the entry. But we had no fence, wide open, any stroller could walk through or by. So they were inside, front door. We spent a lot of money on access control: bulletproof windows, shatterproof glass, that kind of stuff. They were more concerned in those days about individual terrorists, that a terrorist or a couple of terrorists might get into the chancery, into the consular section, into the public areas, with a briefcase with a bomb in it. So we established very strict...

Q: I was in, at this time, from '70 to '74 I was...a bomb went off in our parking lot and killed the two people who were going to set off the bomb. There was a lot of that going around in those days. These were an Italian radical and a Cypriot radical, I think, and they blew themselves up, thank God.

LAUDERDALE: Yes, they had the Japanese Red Army, Bader-Meinhof, and there was a group in Italy, the Red Brigade.

Q: I wonder if you could comment, what is and was your impression of the Marines as a protective force. I've heard people say that because they're young they get into more trouble, and it would be better to have more a civilian, older group. How did you feel about the Marines?

LAUDERDALE: Yes, I felt good about 'em, I felt it was worthwhile, I felt we ought to have them. Then, that every Embassy ought to have Marines. I think it is important to have a clear understanding of the Marines' mission. Their mission as I understand it is to protect American classified material. They are the guardians of our code facilities, really, our classified material and our code books, and within the Embassy itself the sanctity of that as a haven, as a refuge. Even the host country authorities, the police, the fire, no one can come inside that chancery without our permission. And the mechanism by which that is implemented is by the Marine guards. Also, in dealing with individual terrorists, individual troublemakers, such as the kind you may get in any country -- a person comes into a bank and makes a scene -- you need "security" to come and escort them out. The Marines can do that. They do it, they do it very well. They speak English, they're American, they're trained. And I think the thing we learned in Tehran, when the hostages were taken, is that it's not foolproof. Basically it's a delaying mechanism. The Marines are supposed to be able to delay entry of any group long enough to give the communicators and the code people time to destroy the codes and the classified material. That may be minutes or hours, the more they have the more they can destroy. But that's basically what it's for, and to prevent surreptitious or illegal or unknown entry outside office hours. So I consider them guardians of our codes and classified materials, our comm. centers, and so forth. And I think they do it very well. Now if you want a Delta Force to destroy the invaders and so forth then the Marines are the wrong ones. They're not equipped for that, they're not suitable for that. They're American citizens in a foreign country. For that you need the German border police, that's what they're out there for.

Q: How did you find the German local employees, the foreign service nationals?

LAUDERDALE: Competent, efficient, but a little bit hard to control. The two go together. Because they're educated, they're trained, I guess basically they're not willing to accept a second-class status. And our Foreign Service national employment system is based on a two-tier, sort of a second-class citizen relationship. The Americans are American diplomats, they're foreigners, they have their role and the others are the clerks and the bookkeepers, the accountants and the maintenance people, and ipso facto they are lower in the pecking order. The Germans had a little trouble with that relationship and you sometimes had to slap one down a little bit because he was too uppity vis-a-vis taking orders from Washington, or whatever.

Q: Well also I speak as...I went out to Frankfurt as my first post, as a young vice-consul, not knowing anything, and here I was supervising people who knew a lot more about whatever it was than I did. It's a little hard for them. They keep having these new people coming in and telling them what to do, and they often do it better. Were there anything equivalent with labor troubles while you were there?

LAUDERDALE: Not in the Embassy. The Army and Air Force had a long history of labor troubles, in the sense that the Germans have a fairly strict labor law, they have employee protection systems. And of course the Army and Air Force are used to sovereign immunity, doing as they damn please. So they were fairly regularly...if they wanted to close down a base, or cut the staff at the officer's club or something and lay off ten Germans, the Labor Ministry was over talking to us to get the Army to... You know we had about 250,000 military troops throughout Germany during most of the time I was there, and dependents added on.

Q: How did you find... I mean you were kind of the mayor of this rather unruly group. Diplomats are very nice, but when you put diplomats and their families all together, they don't take control easily, do they?

LAUDERDALE: Well, complicated on the one hand, but easier than you might expect on the other. As you said, it's like being a mayor. You have maybe 400 housing units, 400-500 American employees and their dependents running everything from movies to church to clubs to tennis courts and so forth. So there's lots of areas that could produce strife, management challenges. And of course there were some. That's why they had a big and senior administrative staff. On the other hand, it worked. It worked well, people were by-and-large happy. The morale in Germany, in my experience, would go up and down in almost direct proportion to the exchange rate. There were times when it wasn't very favorable, and the place is almost under siege. Nobody leaves the compound to go out to dinner or take a trip. It's too expensive! They just sort of sit around the compound. But fortunately we had enough activities there. We had ball games and softball teams, a high school with football teams, a teen club, other things, and an American Club, the Embassy Club, to which Germans were admitted; more than half the membership was German. So there were ways you could survive without having to spend a lot of marks out on the economy. And depending on the exchange rate that's what happened, or a lot of grumbling. When the exchange rate was better and people could go out or take a trip, then morale was better.

Q: Any problems that come to mind, just to give an idea of what you might have to deal with?

LAUDERDALE: We started some programs, one was started before I got there that was called the Swap Program, where we swapped -- remember I told you that the housing compound we owned, we had more housing than we needed. So before I came to Bonn the Embassy had swapped some apartment units to the Germans for houses out on the economy. Some previous... I think it was Henry Cabot Lodge, had called Bonn the golden ghetto, and he wanted some of the diplomatic officers to get out of that compound. So we traded some apartments to the Germans for I think about 10 houses. So we had some Political Officers and diplomatic officers out living among the Germans, so to speak. While I was there we sold the Germans two apartment buildings, and we turned over to the Germans the streets. It turns out we had built the streets within the housing compound in '48, five or six streets, regular paved streets, sidewalks, curbs, the whole business, and everything was our property. The streets, the sidewalks, the buildings, the lawns, everything. And I think the Legal Office had previously ruled that diplomatic immunity applied to the whole area, so if you were a diplomat living in an apartment and you walked across the street to another apartment, you're still in diplomatic territory. So we went to the Germans and told them, we'd like to give you the streets -- and the streetlights and the sidewalks. It worked because we had good relations with the Germans. They said, we're not going to take streets in bad conditions. No potholes or any of that stuff. So you have to bring them up to good maintenance level, all the light bulbs in the streetlights had to work, and we will accept.... So we actually gave the streetlights to the German government. That pattern by the way is happening again right now.

That same pattern is happening now since the Berlin Wall has come down and so forth, the German government is moving to Berlin, we're moving to Berlin in the out years, maybe five to ten. We are now, today, engaged in trading the German government apartments in Bonn -- we've already signed some agreements -- in exchange for some houses in Berlin. So that part works. We also traded some in some of the consulates, in Munich, Stuttgart, and so forth. That was an example of our good relations with the Germans. We could make deals.

Incidentally, after the wall came down, and Germany was reunited, it announced that it intended to move its capital to Berlin. I was DAS for Inspections in OIG. The DCM from Germany was in town and came by to see Sherman Funk. He said that a decision had been made not to build a chancery in Berlin. Said they didn't have the money. They would use the old East Berlin Embassy for the embassy substantive sections, and put consular, administrative and everyone else in the old army space occupied by the U. S. Mission to West Berlin, a 45 minute drive away.

After the meeting, I wrote a memorandum for Sherman Funk's signature, to Admiral Fort, who was the Assistant Secretary for Administration, pointing out that for the U. S. to plead poverty as reason not to build a chancery on our property at the Brandenburg gate would be interpreted by the Germans as a lack of respect for their decision to rebuild a united Berlin. Within our embassy, it would drive a wedge between the two halves of the Foreign Service (something I had fought all my career) by housing them in buildings 45 minutes apart, be dysfunctional by requiring 1 and 1/2 hours travel every day, for those who travel from one building to the other for meetings or other purposes. Somewhat to my surprise, the Inspector General signed this memorandum, and off it went with copies to others. This memorandum caused a re-evaluation within the department, and the decision was made to build a new chancery on our property at the Brandenburg gate, as Britain would also do.

Q: It sounded like a very long, drawn-out process getting out of the...when we first arrived in '45, and the war and the immediate post-war years we had to go in and almost build everything and then it was a slow disassembling of this machine which, as you say, is still going on today, almost 50 years later. Did you have a problem with the pecking order, who got what apartment? Did this end up in your lap?

LAUDERDALE: Yes it did, and no it wasn't a problem, basically. Amazingly few problems of that nature got to my level. There undoubtedly were a lot of back and forth and so forth at lower levels, at mid-grade or among secretaries or clerks or junior officers, I assume there were. But during my years no more than two or three cases reached my level. The reason for that I think is that aside from the houses, the people who built that compound did it right. I have nothing but praise for them. All the apartments were coded as to kind, they had secretarial apartments, executive secretarial apartments, mid-grade officer apartments, senior officer apartments, and so forth. They were all coded; we had six or seven categories in terms of square footage and degree of appointments within the apartment, the quality of the furnishings. We had them all coded and people were assigned to them according to where they fit in the pecking order, their rank, size of family, and so forth. And by and large it worked, there were no great grievances that reached me.

Q: How did you find...was there a problem in sort of dealing with the consulates? We had quite a few consulates given the size of the country, there was Berlin, which was a special case, and there was Hamburg and Frankfurt, and I guess Stuttgart and Munich at that time, and I guess Dusseldorf.

LAUDERDALE: Yes, there were some problems that required my travel. I went down to Munich to deal with some furniture and property issues. In Hamburg we were going to build a new Consul General's residence, didn't work out. But yes, support of the consulates and relations with the consulates was a fairly big part of my job. I dealt with all the entire management, administration, budget support area, the DCM dealt with the principal officers on their substantive issues, the Consul General dealt with them on consular issues. So the three of us each had our little niche in terms of dealing with the consulates. And basically it worked. Relations were good. We had principal officer conferences once or twice a year, get together, talk things over. They would drive up occasionally for consultations. In some cases where they were close like Dusseldorf and Frankfurt, which were only a one or two hour drive away, the ambassador and DCM used to regularly invite them to diplomatic functions at the Embassy, and when it was worthwhile, they would travel that distance to attend diplomatic functions in Bonn.

Q: What was the feeling about the Soviet threat? Again, we're trying to recreate the time. One of the things I assume that would have been on your plate would have been the E&E Plan, emergency evacuation, which was really...what were the Soviets going to...how did we feel about the Soviet threat at that time?

LAUDERDALE: Well obviously it was a big part of our...it was the umbrella under which we all lived, the threat umbrella, the stress umbrella. And dealing with Berlin brought it to the fore practically every day. We had a...not only did we have the Mission in Berlin but we had within Embassy Bonn we had an officer who was full-time Berlin liaison officer, Berlin issues officer,

and the Russians or the East Germans or somebody was always causing us a little grief, holding things up at the border, doing something in Berlin, or a G.I. would go AWOL and cross the border. So there were constant incidents with the Russians or the East Germans that the Embassy had to deal with. It was kind of an irritant that constantly reminded you that there is a Cold War, probably more so than in other countries. And also I think it is generally known that the Americans always considered the Soviet threat more of a threat than anybody else. More than the Germans, the Italians, the French, the Spanish, even the British to some degree, with their Socialist governments or social democratic governments, they weren't that excited about the dangers of Communism. Now, Soviet military threat, yes, but the Communist threat, which in some ways we also hyped in the United States, although those were really two different things, the Soviet military threat and the threat of international communism. The Europeans just didn't get excited about those things, at least not to the degree we did. Nevertheless the British particularly could be tough on Berlin. And we had a group in Bonn, I think it was called the Bonn Group. It was the DCMs, the American, British, French DCMs that met regularly, sometimes even weekly throughout the year to deal with Berlin issues. How to answer this diplomatic note, how to deal with that issue, what kind of protest we should lodge, and so forth. Also the presence of 250,000 or so troops in Germany was an overwhelming aspect of our total environment. Their maneuvers, their training exercises, their GIs who went AWOL or committed crimes, got in the newspaper, often spilled over into the diplomatic arena. So in Embassy Bonn we had a USAREUR liaison officer and an Air Force liaison officer, they were at colonel levels, and of course we in turn had POLADs at their commands. Political advisers, diplomatic officers assigned to Stuttgart and Heidelberg that tried to keep the information flowing both ways so that we could coordinate and deal with these issues smoothly. More or less it worked.

Q: How about the spy problem? One always thinks of Germany as being permeated...this is one of the biggest industries next to Volkswagen is being a spy. How did you deal with the spy business?

LAUDERDALE: Well we were obviously alert to it. We had an intelligence capacity in Bonn and a counterintelligence capacity in Bonn. Most of the espionage that was occurring at that time, and certainly that made it to the press and came into the public domain seemed to be directed a) either at the NATO context, and the spies were in Brussels and often maybe through a non-American in Brussels or against the Germans. You know, Willy Brandt left office because of that. We used to say "A German is a German. You can't tell an East German from a West German." They don't wear labels on their chest. They're Germans, and some of them were East Germans masquerading as West Germans and they were able to penetrate the West German government periodically. First of all the Germans who worked in the United States Embassy didn't have access to classified material. And while we were alert to such matters, I'm not aware of any espionage incident involving the U.S. Embassy.

Q: Back to something other than say an invasion by the Soviets of West Germany, which didn't happen, did you have which is the second most cataclysmic event, any presidential visits while you were in Bonn?

LAUDERDALE: No.

Q: Then you were very fortunate!

LAUDERDALE: I had two vice presidents at other posts and President Nixon in Brussels, but the President did not come to Germany during my time. We had Secretary Kissinger 13 times, but...

Q: Was he difficult to deal with?

LAUDERDALE: Yes.

Q: How? In what way?

LAUDERDALE: Well one of the things that complicated life considerably, in more than one way, was that he became Secretary of State from the National Security Council, and he kept both hats. As Chairman of the National Security Council, he had a right to Secret Service Protection. The Secretary of State has always been protected by State Department security people. And when he travels State Department security people...and we're plugged in to those people, we're on the same frequency, our walkie-talkies are on the same frequency. Kissinger would come with Secret Service, all these aliens, they don't know anything about State Department, about Embassies, they've been to the Embassies, but they don't know our Regional Security Officers, they don't know the hierarchy -- the Regional Security Officer reports to the Admin Officer -- the way our own people do. And we didn't fully trust them either, I mean in terms of information. If I were talking to a Regional Security Officer who was protecting the Secretary of State, I would tell him anything, about the Embassy, about the Ambassador -- but when I'm talking to a Secret Service officer, he's outside of my...and they have their own channels, they talk on radio back to the White House -- and that's another issue, they're talking back to the White House, not to the State Department. And this caused some stress in terms of the arrangements. And most of these arrangements are actually dictated by security people. The advance people are security people -- who goes in what car, who goes to what meeting and so forth -- the security people are in that up to their neck. And here they're from another agency! That caused considerable strains on communication. They can talk to the White House and I can't, and I can't talk to them very easy either, the way I could to a State Department security officer, because he probably has a walkie-talkie that I gave him! They've brought their own, with their own frequencies.

And the second thing was that Kissinger was quite imperial. So those two things.

Q: Could you give any feel for...I mean, you say "imperial." What...

LAUDERDALE: Yes. He liked -- I suppose all Secretaries do -- he liked to be attended to, waited on. Everything ready. He expected an officer to be holding his overcoat when he got ready to go outside. Which is okay. Matter of fact I held his coat once. What we found annoying was that he wanted all this service, which is okay, but he didn't want people around. So the order I got, because I had around 15 people supporting his visit, the order I got was "keep your people out of sight, out of the way, keep them behind the scenes. Kissinger doesn't like to see all these minions standing around." Well, I can understand that too. But you take that to such an extreme that you've got to hold his coat but you've got to be out of sight. How do you do that? He was

tough. Kissinger was a tough guy. But that's okay, he was a tough policy guy too. As I told you earlier about Hillenbrand. Effective, but I was just giving you a little sense of style there.

Q: Did the fall of Vietnam have any particular impact... I mean here we were holding the line in Germany and all, and we tried to hold the line in Vietnam and it didn't work out. And in the spring of '75 we pulled out in great disarray from Vietnam. Did you feel that?

LAUDERDALE: Yeah. A couple of things. It improved our relationship with several European countries, including the Swedes and some others that had not supported our efforts in Vietnam. They didn't see the threat in the same way we did. It also lessened, diminished considerably all the demonstrations we used to get, graffiti on Embassy walls and rallies against Vietnam. That all went away. So I think that at least in some superficial way, I don't know how deep it went, the pulling out of U.S. troops and disengagement in Vietnam contributed to better relationships with Europeans. It removed a little thorn that was in the side there.

JACK A. SULSER
Deputy Principal Officer
Frankfurt (1972-1975)

Jack A. Sulser served in the U.S. Army during World War II and was a prisoner of war in Germany. He entered the Foreign Service in 1950 and served assignments in London, Bologna, Dusseldorf, Vienna, Rotterdam and Washington, DC. Mr. Sulser was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1994.

SULSER: When I got into the promotion range to make FSO-2, it was the year the budget was such that they only promoted a half dozen people into class 02; so that didn't work. Finally, after having made known to everyone I knew in the system back in Washington that I was available -- that I was not wedded to staying in London the rest of my life -- I got a direct transfer to Frankfurt as Deputy Principal Officer. I have to credit that to the late Elwood Williams, who was "Mr. Continuity" on the German desk for many, many years. Ever since my days as Political Officer in Duesseldorf, in the mid-'50s, Elwood had kept track not only of me, but of anybody else who ever did political reporting out of Germany, kept track of their careers, and if he thought you did good work and had a contribution to make he would try to get appropriate assignments for you. He called to tell me that he had proposed to assign me back to Duesseldorf as Principal Officer, but that was a senior position and there were other senior officers with German experience who needed assignments. I didn't get that, but he was able to get me assigned to Frankfurt as Deputy Principal Officer by selling me to Bob Harlan, the Consul General there. I went on direct transfer in January of '72.

Before I left London I got a letter from Bob Harlan welcoming me to the post and describing what he wanted me to do, delegating certain areas of responsibility so that I would clearly have some supervisory and management responsibilities. I was not only to do the political work, but I was to supervise the Consular and Administrative sections and manage the very active junior officer rotation program they had in Frankfurt. He had scheduled a number of parties to

introduce me to various elements of the community in Frankfurt and had accepted on my behalf invitations that had come in even before I got there. When I looked at that list, I saw that virtually every night for the first month was occupied with parties of one kind or another. I thought, "Well, okay, this is my initial period, but it is going to slow down and be more normal" as I had experienced elsewhere in the Foreign Service: that is, a couple of times a week you are either giving a party or you are invited to more or less official, representational activities.

As it turned out, the social schedule got only heavier as the years went on in Frankfurt. It was far and away the busiest post I have ever experienced in that respect. Frankfurt was not earthshaking in terms of German-U.S. relations, but provincial governments in Germany have a great deal more influence than, say, in Austria or England -- the other countries I was familiar with. Not only do the representatives of the provincial governments make up the Upper House in Bonn, but the national governments draw on people from those provincial governments for Cabinet positions and elsewhere. We had three Laender in our consular district: Hesse, Rheinland-Pfalz and the Saarland, which meant some travel and representational activity to deal with three Laender governments. We also had a quarter of a million U.S. forces in our consular district, which provided not only a lot of consular work; e.g. registering births of children born to our forces in Germany and the issuance of passports to our forces in Germany.

In addition to that consular work, there was a lot of dealing with the host communities -- not only Laender but also municipal officials all over that part of Germany in the interest of maintaining a good atmosphere for our troops. By the time I was there, from January '72 until September of '75, there was frequent friction between local authorities and U.S. forces because of the growing need for housing and other facilities in Germany, with its growing population, expanding economy, and our holding of vast training areas and airfields and barracks and storehouses. As you know, we keep the equipment for several divisions of troops to rush over from the U.S.; that takes up vast areas in Rheinland-Pfalz and Saarland -- all those airfields and stuff all over the place. We were constantly having to deal with these community relations problems occasioned by our very large troop presence in Germany.

There was also in Frankfurt a very large business community. This is the center of American business in Germany -- the headquarters of the American Chamber of Commerce for Germany. We had hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of American companies, some of them large manufacturing plants, such as Opel, owned by General Motors, but also many, many small companies. The business community was growing by leaps and bounds while I was there, with American banks coming in. Although Bob Harlan reserved to himself the management of the economic-commercial activities in the Consulate, there was still plenty of personal involvement on the social level for the Deputy Principal Officer. And then too, there was a huge consulate staff. When I went there in 1972, I was told by the Department that there were only ten U.S. embassies in the world larger than the Consulate General in Frankfurt. One of those was Saigon, which closed while I was there, so I would assume there were nine embassies left in the world that had more people on the staff than the Consulate General in Frankfurt. Much of that staff was due to other agencies that were located there for two reasons -- one because we had housing for them, as originally it was assumed that Frankfurt was going to be the headquarters of Western Germany, until Adenauer decided otherwise; so we had a very large housing area that was no longer needed just for the consulate staff. But it was also the communications and transportation

center for Germany; so it was a very convenient place for other agencies to establish.

The Federal Aviation Administration had a large staff there of 40 or so people with three aircraft kept out at Rhein-Main Air Base. Their job was to maintain the navigation and communications facilities for U.S. Air Force in Europe, but also to monitor the navigational facilities used by U.S. civilian airlines all over the Middle East and Africa, as well. They flew aircraft to Berlin, England, all over West Germany and the rest of Europe, down to Greece and the Middle East, etc., in order to certify to U.S. airlines and the Air Force that navigational facilities were calibrated properly and functioning. The General Accounting Office had a staff of 50 or so there to do their thing all over the Middle East, Europe and Africa. The State Department Courier Operation maintains one of their two large overseas operations, one in Bangkok and one in Frankfurt, again with 40 or 50 diplomatic couriers based there traveling all over the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Other U.S. agencies of a smaller nature -- the Drug Enforcement Administration, Customs Bureau, Immigration Service -- had two or three officers there and a local staff. It was a very, very large government community, and the business community, and the military community, as well as German officialdom and politicians that were of interest to us. It kept us very busy. At the end of the first year I went through my calendar and found that we had averaged something like 5.3 nights a week involved in social activities. When I realized that, I made a point of keeping track every year; and every year it went up by a tenth of a point or two. By the time we left, it was virtually six nights a week when we were busy, either entertaining or, more often, being entertained by different people, and very often two or three different functions in a given evening. Shortly after arriving in Frankfurt, I was promoted to O-2 after nine years in grade, one year short of maximum time in class. Three years later, in 1975, I was promoted to O-1.

I felt that my major contribution was in cultivating close contacts with politicians who later became more than they were when I was there. The head of the Christian Democratic Party from Land Hessen at the time, Alfred Dregger, was mayor of Fulda. I visited him in Fulda, had him in my home and visited with him in the Landtag at Wiesbaden. He later became Chairman of the Christian Democratic faction in the Bundestag. Helmut Kohl was minister-president of Rheinland-Pfalz. I became acquainted with him and he became head of the Christian Democratic Party, their Chancellor-candidate, and of course has been Chancellor for a good many years now. People in the Embassy didn't know him, and we got Ambassador Hillenbrand to come down to the Carnival parade in Mainz one year, mainly to meet Kohl, because Kohl always used to invite us to observe the Carnival parade with him. When he became Chancellor-candidate, I said to his chief of staff, whom I was very friendly with, "But he has no experience in foreign affairs; he has been a provincial politician all his life. Who is he going to have to inform and advise him on world affairs?" The response was, "As a matter of fact he has hired a young man out of one of the southern German university think-tanks named Horst Teltchik to be his foreign affairs adviser." So I said, "Okay, then I have to meet Horst Teltchik." I arranged a lunch with Teltchik and we became very close; when Kohl became Chancellor, Teltchik became in effect his national security adviser. Before I left Frankfurt I saw to it that Teltchik was introduced to one of the political officers at our Embassy in Bonn, which had had no contact with him up to that point.

I became acquainted with the head of the Socialist Party in Saarland, Lafontaine. I cultivated him, and he became the Chancellor-candidate of the Socialist Party through a couple of elections

-- unsuccessful however That is the sort of thing, the contribution political contacts at provincial levels can make, to develop a pattern of contact, get acquainted with these people, write reports about them, do biographic assessments. When Kohl was making his first visit to Washington, I was then assigned in the Pentagon, and the person responsible for preparing psychological evaluations for the President tracked me down having looked in the records to read up on Kohl -- people who had sent in memcons or biographic reports on him, and found me! I was the one who had written most about him, about his personality, his interests, his characteristics, etc. The fellow tracked me down in the Pentagon and spent hours interviewing me in connection with a psychological assessment of Kohl for the President's use in his first meeting with Kohl as Chancellor. Those things we can do.

PHILIP H. VALDES
Monitored Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe
Munich (1972-1975)

Philip H. Valdes was born in New York in 1921. He received both a bachelor's degree in 1942 and a master's degree in 1947, both from Yale University. He was a 2nd lieutenant overseas in the U.S. Army from 1943- 1946. Mr. Valdes entered the Foreign Service in 1947, serving in Chungking, Seoul, Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, Bangkok, Berlin, and Munich. He was interviewed by William Knight on July 11, 1994.

VALDES: Then I went to [the Consulate General in] Munich in 1975, to replace a CIA guy, actually. He'd left some time previously.

Q: *Was Jack Sulser there at the time?*

VALDES: No.

Q: *Perhaps he had been in Munich earlier. He joined an inspection team that I was leading in 1974, I think. He had been detailed from -- maybe it was Frankfurt. You're talking about Munich.*

VALDES: He may have been assigned to [the Consulate in] Duesseldorf.

Q: *What was happening in Munich?*

VALDES: The work involved seeing that the policy decisions made in the two radio stations didn't conflict with State Department policy toward the Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union. There was a tendency in both radio stations, of course, since they were staffed by refugees from the countries involved, to try and be much more forceful than we felt was "politic" at the time.

Q: *Practically speaking, it's really quite difficult to monitor this huge volume of broadcasting, isn't it?*

VALDES: It's extremely difficult. I used to get scripts and would go over them, picking some out at random, and then commenting on some if I found something to comment on. Both radio stations had policy staffs, and it was difficult for them, too.

Q: You mean, even with the best will in the world.

VALDES: Yes.

Q: Do you think that this kind of supervision worked?

VALDES: It worked well enough, I think. I don't recall that there was any real damage done. There was material broadcast which some governments would complain about, but that's all right.

Q: You mean complaints by foreign governments?

VALDES: Yes.

Q: Did you have Congress complaining about your product?

VALDES: No, I don't think that we did. We had a number of Congressional visitors. I remember that Senator Hubert Humphrey came over. We took him to visit the radio stations.

Q: Are they still operating?

VALDES: Yes, they're both operating. They've changed their role somewhat. Someone from Radio Liberty told me, not too long ago, that their subject matter is often, "How to do something." For example, how you go about existing in a market economy and what you do.

Q: Really.

VALDES: In fact, the two radio stations have staff correspondents in Moscow, and, I think, in Eastern Europe, too.

The Czechs -- Vaclav Havel [president of the Czech Republic] -- invited the radio stations to move to Prague, he was so interested in keeping them going. I don't know what happened. They were thinking seriously of doing it because the costs would be much less than in Munich.

Q: I think that that issue has not been decided yet. It's still being considered. What was your feeling about the utility and effectiveness of that whole broadcasting operation?

VALDES: RFE [Radio Free Europe], I think, was very effective. Radio Liberty was less so because of "jamming" [by the Soviets], but as time went on, I think that it became more effective. They would carry a lot of things like material written by dissidents -- such as Solzhenitsyn and others. They would read it over the air. We did get some "feed back" from

people who came out. The radio stations were clearly listened to and heard.

Q: Is there any jamming now, as far as you know?

VALDES: As far as I know, no. [When I was in Munich], broadcasts by the VOA [Voice of America] were no longer being jammed by the Soviet Union. Radio Liberty was still being jammed, but not the VOA.

JOSEPH A. B. WINDER
Economic Officer
Bonn (1973-1975)

Joseph Winder was born in Schenectady, NY and was raised both there and in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He attended the University of Michigan and served in the US Army. He entered the Foreign Service in 1966 and served in Chile, Germany, Indonesia, Thailand, and Japan. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: In 1973 it was time to go out again?

WINDER: Yes. I was assigned to Bonn, which was a nice change of pace. The position came open and I jumped at the opportunity having served in Germany in the army. I studied some German before going to Bonn and enjoyed my tour there very much.

Q: You were there from?

WINDER: I was there from 1973-75, a little over a year and a half, because my tour was interrupted in mid-tour when I was given the opportunity to return to Washington as an office director in EB, in the office I had left. As a mid-career officer I jumped at the opportunity.

Q: While you were in Bonn, who was the ambassador?

WINDER: Martin Hillenbrand.

Q: How did you find him?

WINDER: A very stolid individual and marvelous to work for.

Q: You were in the economic section?

WINDER: Yes, dealing mainly with U.S.-German foreign economic relations. The energy crisis hit shortly after I arrived in Bonn and energy was my portfolio so I had a lot of interaction with the Germans on dealing with the energy crisis, setting up the International Energy Agency at the OECD (Organization for Economic and Cooperation Development), worrying about the

international energy conference and trying to persuade the Germans to adopt our approach to dealing with energy producing countries that was a fairly aggressive approach. I also dealt with other aspects of U.S. relations with the oil producers in the development world. The Sixth Special Session of the general assembly took place then, which was very hostile, aggressive, anti-U.S. North/South confrontation. I was working on that. I had a lot of contact with the economic ministry and the foreign ministry in particular.

Q: What was the German attitude towards the oil crisis?

WINDER: They didn't want to do anything that would jeopardize their access to the Middle East oil markets, and yet on the other hand we were pressing them to have solidarity with us. We did everything we could to put pressure on OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries). After all, the OPEC cartel really had an enormous amount of strength after the 1973 oil crises and we were trying to do everything we could to if not break OPEC, at least to reduce their ability to exercise quite so much control over prices and supplies.

Q: Did you get any feel for the role of France vis-a-vis Germany as this developed?

WINDER: Sure. We had the international energy conference in January/February, 1974 that Kissinger called here in Washington and all the European countries came along with the Japanese and others. It was Kissinger's chance to exert U.S. leadership and try to develop a common developed country bloc to operate politically against OPEC. The French wouldn't have anything to do with it. The French foreign minister at that time, Jobert, was very much opposed to the U.S. position and made no bones about it. The one thing he objected to was the fact that U.S. leadership was involved. So, the International Energy Agency was set up in the OECD in 1974 and France refused to join.

Q: What about Germany in a North/South context? Were they doing more than we were?

WINDER: They had an aid program, of course, that was run by a fellow who was very much a pro-developing world, which was typical of the Europeans on those days. But, after all, this is the mid-'70s and Germany is very much dependent on the United States for military support and their foreign policy was pretty much keeping in lock step with the United States.

Q: How did you find the German bureaucracy that you were dealing with?

WINDER: Oh, they were professionals and capable. They were extremely narrow in a sense they were all lawyers and were cut out of the same cloth, but very capable. They were not terribly innovative, but good solid people.

Q: Was there a good infusion of expertise from oil supplied people, economists who understood the oil thing?

WINDER: Clearly their work was being read in the embassy. People who were formulating the response to the OPEC challenge were very much aware of it. But, the problem was as much political as economic.

Q: Were the Germans reluctant or going along with us?

WINDER: Both. They were reluctant and going along with us. They were very nervous. They got oil from Libya and didn't want to jeopardize that. They got some oil from the Middle East and didn't want to jeopardize that. They were very worried about their oil supplies being much more dependent on imported oil than we were. They were also very anxious not to do anything that would enrage the United States. They were skating a thin line. The French kept hammering at them, trying to get them to be more independent of the United States.

Q: Was the Soviet Union a factor?

WINDER: Not really except to the extent that there was concern about the possible vulnerability of German and U.S. military oil supplies to an invasion. I remember I was involved in some studies on the military's petroleum network and how vulnerable it was. The Soviet angle wasn't a big one.

Q: The embassy was huge. Was the economic section well integrated into it?

WINDER: Oh, yes. It was an integral part of the embassy. The economic minister had close relations with the ambassador. Economic relations were not front and center in terms of our relations with Germany. Clearly in those days we still had the question of Berlin and the Four Power Talks, and the NATO questions. Political and political/military relations were far more important in the overall scheme of things in terms of our relationship with Germany and particularly when Henry Kissinger was secretary of state. But, economic issues were important and Ambassador Hillenbrand took an interest in them. Clearly we had no difficulty in getting support from the front office in dealing with the Germans on economic issues. It just wasn't the central thrust of the policy in those days.

Q: Did Vietnam play any role?

WINDER: No. By the time I arrived there in 1973-75... I guess we left just about the time of the fall of Saigon and the pull out was just a matter of time. It wasn't a major issue.

THOMAS G. WESTON
Economic/Commercial Officer
Bremen (1973-1976)

Ambassador Weston was born and raised in Michigan and educated at Michigan State University and in France. Entering the Foreign Service in 1969, he was posted first in Zaire, after which he began assignments in the Bureau of European Affairs and abroad. His posts include Zaire, Germany, Belgium and Canada. Ambassador Weston was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: So you went to Bremen; you were there from when to when?

WESTON: From '73-'76, a three year tour. I went there as the economic/commercial officer, this is before we had a foreign commercial office. Bremen was the smallest American post in Germany. The fact was you had Consulates in Frankfurt and Munich which were larger than most embassies. Bremen had a principle officer, the number two which was the job I was in, the economic officer, a communicator and a consular officer and then a couple other agency officers, someone from military security, a Coast Guard officer because of ship building and things like that and then a series of FSNs (Foreign Service Nationals) doing public diplomacy, political and things like that. In essence it was a very small post and you did probably every part of the job of the post at one time or another. A part of the time I was in Bremen, I was the acting principal officer, the acting consul general because it was such a small post. For instance, when I arrived I was immediately the acting principal officer because there wasn't one right then. But, you were basically supervising the one political FSN, so you were doing political work all the time, obviously doing a lot of representation along with the economic and commercial work. There was only one consular officer so when the consular officer wasn't there you were doing consular work as well. Also, when the communicator wasn't there you were decoding your cables the old way with the, I don't know if you remember those tapes we used to have to deal with to decode cables and things. So you did all kinds of things.

Q: Where did Bremen fit into the bigger German picture?

WESTON: Yeah. It was kind of an anomaly that we even had a consulate there. In fact, the consulate was closed I guess it was two years after I left. Bremer and Bremerhaven were an American enclave in the occupation period. All of Northern Germany was British occupation zone. But the United States decided it needed a sea port and that turned out to be Bremen and Bremerhaven and became an American enclave, occupied by the United States and then as you know, you had bizonians, the development of the Federal Republic. Bremen became a separate state from the larger area in the north and because of the long American connection in the post-war period what had in fact been the office of the occupation authority became a consulate there. On the surface of it, it would be very hard to justify and became very hard to justify continuing to have a consulate there. You had another one in Hamburg less than an hour away, 45 minutes away and one in Düsseldorf, about an hour and 50 minutes away. So it was a historical anomaly. That being said, it was a terrific job first because it was so small so you did everything. Secondly, unlike the other American diplomatic or consular establishments in Germany there was literally no American community so in addition to doing all aspects of diplomatic and consular work you were in a completely German environment very unlike the situation in a Munich, or a Frankfurt or a Stuttgart or anywhere else which made it much more interesting; it made it a little more difficult in a family sense. For instance, my oldest daughter who was just over a year old when we moved to Bremen ended up with her first language being German rather than English just because it was such a completely German environment. But from a work point of view and from the point of view of having fun in what you do it was absolutely terrific. But it was a bit of an anomaly, you know, and that comes out of the post-war period.

Q: What is the area of Bremen, was it a Land by that time?

WESTON: Yes, it was Land by then.

Q: Where did Bremen fit in the political spectrum?

WESTON: Very left. It always had an SPD (Social Democrats Party) government. At the time I was there you had the start of what was then called the Burger Initiative and these grass roots movements which eventually grew into the Green Party of Germany, so very left. It had a new university which was the most radicalized university in the Federal Republic. The consular district included half of Lower Saxony as well, a kind of the western half of Lower Saxony which was a very different area. It was quite conservative, had a CDU (Christian Democratic Union) government and so on and so forth. But included in the consular district was Oldenburg, which was the center of the Baader Meinhof gang, so we had very radicalized, even violent, politics as well as very leftist politics and very green politics all going on at once.

Q: Well now, we were still involved, but it was diminishing involvement in Vietnam, did this affect you?

WESTON: We had a demonstration against the consulate on about a weekly basis. Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Yes, it was very much an issue.

Q: How did you deal with these radicals?

WESTON: I was there as an economic/commercial officer but you did just as much political work. I spent a lot of time with political officials in the SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany). The SPD in Bremen was pretty much split between something the Germans called the Kanalarbeite (Canal Workers) branch of the party, which is kind of the traditional trade unionists part of the Social Democratic Party in Germany and the actual mayor or governor of the Land was called Mayor Burgermeister. He was from that wing of the party but there was the other wing which was the much more socialist international, much more ideological part of the party. There was about a 50-50 split I would say among the governing officials and party officials within Bremen. I spent a lot of time with both of them kind of uniformly against the Vietnam war, but you went out there and you tried to explain why. I have to say from my previous history I was not enamored with the war either but in the foreign service we do what we can to gain support for U.S. policy. That meant in Bremen trying to work with what was overwhelmingly the strongest political factor which was the SPD. I did try and also did things with academic institutions. That was very difficult at Bremen University. It was probably the most radicalized campus in the Federal Republic. Had difficulties in even having them invite you to meet with students. But, there were other academic institutions where I think we had a little more luck. So, basically you were fighting a losing battle for public opinion obviously on the Vietnam war, if you were an American diplomat in Germany at that time, but you did what you could to explain the policy.

Q: You were there during the collapse of the South Vietnamese government in '75. Did that have much effect or end the issue?

WESTON: I wouldn't say it ended the issue. Remember this was probably the farthest left and

most radicalized part of Germany. It didn't go away overnight by any means. There was a great deal of distrust of U.S. motives. Another thing happened which was the conflict in the Middle East. We were trying to establish a brigade in Northern Germany. This all relates to new strategies of dealing with what was then viewed as the Soviet threat and there was insufficient infantry in the northern plans of Germany. At any rate, there was a move to establish an American brigade in Bremen which meant new deployments, new bases. Obviously, very difficult to do politically in this environment though ultimately successful. At the same time we had a great deal of controversy because in the conflict which was going on in the Middle East there was the resupply of Israelis from U.S. stocks which were actually located in Bremerhaven.

Q: You're talking about the October War in '73?

WESTON: Right, exactly. So you had a situation in which in addition to the Vietnam problem there was a great deal of concern politically in Bremen and in Germany more broadly about U.S. using its bases, if you will, and its spies in Germany to support what was seen by many Germans as questionable actions on the part of Israel and it was right there in Bremerhaven. This at a time when we were trying to establish new facilities, new dispositions of U.S. forces in order to defend Germany against the Soviet Union. So, it was a very complex time politically to have all these things playing together. You started out asking about Vietnam. I think that the interaction of all of these things made it a challenge. I was there talking to the government of Land Bremen about where can we get some land to build a U.S. base which might ultimately be used to supply actions in which Germans didn't agree, it made a really fun and challenging time to be doing this kind of diplomacy.

Q: What about...

WESTON: Especially since I was there as an economic/commercial officer.

Q: We'll come to the economic/commercial business in a second but continuing on the political thing you had far leftist elements in the Land then, how did they look at the Soviet Union because they weren't that far away from the 1968 attack on Czechoslovakia which squelched democracy there thoroughly. How did that play?

WESTON: Well, I don't think you had a great deal of love for the Soviet Union. There was a tremendous amount of support for "détentist" type policies rather than confrontational policies with the Soviet Union that is of the Brandt Ost Politik type of policy. By then, of course, we had changed chancellors. I don't remember if you remember the history of the period we had this...

Q: You were saying by this time the Brandt government had been brought down by what sort of scandal?

WESTON: It was a spy scandal. A key advisor was found to be a Stasi (East German Intelligence Agent) so the government was brought down and Brandt was replaced as Chancellor by Helmut Schmidt, another north German incidentally. Brandt was from Lübeck and Schmidt was from Hamburg.

Q: What was the commercial/economic activity there?

WESTON: Well, there were two big aspects of it. On the economic side there was substantial economic reporting in particular related to commodities. In those days we did a lot more economic reporting than we do now. Bremen was a trading center but it was very much a trading center of all kinds of agriculture commodities. For instance, the Bremen Bombulbuser (the Cotton Exchange) was the main center for trading fiber for all of Europe. We had a lot of responsibilities on commodities, reporting on agricultural products like cotton, tobacco, fresh fruits and vegetables, coffee, all kinds of things like that. There was a lot of reporting on the shipping industry and the ship building industry, so sectoral industrial reporting. That was the economic side; we did not do really macro-economic reporting out of Bremen, obviously.

On the commercial side, this was before the development of the Foreign Commercial Service. So commercial diplomacy was very much done by the Foreign Service and we had an active commercial program when I arrived there. It became even more active because during the time I was there we developed a kind of a systematic approach to performing commercial diplomacy in Germany which would have benefits at the margin. There was a new approach to commercial diplomacy then in Europe and it was, look, corporations like General Motors don't need the United States diplomatic service to pursue their commercial interests. Those who do need it are small and medium sized companies both in terms of trading and investment. So there was a real change to emphasize commercial diplomacy on such things as the ADS (Agency Distributor System), the World Trade Directory Reports (WTDRs), so all of these various programs of the Department of Commerce which were implemented by the foreign service for trade and investment by small and medium sized enterprises. We did this in Germany as a whole, but I think we did more of it in northern Germany than anywhere else just because we had some very talented people to do it in our FSNs (Foreign Service Nationals). We organized something called "sprachttage" (speaking days). These were basically days in which a team would go out somewhere in the consular district and set up a whole series of meetings ahead of time with German businesses of all kinds, industrial, agricultural, service industries, whatever, and try and foster these various instruments of commercial diplomacy. You would go out and spend a day in a small sized city in northern Germany. You would spend the whole day in meeting after meeting with businessmen trying to establish links in ADS in doing WTDRs on the firms that sort of things. This is before there was a Foreign Commercial Service. All of this has been taken over by the Foreign Commercial Service now.

Q: Did you find yourself colliding with the consulate general in Hamburg or others?

WESTON: No, we were both consulates general and we split up Lower Saxony between us and we had quite a cooperative relationship. I mean I wasn't the principal officer most of the time.

Q: Who was it then?

WESTON: A woman named Frances Usenik. There were three different principal officers when I was there but for the vast majority of time it was Frances Usenik

Q: I know Frances, we served together.

WESTON: She was a terrific lady. So that was about the time when she adopted the two kids.

Q: Two kids. They were Polish kids.

WESTON: Right, exactly. So Frances was the principal officer most of the time. When I first arrived there I was the acting principal officer and there was a fellow named Ken Sullivan who was there for about a month. Frances arrived and as I was leaving Frances had left the foreign service and just as I was leaving Irv Schiffman arrived, so we overlapped for a couple of weeks, almost a month. So it was Frances most of the time. At any rate, Frances was very involved in all of these same things. I mean when we'd go out, I was talking about these "sprachttage" and commercial diplomacy, she would go out and she'd host a reception as the consul general in the chamber of commerce or something and she would participate actively in these discussions so it was all very cooperative. On the other hand, you asked about consulate general Hamburg because we split Lower Saxony in terms of consular districts. It was very easy to split when you were doing consular affairs; it wasn't so easy to split when you were doing economic affairs in particular political because the capital of Lower Saxony was in Hanover which was in Hamburg's consular district yet half of the land was in Bremen's but it worked very well. I went to Hanover frequently but doing political work in Lower Saxony in Hanover which was Hamburg's consular district. We worked very cooperatively, there really wasn't a rivalry.

Q: What about Bremerhaven as a port? I came in on a troop ship back in '53; I came into Bremerhaven in the bowels of the troop ship. Was that much of a care and feeding of seamen and shipping and much of a problem for you all?

WESTON: No, but not only Bremerhaven it's Bremen because the main container port was in Bremen. In those days Bremer/Bremerhaven were still one of the main ports in Europe mainly because of container shipping but because it was container shipping you're talking about very small crews. We had and this was really the consular section, we had your crew list visas, the normal sorts of things that you do with seamen and shipping but it was probably less than you would have expected because the nature of shipping in trade through Bremer/Bremerhaven which was highly containerized by that time. You're not talking about these freighters with large crews and so on. We still had also a certain amount though of kind of cruise tourists shipping because Norddeutsche Lloyd was a Bremen company which was one of the you know one of the last great German transport companies.

**WILLIAM BODDE JR.
Political Officer
Berlin (1973-1974)**

**Political Officer
Bonn (1974-1977)**

William Bodde was born in Brooklyn and raised in Long Island. He served in the

US Army in Korea and attended Hofstra College. He entered the Foreign Service in 1962 and served in Austria, Sweden, and German. He was also ambassador to Fiji, Tuvalu, Tonga and the Marshall Islands and served as EE/MP to Kiribati.

Q: We'll keep working on him. Well, then, you left Berlin in '74. You'd been there a year. And you went to Bonn, and you were in Bonn from when to when?

BODDE: 1974 to 1977.

Q: And you were what?

BODDE: I was a section chief of the internal affairs unit in the political section. In Bonn I worked for two of the best people in the Foreign Service, Frank Meehan and David Anderson. Frank was the political counselor and later served as ambassador to Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. I worked for him for a year and learned a great deal. David was his deputy and the atmosphere in the political section was highly professional and lots of fun. My job took me outside of Bonn a great deal. I attended political conventions all over Germany and traveled extensively through the country during the national and state political campaigns. I didn't have a lot to do with the diplomatic community or the foreign ministry. I saw my colleagues at the embassy and I was active in the community association, but really the job was German-centered.

Q: I'm wondering, my experience, the twilight of my career, was consul general in Naples, and I had never served in Italy before, and I was watching these people up in Rome dealing with the exquisiteness of Italian politics, and it all was about the same, anyway; it had been the same since 1948.

BODDE: What years were you there?

Q: I was there '79 to '81. But I was wondering, sometimes about the detailed reporting from the embassy in Rome. Were we getting deep into German politics?

BODDE: I'm glad you asked that question because it's really something I thought about a lot. When I was DAS, in the European Bureau I dealt with Italy a lot. Like most political officers, I found Italian politics fascinating, but you put your finger on a real problem in the Foreign Service. It is a problem of judgment. At the end of the day, when we talk about what quality defines the best Foreign Service Officers, it is their judgment. It's not intelligence; they're all intelligent. Yet one of the things is it's so easy to get caught up in -- especially if you're doing internal politics -- in the intricacies of domestic politics. You know what this faction or that faction is doing. I suspect the Department knew more about every faction and splinter group in China's Communist Party than it did about China's economy. It is a great temptation because you want to know as much as you possibly can. But I always stressed to the people that worked for me that we were there to look at what happens that affects American interests. If it doesn't affect American interests, it may satisfy our intellectual curiosity, but it should not be reported to Washington. It's the same thing with predicting elections. It is more important to analyze how the outcome of a foreign election is likely to affect U.S. interests than predicting the election results within a tenth of a point. We had five people in Rome covering Italian politics. That is

overkill.

Q: What was the government like in '74-76?

BODDE: When I first went there, all the time I was there, the Social Democrats were in charge.

Q: Was it Willi Brandt?

BODDE: No, no. Before I left Berlin Brandt was forced to resign because his closest aide turned out to be an East German spy. Helmut Schmidt became the chancellor. I became a good friend with Schmidt's special assistant, Dieter Leister, which gave me exceptional access. I would travel around with Schmidt in the election campaigns. Schmidt was a right-wing Social Democrat, very smart, and pro-American. He was also arrogant and moody. In short he was a skilled, but flawed politician. He often would speak harsh truths to his party, and over the long run no politician can afford to do that. So after a while he was pushed aside.

I had some "firsts" when I was in Bonn. I wrote the first report on the Green political movement that later became a political force and now is the coalition partner of the ruling Social Democrats in Bonn. It was basically an anti-nuclear movement when I first wrote about it. While I did not write the first report on Helmut Kohl, my cables and airgrams were among the first to take him seriously as future chancellor material. The conventional wisdom at the time was that he was too provincial. Even worse, according to his critic Kohl lacked the political skills to outmaneuver the Social Democrats and his rivals in his own party. I argued that one of his most powerful advantages was that his opponents underestimated him and that he was a lot more skilled at party infighting than he was given credit for. Slowly, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) was making gains under his leadership. When I started reporting on him, Kohl was the then minister-president in the Rhineland Palatinate and then he became the CDU party faction leader in the federal parliament. The question I was interested in was if the CDU came into power under Kohl's leadership, what would it mean for U.S. policies and interests.

When he became chancellor, German public opinion, especially among youth, had become much more critical of the U.S. This was the fallout from Vietnam, and the 1960s student revolution in Europe. The generation of Germans who remembered CARE packages and the Berlin Airlift were leaving the scene. The number of German students studying in the United States was way down. The general knowledge of the United States was not what it had been. Kohl recognized what we call "the successor generation problem" and set about remedying it when he became federal chancellor. He instituted a large, active student exchange program, he promoted greater German non-governmental presence in Washington with think tanks like the German Marshall Fund and the German Historical Association. Although he did not speak English, he sent both his sons to Harvard.

Q: Our military was probably at its worst disciplinary situation, too, wasn't it?

BODDE: That was changing by the time I got to Berlin in 1973. The Army was over the worst of the post-Vietnam trauma by then. The all volunteer army changed things considerably. Discipline and morale were restored. The problem we had in Germany came from maintaining

an overwhelming U.S. military presence 30 years after the end of the war. The German public was much less patient with the frictions caused by large numbers of foreign troops in a relatively small country. The political sensitivity and sophistication of the U.S. generals made a great difference in coming to grips with these problems. Colin Powell was V Corps commander when I was consul general in Frankfurt. He understood the problem and we worked closely together to find solutions. General John Galvin, who was VII Corps Commander in Stuttgart at the time, was also very politically astute which was an invaluable quality when he later became the NATO commander. Some of the other generals were less sensitive and acted as if it were unnecessary to accommodate German views. They were like bulls in a china shop: "I'm going to put my troops or helicopters where I want to and those damn Germans will just have to live with it." Of course, the quality of the U.S. Ambassador was a crucial factor in the bilateral relationship.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

BODDE: Well, I served in Germany with a few ambassadors. When I served in Berlin and for the first two years in Bonn, Martin Hillenbrand was ambassador. Walter Stoessel was ambassador for my last year in Bonn. Later in the 1980s when I was consul general in Frankfurt, Arthur Burns and Richard Burt were the ambassadors. Hillenbrand was an old German hand and one of the most knowledgeable people in the State Department about Germany. Kissinger resented Hillenbrand's deep knowledge of Germany and often undercut him. Sometimes I would learn from the chancellor's aide that Kissinger was coming to Bonn before Kissinger had informed the ambassador. It was awkward to go tell Ambassador Hillenbrand that the Secretary of State was coming to Bonn. Walter Stoessel replaced Hillenbrand. He had been ambassador in Poland and the Soviet Union and later became the Deputy Secretary of State under Al Haig.

Hillenbrand was a pleasure to work for because he knew so much and if you talked to him about some German political development he knew exactly what you were talking about. He was a stickler for details and a sharp proofreader, and if you made a mistake he would spot it immediately. I was there about two weeks, and sent a cable out with a minor politician's name misspelled. Shortly after the cable went out a copy came back to my boss, Frank Meehan, with the error circled in red and a note in Hillenbrand's tiny script, "I think this is wrong." Frank sent it back with a note, "Marty, we do this every once in a while to see if you're on your toes." How many bosses would give you that kind of break? Frank also knew a great deal about Germany and was a very close friend of Hillenbrand.

It was a very congenial embassy to work in. David Anderson was a joy to work with and he was clearly a rising star. They made working at the embassy fun. Frank and David were only there for my first year, and then Dick Smyser replaced Frank. Have you interviewed him?

Q: Yes, I have.

BODDE: A very different type than Frank Meehan but he is smart, and a decent guy. And I must admit that he treated me well.

Q: When Brandt went out and Schmidt came in, was there in a way a certain sigh of relief, because I just think of Brandt having this Ostpolitik, and there was always a concern he might

give away the store. And the main problem we were concerned with - correct me if I'm wrong - was Germany turning neutral.

BODDE: Yes.

Q: And this Ostpolitik smacked of this, and then with Schmidt coming in with a harder nose, how did we feel about this?

BODDE: Oh, I think there was a sigh of relief in Washington. I don't believe Brandt was covertly seeking German neutrality, but his agenda was different than ours. Reportedly Brandt was so disenchanted with the lack of action on the part of the U.S. when the East Germans erected the Wall that he decided it was up to the Germans themselves to find a solution to the division of their country. As I said earlier, *Ostpolitik* did not play a major role in bringing about reunification. However, in one important respect *Ostpolitik* was a success. Brandt and *Ostpolitik* were instrumental in making Germany respectable in the international community again, especially among liberals. Someone once said that anti-Germanism is the liberal's anti-Semitism. Brandt had valid democratic credentials. He had opposed the Nazis and fled to Norway and Sweden. In fact, when he came back to Germany in 1945 he was wearing a Norwegian officer's uniform, something some Germans have never forgiven.

Q: He was in Norway, wasn't he, or someplace?

BODDE: Yes, he spent the war in Norway and Sweden. My Social Democrat friends would constantly tell me what a wonderful person he was and he certainly was much more popular in the party than Schmidt. I personally found him as cold as fish. I once went with George McGovern to call on Brandt at party headquarters in Bonn. It was after McGovern had lost his race for president and Brandt had resigned but was still SPD leader. Both of them, being somewhat flaky, hit it off well. The week after that, I was control officer for George Wallace but he didn't ask to see Willi Brandt. Helmut Schmidt was pro-American but he had no problem lecturing the U.S. President when he thought we were wrong or that he knew better. He liked Ford. He never connected with Carter.

Q: In fact, it was quite the opposite, particularly after Carter pulled the rug out from under him.

BODDE: Carter's flip flop on deployment of the neutron bomb really strained U.S.-German relations. Schmidt had gone out on a limb politically, defending the bomb and Carter decided to kill the idea without informing Schmidt in advance. Schmidt was understandably furious. Sometime later, the chancellor's aide, Dieter Leister came to Washington and tried to see Jody Powell and the White House just brushed him off. It was typical of the way the Carter White House dealt with Germany. I have great respect for Schmidt. He was never loved in the party because he was to the right of the SPD mainstream, which was basically left wing. He was also arrogant and moody but was brilliant and basically correct on most issues. I traveled with him on his campaign train a few times and the word was don't talk to him in the morning or he would bite your head off. One time, I won an election bet from him. I was sitting in the press car with some American and British correspondents. Schmidt came into the press car and joined us. He used to drive his press officer crazy because he would much rather talk to the foreign

correspondents than talk to the local German reporters. His press advisor would remind him that he was running for office in Germany not the U.S. We started talking about the U.S. elections and I offered to bet anyone at the table one *deutschmark* that Carter was going to win. Chancellor Schmidt said, "I'll take that bet." The Washington Post reporter held the bet. After Carter won, I wrote the chancellor thanking him for the *deutschmark* telling him that I had won a lot of money betting on his victory as well. I received a lighthearted letter in return. He was a very impressive guy.

Q: Were we concerned about rightist movements in Germany? I mean, this was always a concern, will the Nazis come again later?

BODDE: It was always a concern but it was wrong. I used to say then, and I would say it now, although it's gotten worse because of skinheads in East Germany, that there are more Nazis in Wisconsin than there are in Germany. But you did have to worry about the false perceptions in the U.S. of the new Germany. The Germans get a bad press in America. Many Americans are always looking for signs of resurgent Nazism. My American and British correspondent friends told me that whenever they wanted to be sure to get their stories in the paper they would work in a Nazi angle.

Q: Yes, why don't we cut it here? Is there anything I should put at the end, or shall we pick it up when you come back.

BODDE: I think there's probably some more stuff on Germany. Why don't I think about it, and if there isn't, we can move on.

GUNTHER K. ROSINUS
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Berlin (1973-1977)

Gunther K. Rosinus was born in Germany in 1928 and emigrated to the Cincinnati, Ohio in 1938. He received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Harvard University. In 1951, Mr. Rosinus joined the State Department, serving in the Information Research Bureau and as a Southeast Asian Affairs analyst. When USIS began in 1953, he transferred. He served in Germany, and Japan, and with the Inspection Corps. Mr. Rosinus was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1989.

ROSINUS: From the Philippines, we went, of course, to fascinating experiences in West Berlin where I became PAO and Director of USIS in the U.S. Mission there -- just shortly after what might be considered the formal end of the Cold War, namely the signing of the Berlin Agreement.

I say formal end of the Cold War in the sense that the Cold War really was about Germany and Berlin in the immediate post-war years. I think the talk about Cold War today is largely self-

serving for our military-industrial-political complex, which all too often needs a threat of some kind to sustain its mutually profitable existence.

What we are engaged in today, I think, is normal state rivalry with the Soviet Union. So, in a historic sense, I think, perhaps, the Cold War began to end with that agreement if you define it as the competition in Central Europe and Germany particularly.

We arrived there just after that agreement had been signed. We arrived in late '73 and stayed till '77. The agreement had been concluded in '72; so what we found was a West Berlin which was a bit uneasy because they felt that now that the agreement had been signed, perhaps that protective American presence and that great American interest in Berlin as the very epitome of the confrontation between the closed and open societies, which it remains, of course, today, that somehow this American interest would wane; and that gave the Berliners fears and that gave us our public affairs cue that the important thing was to preserve in the Berliners' mind and to assure the Berliners that American interest had not waned, that American presence would not be draw down significantly and that our interest in the city and its preservation as a bastion of freedom and openness certainly remained.

So, we did spend our time for those four years in our naturally very extensive contacts throughout the city, from Governing Mayor on down and particularly in the press field, but also through a very active Cultural Center and seminars with students and teachers, particularly teachers again, kept this American commitment and presence as active as we could. So it was again a very strong policy and politically oriented kind of program that assured them in a great variety of ways that American policy and political interest remained high in Berlin's future and safety.

In addition, the Berlin PAO also had responsibility for supervising RIAS, the Radio in the American Sector. That, of course, as I mentioned before, was an integral part of the American presence, and, therefore, important to the West Berliners who listened to it a lot.

It was a damn good radio station, but we also, of course, broadcast to East Berlin and the GDR and so, in a sense, we had to reach from West Berlin, the open society, also into the closed society of East Germany, an activity that was also a part of our portfolio at that time.

The embodiment of our presence, strangely enough, which also had a political importance, although it would not seem to have on the face of it -- again, an illustration of the peculiar nature of public affairs activities in this singular city -- was Green Week: an agriculture fair, a wonderful fair, where forty or fifty countries from around the world participated and exhibited their edible products and some half a million people ate their way through this fair for about ten days -- a wonderful international smorgasbord, but the important thing was to have a U.S. presence.

It did not matter whether we were pushing hamburgers or bourbon or corn on the cob or whatever, what the commercial side of it was -- the important thing for the Berliners was that Americans were still there, along with all of the Europeans, some of the Latins, and some of the Middle Eastern countries. So, even a fair had a political context in Berlin.

RIAS by this time had only two American officers running it. The financing was 96% German with considerable amount of a policy control. Washington, perhaps, did not fully understand this degree of movement off to a more Germanized approach to programming than we had had before. When I say I supervised RIAS, I meant, of course, the American officers in RIAS, who in turn were there as policy advisors, really. We did have the ultimate control of RIAS; that is, we owned the transmitters. In the peculiar theology of Berlin, the U.S. military and the U.S. Mission exercised ultimate governance over the city, even though we had, of course, given it in fact to the Berlin Senat and the Governing Mayor. But still, we retained the right to any final decisions if we had to impose them on the Berliners should that have been necessary.

By the same token, with RIAS, we could have, for example, turned the transmitters off. Now, obviously, the political cost would have been great, and all that sort of stuff, and nobody even thought of doing such a thing. There was some tendency for RIAS staff to reflect in the '70s the same kind of attitudes of moving more leftward, you might say, political attitudes that had been reflected from the United States in the '60s and there was some concern among some of our people that RIAS might become almost counterproductive to its purposes.

It never was counterproductive to its purposes. It was Germanized. It did have some personnel problems at times with some radicalized journalists, but it was nothing that I felt was ever -- that ever escaped really the control of either the German manager, who was basically reasonable if not shoutingly pro-American, and who the hell needs that, and of our own RIAS director and his deputy.

I had the feeling that our two people had adequate policy input and adequate power of review of programs and adequate power of persuasion within the management of RIAS to keep the station basically quite sound. Besides which, I think there was too much alarm on the U.S. side. If we are to project the open society, then we obviously project the conflicts and critiques within that society on any given policy situation.

I had absolutely no qualms about doing that as long as we also had the provision of American policy positions through VOA feeds, which we did have and which were broadcast. Absolutely no problem with that; quite the contrary. I liked it and I liked it even more when I was in East Berlin, looking at this thing from the other side as Counselor for Public Affairs, because the very exercise of self-criticism, the very exercise of varied opinions, the very exercise of not following a propaganda or governmental line made a helluva lot bigger impression on behalf of this American-owned station, in the eyes of the East, on the other side, than any content we could have given them in the radio broadcasts, because they did not give that much of a damn about content.

They knew about content. What they liked was this exercise by a free people of their free rights. That is what really made the impression and there again, I think, some of the U.S. crowd misjudged the impact of just that kind of thing. As a matter of fact, I remember telling Charlie Wick, when he came through, as we sat down and talked East Berlin and East Germany with him, that if RIAS didn't exist, we would have to invent it; that we would want to invent it in its then form, as a very excellent example of the open society at work.

Wick was a weather-vane, not an ideologue. There was an interesting example that I can cite on that, to go back to that visit that he made with us in East Berlin. He came to East Berlin, I guess, it must have been about -- I went there in '81. I think he must have come maybe in '82, let's say, and it was his first exposure to a communist country.

The Ambassador and I got together at luncheon at the Residence for him with some of our key contacts in the East German government's policy advisory councils, councils that advise both the Politburo and the Foreign Ministry, and we had a hell of a good discussion all afternoon about The Wall and why it was up and what they thought and what we thought, and it was a lot of give and take on this thing. This was Charlie Wick's first exposure, as I say, to real communists, and, of course, the Germans are perhaps the most sophisticated of the lot.

He had never sat with any apparently; so he left that afternoon and went back West and Len Baldyga, who was Area Director at that time, subsequently told me that in talking about this experience, Mr. Wick had expressed some amazement to him.

"You know," he said, "talking this afternoon with these fellows; they really believe what they are saying." Well, that was a lesson well learned, wasn't it? You know, this tendency to dismiss communists, to feel that they must know that they talk nonsense -- this faded that afternoon and gave him a much more solid picture of the kind of thing that we were confronting in the ideological conflicts of the time.

ARTHUR H. HUGHES
Political Officer
Bonn (1973-1977)

Ambassador Hughes was born and raised in Nebraska. He attended the University of Nebraska and entered the Foreign Service in 1965. He held posts in Germany, Venezuela, Denmark, The Netherlands, and Israel. He also held an ambassadorship in Yemen. He was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 1998.

Q: And from Washington where did you go?

HUGHES: Went to Bonn, the Political Section.

Q: Back to Germany.

HUGHES: Back to Germany.

Q: And the Political Section in Bonn in those days was pretty good sized.

HUGHES: 13 officers.

Q: What was your responsibility?

HUGHES: I was working on Berlin. I replaced John Crumdum, who is now our Ambassador in Germany, a great person, great friend. There was an organization in those days called the Bonn Group which was made up of the Americans, the French and the British as the occupying powers, and then which also included the Germans when we needed to coordinate operations or coordinate policy with them regarding the occupation of Berlin, the maintenance of quadripartite reserved rights as a result of the victory in World War II. It was very important to maintain the quadripartite status with them, that is the occupation of the three Western powers and the Soviet Union, because that guaranteed the access and denied the East Germans from exercising sovereignty over Berlin. The Soviets also saw it in their interest to maintain their authority over Berlin and to restrain the East Germans, usually but not always. It was really a tremendous job, a wonderful job. Great bosses, starting with the Ambassador, Martin Mellenbran, who was really one of the greats of the Service. Frank Meeting, the Political Counselor, also one of the greats, later served as Ambassador including Czechoslovakia. And David Anderson, who was the Deputy Political Officer, just passed away last year unfortunately. I worked mainly directly with David.

Q: Were you the U.S. representative on the Bonn Group, or did you support the U.S. representative?

HUGHES: David was usually the U.S. representative, and then we did a phase-out of him as I got into the thing and the work adjusted. There were other things going on that demanded his time. And then he left the last year. The plan was for his replacement to do other things and for me to be the representative to the Bonn Group. That didn't quite work out because the new man was fascinated by the work, and regardless of the wishes of our respective bosses, he didn't want to let go, so I left after one year to go back to Washington, to replace you actually.

Q: Yes, well, we'll come to that again. So Berlin was your main bag in Bonn?

HUGHES: That was it, ranging from Berlin access, contingency planning, again working with the military, to responding to complaints from the Russians, drafting responses to the Russians, drafting our own complaints about Russian activities, working the Germans in implementation of the state treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union which had been signed just prior to my arriving in Germany. So it was an absolutely fascinating time. We had such issues as Hontage Adventure, who was then the Interior Minister, who for political purposes went to Berlin and on the steps of the Shernabager Othaus announced that the Umwelt Undus Ospit, the federal environment office, was going to be moved to Berlin, which from his perspective was permissible under the treaty between Germany, West Germany, and the Soviet Union. This caused a major confrontation, a major issue, a major political issue. Brogenoff never was working for him, but hundreds and hundreds of hours trying to coordinate policy on our side and trying to deal with the Russians, because, of course, from our point of view- (end of tape)

Q: Huns Degenture was a jury minister and tried to establish the Environmental Affairs Office in Berlin to move the domain of his ministry into Berlin. Why don't we back up just for a minute and talk generally about the situation in Berlin. Was it a period of crisis other than these incidents or

issues that did come up, and what was your relationship with the United States mission in West Berlin and perhaps with the Embassy in East Berlin, which I think had been established by then?

HUGHES: Yes, well, it was established actually while I was in Bonn. It was not a period of crisis. There had been a crisis in the early '60s in which President Kennedy deployed additional forces to Germany. In fact, the unit that I went to Germany in in the Army initially was what was called a Berlin round-out unit. When they went home, I worked in another unit while I was still in the Army there, but the crisis was past, largely because of the efforts of Willie Brandt and the state treaty between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany, which did allow West Germany to develop ties with Berlin. That was the area of contention, that West Germany took risks and wanted to establish all kinds of ties, logically enough, reasonably enough from their point of view. The Soviets, of course, didn't want that, and the East Germans certainly didn't want that. But it was the probing and pressing mainly of the West Germans regarding the development of these ties that became the focus of our efforts and the focus of our work for the reasons I just mentioned. There were various federal activities that did develop and did take place in West Berlin. Also, the Bundestof, the federal parliament, got involved by holding meetings there, and there was a certain level of meetings that were allowed. I remember one time what is called the Ebsinrot, the council of elders of the parliament which is a steering group, steering body, scheduled a meeting in Berlin. Of course, it was announced, it became public, and then the question of Soviets complaining, and then the three Western powers. What were we going to do? Were we going to tell the Federal Republic that they should do it or should not do it? Would we prohibit it, and all the political fall-out that that would cause within the alliance and our relations with the West Germans? I can remember I went to work with Ambassador Hillenbrand down to meet with one of Chancellor Willie Brandt's senior advisors, Elgin Barr, and I remember the Ambassador asking him if they would take the initiative to just keep postponing that planned meeting and announced meeting so that it in fact would never happen. He gave a one-word reply, "Teinesex."

Q: No way.

HUGHES: No way. But in fact the meeting did not happen, because the Germans also had their own interests and not provoking things excessively with the Soviets. There were pressures back and forth. The West Germans understood that that and other cases like forcing the environmental office would have been more than the traffic would have borne, and so they just managed the issue. And then, of course, the Gunther Guillaume affair intervened, the spy for the East, one of Brandt's closest advisors on his staff. It was the proximate cause of Willie Brandt's leaving, but I can remember within the embassy and with German politicians and observers for several months prior to that, it was clear that Willie Brandt was not having fun, that he was a better politician and campaigner, and that he felt constrained by the chancery. Of course, the treaty had been completed, and then it was the day-to-day work in the trenches of implementing, maneuvering and so forth, which was not, I think, to his taste at all.

Q: In keeping the coalition together.

HUGHES: Yes and, of course, the Germans have a wonderful word to describe that, Ansmidikite, the fatigue of office, which described it. I think it's a wonderful word. So there was

some speculation we talked about. It was clear he was not having fun, he was not enjoying it. After the treaty, of course, what do you do for an encore? But it is clear that the Yom affair was the proximate cause of Brandt's departure. For a long time then that meant that a lot of things - or for awhile - were a bit frozen, and there were no new initiatives in that arena.

Q: Either initiatives that you would take or could take or that you needed to react to and handle that would be taken by the government of the Federal Republic?

HUGHES: Right. And, of course, the federal government was trying to expand its own linkages and ties to the GDR [German Democratic Republic] and to the Soviets and occasionally would do things that were inconsistent with our responsibilities or our desire to maintain a certain political control for bigger reasons. For example, I remember the two Germanies reached an agreement regarding freight and train traffic, which, of course, in connection with the quadripartite reserved rights, QRR, was in the domain of the Allies, and they we had to reach this agreement without telling us. What were we going to do? Were we going to assert our authority in some way? Were we going to say, "Okay, fine, it's no big deal," in so many words? I think in the end we basically accepted it but insisted on certain little modifications in order to demonstrate our right of review.

Q: So those consultations, discussions, would take place among the three Western occupying powers, Allies? And then, of course, we'd have to bring the Soviets in too, because they really are a fourth power.

HUGHES: Well, there were four powers in two ways. In the West there were the meetings of the Three, and then there were the meetings including the West Germans. But the normal process was issues the Three would discuss, the Three would report, the Three would get instructions, and then you'd bring the Germans in. But there were a lot of informal discussions too. We had really good people there, and I think on all sides there was a clear tendency to assign very good people to this because of the importance of it. And there were a lot of informal discussions and conversations and so forth. But then there was the Group of Four in Berlin, the three Western powers and the Soviets as the occupying powers, and there were periodic meetings there with the ministers in Berlin dealing with the issues. Now, we in Bonn never participated in those meetings in Berlin. Those meetings were handled by our mission, although our mission in Berlin took guidance both from Washington and from us. But it was a very collegial kind of thing between ourselves and Berlin. There were some things we didn't see eye to eye on, and sometimes discussions would get animated, but we were all colleagues. We knew what the overall objectives were. There was no difference in what we were trying to do, what we were trying to maintain, but just a little bit different perspectives on how to deal in specific cases.

Q: Would you visit Berlin periodically?

HUGHES: I'd go to Berlin quite frequently, sometimes for several days, sometimes on one-day turn-around. I'd go to the Cologne Airport, fly for the morning, do business, and then fly back in the evening - horrible way to do things.

Q: To come back to the Bonn Group...

HUGHES: The Bonn Group. The Germans called it the Vier Group, the Group of Four.

Q: The Soviet Embassy would be representing the Soviet Union presumably, and that would be one of the main things they would be doing.

HUGHES: We never dealt with the Russians in Bonn. There were certain discussions from time to time with the Soviets in Bonn on other matters, but we never dealt with the Soviet Embassy in Bonn regarding Berlin. That was the purview of our respective representatives in Berlin.

Q: Okay, so the main thing you would do in Bonn would be among the Three and with the West Germans?

HUGHES: Yes.

Q: To what extent did the American Embassy in East Berlin get involved in anything to do with Berlin or with you generally in your area of responsibility in Bonn?

HUGHES: John Sherman Cooper was our first ambassador in East Berlin. Before we had the embassy, one of my duties was to watch the GDR, so I actually traveled to the GDR before that and went to the Leipzig fall fair, which is a historic, traditional affair. It was kind of interesting because we intentionally made reservations late so that we would be compelled to stay in a private home because there were not enough hotel rooms in the city. I took Pat. There were four of us, myself and Pat from Bonn and then two officers from Berlin. We drove to Leipzig in a black Dodge with Yoosburg license plates with a two-way radio and antenna. As far as we could tell, nobody paid us any attention in Leipzig - I assume because they were completely overburdened by watching other targets from the Eastern security services point of view. We ended up staying in a private apartment.

Q: Your reason for making late reservations wasn't because they wouldn't notice you or wouldn't be aware that you were there, because you were very obvious about it by the car you used, etc.

HUGHES: We thought it would be interesting, because we knew from previous experience, or others knew from previous experience, and because of the shortage of hotel rooms and just the crush of events, that the great likelihood would be that you'd be farmed out to a private apartment. And so we were. We stayed with a family, which was fascinating, absolutely fascinating. We never did go to the fair; that was the least of our interests. One of the days we were there, we were talking at breakfast with the people that were in the apartment. They were both retired, and we were talking about going down to Dresden, and the woman of the house, with the strong personality of the two, said, "Oh, Dresden, you don't want to get lost. Why doesn't my husband go with you to show you the way." So we said, "Fine." He was totally nonpolitical as far as we could figure out, but we thought it would be interesting to have somebody in the car. We could talk with him and just ask him his perspective on things, you know.

Q: And also as well as being a bit of a guide on what you were seeing as you went along.

HUGHES: It turned out we got in the car, drove away and so forth, and we said, "Now which is the road?" He said, "I don't know. I have not been there in 30 years." But we drove along and we came to a little bridge and we crossed the river, and he said, "We'll never forgive you for this." And I was sitting in the back and I couldn't hear and said, "Pardon me?" He said, "We'll never forgive you for this." We said, "What?" He said, "That was the Muldef River. That's where you stopped."

Q: You should have kept coming, huh?

HUGHES: "If you had kept coming, Leipzig would have been in your side." And then, of course, we went to Dresden and the famous museum there. The first display you see as you go through the door is the fire bombing of Dresden. That was really an extremely interesting trip overall, because we learned people were living on three levels. They were living on the public level in which they didn't say much of anything to anybody; and then they were living on the level of their colleagues at work or people who lived in their building, which was a little bit more open level; and then they were living on the level within their own families or their closest personal friends about whom they mostly no doubt about loyalty.

Q: By staying with a family, you at least were aware of that third level. You perhaps weren't intimately brought in, but at least you could sense it.

HUGHES: You could see what they had to eat, what they were buying, because we ate breakfast there, just what their lifestyle was.

Q: Did you pay them directly for the room and the accommodations and the food, or did you have to go through whatever office that placed you.

HUGHES: In the East you always have to go through something, some bureaucracy, but we also paid them.

Q: When the embassy was opened and established after John Sherman Cooper to the German Democratic Republic, presumably that kind of a trip was less feasible. It would have been done from East Berlin.

HUGHES: That's right, although for something like the Leipzig fair, if there were true commercial interests, one could go, but that's right. I remember when he came, he also went to East Berlin to present his credentials and so forth. He also came to Bonn, and we had some consultations in Bonn with him. I remember taking him down to the Foreign Office and meeting with senior people down there to talk about the GDR and so forth. But our mission in East Berlin had absolutely nothing to do with QRR or the occupation of Berlin. It was a very clear firewall that was built there. I went occasionally to the embassy in East Berlin for consultations and to talk about things so they would have a perspective and understanding of what was going on.

Q: Was there an issue at the time you were there about whether the embassy should be located in East Berlin? I guess once we had in effect accepted that that was the capital of the German

Democratic Republic, then the embassy pretty much had to be there.

HUGHES: Well, legally we never accepted that it was the capital of the German Democratic Republic, as they proclaim on every signpost, stamp cancellation on their letters and everything. We never accepted it legally, but as a practical matter, particularly after the state treaty between West Germany and the Soviet Union, certain things were going to happen. This was, as one could see, part of the overall deal, implicit if not explicit. We made all kinds of disclaimers, but as a practical matter we decided that we needed an embassy there, and the West Germans were certainly happy to have us there. But it was a depressing site.

Q: About the time that you arrived on Bonn in 1973, what was the year of the state treaty between the Federal Republic and the Soviet Union?

HUGHES: Either '71 or '72.

Q: It was a year or two before you got there. So all this was pretty well entrained and you really weren't involved in issues related to that except the implementation, I suppose.

HUGHES: Well, the implementation because the treaty had been signed, but there was enormous pressure, political pressure. Willie Brandt was trying to, with our approval, achieve a treaty. So there were areas that were left intentionally vague. There were areas that could not be resolved and they were big. I remember the first time I read it, I read it through and I said, "Well, here are the spots that are going to be hard," because they were so apparent. You said, "Only the difficulties of implementation." I would take out the "only."

Q: What else should we talk about in terms of this period, this assignment in Bonn? Did that pretty well cover it?

HUGHES: Yes, I think. It was really a wonderful time. We thoroughly enjoyed Bonn. We were privileged to have a little house up above the river across from Draffenfelt Dragenflack, only about a seven-minute commute to work. I could get on my bicycle and be in open countryside in five minutes. Good schools. The only downside was the mothers driving the kids to school in Buddersdorf.

Q: You had to watch out for them?

HUGHES: No, the wives just disliked it intensely.

Q: Oh, that they had to do it?

HUGHES: In the main commute artery up the river, to go up to Buddersdorf, they would take them to school. But it was a wonderful time and the ambassador was just a great man really. We all had just tremendous respect and affection for him, and, as I said, Frank, me, and David.

Q: Your work was very much the negotiation, diplomatic. You were dealing with all of these various parties. The reporting by contact and reporting in kind of a traditional way was

probably - you probably didn't do much of that.

HUGHES: Well, it was a 13-officer political section.

Q: There were others doing that.

HUGHES: So there were two people doing internal, there were people doing multilateral, people doing all different kinds of things. But to give you an idea of the rhythm, there would probably be tripartite meetings a couple times a week at least, and the agenda would be anywhere from one very tough issue to 12 or 15 issues. So meetings would oftentimes go on for four or five, maybe even six hours on occasion, but usually they would go from three to four hours, working their way through the agenda items. Of course, you're dealing with very tricky issues, issues in which there are a little bit different perspectives. There could be some very lengthy discussions and debates. What we strove for was ad referendum agreement, ad referendum agreement with capitals. So we'd go through those things, then I'd go back, or we would, go back to the embassy, see if there were any traffic or phone calls from Washington, but we would get on the phone. Those were the days when the KY3 [secure telephone] wasn't worth a dime, so it was hard sometimes to have telephone conversations. Then I'd go home and I would write anywhere from one to five or six telegrams.

Q: At home?

HUGHES: At home, after dinner, sitting at a little round table in a room that looked out over the valley and over the Rhine - sometimes, I confess, with a glass of wine in my hand.

Q: Writing in longhand?

HUGHES: Writing in longhand on a yellow pad, and then the next morning going - and I was really glad to have two wonderful secretaries at the time I was there. Eve Foster had been an executive secretary; her husband was an attache. She had been an executive secretary, just a wonderful person, just magnificently competent. And I'd hand her the full sheaf of paper, and within an hour or two she'd have everything. And those were the days when the optical character machines [typewriters] were just coming into being with all of the problems - you remember that very well. But she was fantastic. And then when she left, the subsequent woman was also really very, very good. And then we'd begin the cycle again, with answers to previous cables from Washington. If there were problems, you had to get on the phone or go see somebody bilaterally and say, "Washington's got this problem. I think we can work it out between us before we have the next meeting." And then we would have a meeting including the West Germans and go through these same issues. The West Germans would make proposals: "We want to do this, we want to do that." We would give responses. Sometimes we would give pretty definitive responses. If they wanted to do something very badly, we would agree to ask for instruction or we would work, and our objective there was to try to find, again, a position that everybody could live with. Sometimes on some issues everybody agreed instantly; it was so clear, a matter of principle and so forth. On other things we never did reach full agreement, which meant, of course, that nothing happened unless the Germans wanted to force the issue and take it to the highest political level, which they did on occasion, very rarely.

Q: Were you getting a lot of detailed guidance from Washington, or were they letting you do much of this work on the spot in Bonn?

HUGHES: Both. We were never very far apart, because the principles were very clear. While we were working our way in the implementation of the agreement, of the treaty, the principles were cleared, so largely the work was managing issues on the ground. So there was not a lot of guidance from Washington in that area, because they understood and they did have suggestions on occasion, but there was not a lot of input. They'd tell us how to manage the situation on the ground, but we were in a much better position to make those judgments ourselves. But the people who were in Washington were people who had come out of Bonn.

Q: Who were very familiar with the issues.

HUGHES: Nelson Ledsky, for example, and John Kornbloom were very familiar with the issues. Occasionally there would be a real difference of view, and if we couldn't resolve it at, say, my level, Dave Assen and occasionally Frank or we'd get the ambassador to become involved with writing a cable, and the ambassador would get on the telephone back to the Assistant Secretary or the Deputy Assistant Secretary. But because of Ambassador Hillenbrand's stature and his knowledge - he was Mr. Berlin, he ran the Berlin Task Force. He was not second-guessed by Washington, but he did suffer because after Kissinger became Secretary and Kissinger had his own channels to the West German government, occasionally he would send somebody out without even telling him about it. That was a real burden for Hillenbrand; it was sometimes a burden for us in policy in an implementation way. I mean, how can you know what you're supposed to be implementing and what you're trying to work for when you don't know what the hell Washington wants to do? And there was no reason in the world why Hillenbrand could not have been used. Hillenbrand was certainly not loose-lipped nor did he have his own political agenda. But I think it was a certain sign of the times and sign of the personalities, which was not constructive.

Q: How would you summarize what were our basic principles or objectives during this period as they related to Berlin - to not upset the status that had been achieved in the post-war settlements and so on?

HUGHES: Essentially it was to maintain the QRR, or quadripartite reserved rights and responsibilities over all of Germany until there was a settlement. Because of the leverage that existed or potentially existed by the Soviets regarding East Germany and leverage consequently over West Germany because of Berlin, political currents in West Germany and also their leverage over Germany and Berlin as it also played out on the other Eastern European states, it was a very important subject, very important issue.

Q: Let me come back again a little bit more to the Allied consultations, the tripartite meetings that you said sometimes took place a couple or more times a week. Would the chairmanship of those rotate, or how did that work?

HUGHES: That's right. The chairmanship rotated.

Q: On a monthly basis or something, six months?

HUGHES: Let's see, I'm trying to think. The chair rotated in Berlin quadripartitely with the Russians. I think we tended to rotate in the same sequence. It's a little hazy in my mind now, but it definitely rotated. I think we guided on that. And in the Group of Four, the Germans also participated as chair.

Q: The West Germans?

HUGHES: Yes, the West Germans also rotated through the part of the chair.

Q: And the French and British were represented by your counterparts and officers in the embassy. Generally was it fairly easy to reach agreement among the three, or was that difficult often because of the French, as it is on some other issues over time?

HUGHES: Actually it wasn't. There were a few exceptions, but actually it wasn't because all three, again, saw a basic principle. On occasion our European friends sometimes wanted to accede more willingly to certain ideas or initiatives of the Germans. On occasion we did. But this was a time, of course, when the EC was building and expanding. I can remember telling my French colleague there about the EC parliament, and, of course, the French were very skeptical. I can remember a colleague saying, "You know, the idea of having a parliament with no power is nonsense. If you use parliamentarians, they're going to want power, they're going to want authority, and you watch and see what happens."

As I said, there was a clear tendency by all capitals to send very good people there, and our British and our French colleagues were. Well, Jean Claude Payee was the French member of the Bonn Group for part of the time I was there. He later became the Secretary General of the OECD. His younger colleague was more my counterpart, Pierre deGrassier. His family was connected with President deGaulle, General deGaulle's family, brilliant guy, and I found both of those gentlemen personally very helpful. One of the rules was you could use your own language. German for me was no problem. You could speak your own language. I didn't try to negotiate much in German, but they could speak German and I'd speak English. But I didn't speak French. Both of those French colleagues were personally very thoughtful and kind to me, including when they had volunteered to do a draft. We'd have a discussion and say, "Okay, you do the draft to try to memorialize what we've agreed in principle here or agreed ad referendum, and then send it around and we'll all take a look at it." For example, when the French would do a draft, they would give it to me in English. And some of my colleagues were absolutely astounded at the courtesy that they showed.

Again, those were really fascinating years, and I learned a tremendous amount, sitting in a room with representatives of four countries trying to reach agreement, and the negotiations, and what one can learn about body language, about personal style. I won't mention the country, but one of the representatives from another country gave himself away usually when he was going to concede a point. We'd have a tough issue and they'd been holding out, and I could always tell if he was going to concede by the way he introduced the subject and by the way he reviewed the

subject before conceding. At the same time you learned in whom you could place more trust. Occasionally when we'd have an agenda of ten, 12 or 14 items, it was simply impossible to get fully up to date on every one of those issues in a day or two, particularly if it was a relatively new issue. But I knew who among the whole group I could trust to relate the facts correctly.

Q: Who really did the homework.

HUGHES: I knew, if Mr. X had done the homework and made a presentation, that these are the facts, that he could be trusted, that it was absolutely reliable, that those were the facts. He might draw a different conclusion, but that's another question. I knew that he was going to give a straight story. And I knew who would be a little lazy, and maybe not even intentionally unreliable, but somebody who would be a little lazy and imply that they knew things or imply that such and such was the case when it wasn't. I remember I could always tell when Ambassador Hillenbrand was getting a little bit fed up with proposals or what people were saying to him, because he would start to rub his hands. I remember going in with one of my colleagues. My colleague was making a pitch that I told him I just didn't agree with but we'd do this, and Ambassador Hillenbrand started to rub his hands like this, and I knew what his views were. So I said to my colleague, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, I think we've taken enough of your time. I think we should leave." He agreed, and I pulled my colleague, and I said, "He was just about to let you have it. I don't know if you realized that." But those were the things, things like that.

Q: Now the U.S., of course, as you have said several times, had forces in Germany at the time and still does, as did France and United Kingdom and in Berlin, West Berlin, as well. To what extent were all of you involved with the military, or were a lot of the issues of no interest to them?

HUGHES: Well, quite extensively, because there were the contingency plans under the moniker [name] Live Oak. So there was planning going on, and there was also an annual Live Oak exercise which took representatives down to Belgium, where we would carry on the exercise and usually meet with SHAPE [Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe], who during part of my time there was...

Q: General Haig.

HUGHES: General Haig, and very impressive there, very impressive. His appointment took some of our allies by surprise and caused a lot of dismay, of course, if you want to know the history of his appointment. But I don't know how military historians will rate it, but I found him from our perspective, the Live Oak and Germany and so forth, really was quite impressive. So in a nutshell we did have ongoing relations and quite intensive contacts with our military counterparts.

Q: Did you have a military person that would attend the Bonn Group regularly?

HUGHES: No.

Q: But to the extent you needed to have liaison on issues affecting the forces in Germany, you do it how, not through the attaché and the embassy, or was there a representative of the U.S. forces in Germany in the embassy?

HUGHES: Yes, there were liaison people at the embassy, so there were representatives. There was ready communication. One other thing I should mention also, one important context of the program on oral history, is the importance of records in embassies. You've been in embassies, I've been in embassies where you try to find what happened four years ago and everybody's new, and there's simply no record and you simply can't lay your hands on it. You just don't know, and you go back to Washington, and maybe it's in Greenbelt [records depository near Washington], maybe somebody remembers. I think this is an awful thing, I guess particularly since I was a history major at the university and want to go back to the original documents whenever you can. At least that's my predilection. But in Bonn and Berlin there were exemptions to the retirement of records rule. There was a vault that was basically 85 percent Berlin, and it was there that I learned the importance of creating files called permanent documents, or basic documents I usually call them, basic documents, both classified and unclassified in one place so that one could go back, you know. We'd have an issue in the Bonn Group. What happened? How were the rates of the trains crossing East Germany to Berlin determined?

Q: The rates? The speed?

HUGHES: No, the cost.

Q: The cost, okay.

HUGHES: The rates, and what were the responsibilities of East Germans to provide locomotives? What kind of reimbursement did they receive? Well, you could go into that file, and between us there and in Berlin you could find out. What were the original discussions between ourselves and the Russians or the Soviets? What were the discussions between the West Germans and East Germans, because they're the ones that actually interfaced to make things happen in that regard. It's just an example, but the importance of these basic documents was proven time and time and time again.

Q: Did you get involved in the Bonn Group in some of the shared institutions in Berlin such as Spandau Prison and I think there was an air traffic center and there was a document center?

HUGHES: Yes, we did, very much so. We had hours and hours of discussions on Spandau and hours and hours of discussions as to what to do with the last prisoners there.

Q: Rudolf Hess?

HUGHES: Rudolf Hess - what to do, what to do with his remains. The Russians wanted to have his remains cremated when he finally died and his ashes scattered to the wind to preclude any monument, neo-Nazi monument or whatever to be constructed. That was the argumentation. And there was some sympathy for that in the West. We had hours of discussions with legal studies, and basically in Western jurisprudence the penalty is against the person, not against his remains.

And so we determined there was no legal precedent or no legal authority for disposal of the remains outside the wishes of the family. And, of course, at the end of the day, because Hess's health was going up and down, I remember half seriously, half jokingly but more seriously, hoping that Rudolf Hess did not die when the Soviets were in the chair in Berlin, because then that was also their month to have the guards at Spandau. If that happened, then you might have an issue that West Germans would come to us and say, "You've got to turn the guy's body over to the family." We believed that also legally, but we'd have to go to the Russians and say, "Huh-uh, the body has to be turned over to the family." Of course, that's what happened.

Q: When did he die? I know he was still alive in 1980, because I saw him from the air from a helicopter walking in the courtyard of the Spandau Prison.

HUGHES: What were you doing in 1980 in a helicopter over Berlin?

Q: That's my story. Let me back up for a second. You just talked about some legal issues, and, of course, a lot of what you were doing was not just diplomacy or negotiation but interpreting in a legal context. Was there a lawyer in the embassy that worked with you?

HUGHES: Right, there was a lawyer who worked almost full time with us. He'd get occasional side tasks. And also there was a lawyer in Berlin.

Q: So he would not necessarily be exclusively working on Berlin issues or on the Bonn Group?

HUGHES: In a practical matter that's usually what happened.

Q: And he would be a State Department lawyer assigned to...

HUGHES: He's still working for the State Department, first rate guy. We were very fortunate.

Q: Okay, anything else about these three years in Bonn? Great assignment, I think.

HUGHES: Oh, it was, absolutely tremendous. Well, only to say that I've jokingly said since then that we must have been doing the right things, because now it's totally unimportant.

Q: Well, obviously lots of things have changed. Did you talk a lot about the [Berlin] Wall in those days?

HUGHES: Oh, yes, but the Wall was more the articulation, so to speak, the situation made manifest as opposed to the policy of what we were trying to do. And, of course, we visited East Berlin quite frequently, but went through the processing at the Wall. There were very strict rules about how we were supposed to relate to the East Germans, because our politics and our theology was, we related only to the Russians, the Soviets, because they were the occupying power. But as a practical matter we had to deal with the East Germans. That was a great assignment.

G. JONATHAN GREENWALD

Legal Advisor

Bonn (1973-1977)

Born and raised in Pennsylvania, Mr. Greenwald earned degrees for Princeton University and Harvard Law School. His first government assignment was General Counsel in the Department of the Air Force. He later transferred to the Department of State, where he served as legal advisor as well as Political Officer, both in Washington and in various assignments abroad. His foreign posts include Germany (East and West Berlin), Yugoslavia, Hungary and Belgium. He also had assignments concerning anti-terrorism. Mr. Greenwald was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 1998.

Q: When did you actually leave that office?

GREENWALD: I left it in the fall of 1972, because by that time I had already been accepted for the position in West Berlin, which normally was filled out of the Legal Advisor's Office, because everything in Berlin was legal-political or political-legal. There was always somebody in the Political Section of our mission in West Berlin who had a legal background, normally somebody who came out of L. I had been interested in that job almost from the time I had come into the Legal Advisor's Office. I applied for it, and I was told I would be put into it when it next became vacant, which would be early in 1973. In preparation for that, they had moved me into the office of the Assistant Legal Advisor for European Affairs so that I could get some experience with the issue. I had also been trying to learn German on my own. I had been taking early-morning German classes at the Foreign Service Institute for two years. I had asked for some substantial time at FSI to learn German full-time once the assignment was actually made, and FSI had said, "No, because you're doing it the wrong way. You've done it on your own in the early-morning class. We don't want people to think that the way they learn a language is to go to the early-morning class. You should attempt full-time, 24- or 48-week instruction. In the end they did let me take about five weeks of full-time German in December and then in January. But because I couldn't take the full course, as I had about four months in L/EUR working on the Washington side of particularly German legal issues. At that time the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin had just been negotiated. The final signature was in June of 1972, and the question was how it would be implemented. I knew that the work that I had been doing in Berlin for the time in my assignment that would be substantially on the implementation of the Quadripartite Agreement which had been negotiated. [end of tape]

Q: Okay, we were talking about preparation for your assignment to Berlin as the Legal Advisor at the U.S. mission in West Berlin. Why don't you say just a word again, Jon, about the Quadripartite Agreement, what it meant, and how you prepared yourself for that assignment.

GREENWALD: Well, of course, Berlin had been for most of the post-war period at least potentially the hottest spot in Europe, the place where it was most likely that the Cold War could become at least a very hot crisis and perhaps even a hot war. The Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin was negotiated throughout most of 1970 and 1971 into 1972 in order to find a way to

remove Berlin from the center stage. It wasn't thought that it was possible to resolve the Berlin issue. The different positions were too strong, too starkly opposed, but there was a common interest in preventing Berlin from becoming continually irritant. That would make it impossible to make progress in any other area of the Cold War agenda of both sides. So there was an effort, ultimately successful, to negotiate a series of arrangements, on the one hand, between the four major wartime victors, the United States, the U.K., France and the Soviet Union, and on the other hand, between the two concerned German sides, the Bonn government (the Federal Republic, the FRG), and the East German government (the German Democratic Republic, the GDR). The object was to make practical improvements in the situation in and around Berlin and for particularly the residents of West Berlin while leaving both sides free to maintain that their fundamental view of the situation, their legal position and political position, had not been affected. That agreement had just been concluded by June of 1972. I knew that the major work that I would be involved with over the couple of years that I would be in West Berlin would be how that agreement was to be implemented. So I spent a fair amount of time in the fall of 1972 really trying to learn the very complicated negotiating history and agreement and complicated history of the Berlin question. The Berlin question had its own mystique, its own expertise that was known as Berlinery, and it was something like in some ways learning the mysteries of the atom or so it seemed, or, as others would put it, learning what the world is like once you go through the looking glass in Alice in Wonderland.

Q: What did the Quadripartite Agreement do with respect to the German Democratic Republic in the United States, if any?

GREENWALD: Well, one of the purposes, of course, from the Eastern point of view in reaching an agreement on Berlin was to establish the point that the German Democratic Republic was a legitimate, permanent part of the international scene, a government with which other governments should have normal diplomatic relations. Until the Quadripartite Agreement had been concluded, essentially there was no other government outside the area of direct Soviet influence which had diplomatic relations with the GDR. In fact, the Bonn government had a policy, the so-called Holstein Doctrine, under which it would break diplomatic relations with any country that established diplomatic relations with the GDR. Because of the power of German influence in Europe and the United States' position, basically no other country had recognized the GDR other than those countries with which the GDR was aligned in the Warsaw Pact or China, for example. Once the Quadripartite Agreement had been signed, that policy changed, the policy of the Bonn government, the policy of the United States government. Countries began to establish diplomatic relations as early as 1972 with the GDR, and it was clear that it was only a matter of time before the U.S., France and Britain would do it. All three of us wanted to learn more about what was happening on the other side of the Berlin Wall. One of the things I worked on while learning in general about the Quadripartite Agreement in Berlin in the fall of 1972 was the question of how we would establish diplomatic relations with the GDR: what steps were necessary formally, what steps one had to take to establish diplomatic relations with the country, what issues were hanging around, property issues, for example, what protections had to be sought to insure that in fact our legal and political position on the Berlin question as a whole and the German question as a whole were still maintained. It was felt strongly that the United States, Britain and France would have to move together, because our position in Berlin very much depended upon the mutual support we gave each other. We didn't want to do anything with

regard to the GDR that would weaken that basic position on the question of Berlin and Germany as a whole. So we did a lot of work in preparation in the fall of 1972, and in fact I flew out to Berlin to start my assignment in West Berlin in January of 1973 via Paris. It had been decided that there would be a meeting in Paris of U.S., British, French and German experts specifically to discuss this question of what each of us had to do to make sure that we were working in lock step as we proceeded in our own ways toward establishing diplomatic relations. We had that meeting in the Quai d'Orsay. It lasted two days. I flew out to the meeting with Jim Sutherland, who was the head of the Office of German Affairs, and his Deputy for Berlin Issues, Nelson Ledsky. Joining us was Bob Prowitt, who was [inaudible] CSCD work in Bosnia and was the person who worked on that issue from the Embassy in Paris, met us at the airport and took part in the meetings for the Embassy in Paris. John Kornblum, who is now the Ambassador in Bonn, came from Bonn, where he was a junior political officer at the time, to take part with the Embassy in Bonn; and Dick Barkley flew in from the mission in West Berlin, where he was in what was called the Eastern Affairs Section, which was the part of the mission that watched the GDR and effected embassy exile. Dick, of course, years later was my Ambassador in East Berlin at the time that the wall actually fell. We had those two days of meetings. We worked out common principles that we would all follow as we each proceeded to start negotiations with the GDR, and then Nelson Ledsky and I continued on to Berlin. Nelson dropped me off there and spent a couple of days as desk officer and went back, and I stayed for four years.

Q: When negotiations with the GDR actually began, you were involved with those, or were they done somewhere else, because obviously West Berlin was probably not where they were done?

GREENWALD: No, they were done in East Berlin and in Washington, and the very first American to cross Checkpoint Charlie to be received by an East German official ironically enough was Nelson Ledsky, and a few months later he was asked to take on the start of that task. I say ironically because probably nobody was a fiercer defender of Berlin against the GDR than Nelson was. He became the first person to deal directly with the GDR. Then Joan Clark took over that negotiation. Joan -- I forget what her position was back at the State Department.

Q: Well, I believe she was Executive Director of the Bureau of European Affairs, or possibly later, but I think she already was at that time.

GREENWALD: I think probably that's what she was at the time she began the negotiation, which would have made sense because so much of the negotiation was about very practical questions like where this is going to be and what kind of buildings we were going to have, what type of facilities we were going to have. I helped at those early meetings basically by just going and taking notes. Most of the work was done elsewhere. I do remember driving around East Berlin with Joan and her explaining to me that she had been there before. She had been in Berlin right after the war ended in 1945 and had actually gone into the ruined chancellery building, the first chancellery which within a year was torn down, and of course there was no trace of that left in 1973. We proceeded more slowly for various reasons than the British and the French. The British and the French Embassies were opened by the fall of 1973. It wasn't until sometime in 1974 that we actually got members who were working on the ground in East Berlin. But that was very much a secondary part of the work I was doing. I found it fascinating because the GDR itself was an unknown land, and the opportunities one had to spend some time over there talking

to people were great, but most of the work I did was on the implementation of the Quadripartite Agreement. As I had anticipated, the Quadripartite Agreement was a marvelous compromise. It was built around two concepts. The phrases were actually there in the agreement that the Federal Republic of Germany could maintain and develop its ties to the Western sectors of Berlin notwithstanding the fact that those Western sectors of Berlin were not an integral part of the Federal Republic nor were they governed by it. Of course, the ambiguities were manifest at those two phrases. They were made even more so by the linguistic question, because the official languages for the Quadripartite Agreement were English, in which basically negotiation was conducted, French and Russian, and in all of those languages it is not difficult to use the word 'ties' that could be maintained and developed. In German there are two types of ties, and so as soon as the Quadripartite Agreement was translated into German, it turned out there were two versions of the Quadripartite Agreement. There was bindomen (Bindungen) and then felbindomen (Verbindungen). Bindomen (Bindungen) are very intense ties, ties of the closest kind. Felbindomen (Verbindungen) are much, much looser, the sort of thing you have when you have a telephone connection which is broken by somebody hanging up the implement. And, of course, the East German version spoke about felbindomen (Verbindungen) which could be developed, and the West German version spoke about bindomen (Bindungen) which could be developed.

Q: And neither of the German translations were official?

GREENWALD: No, neither were official, but they encapsulated the great difference, and so there was a constant feeling-out process in the early years. How far could the Quadripartite Agreement go? How far could it be stretched? How many concessions had to be in fact gotten? How narrowly would it be construed? This was struggled over on virtually every issue that came up, and at that point in time the Allied involvement in the daily running of the government, the daily life of Berlin, was still rather intense. It was still a city under occupation, still a city in which basically all significant government matters had to be vetted by the German authorities with the Allied authorities. The various committees of the Allied Kommandatura were the ultimate responsible authority for governmental action in West Berlin. I sat on the Legal Committee with a British and a French Legal Advisor and had a Civil Affairs Committee and another committee, a Public Safety Advisor who supervised the police, for example. Ultimately the ministers, the heads of our diplomatic missions, met with the Governor Mayor of the city on the highest issues. But the bureaucracy being what it is, of course, Berlin was not a world unto itself, but the ministers in Berlin were responsible to the ambassadors, the British, French and American ambassadors in Bonn, who were in charge of the missions in Berlin, not as ambassadors to the Federal Republic of Germany but in their residual role as High Commissioners for all of Germany. As a fairly practical point, what that meant was the ambassador was responsible for what happened in Berlin, but the missions in Berlin were not subordinate to the embassies; that is, the Political Section of the mission in West Berlin was not subordinate to the Political Section of the embassy in Bonn. We had an equal right to speak our minds, to say what we thought about a particular issue, to say it internally but also to say it back to Washington in telegrams. So there was a constant debate, normally a debate of very good spirit and mutual respect, between the missions and the embassies, but in the normal way of things, you see things often from where you sit, with a perspective of where you sit. There was a different Berlin perspective on many issues, and there was a Bonn perspective. There was often a

feeling that the missions in Berlin were very particular, very rigid and very conservative in the way they viewed Berlin issues and a feeling from Berlin to Bonn was sometimes a bit cavalier about important political-legal points that might be given up because they were looking at what they thought of as a broader picture.

Q: Was there a counterpart Legal Advisor in the embassy in Bonn?

GREENWALD: There was. There was someone in the Political Section of the embassy in Bonn who came out of the Legal Advisor's Office also. His responsibility was twofold. There was a so-called Bonn Group within the structures in Bonn, which was a group which met quite often with representatives from the American and British and French embassies and the West German Foreign Ministry to deal with Berlin issues. The Bonn Group was that group of four that dealt with Berlin issues, and the issues that we had over in Berlin which were of some significance, not simply purely local, would be discussed in Bonn, but again with the Berlin missions having a right to express their views independently back to Washington as to what positions would be taken in the Bonn Group. It wasn't a hierarchical matter of the lesser mission referring it to the higher embassy. The Legal Advisor in the embassy in Bonn was the person who dealt with the legal aspects of those issues that were handled in the Bonn Group but who also dealt with the rather separate and often quite complicated legal issues that were involved between the United States and the Bonn government. They often, for example, dealt with military status of forces situation and reserved rights, which were fairly substantial, that the United States, Britain and France retained in 1955 at the time they would otherwise return full sovereignty to the government in Bonn. So there was a substantial area of work that the Legal Advisor in Bonn did which did not involve Berlin.

Q: I guess the other dimension that we need to also talk about is the quadripartite, the Soviet role, and how did that play out in Berlin as far as you were concerned and the mission was concerned.

GREENWALD: Well, one aspect of the Quadripartite Agreement was that it allowed the Soviet Union to establish a substantial presence in the Western sectors of Berlin for the first time. There had been always a certain Soviet presence in West Berlin. There were several remaining Quadripartite institutions. Most significantly there was Spandau Prison, which still had at that time one prisoner, Rudolf Hess, of those who had been sentenced to lengthy prison terms by the Nuremberg Tribunal. There was a Soviet war memorial which was maintained just over the demarcation line in West Berlin, almost next to the Reichstag building, and it was felt strongly by a lot of people in the Western governments that we should not allow the Soviet Union a presence in the Western sectors. It would become a Trojan horse if, in fact, they established a consulate in West Berlin. It was a major desire of the Soviets to have such a presence, and in the end one of the concessions that was made by the West in order to get other things that we wanted, particularly the substantial concessions from the Eastern side on free access along the autobahn routes to Berlin, we allowed the Soviets to establish a consulate and trade mission in West Berlin. One of the tasks we had in the mission was to keep looking at that operation and prevent it from becoming in effect the fourth occupying power of West Berlin. The Soviet position was, after all, the Eastern sector of Berlin had become a sovereign territory of the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union did not occupy it any longer. The Soviet part

of Quadripartite responsibility, therefore, had to be exercised, could only be exercised, in West Berlin, and it was our constant effort to maintain a distinction that the Soviet Union was operating a consulate and trade mission in West Berlin in the normal way that any country would operate a consulate and trade mission. That was not part of its Quadripartite responsibility. Its Quadripartite responsibilities were only exercised with regard to Berlin as a whole. We had many dances around that particular -- angel on the head of a pin.

Q: How in terms of representation did the Soviets or did we expect the Soviets to discharge their Quadripartite responsibility? Could they have somebody from their consulate attend four-power meetings, or how did that work?

GREENWALD: Well, of course, they were expected to fulfill their responsibilities at Spandau Prison, and they always did. We would have been in principle happy to see them return to the Allied Kommandatura, which was the body that had been set up in 1945 to handle Berlin matters. There were two issues. There was the Allied Control Commission, which in 1945 was established as a quadripartite body to deal with Germany as a whole, and then subsidiary to the Allied Control Commission was the Allied Kommandatura, which dealt with Berlin, which was a four-power city. The Soviets walked out of the Allied Kommandatura at the time of the Berlin blockade and never returned, but in the building in which we met, the Allied Kommandatura building, there were pictures of the early Soviet members of the Kommandatura on the wall. There was always room at the table if a Soviet had shown up at our Legal Committee meeting or our Public Affairs Committee meeting or our Civil Affairs Committee meeting. However, if they had done that, the issue then would have been are we dealing only with governmental affairs in West Berlin or are we dealing with governmental affairs in the whole city. We would have said that they had a right to be there only if once we stopped talking about this or that problem about the fire department in West Berlin, we would start talking about what was being done with the fire department in East Berlin. That, of course, the Soviets were never willing to do, so we would insist that they maintain their responsibility for seeing to it that the Quadripartite Agreement was carried out properly. If we felt the GDR was misbehaving on this or that issue, we would go to the Soviets and raise an issue with them. Part of the job of the mission in West Berlin was to deal with the Soviets on Quadripartite Agreement matters. We would never allow the embassy in East Berlin, once it was established in 1974, to deal with the GDR or to deal with the Soviet Union on a Berlin matter. If there was a Berlin matter, it had to be dealt with through the mission, through the Quadripartite Agreement mechanisms. In the early days of '73-'74, of course, when everything was new and nobody quite knew how it would work, there were constant efforts to test the waters on all sides, to make sure that the Soviets didn't intrude into Quadripartite issues in the Western sectors, to make sure that they kept up with the responsibilities for East Berlin and so forth, that there were no changes in the procedures by which members of the Allied forces entered East Berlin, that they weren't subject to controls by the GDR and so forth. If there was a shooting incident at Checkpoint Charlie, for example, we would complain not to the GDR but to the Soviets.

Q: When you say, "to the Soviets," how was that done?

GREENWALD: To the Soviet embassy in East Berlin, which in our view maintained the same type of residual responsibility for Berlin and Germany as a whole as our embassies in Bonn

maintained. The ambassador was, in our view, operating as the residual high commissioner for Germany and, of course, could have his delegated people handle lesser issues.

Q: Was there any other Soviet counterpart to the three Western missions in West Berlin, which you were part of? Other than the Soviet embassy in East Berlin, there was no other Soviet counterpart to that, to the mission?

GREENWALD: No, the other element of Western activity in the GDR was the Potsdam military liaison missions. Under agreements that were made very shortly after the end of the war, the U.S., British and French military maintained missions in Potsdam on the undisputed, what became the undisputed, territory of the GDR, because it was outside of Berlin. Their task was to maintain liaison with the group of Soviet forces in Germany. In fact, of course, they did a substantial amount of Cold War information gathering, as did the Soviet liaison mission, which they had the right to establish in West Germany, kept outside of Frankfurt, a liaison to the Allied armies that were in Germany. But those kinds of issues when one or another of those liaison missions stuck their nose under the wrong tent or was prevented from traveling down this or that road, those were dealt with in normally military-to-military channels. If it became very serious, then it would be dealt with by the channel of the mission in West Berlin to the Soviet ambassador in East Berlin.

Q: You mentioned that one of our objectives in negotiating the Quadripartite Agreement was to assure access through the autobahn and, I guess, the railroads, trains, air. Why don't you talk a little bit about your involvement at the mission in West Berlin in this period on access issues.

GREENWALD: Sure. The Berlin access problem had been for more than two decades one of the constantly recurring sensitive crisis points, and that's because in the immediate post-war period the Allies arranged with the Soviets only limited rights of access to the Western sectors. As it turned out, we had a good agreement on air access, which worked throughout the entire post-war period. There were arguments on the margin about whether or not the agreement was that airplanes could fly no higher than 10,000 feet or whether they could fly higher than 10,000 feet, but basically the air corridors which were established in the immediate post-war period were maintained. The Soviets did not contest them. They allowed the Berlin air lift to keep the city alive during the blockade, because the Soviets never did interfere with the flights that were conducted, and they never interfered with the civil aviation lines that were established and allowed to run through those same corridors. There was no equivalent agreement for land transport either by road or by rail; and that meant that whenever there was a crisis or a desire to create a crisis, to create a bit of pressure upon the Western position, it was possible for the Soviets, acting often through GDR police or sometimes acting directly, to prevent traffic from moving, to slow down the trains for a long period of time, or commonly to see to it that every person who was attempting to drive on the autobahn from West Germany to West Berlin was thoroughly searched and had to sit in a traffic queue for 24 hours or 48 hours. All of this meant that it was impossible to plan normal travel to and from Berlin other than by air. One of the great achievements of the Quadripartite Agreement was a subagreement which was reached directly between German authorities for the smooth operation of land traffic, road traffic, between West Berlin and West Germany. One of our tasks was to see to it that that it worked as it was meant to work, and that meant, of course, that we were very careful to react if there was ever an instance

where it appeared that traffic was being slowed down for perhaps a veterinary search or any number of reasons some of which might very well have been legitimate, but we were very sensitive to any delay in the traffic. It also meant that we had to be very vigilant about something which on the surface or on first blush might not have seemed like it should have been a problem for the West to be concerned with, but it was called exfiltration. Exfiltration meant an effort to smuggle people through the autobahn to West Berlin or to West Germany -- East Germans. In the days shortly after the Berlin Wall was built, there were various exfiltration efforts which were given a romantic aura of heroic efforts to help people get out of a situation that they wanted to be out of. Probably most of those efforts were in fact heroic and selfless and well meant, but by the time I was in Berlin in 1973 and onwards, after the Quadripartite Agreement, most of the exfiltration that existed was basically commercial. This was an effort by people to make a lot of money smuggling people out through the autobahn system, and where we were particularly concerned was what involved American forces who would use their special protective status. Even before the Quadripartite Agreement was signed, there was to be no interference with members of the Allied forces traveling on the autobahn between West Berlin and West Germany. We were concerned about people misusing that status to smuggle East Germans into West Berlin or into West Germany for substantial amounts of money, because it was a deadly risk. The feeling was that, if it were to come to light that there was this kind of misuse of the rights of the Allied forces, it would be an open invitation to the Soviets to say that it was necessary to put an end to the right of Allied access to Berlin. So one of the tasks I had was to try to work with the German police and with the Allied military police to uncover instances of misuse of our rights and find ways to put an end to that kind of misuse. We had a number of cases where in fact there were American soldiers who were involved in it, or ex American soldiers who continued to live in the city, who maintained friendly ties with ex-colleagues and were involved in gangs. Sometimes the ultimately responsible people were real mafia-type criminals, and it was obviously a very difficult, sensitive thing, because you had to be sympathetic to the individual who wanted to pay money to these people to get the relative, for example, out of East Germany, but we had to recognize that there was a major risk to a very substantial Allied and German interest that was involved as well.

Q: Did some of the exfiltration cases that you were involved with also involve people from third countries who come into East Berlin or East Germany as a way to getting to freedom, getting to the West, but had come from somewhere else, or were they mostly East Germans, East Berliners?

GREENWALD: No, these were East Germans. They were themselves paying money, paying personal favors, or having relatives from the West pay substantial amounts of money. It wasn't the problem that became an issue some years later when we had Third World would-be immigrants who would fly from Pakistan, land at the airport, Schoenefeld Airport, the East Germany airport, cross over the West Berlin and ask for asylum, economic or political asylum. That was a different issue that came up ten to 15 years later. No, this was a particularly sensitive thing because, of course, these stories got into the newspaper at the time. They would be played by the rather tabloid Springer Press as Allies preventing Germans from obtaining freedom, and there were issues that had to be dealt with that could have gone to the heart of the Allied presence and ultimately the safety and security of West Berlin. There was another type of access issue that was more pleasant to deal with, and that was the effort to give meaning to the pledges

that were in the Quadripartite Agreement to build out the normal infrastructure of transportation in the city. For example, everything to do with train traffic in and around Berlin was basically under GDR control, because in the immediate post-war period it was decided to give responsibility for train traffic to the Reichsbahn administration in East Berlin. The Reichsbahn administration was the inheritor of the old German government train system, which was called the Reichsbahn. We considered it to be simply a train administration. The Soviets and the GDR considered the Reichsbahn to be a constituent element of the Ministry of Transport of the GDR. The Reichsbahn controlled substantial pieces of territory in West Berlin, the train stations, the tracks, the area even contiguous to the tracks. Anything to do with the modernization of that infrastructure had to be negotiated with the Reichsbahn, whether it was a project to rebuild a train station or a project to expand a platform so that a suburban West Berlin station could take long-distance trains for the first time since the war. We were constantly vigilant in Berlin to efforts by the GDR, by the Soviets, to use the practical concessions that they would hold out as a way to get changes in the legal status of the city. For example, the issue would always arise, the negotiation would be conducted between local authorities. The Zinot, the city government of West Berlin, which would be under general instructions from the Allies but basically operated on its own, would negotiate with Reichsbahn officials and at some point they would have an agreement. But then the question would arise: How would that agreement be structured, who would sign it, what would be the signature block under the signature. Would it say 'Deputy Minister of Transport of the German Democratic Republic' or would it say 'Reichsbahn Direktor'. I remember once going to Hausbruch for some of the side readings around the NATO ministerial. That was in May of 1975 when the issue of expanding several of the suburban train stations was finally to be resolved. There were agreements that had been reached to allow for expansion of the stations so that they could receive long-distance trains for the first time since the war. What was left was this question of how the agreements were to be actually structured. I remember sitting across from the State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry, Gunter Lombell, who at one point lost his temper and said, "We can lose Detente while you Allied experts in Berlin argue about what hat some Reichsbahn fellow is wearing." This was what I alluded to earlier in saying that there were always slight differences of perspective between Allied officials depending upon where they sat. The people in Berlin, both the Allied officials and the German city government officials, tended to be more conservative, more careful about these legal-political issues. The people in Bonn, both the Allied embassies and the German government, tended to be a little bit -- cavalier is word that's prejudging the way they [inaudible] -- but basically looking at a larger picture. At that time, of course, Willy Brandt was Chancellor and Egon Bahr was his Senior Advisor for Eastern Issues. The Brandt government was very strongly pushing this Ostpolitik, which basically had the philosophy that you could produce change in Eastern Europe, change in Berlin, best by coming closer to the East, by improving relations substantially with the Soviet Union, improving relations substantially with the GDR. Personally that's a position that I agree with, and I think their policy was an enormous success, but our professional point of view from Berlin at that time was to always say, "Don't forget what you can risk if you go too fast or too far." And so you have this essentially creative tension between people in West Berlin and the people in Bonn, both the Allies and Germans in Bonn.

Q: Partly as a result of that on the United States side, therefore, Washington, the State Department and other agencies in Washington, had to often get quite involved in some fairly detailed issues related to Berlin because of some of these differences, but also because, in

addition to the Berlin aspect, the Ostpolitik, the Republic of Germany aspect, there was also, of course, our relationship with the Soviet Union and really our whole attitude toward Eastern Europe, and where Berlin was an extremely important part but only a part. Is that right, or did you find that you got a lot of support from Washington, or at times did you find that broader issues, so to speak, overrode some of your concerns?

GREENWALD: Well, you know, I went to law school, and while I wasn't an enthusiastic law student, I always appreciated the philosophy that the way you got closest to the truth was through the adversarial process. Representing positions as strongly as you could and then a constructive rubbing together of ideas, you'd end up seeing the issue a little bit better. So I never thought that strong arguments between the mission and the embassy or between the mission and the embassy in Washington was a lack of support. I thought that was actually quite good and useful, and for the most part it led to a rather good consensus position. Certainly there was an enormous pool of support back in Washington from the people who had themselves served in Berlin and served in Germany, support for the importance of the issues we were dealing with. But there were, of course, different perspectives, and I think it was clearest probably in the struggle over the question of new institutions in Berlin. I had mentioned that the Quadripartite Agreement provided that ties could be maintained and developed; whatever ties were, they could be built up, expanded. There was a real question, though, as to whether totally new ties could be established. This came to a head in about 1974 when the environment became an increasingly important part of politics in Germany as it did in the United States. The Green Party, the Green Movement, was beginning to develop, and as the United States did, the government in Bonn decided that it needed an environment agency; however, it decided to put the environment agency in Berlin. It never had an environment agency before. It was a totally new thing. Umweltbundesamt, the Federal Office of Environmental Affairs, was announced as destined for Berlin. The Interior Minister at the time was Hans Dietrich Genscher, and he pushed it particularly. Later, for years afterwards he was the Foreign Minister. The Soviets reacted very strongly and said this was a violation of the Quadripartite Agreement. You could maintain and develop ties, but you can't establish something that's totally new, because that goes against the principle that the Western sectors of Berlin are not a constituent part of nor are they governed by the Federal Republic of Germany. Other provisions of the Quadripartite Agreement provide that, notwithstanding the legal positions of both sides, those practices and procedures which are developed over the years shall be respected. That means that offices which were established by the German government with Western Allied approval between 1948 and 1972 -- even if the Soviets did not like those offices which were established, those offices would be respected and continue to operate. They could grow, they could have more people, they could have offshoots, but not something totally new, not a new governmental body. There was a certain logic about the Soviet position. One could see where they were coming from politically in wanting to draw a line. So there was a new mini Berlin crisis with little threats of interference on the autobahn and rumblings about what would happen at the NE office with the big stores. Ultimately the issue went away with the Soviets accepting the presence of the Federal Environmental Office, and it was always presumed -- I can't prove it and I don't know whether documents have come out since to prove it or not -- but it was always assumed that there had been a commitment made by Henry Kissinger to the Soviets and accepted by the government in Bonn that the resolution of the problem would be that, yes, this one time you can establish this office but never again. You won't do it again. Washington, Paris and London won't let Bonn put a new office in West Berlin, and that was

something which was a difficult issue, because there were certainly people in Berlin who felt that this was an edge of the wedge and the next time that the Soviets would insist on something that wasn't quite perhaps as legitimate, legitimate from their point of view. That kind of issue became one of substantial argument back and forth, but I don't think it was ever done in a way that anyone felt that there wasn't a basic position of support for the concept, the issues that Berlin stood for. With that broad consensus of how important Berlin was in and of itself and for the larger picture in Europe, one felt very comfortable and very proud working there.

Q: Okay, this is the second session of a Foreign Affairs Oral History Interview with G. Jonathan Greenwald. It's the 24th of March, 1998. I'm Raymond Ewing, and this is being conducted at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center under the auspices of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. Jon, we were talking last time about your assignment as Legal Advisor at the U.S. mission in Berlin in the 1970s. You mentioned the four-power control of the Spandau Prison, of the one prisoner, I guess still just one prisoner at the time that you were there, Rudolf Hess.

GREENWALD: Yes, it was a very macabre situation because you had a large, very large building which had been a prison in Berlin in the 19th century holding hundreds of prisoners, which was operated solely for one very old, at that time 80ish-year-old, man, including several dozen fully armed guards of any one of the four powers which was in control of the prison in a given month and a group of warders and prison guards who were civilians who were for the most part professional prison people. In the United States' case, we recruited a number of professional prison guards from the U.S. prison system, and all of these people and all of this organization was to take care of one man, who at that time, the time that I was there, was still reasonably physically fit and seemed to be reasonably mentally fit. I would see him about every second or every third month, because one of the jobs of the Legal Advisors was to supervise the operation of Spandau Prison. The prison was a Quadripartite organization. There were four warders, one from each of the four powers, but the next instance of authority over the prison was the Legal Advisors, and that meant the Legal Committee of the American, British and French Legal Advisors. I had mentioned, however, that, since the Soviets walked out of the Allied Kommandatura in 1948, there had been no Soviets in any other part of the Kommandatura. This, of course, created an anomaly since there was a higher Quadripartite body which was supposed to supervise the work of Spandau Prison, and there was no Soviet member. So in effect there was an ad hoc Soviet member merely for the purposes of supervising the prison, and that was a member of the Soviet embassy in East Berlin, who would come to events and affairs at the prison, primarily the changing-of-the-guard ceremonies. We never admitted him to our regular Legal Advisors meetings, because that would be regarded as a violation of practices and procedures in the operation of Berlin. The Soviets would have had to come back entirely into the Kommandatura or not at all. But the events at the prison that occurred around the changeovers, the lunches primarily the day of the change-over, were what passed for diplomatic events, Quadripartite diplomatic events. There was always over the lunch a discussion of whatever it was that was happening in and around Berlin at the time. It was always particularly painful for me to go on the inspection that was part of the Spandau routine. The commanding general, British, American, French or Soviet during the time of their respective authority for the prison, would one day in the three-month period inspect the prison. The Legal Advisors were expected to accompany him on his rounds. The major part of that event, of course, was to walk in and

speaking to the prisoner, and the commanding general would always ask him whether he had any complaints, whether his health was being looked after and so forth, and that was about the extent of the conversation. It was a very routine thing and did follow the procedure with almost no change. One had the chance to put other questions to Hess. I could never think of what to say to the man, knowing his history, knowing the history of the regime that he worked for loyally. One felt simply unable to think of normal things to say. Couldn't ask him about the weather or about football or any of those normal icebreakers. You could hardly expect after his 30-odd years of silence that he would respond to a question if you said it to him, asked him, "Why did you fly to England?" So it was always a matter of embarrassed silences, and one always wondered what this man had done and what he had seen and even how he had become what he was, but he was always a mystery to me and I never had a meaningful conversation with him, but I consider the experience in and about Spandau Prison one of the more macabre episodes in my time in Berlin, in fact my whole career.

Q: Did his family visit him? Were they allowed to pay visits?

GREENWALD: Yes, there were family visits. There was a routine schedule of family visits. His son and his wife could visit. They exchanged letters with him. For many years he had not written to them. He had chosen not to see them and not to write to them, but that period of self-imposed isolation had ended some years before my time in Berlin. One of the tasks that the Legal Advisors were supposed to exercise was to monitor his correspondence. I confess we did that in a very loose way. It was not something that we took terribly seriously, because clearly the man had the right to exchange his private notes with his family, and we felt that way.

Q: During the period that you were in Berlin, were preparations begun or had they already been arranged for his burial, for his funeral, for his death?

GREENWALD: One of the constant questions was what would happen to Spandau Prison and what would happen to the remains of Hess upon his death. In the first instance the Allies believed that it would be appropriate to avoid the entire issue by releasing Hess. The feeling was that he was an old, ill man who had not that much more time to live and certainly not any time to be active as a politician any longer. He was not a threat, and it would be better and more humanitarian simply to release him. There had always been a feeling that the Hess sentence, in fact, at Nuremberg, had been something of a compromise, that the Soviet judge had wished to impose the death sentence and the Allied judges had felt that Hess, since he had left Germany in 1941, had been out of the power structure in the years of the very worst crimes of the Nazi period. Therefore, he might have been more appropriately sentenced to a number of years in prison but not a life sentence. The feeling was that he could be, should be released. I always felt somewhat ambiguously about it. I could understand the Soviet belief that Hess was, in fact, truly a major war criminal and that he should be punished to the full severity of the sentence he was given at Nuremberg, but to me it always seemed the cruelest thing that could have been done to Hess would have been to release him, because as he lived in Spandau Prison, while it was in some ways a terribly isolated existence, he could always maintain the illusion or belief, delusion, that he was still a very important person and that his movement was still a very important movement. Why else would four major powers dance about him in such a remarkable fashion? If he had been released, he would have seen that time and history and Germany had passed him by.

In many ways I think that would have been a crueler end to his life than the fact that he was able to continue to live in prison with four countries taking care of him as they did. As you say, there were considerable efforts to negotiate some type of agreed scenario. If he was to stay in prison for the rest of his life, what would happen when he died? Those negotiations, at least during the time I was there, never went very far. The Soviets, I think, suspected some tricks, and they really never wanted to reach very serious agreements. We always suspected that their hope was that somehow Spandau Prison would become a permanent Quadripartite entity, that even when there was no prisoner the Soviets would see it useful to maintain some substantial element of their presence in the Western sectors of Berlin, and that they therefore weren't interested in an orderly disposition of the prison. In fact, what happened when Hess died, when he committed suicide in fact, oddly enough just a few weeks after I returned to East Berlin in 1987, the British acted very quickly and unilaterally, on a basis of an understanding that they worked out with the two Western powers, to quickly raze the prison so that there was no further question of it being a structure that would be devoted to four-power purposes.

Q: It was in the British zone?

GREENWALD: It was in the British sector of Berlin.

Q: And his remains were given to his family?

GREENWALD: Yes. I don't recall exactly where they were buried, but it was simply a matter of turning them over to his family.

Q: The fear perhaps on the part of the Soviets or at various times was that he would be a martyr, his burial place would be a place where neo-Nazis could rally or something like that?

GREENWALD: Yes, it was, but, of course, they made him into more of a martyr than he would have been by keeping him in prison for so many years.

Q: Because it was the Soviets that resisted any idea of early release or parole?

GREENWALD: Yes.

Q: Okay. He was able to exercise in the courtyard, the garden of the prison regularly, I think.

GREENWALD: Oh, yes, he had a certain number of hours a day that he could go out and in fact more than I think he ever really wanted to. There was really very little constraint in the years of his old age. Had he wanted to spend more time in the garden, he could have and, in fact, he did have some garden projects, but he wasn't a gardener. I think there were some passages to that effect in Speer's memoirs.

Q: I recall in 1980 flying over West Berlin in a helicopter and having the crew point out Spandau Prison and Rudolf Hess, who was walking in the courtyard at that time. Okay, is there anything else about your time in West Berlin that we should cover, Jon, before we go on?

GREENWALD: Well, basically it was a peaceful period in the history of the city. The Quadripartite Agreement, as I had said earlier, was new when I came, and the question was whether it would succeed in normalizing the situation in the city and around the city. That it did was perhaps symbolized about a year after I was there by an end-of-year wrap-up of the political scene by the daily newspaper Tagesspiegel, which wrote that the most controversial element of the city's life for the past twelve months was the decision to introduce a new, radically different pleasure boat onto the Banzai in the shape of a whale and called Moby Dick. The paper editorialized that the fact that Berliners could become more excited about the appearance of Moby Dick on the Banzai than any other event during the year was an indication that in fact the Quadripartite Agreement was working rather well. In fact, that's the truth of it. It did work very well for the city.

Q: That's a good story and good example of the calm and tranquility that the Quadripartite Agreement brought. Let me ask one question that I meant to ask before, and you may have touched on this before, but who covered the costs of Spandau Prison and the other Quadripartite aspects? Was that borne by the United States and the others?

GREENWALD: No, the full cost of the occupation was borne by the government in Bonn. I believe that the GDR bore certain Soviet costs. How those were taken into account between the two in terms of the cost of stationing Soviet troops on East German territory, I don't fully know, but the total cost that the United States, that France and that Britain bore in the occupation of Berlin was paid for by the Bonn government in the Occupation Cost Budget. The amounts each year were negotiated between the three Allies and the German government, but it was always a very generous amount. In fact, I think it's fair to say that there was an element of fat, of luxury in the Berlin occupation that would not have existed if each national government had borne its own cost -- fat in the sense of the types of equipment that were put into the various missions, the types of official vehicles that were purchased, the housing and so forth. One used to laugh that the French army would station at least one unit of new troops in Berlin each semester and that they would charge the Occupation Cost Budget everything from uniforms down to the equipment for the new troops.

Q: Which they would take with them.

GREENWALD: Yes. Whether that's true or not I don't know, but certainly the German government was very generous in its support of the occupation costs, and they felt certainly originally that the costs were a matter of legal obligation, as an obligation was established at the time of the return of sovereignty to the Bonn government, but more than that I'm sure that the Bonn government felt that this was in fact a debt of honor paid to the Allies who they knew were standing in Berlin for the freedom of Berliners and that this was an important national cause for the government in Bonn. So they paid those costs without it ever becoming a major political issue of the Bundesamt.

Q: And the costs that they covered, that were covered by the Federal Republic, the Bonn government, included the three Western missions, diplomatic missions.

GREENWALD: Yes. Other than salaries, basically the entire operation of all of the three Allies

in Berlin was covered by Bonn.

Q: So you finished your assignment at the U.S. mission Berlin in 1977?

GREENWALD: Yes.

GEORGE F. MULLER
Political Advisor
Stuttgart (1973-1978)

George F. Muller emigrated from Vienna, Austria to the United States in 1939. He received a Ph.D. from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. He entered the State Department in 1949 as Intelligence and Research Analyst for Austria and later became Chief of the Central European Section. Mr. Muller joined the Foreign Service in 1954, serving in Germany, Thailand, and Washington, DC. Mr. Muller was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 1994.

MULLER: I was transferred directly to Europe, to become the Political Advisor to the US-European Command located in Stuttgart, Germany. The fact that EUCOM was located there was an accident of history. It had originally been located close to Versailles but in 1966, as you know, General de Gaulle severed his relations with NATO, at least to a large extent, and the NATO headquarters moved to Belgium; the Supreme Allied Commander's headquarters moved to Mons, also in Belgium. The US-European Command, that is the Supreme U.S. Command for all U.S. forces in Europe, moved to Stuttgart, where there was a large headquarters complex, with housing and communications, already available.

I reported to the Department of State only indirectly because as Political Advisor I was a full time member of the senior staff of the US European Command. My immediate superior was the Deputy Commander-in-Chief, US Forces Europe -- an Air Force 4-star general. It was made quite clear to me, and I knew from my previous experience in the Pentagon, that you cannot have divided loyalties. That if you are seconded to a military command, you serve that master.

That doesn't mean that I did not inform P/M in the Department of what was going on whenever I felt that there was an issue that P/M should be involved. I also called on the Assistant Secretary for P/M, George Vest, when in Washington. More importantly I think, was that I had very good relations with the Embassy in Bonn. Partly, of course, because I knew Ambassador Hillenbrand from previous service and immediately called on him when I was stationed in Europe. I also knew the DCM, Frank Cash, well and the Political Counselor, Frank Meehan; they were all old friends.

As I said, I was assigned on direct transfer to Stuttgart and I must say, I didn't particularly cherish the assignment. In fact, I fought it but it didn't do me any good. My point was that I had done this kind of work before when I was in the Pentagon. I didn't want to do it again. Allegedly, I had gotten the reputation of being able to get along with the military and therefore I was the

choice.

It also didn't help my good feelings about the job that I was the first POLAD who no longer received direct Embassy support. Among other things, for instance, I was not given a diplomatic license plate for my car but had a military plate.

This went back to an arrangement within the Department, transferring authority over the POLADs from the regional bureaus to P/M. But P/M had no representatives in the field. Therefore, the POLAD became an unwanted appendage that the Counselor for Administrative Affairs at the Embassy had to take care of.

I ran into idiotic things, like my car was not being shipped from the States to Germany. It sat in New York for weeks. Bonn refused to ship it because the arrangements in Washington, the financial arrangements for shipping were all snafued. Having the equivalent rank of major general, I was of course assigned a car and driver, but I didn't feel I should use them for personal travel, although others had no such qualms.

The General I was initially called upon to serve was a very difficult man who had made his mark in the Strategic Air Command. He wanted me urgently and kept insisting that the Department send me over post haste. The only problem was that I had no orders while I was still sitting in Thailand.

I remember being called at 3:00 in the morning by Personnel in a rather terse manner. Of course it was easy for someone in the Department to pick up the phone at 3:00 in the afternoon, a very convenient hour to make a phone call. But it was 3:00 a.m. in Bangkok.

I think it was Tom Shoesmith who asked me, "Why aren't you in Europe?" I said, angrily, "Why don't you send me my orders instead of waking me up?" He said, "What, you don't have your orders?" I said, "No." End of conversation. It was no secret that our personnel system leaves something to be desired.

The first really important thing that happened after I got there in June was the September War between Israel and Egypt. As you know, the Israelis were overrun initially with large losses of materiel. A large-scale re-supply program was mounted by the military with exceptional American responsiveness. C-5s carrying tanks, other heavy equipment, etc. were ferrying the stuff in via the Azores. At the same time we were also drawing down our NATO stocks located in Germany. These were committed to the defense of Germany and we did not inform the Germans what we were doing. But they got wind of this -- you can't load ships in Bremerhaven without anyone noticing -- and made official inquiries.

From reading the State Department traffic, as well as the military traffic, I realized that we were either playing games, or inadvertently failed to notify them because of a gap in State-Defense communications. Ambassador Hillenbrand was told to go to the Foreign Office to tell the Foreign Minister what was going on. I read his instructions and I knew that what he was instructed to state was not factually true. I realized that the German longshoremen, and so on, loading our equipment would know what was being sent, and sooner or later, the story would

out.

I tried to see the General and tell him that we should send a message, or call the Ambassador, and tell him what was really going on because he would be in an impossible situation vis-a-vis the Foreign Minister. The General was in a meeting and could not be disturbed. The Chief of Staff could not be found or could not be disturbed. They were all deeply involved in the shipments going to Israel.

So I got the DCM, Frank Cash, on the scrambler telephone and I told him that the instructions as written contained assurances that were not factually correct. He intercepted the Ambassador, who was en route to the Foreign Office, and double-talked to him on the car phone to change the wording of his statement in such a way that it conformed to the fact.

When the Embassy sent out the reporting telegram on the Ambassador's discussion with the Foreign Minister and why he didn't follow the letter of his instructions, they added, at the bottom, a paragraph: "Contrary to what we had been told, EUCOM informs us that such-and-such shipments had gone forward after all" or words to that effect.

Next thing I was hauled before the General. The Chief of Staff came around and said, "Did you talk to the Embassy on this?" I said, "Yes, I did, because I felt that the Ambassador should be protected from making a misleading statement; our credibility was at stake; and quite unnecessarily so." As I said, I was about 3 months on the job and the General read me the riot act.

I said, "Well, you asked for a senior Foreign Service officer, I am used to operating on my own. I could not reach you; I could not reach the Chief of Staff. And I felt it was in the overall U.S. interest to warn the Ambassador not to make a statement which was not in conformity with the facts." That sort of set the stage for my tour of duty.

I was really hoping he would have me transferred, but he never said another word about the incident. He was succeeded a year later by an absolutely wonderful guy, General Robert Huyser, also known as Dutch Huyser with whom I had a very good relationship and with whom I took many trips all over the European Command.

It must be understood that the European Command covers a great deal of territory -- namely from England to the Persian Gulf and from Norway to the Mediterranean, including the northern tier of Africa from Morocco to Suez. COMIDEASTFORCE, the three ships stationed at Bahrain which I mentioned in connection with the Concord Cruise, were under the European Command, much to the Navy's disgust, because EUCOM is traditionally commanded by an Army general. This general was double-hatted as Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and Commander-in-Chief US Forces Europe (CINCEUR). While I was there, first General Goodpaster and then General Haig were the CINCs. But the day-to-day US Forces business was carried on by the Deputy CINC in Stuttgart.

I received a great deal of Embassy reporting and all State Department messages that had a bearing on military problems. I also saw the military traffic. My job was to brief the General and

the EUCOM staff on what was going on politically in this vast area; and, by keeping close touch with the embassies, to inform them of military developments that would or could affect them. As an example: military contingency planning involved obtaining overflight and possibly landing rights. In the NATO area this was no problem, but, as the resupply for Israel demonstrated, this could get sticky when other countries were involved.

I hope I also made a contribution in fostering good working relationships between EUCOM and the embassies by working out a program of bringing ambassadors to EUCOM for briefings and discussions with the senior staff. This was especially important, I felt, for newly arrived chiefs of mission. They were usually picked up by a EUCOM T-39 and brought to Stuttgart in the morning for briefings and discussions that lasted most of the day. In the evening the General would give a dinner in their honor and they returned the next day. My wife, Ursula, took their wives on shopping or sight seeing tours, if they were so inclined.

I might add here that I have a very high regard for General Haig. Haig arrived with the stigma, if you will, of having served in the Nixon White House. Chancellor Schmidt and the German Social Democrats for that reason didn't like him very much. The Dutch had a socialist government, the Brits had a Labor government; in other words, Haig really had his work cut out to make himself accepted and respected.

I must say that within 6 months, he did. He was very effective. Succeeding Goodpaster was a very difficult thing also in another way. Goodpaster was the rapid action type. Yet, Haig managed to not only make friends and influence people very quickly, but he also developed a sense of cohesiveness which the alliance had lacked for some time.

He was particularly successful in bringing the French closer in by establishing a personal relationship with the French Chief of Staff. He got the French navy to participate in the naval maneuvers in the Mediterranean, not as NATO forces but as French forces working together with NATO task forces. He did the same on land, in the air, in the European theater; so he was very effective in that way.

I think, possibly, his most lasting imprint was that he, together with Ambassador Carlucci in Lisbon, developed a military assistance program for Portugal, which, in my opinion, probably prevented Portugal from sliding into the red abyss and leaving NATO.

I think Secretary of State Kissinger had already given up on Portugal after the revolution, when the paratroopers from the Portuguese overseas territories came swarming back into Lisbon. I remember being in Lisbon at the time when there were revolutionary slogans spray-painted all over the walls and it was a city in some turmoil.

Both Haig and Carlucci felt that a relatively unknown lieutenant colonel in the Portuguese army named Eanes, was a man on whom to bank. Eanes very quickly rose to the position of Chief of Staff of the Portuguese army. Haig established a very good relationship with him. Eanes subsequently became President of Portugal. Portugal remained in NATO. I really think that it was Haig's good judgment, together with Carlucci, that helped bring that about.

I am only sorry that Haig's tenure at the Department was fraught with controversy. My criticism of Haig is that he was obsessed with turf protection, with bureaucratic territory; you must not infringe upon my area of competence. Well, when you are commander-in-Chief in Europe, that doesn't arise. But when you're Secretary of State having to deal with the Secretary of Defense, who also happens to be an old friend of the President, then sooner or later you are bound to lose out, and that is what happened to Haig. He offered his resignation once too often.

We took a large number of trips. We went to Jordan and had an interview with King Hussein -- Tom Pickering was the Ambassador at the time. We went to Morocco. We inspected the Tunisian defenses in the desert because the Tunisians are very afraid of Libyan incursions way south in the Sahara Desert. These trips were mainly designed to establish personal contact at high military levels and to help formulate our military assistance program for those countries. We also went regularly to Spain where a joint committee was set up to manage our bases.

We always had a POLAD in Heidelberg, to the U.S. Army Europe, and in Ramstein to the U.S. Air Force Europe and, of course, we also had a POLAD in London to U.S. Navy Europe, where U.S. naval headquarters was. On the NATO side, there was one in Mons, Belgium. We also had a POLAD in Naples to the Admiral who was CINCSOUTH. The NATO commander for the Mediterranean area is an American admiral headquartered in Naples. Under him you had both Turkish and Greek forces, land forces as well as naval forces. We used to get together. We had rotating POLAD meetings just amongst ourselves. The nicest of these was in Naples when our POLAD, who was then Jack Stoddard, managed to get the Admirals' motor launch. We had lunch and a swim and a ride over to Capri after we had completed our POLAD business.

Also, the Ambassador in Rome very often held Political/Military meetings. That is where I first met Admiral Crowe, who was then the Commander of the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean. He made a lasting impression on me as an absolutely first-rate officer and, of course, went on to become Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

We also met in London. One of the nicest aspects of my job was that as a member of the senior staff, I could get a T-39 anytime within the theater. When business demanded it, I could go to Madrid, Rome, any of the capitals of the European command, and have an airplane to do it in. Which was luxurious -- perhaps not warranted, but nevertheless, a nice thing to have. The argument was that EUCOM had the aircraft and the pilots needed to get in their flying hours.

WALLACE W. LITELL
Cultural Counselor
East Berlin, GDR (1974)

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

Q: Why don't we talk about East Germany. That was quite a breakthrough at the time because East Germany had been unrecognized for so many years.

LITTELL: I went to East Germany when I was approached by our Washington offices on it. We went in to open up the embassy in '74, and I went primarily because I had had a good long experience in West Germany, and actually had gotten to East Germany to the Leipzig Fair, or to East Berlin on occasion, but never had been able to really move around there. I went really because of my interest in Germany. It was not as big a job as I had had in Yugoslavia or Poland, or had subsequently, of course, in Moscow, but it was interesting. So I figured it was worth a two-year assignment, and it was. It was interesting. However, I didn't think I'd find bureaucrats that were worse to deal with than the Soviets but the East Germans were really bad.

Once again, if they were permitted to do something, then they were much more efficient than the Soviets about helping you do it. But if they weren't, and most of the time they weren't, then the foot-dragging was very obnoxious. My contempt for the East German bureaucrat was exceeded by none I have met anywhere. But it was understandable. I was able to move around in East Germany quite freely, and knowing German as well as I did, and having the contacts that I had in the Church, and so on, I met a lot of people and talked to a lot of people. There's certainly no feeling on my part that there was a great degree of loyalty to the system there among the people.

Q: One might note too that since East Germany was so close to West Germany, and particularly since you had Berlin embedded in the middle of East Germany and one could, I suppose, hear West German radio, maybe television...

LITTELL: They could watch West German television. In fact, they watched nothing but West German television.

Q: So on the information side they were already getting a great deal of input from the West to a much greater extent than certainly the Soviet Union, and perhaps the rest of Eastern Europe. Did this result in an emphasis in your programs more on the cultural side and the information side, or if you had a fair amount of emphasis still on the information side, did it take a different form than it would have taken in the Soviet Union, and perhaps, say the relationship of a magazine to a newspaper kind of filling in the cracks and being more analytical, or something that was different than straight direct information, or direct news, since they were getting that anyway.

LITTELL: Well, once again, it was a beginning operation and a lot of my time there was involved in setting up the library, and the physical facilities, and hiring a staff, and getting things going that way. Also, I was a one-man staff, really, although I had a secretary with me at the time. So it was a small operation. We did try to draw on cultural groups that came to West Germany, or particularly, Berlin being a city where a lot of them came. We had had some success that way, but we didn't in the time that I was there, have a lot of either performing arts programs or other programs going. We had scholars coming in quite frequently, and some students. Our old friend Bill Griffith used to come in regularly to East Berlin and he was always fun to take to the various ministries or to their research institute on the United States and Canada, paralleling the Soviet one, because he hauled them over the coals so unmercifully.

Q: This is a professor that was one of the major scholars dealing with the communist world?

LITTELL: Yes, that's right, Bill Griffith. Actually he was head of RFE in Munich for years, and then he was at MIT for many years, and Fletcher too. He's a guy with a lot of humor. Actually I used to take him in Moscow to see people including Primakov, who I see has just been named to be the first civilian head of the KGB. Primakov was head of their mid-east institute originally, and has been very close to Gorbachev; an adviser to Gorbachev.

The one problem we had in East Berlin, which was very comparable to the Soviet Union, was access to the embassy on the part of the public. We established a very good and attractive American library there, but very few people came in. They were intercepted a few blocks away and just not allowed to come in.

Q: We had that problem in Romania too in my time.

LITTELL: Although, of course, eventually we did get the cultural center in Romania.

Q: We had the cultural center when I was there. It came in shortly before I arrived, but access was difficult. There was a certain amount of pressure against going, and when people did go they were making a mark for themselves in the books of the Securitate, I'm sure.

LITTELL: Well, on rare occasions we would get harassment of this type to our library in Poland -- there'd be some harassment there. In Yugoslavia, almost never; and in East Germany, almost always.

Q: What were your relations...were the West Germans establishing very much in the way of programs in East Germany, and was the interest on the part of the East Germans more in West Germany than in the United States?

LITTELL: At that point they didn't have diplomatic relations.

Q: Even then?

LITTELL: Yes, but they had a liaison office, which for all practical purposes was an embassy headed by an ambassador, but it was not called that. It was called a liaison office and he was not an ambassador. He was head of the liaison office. Obviously the East Germans had extensive contacts with the West but the West Germans were not allowed to do a lot of public things, for obvious reasons because the appeal was so great. And, as I mentioned before, the East Germans listened to West German and European radio, and watched nothing but West German television. I remember one time staying with a family in Leipzig at the fair who rented out a room. They were obvious Party members. They had a nice apartment in a building that had just Party members, and the two kids were running around in FDJ (communist youth) uniforms. But I came in at night after dinner and they were all gathered around watching West German television, so I said, "What's the matter? You can't get East German television here?" And they laughed, and said, "Oh, yes, its here, this channel here, but we never watch it."

ANNA ROMANSKI
Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Hamburg (1974-1976)

Born in England, Ms. Romanski was raised in England and in New Jersey. She was educated at Stanford and Yale Universities, as well as Middlebury College, where she studies the Russian language. Joining the State Department in 1974, her assignments both in Washington and abroad were primarily with USIA, serving in Public and cultural Affairs capacities. A speaker of Polish, German and Chinese, she served in Germany, Poland and China. Ms. Romanski was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: Where was your first assignment?

ROMANSKI: One of those assignments to Germany was our first post, namely Hamburg, Germany. My husband, although in the political cone, had to start out by doing consular work. I think it was about six months before the consul general, a political officer himself, discovered -- to his surprise and delight -- that my husband was actually a political officer. This changed his assessment of my husband markedly, so much so that he decided to offer him some opportunities. A little while later, my husband was able to fill a political slot after the officer in that slot transferred. As for me, I had been assigned to the America House as the deputy branch public affairs officer. There were only two Americans and I was number two.

Q: What were you doing?

ROMANSKI: My responsibilities included running the exhibit program, which was actually quite large. I also ran the film program, which was fairly successful. Indeed, I soon got stuck with administering the film program for the entire country -- and Germany had quite a few branch operations in those days! Needless to say, it was not a prestige operation, but we managed to make some money while I was in charge of selecting films. The biggest hit during my time was the film Easy Rider with Peter Fonda and Jack Nicholson. I'm not sure why the film was so popular with German audiences, maybe it fulfilled some fantasy of America still being a free and individualistic country. We were allowed to channel profits made from ticket sales (tickets were very cheap - about a mark, I think) to a German-American support organization, which would help fund food for receptions, wine for exhibit openings, etc.

Q: You left Hamburg when?

ROMANSKI: I was in Hamburg from '74 to '76, and then we left. This was a JOT assignment: Junior Officer Training. Actually, we were called Public Affair Trainees, PATs, and then I left for Warsaw in 1976. Before leaving Hamburg, I would like to tell you a story from my original tape. The story is about how well the citizens of Hamburg, the Hamburgers, spoke English. You will recall that I was responsible for cultural speakers. One of the speakers who came to

Hamburg, I remember vividly, was the American writer Paul Theroux. He came by train.

Q: The Travel writer?

ROMANSKI: That's right. He had just written The Great Railroad Bazaar, or a similarly popular work and he was promoting it with appearances before prospective readers. He wrote a lot of travel-based literature. In any case, he came to Hamburg by train, which was the customary way for speakers to arrive. I had to meet him at the train station, which I absolutely hated doing because the train station was so large and there were so many exits that it was almost impossible to meet anyone. I almost invariably would miss the speaker and call the America House only to discover that the visitor had been cooling his heels there for half an hour waiting for me! Talk about embarrassment. In that particular case, however, semi-miraculously, we managed to connect. Perhaps I recognized him from the photo on the back of the book jacket. I was very surprised to discover that, even though he was American, he spoke with a pronounced British accent from living in England and having a British wife. He didn't seem to be a very *American* American. He was smoking a pipe and asked me if I knew the German word for pipe cleaner. Of course I had no idea. In my very basic German course, we never covered anything as exotic as that. In his very British accent, he said "Why don't I just pop on over to that kiosk and ask the chap." So he went over to the person selling tobacco in the Hamburg train station and said, "My good man, do you have any pipe cleaners?" The vendor said, "Of course! What amount would you like?" Right then and there, I knew there was little hope for my German in Hamburg if even tobacconists spoke perfect English.

One of the other writers who came to Hamburg during my time was the science fiction author Frederick Pohl. The exciting thing about him for me was not his writing -- although that was OK as far as I could tell, but that he lived in Red Bank, a town located only a few miles from where I had grown up in New Jersey. One travels halfway around the world only to discover someone living right next door.

BRANDON GROVE
Deputy Chief of Mission
East Berlin, GDR (1974-1976)

Brandon Grove Jr. was born in Chicago in 1929 and lived in Hamburg, Germany at the time of Hitler's rise to power. Before Germany invaded Poland, his father was transferred to Holland and later to Madrid in 1940. He attended Fordham University and later Bard College and Princeton University. His Foreign Service career took him to such places as the Ivory Coast, India, West Berlin, and Jerusalem as well as an ambassadorship to Zaire. Ambassador Grove was interviewed by Thomas Stern in 1994.

GROVE: Staring out my window at the dark sky from a plane taking me to East Berlin as the first American diplomat to be accredited to the German Democratic Republic, I thought of the comic irony of my first experience there, sixteen years earlier, in May of 1958.

Before joining the Foreign Service and while staying with my parents in London, I visited the Soviet Union and Poland with a tour group and remained for a few days in Warsaw to spend some time with my uncle Wladek and his family. From Warsaw I continued by train to Berlin, with a plane ticket in my pocket to go on to London that afternoon. When East German border guards came through the train outside Berlin they asked to see my transit visa, which the travel office in Warsaw had failed to provide. After checking with the responsible Soviet officer, they escorted me off the train. Watching incredulously as the train left the station without me, I foolishly asked to speak to the American consul.

There was, of course, no such person in the Soviet Zone in 1958. I soon found myself in an officers' compartment of a Soviet furlough train, drinking tea from the samovar at the end of the coach. Back in the Warsaw travel office, and feeling a bit ridiculous, I got the necessary visa placed in my passport and once more set out for Berlin on the following morning, where it was stamped by the same soldiers I had argued with on the previous day. When my mother met me at London's Heathrow Airport she said, "I knew you'd be arrested on this trip!" And here I was, returning to East Germany to become, in effect, the unavailable American consul. I knew that in every way my service in Berlin this time would be different. The Cold War had not only entered a new phase but, as Heraclitus put it, "you cannot step twice into the same river."

On September 4, 1974 the United States signed an agreement with the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the austere Treaty Room of the Department of State which established normal diplomatic relations. I was present when Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Arthur Hartman signed for the US at a small ceremony. The US side had no smiles for photographers. Our posture was that we had recognized the GDR to remain in step with the Federal Republic, France, and Great Britain who had already done so. In fact, we were the 111th country to recognize the German Democratic Republic.

I was aware from my work on the Policy Planning Staff in the early 1970s that we were considering establishing relations with East Germany, and kept track of the issue through a life-long interest in German affairs. Former Senator John Sherman Cooper would become our first ambassador, and the Department was looking for someone with experience in Berlin to be his deputy, or DCM. The case study I had written in the Senior Seminar on the standing of East Germany in Eastern Europe helped whet my appetite for this assignment. In the summer of 1974, I let Hartman know I would like to be considered for Berlin. I first met Cooper when he called on Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in 1974 as ambassador-designate. He stopped by my office to chat, knowing I was interested in becoming his deputy. I found John Sherman Cooper, at 73, an excessively courteous, formal, soft-spoken southern gentleman with the bearing and aloof manners of an earlier age. At the end of approximately half an hour, he seemed satisfied that we could work together. I hoped we could.

I brought myself up to date on German affairs and planned to leave for Berlin in October. My wife and children, for schooling reasons, would not be joining me in Berlin until Christmas. Although I was to become the first American representative accredited to the German

Democratic Republic, we were not charting entirely new waters. France and the UK had preceded us. Their embassies were functioning in East Berlin and their pioneering work became helpful to us.

We were all accredited to the German Democratic Republic and worked and lived in East Berlin, which the Western Allies did not consider part of the territory of the GDR. This created a semantic issue. Absent a peace treaty and final settlement of other issues surrounding the defeat of Nazi Germany, East Berlin was merely the Soviet sector of a city, Greater Berlin, occupied by the four wartime powers: the US, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. Berlin was therefore not part of East Germany. The surrounding countryside was. Upshot: we styled ourselves embassies to (not in) the GDR. These were not arcane legalisms, but went to the heart of the post-war status of defeated Germany, "the Four Power rights and responsibilities for Berlin and Germany as a whole."

We maintained this distinction when it came to the functions of the American ambassador in East Berlin and his staff, on the one hand, and our ambassador in Bonn and his staff on the other. Martin Hillenbrand, a lifelong expert on German affairs and foreign service officer, was then our ambassador in Bonn. If a problem involving the *Soviet* authorities arose in Berlin that had to be dealt with at the High Commissioner level, John Cooper could not address it because such issues fell to Hillenbrand. Hillenbrand, with his residual powers as successor to the High Commissioner, periodically came to East Berlin to see his counterpart, Soviet Ambassador Piotr Abrasimov, in order to keep in touch and deal with just such matters.

The Soviets simplified their approach to this duality of roles by appointing Abrasimov both their ambassador to the GDR and, in effect, Soviet High Commissioner. He, however, lived in the Soviet sector, and not, in our view, in the GDR. Hillenbrand would drive through "Checkpoint Charlie" with his ambassadorial flags flying, visit the Soviet embassy, transact his business with Abrasimov, and return to Bonn via West Berlin. It was all rather complicated, but not without logic and purpose: the Allies would not permit the post-war legal status of Berlin to erode.

The American military commandant in West Berlin also came to East Berlin to meet with the Russians. Western Allied military in West Berlin had continuing contacts with the Soviet military on issues that dealt with the city or one of its sectors. The military met at Potsdam, outside East Berlin. Americans stationed in West Berlin could cross to the east only through "Checkpoint Charlie," showing their documents to GDR or Soviet authorities through the closed windows of their cars. We, on the other hand, who were accredited to East Germany, passed through any of the East German checkpoints, showing our red diplomatic identification booklets to East German personnel. If there were problems for us at the crossing points, we, as accredited diplomats, would ask for a GDR foreign ministry representative, rather than the Soviet officer. All Americans and their dependents assigned to the GDR had to learn and observe these rules.

Senator Cooper enjoyed a year of service as ambassador to India in the Eisenhower administration. A liberal Republican, he resigned after Kennedy took office. In 1974, his socially prominent wife, Lorraine, began lobbying Secretary Kissinger during Georgetown dinner parties to appoint her husband to the GDR. As I was leaving for Berlin to prepare the way, Winston Lord, head of the Policy Planning Staff, told me Kissinger had directed the State Department to

expedite its efforts to send Cooper to East Germany in order to "get that woman off my back." Lorraine, who would have been delighted to know this, was instrumental in having her husband appointed and despatched on his mission to Berlin.

Cooper was a prominent political figure and turned out to be a fine ambassador in many ways. He was also hard of hearing. Like many older men--Averell Harriman comes to mind--he was not willing to wear a hearing aid, and communicating with him was difficult. I opened any conversation with a short sentence to get his attention, and then repeated it because his first response invariably was "WHAT?" Anyone who worked closely with Cooper had to adjust to this, including our East German hosts.

Cooper was a shrewd judge of people, especially as to their potential for trustworthiness. He came from Pulaski County, Kentucky and a family of modest means. He had been a judge and risen to the US Senate. There, he was the co-author of the Cooper-Church amendment which stopped funding for the Vietnam War. He had finely honed political instincts, and was not naive or anyone's patsy. The East Germans recognized his abilities; they also respected him because of his age, bearing, and old world manners, which they particularly liked. He looked the part. This was true of the Soviets in East Berlin as well, especially Ambassador Abrasimov, who had been the Soviet representative for many, many years and was himself a canny old fox.

The East Germans and Soviets were delighted not only to have American representation in East Berlin, but to gain this in a person of Cooper's renown. Our presence and the American flag flapping from a window pole represented to them the completion of a legitimization process by the West, the much sought *Anerkennung* which had begun when the French and British opened their embassies in East Berlin quite a few months before. Allied policy in this regard was not to get ahead of the West Germans in Bonn. The two Germanys had established relationships earlier in the form of Permanent Representatives which enabled the French, the British, and then ourselves to follow.

Cooper could not speak more than ten words of German, although he had served briefly in Germany during World War II where he was for a short time married to an American Army nurse. That did not stop him from getting along remarkably well with Germans. He communicated with them in ways that were mysterious to me. I remember one day, long after the embassy had opened, when the East Germans changed foreign ministers. Oskar Fischer was the new man. Cooper had been asked to make a courtesy call, and before he was to go we had arranged to meet in front of the Unter den Linden Hotel, where we were all living at the time.

I arrived from my office to find Cooper standing outside eating *wurst* and chatting with the street vendor. I don't know what common language they found because neither could speak the other's tongue. Cooper was about two-thirds finished with his *wurst*, when I suggested that we start our walk to the foreign ministry, or we would be late. Cooper folded a flimsy paper napkin around the uneaten part of the *wurst* and stuck it in his coat pocket.

When we arrived at the ministry we were escorted into the minister's gloomy and oppressively furnished chambers, where we witnessed an unusual performance on the part of a foreign minister. Fischer sat very close to Cooper, barely 18 inches away and, leaning forward, stared

intently into his face. This behavior was disconcerting to Cooper, and I found myself repressing laughter. Ours was essentially a courtesy call, with Fischer mouthing platitudes and Cooper going through a few lackluster talking points. We finally left this odd scene and strolled back to the hotel, laughing about the meeting just ended. Cooper kept imitating the foreign minister by sticking his face close to mine just as Fischer had done with him. We found the episode incomprehensible. While Cooper was imitating Fischer, I kept thinking about the *wurst* which was still in his pocket. I knew that his personal assistant, Trudy Musson from Louisville, a vivaciously competent person Cooper had brought with him from his Senate office, would soon discover this greasy leftover, as she discovered so many other odd things in her boss's overcoat pockets, which she had learned to check from time to time.

Cooper used to forget things like that rather frequently. He was a meticulous dresser, but sloppy otherwise. In his first few days at the embassy, he received at least one security violation notice every night from the Marine guard who inspected our offices after we left. He discarded everything in his waste basket. We finally decided to declare the waste basket a classified area, so everything in the basket would go into the burn bag at the end of the day. Cooper was in deep contrition after each violation of security and apologized elaborately to the Marines but never changed his habits. Our Marines loved Cooper. Each time one of them was promoted, he assembled all of us in his office, the full detachment appearing in their dress uniforms. As he read the standard citation of service to country, his voice began to crack about half way through. At the end we were all on the verge of patriotic tears, each and every time.

Mrs. Cooper, married three times, was a leading social force on the Georgetown scene. A petite, elegant woman of great taste who favored large hats and parasols as protection from the sun, she was for many years on the "best dressed" lists of fashion writers. She was a stickler for correct behavior and, like John, could be stuffy at times, which seemed odd because in private her humor was sharp and did not avoid vulgarity, any more than his did. By the time she arrived in Berlin, Lorraine must have been in her late 60s. She was a Californian who had never gone to college, but was one of the best read and brightest people I have known. Mrs. Cooper's invitations were prized; she held an annual garden buffet at the Cooper's N Street home in Georgetown, the invitation to which read: "In Honor of the United States Senate." A large portion of the Senate and many other luminaries showed up, making this a major event for Washingtonians and their social pages.

Lorraine, also, was an extraordinarily shrewd observer, clever in assessing people, often catty and funny about them, and always in search of their strong and weak points. She had a fine sense of what motivated people. She has been compared in print to Mrs. Lightfoot Lee, the heroine in Henry Adams' novel *Democracy*, a book I read years earlier, and I found the comparison apt. Lorraine's political instincts were as good as her husband's; she had an appreciation of what was really going on. She was unfailingly supportive and always spoke lovingly of him, even when he was in one of his moody periods which occurred periodically.

I admired how warm and friendly Lorraine was with our small embassy staff. She took a genuine interest in them, their problems, their families. What made them laugh made her laugh too. She was at once a *grande dame* and a *Mensch*. John married her sooner than they had planned so she could accompany him to New Delhi, where she had a brief exposure to embassy life. She had

traveled extensively, and lived in Italy and France as a young woman. She spoke good French and Italian, and had studied Russian in Washington with the help of my wife's grandfather, her friend Sergei Cheremeteff. Lorraine made an effort to learn German, enough to handle pleasantries. She also had, far more than her husband, a sense of adventure. Lorraine saw the Coopers doing in East Germany what the David Bruces had accomplished in China. They were pioneering Americans carrying the flag to new territory. Evangeline Bruce was a close friend, and Lorraine reflected her elegance and *savoir faire*. Lorraine was an intensely patriotic American, and she let it show in ways that made her an enthusiastic voice for our country.

My relationship with the Coopers was never easy in Berlin, although John Sherman Cooper and I made an effective team and worked well together. There were moments of strain, often stemming from Lorraine's vision of what the US embassy residence in Berlin should be. The State Department was never able to satisfy her completely, although it tried to. After our tour in Berlin was over, the Coopers became two of my closest friends. We saw a great deal of each other in Washington. When I felt low, Lorraine would buck me up. At the N Street house, I poured for her the last glass of champagne she would drink. Shortly after I left the Cooper's home that evening, Lorraine suffered a massive stroke from which she never regained consciousness. The two of us had been gossiping about friends in Berlin.

Cooper's main objectives in the new relationship with the GDR were to establish respect for the United States on the part of the regime and a favorable image of our country in the eyes of East Germans; to keep the performance of his embassy within the bounds of post-war Allied rights, responsibilities and practices, a task he largely left to me; to lay the basis, on the scene, for what we recognized would be a long and arduous process of dealing with restitution and American Jewish claims; to advance our modest commercial interests in the GDR; and to negotiate a consular convention with that government to protect our citizens.

We also sought to report back to Washington our first-hand impressions and analysis of the East German scene, something previously done from an Eastern Affairs Section of our mission in West Berlin and by various intelligence entities. This was the other part of Hitler's Germany whose post-war status was still unresolved. There were 20 Soviet divisions in the GDR, stationed there to keep order and constitute the core of a force which could move through the Fulda Gap one day to assault the NATO forces of Western Europe. This was the largest concentration of Soviet troops anywhere in the world. At the heart of these tensions lay an isolated Berlin, vital and vulnerable at the same time.

Within the limits of what could be done in a little more than two years, Cooper accomplished these goals and first steps. Most important to him was to get our relationship with the regime off to a correct start. "Correct" was a favorite word of his, reflecting principles, a lawyer's mind, and his view of American interests. Cooper never expected to produce warmth in the relationship, even during a period of *detente* with the Soviet Union which led to a thawing of sorts in other countries of Eastern Europe, and he was realistic in this appraisal. Nothing important in the Allied-Soviet relationship over Berlin would budge in those years, nor did we intend that this happen through our newly established presence in East Germany.

There had been discussions within our government as to how and where I, as *chargé d'affaires*, should first appear in the GDR. One view held that I should drive through "Checkpoint Charlie" from West Berlin, emphasizing the occupation status and Allied as well as Soviet roles. The other maintained that because we had recognized the German Democratic Republic, I should land in its territory from a foreign capital, as would any other newly arrived diplomat. The second option became the preferred one, and this is what I did, relieved at the outcome. The East German protocol staff from the foreign ministry was also, in this way, able to go through its protocol of greeting a new head of mission at the airport. The East Germans were aware of this intra-US governmental debate through Felix Bloch of our mission's staff in West Berlin, who served as liaison officer for the details of my arrival, and they appreciated its outcome. (Bloch, years later, was accused of spying for the Soviet Union during his assignment as DCM in Vienna. I saw no evidence of such sympathies during our time together in Berlin. Bloch has not been indicted.)

On the arrival issue, Cooper and I had argued that, despite the nature of the regime, the East Germans should be treated correctly and with a certain respect, consonant with proper diplomatic behavior on our part. This may seem a small point, but it was not. Communication in diplomacy takes many forms, and often consists of sending signals to the other side through actions, attitudes, and behavior sometimes no greater than a look of disapproval, a stiffening of one's back, or a smile. My arrival arrangements carried a message about our view of the quality of this new relationship, and the extent to which we intended to treat the GDR as a normal partner in international affairs. The matter was decided in Washington by Arthur Hartman, a man of consummate skill and sensitivity in diplomacy. In a further bit of signal sending, I stopped in Bonn for two days on the way for briefings at the embassy and foreign ministry, a step we brought to the attention of the German press.

At Schoenfeld Airport, I was met by the deputy chief of protocol when my plane from Copenhagen landed, and driven into the city through torrential rains to my temporary quarters at the Unter-den-Linden Hotel. This was a seedy place indeed, but the best hotel in East Berlin at the time. Unhappily, there was a photographer who took pictures as I was checking in. This led to a longish story in *The New York Times* about the first US representative arriving in East Berlin, which was not what the Coopers or I wanted. The German papers carried similar stories. Our country director in Washington, David Anderson, called to tell me to keep a low profile, because the Coopers were miffed. They were anxious that John Sherman Cooper be known as the American who opened the US embassy in East Berlin.

I was not authorized by the Department to present my credentials as *chargé* until he had arrived, so there was no "official" embassy to East Germany. This scenario confounded the East Germans, who could not understand why I had not offered my letter of accreditation on arrival. But that is the way Cooper wanted it done. I was able to rationalize the situation at the foreign ministry, which did not make an issue of my unofficial presence and ignored this breach of procedure. As a practical matter, I was not impeded in my ability to do what I needed to, even though in diplomatic limbo. It is inconceivable that a career foreign service officer would have insisted on a similar arrangement as ambassador-designate. Our policy of keeping the act of recognition a low-key matter in the Cold War context argued, as State recognized, for playing down the ceremonial aspects in any event.

I did not fly the flag on our car, and we did not fly an American flag from our office building. This irritated the East Germans, who were anxious to have our flag displayed as soon as possible in public attestation to our recognition of their regime. One cannot exaggerate the East German regime's hunger for legitimacy, the "*Anerkennung der DDR*," celebrated in front- page headlines each time some small African state granted recognition. We were the biggest catch of all. Cooper himself would do the honors.

The State Department had sent an advance team to East Germany many months before, ably led by Joan Clark, then the executive director of Hartman's Bureau of European Affairs. It focused on leasing office space and housing, necessary spade work in preparation for our arrival. Her team was supported by our mission in West Berlin. Felix Bloch was assigned as liaison officer for Joan's efforts in East Berlin, and subsequent dealings with the East Germans. He later became our economic counselor at the embassy. I found him rather cold, distant and sardonic, but good at his work.

By the time I arrived, modest office quarters had been acquired, but were not ready to be occupied. A home for us at Mayakowskyring 50 had been rented, but I could not move in because it was still unfurnished. It was a rather large and brooding villa overlooking a park with a stream and ducks, wooden bridges and my favorite bench. The kitchen was small, but we installed the latest equipment from West Berlin. When our books and pictures arrived, along with the few items of furniture Mary and I traveled with, it became more home-like but never a place one could call cozy or happy.

Perhaps the gray skies of long, cold winters made it seem that way. The children played with their American friends from school in the flower garden and in its trees, or bicycled in our village-like neighborhood. They had no East German companions and none seemed to live nearby. My ten year old son Paul fell out of his favorite tree one day, and I brought him back from the Army hospital in West Berlin with a cast on his ankle, which made him a hero to his siblings and circle of friends. Mark, on the other hand, then five, who fell on the edge of a chair while tearing around the dining room, received careless attention at the local and unsanitary East German hospital and has a scar on his forehead to show for it.

I spent the first three months in the hotel, in a run-down, small and drably furnished room. The hotel served as the initial living quarters for our staff, at its peak during this period numbering 23 Americans, including the Marine guards. My room was at the end of a hall, and outside was a chair occupied twenty-four hours a day by a uniformed East German policeman for my "protection." What we did was closely monitored by the East Germans. If we wanted to have sensitive conversations, we walked the streets. When my wife and children arrived in mid-December, we spent a dreary Christmas at the Unter-den-Linden.

Next to arrive after me were James and Aniko Gaal Weiner. Jim was our administrative counselor and therefore a key man for us all. His East German point of contact was one Dr. Loeffler, who presided over the *Dienstleistungsamt*, or Diplomatic Services Agency, to which we had to turn for housing, office space, and local employees such as drivers, household staff,

and embassy clerks. In keeping with the regime's satisfaction with our presence, Loeffler was as helpful as he could be.

Aniko, new to the Foreign Service, was a star. Hungarian-born, elegant and artistic by nature, she worked tirelessly to help people settle in, added color to the decor of our three office suites which then constituted the chancery, and became a valued friend and helpmate to Lorraine Cooper. Typical of her priorities was to work with the Marine gunnery sergeant and, with purchases from the many stylish shops of West Berlin, brighten up and make a home out of the Marine quarters in the muddy Leipzigerstrasse, a monolithic and aesthetically bereft mass housing project adjacent to the Berlin wall, and still under construction, where she and Jim, and Cooper's secretary Trudie Musson, also lived.

Soon after my arrival we were assigned a communications officer. Until the embassy moved several years later to its permanent chancery, where there would be a communications center, one of his responsibilities at the end of the day was to take a sealed pouch of telegrams and diplomatic correspondence through a checkpoint to West Berlin for electronic transmission by USBER's communicators in the US Mission on the Clayallee. In the morning, he would again take an embassy car, drive through a checkpoint, and pick up messages that had arrived during the night.

One evening early on, I had written a telegram that was ready to be sent from West Berlin, and told our communicator, Bob Walker, I would take it myself because I needed to be there that night anyway. Bob drove me to USBER, where I left the telegram off and then went on to dinner with friends. Afterwards, I took a West Berlin taxi to "Checkpoint Charlie," which was as far as it could go. By now it was raining furiously, and I had not brought an umbrella. The walk back to my hotel on the other side of the wall was about five long and gloomy blocks through streets in a bombed-out section near Hitler's bunker that were deserted and dimly lit. Soon, I was so wet that water ran down the back of my neck and squished in my shoes. Far from feeling depressed, I recognized this was one of the most satisfying moments in my fifteen years of foreign service. I felt I had been born to walk this street on this night in this way, and that what I was doing was worthwhile. With no one around to watch, I tried out some Gene Kelly dance steps in the pouring rain.

I decided that all of our staff would live in East Berlin. There had been interest on the part of some to live in the west and commute through the wall every day. I believed that if we were assigned to East Berlin, we should live there. However, we depended on our mission in West Berlin for much of our logistical support, and so we needed to cross through "Checkpoint Charlie" often, which, fortunately, was located near the embassy. We did all of our shopping in the west and often ate lunch there; eventually our children attended American schools there; we went to theaters there; all of this was a respite from the closed, dour atmosphere of East Berlin. At the end of the day, each of us returned to our homes in East Berlin, and eventually it felt like coming home. Despite the spartan conditions we worked and lived under, the staff responded well. As the first Americans in East Berlin, we had a sense of pioneering that brought us together. We supported each other and morale was surprisingly high.

In East Berlin, one breathed polluted air day in and day out: the brown coal dust, the East European cigarette smoke, the vapors of cheap gasoline. Shops were mostly empty, and people drew within themselves in public or with foreigners. Physically, the city had changed little since I last visited it five years earlier. There was some new construction, particularly of Soviet-style apartment blocs, and some renovation and restoration of historic buildings, even churches. But the atmosphere of oppression, the fear of contact with foreigners, the lack of gaiety and spontaneity remained the same.

All the while, the East Germans had access to West German television. The GDR could not keep these broadcasts out of its territory. Every evening, without trying to hide it, East Germans watched West German TV. They saw a way of life, as it was portrayed across the wall and in other western countries, materially and socially different from theirs. Yet the East Germans viewed this other standard of living with ambivalence. They were shocked by the crime rates, the blatant sexuality on TV, and by what appeared to them to be other signs of moral decay in West German society. On the other hand, they could not help but be impressed by the material opulence of West German life, and envied their German cousins for that.

I came to understand this ambivalence, a combination of their conservatism and prudery. East Berliners, particularly those no longer young, were not sure they wanted to live like their relatives on the other side of the wall. They coveted the affluence--refrigerators, fancy cars, and laden stores--and were wary of the life-style. Many were frightened by it, and concerned about the effects such freedoms would have on their own children, who also watched television.

By the 1970's, all of Berlin, in different ways, had recaptured the artistic vitality for which the city was famous in the pre-war days of Berthold Brecht, Kurt Weill, and Marlene Dietrich, Kaethe Kollwitz and George Grosz. Suggestions of vulgarity, drunkenness and sexuality, of loneliness and despair about life itself, lingered in Berlin's streets, where pock-marked building fronts with dark rooms behind their lace curtains protected secrets one did not wish to know. No writer of English has caught this mood better than Christopher Isherwood, "Herr Issyvoo" to his landlady Frl. Schroeder, in *Berlin Stories*. Hildegard Knef's song "*Ich Hab' Noch Ein Koffer in Berlin*" speaks to this spirit.

In the 1970s, Von Karajan led the Berlin Philharmonic and Felsenstein staged breathtaking operas in East Berlin. Talented young writers, painters and actors lived on both sides of the wall. The lack of artistic freedom in the East was palpable. Berliners are possessed, in varying degrees, of fashion consciousness, intellectual vigor, cockiness and *avant garde* tendencies; raunchiness and maudlin sentimentality; stubbornness, courage, steadfastness and rudeness; a love of freedom, dogs, asparagus, and their vaunted "Berlin air." They sum up their brassy self-confidence in the words *Schnauze mit Herz*, meaning big mouth with a heart.

Few East Berliners were routinely allowed to cross to the west. Pensioners did so because they were considered unproductive, and family visits were occasionally approved by the regime in emergencies. At first, Berliners on both sides saw each other from a distance, but by 1974 buildings close to the wall had been razed. A "death strip" between East and West was widened and fortified with watch towers, fences, and ferocious guard dogs on long leashes. What could be

seen most clearly from the east was the publisher Axel Springer's building in West Berlin adjacent to Checkpoint Charlie, and behind it the loom of West Berlin's bright lights.

In East Berlin, houses occupied by Americans had a police booth in front manned twenty-four hours a day ostensibly for protection from unspecified threats, but in fact to observe who came and went. We knew we were being subjected to technical surveillance, an East German specialty in the Soviet Bloc.

At the embassy, we needed to take down one of the walls in our office so we could install a "bubble," a secure and shielded enclosure the size of a small conference room. We explained to Herr Loeffler at the Diplomatic Services Agency that because the ambassador, once he arrived, wished to have an area for staff meetings, a non-retaining wall would have to be torn down to provide space. The wall was reluctantly demolished by the East Germans, who surely understood our reasons. Then came an unending stream of crates from West Berlin containing the acoustic blocks that would constitute the "bubble."

Once it was constructed by American Seabees, we were often in this secure room within a room, despite its poor and noisy ventilation. We recommended that people on our staff who wanted to discuss sensitive personal matters use this room to protect their privacy. Many who wished to have such conversations went instead to West Berlin. We would point to the ceiling if someone was about to discuss things that should not be overheard, sign language universally understood behind the Iron Curtain. The British, French, and West Germans had their own versions of "bubbles." I was intrigued by the subtle differences in design and furnishings: the British and French interiors had the down-at-heel feeling of a gentlemen's club that had known better times. The West Germans and ourselves offered a contemporary conference room ambiance. None was comfortable.

Ambassador and Mrs. John Sherman Cooper arrived in December of 1974 at Schoenfeld Airport in East Berlin. The ambassador made a brief statement and then they were sped to the Unter-den-Linden Hotel. We had asked that two rooms be joined by knocking out a wall so the Coopers would have space in which to move around. With the Coopers came two butlers, Thomas and Michael, Mrs. Cooper's wonderful Salvadoran cook, Delia Alfaro, and her personal maid, Caroline. We housed this staff in West Berlin; the Coopers settled into their dowdy, noisy, and over-heated hotel with its collection of East European smells.

On their first night, the Coopers had a quiet dinner by themselves. The next afternoon, the administrative staff and I took them to the house the State Department's advance team had chosen for them. It was the best they could find. This turned out to be a small villa surrounded on three sides by a large cemetery. It had a tiny 1930s kitchen and small rooms, none of which opened on each other, and were accessible only from a cramped entrance hall. Delia, Tom, and Michael looked shaken. It was entirely unsuitable for the Coopers and fell far short of their expectations. Words failed Mrs. Cooper. A foreign service couple would have made the adjustment, perhaps even to the cemetery. It took only a few minutes, however, before the ambassador said to me: "When's the next plane home?"

I anticipated this reaction and had a fallback plan. We had asked the Diplomatic Services Agency to show us one of their shoe box shaped houses on the diplomatic compound. There were about thirty of these in a kind of Levittown for foreign ambassadors. Surrounded by a high fence, they were conveniently located. Some pathetic attempts at landscaping had been made, and it was not a pretty sight. On the plus side, they had large kitchens, a large dining room, several bedrooms and baths. They were well designed for entertaining. The outside area could accommodate many guests. Had we shown one of those houses first to the Coopers, we would have heard the same question about the next plane. But having seen the best traditional, pre-war housing the East Germans could provide, a shoe box would look better to John and Lorraine. Everything, after all, is relative.

The Coopers, quite upset, asked me to join them for dinner in their room that night. I described the shoe box, pro and con, and said it had great potential. I suggested that Mrs. Cooper could work with the basic structure and transform its appearance on the inside the way no other diplomats ever thought of doing. If they would be interested, I could arrange to take them to the diplomatic compound the next day so they could see the challenge for themselves. And that is what happened.

I could see a gleam in Mrs. Cooper's eyes the moment we entered. She was a talented interior decorator and it did not take long for her to assess the possibilities. Thomas was an interior designer as well as butler, and saw what might be done. Delia loved the kitchen. Lorraine transformed that shoe box into an entirely different place. She put tapestries on the walls, borrowed paintings from the National Gallery in Washington with its director Carter Brown's help, and strategically placed miniature orange trees we had procured from West Berlin. The East Germans were dazzled by this endorsement of their handiwork. More importantly, the Coopers were happy in their new home. Lorraine's imagination and determination got us all past a large hurdle.

I mention the housing crisis because so much of my time was spent on matters like this, something to be expected in opening a new post. Our mission in West Berlin did its utmost to accommodate and support us. And what an asset it was to have West Berlin on the other side of this divided city! Our well versed administrative officer, Jim Weiner, however, always had a difficult time of it with Mrs. Cooper. Through her husband, she regularly tested the limits of our government's procurement policies.

The matter of the wooden toilet seats makes the point. Lorraine had heard from her friend, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, that wooden toilet seats were good in winter because they did not get as cold as the other kind. So she insisted on wooden toilet seats, and one day the ambassador put these on a list of items he wanted ordered for his residence. I told him we and Washington had been as responsive as possible to his many requests. Wooden toilet seats were very expensive. If we sent a telegram to the State Department with such a request, it would not be long before some ne'r-do-well would leak it to *The Washington Post*. I suggested that if wooden toilet seats were needed, they should be bought privately. I never heard about them again. Lorraine was visibly annoyed.

I walked a thin line in East Berlin. The State Department thought I was too supportive of the Coopers and too willing an accomplice in their demands. The Coopers, on the other hand, thought I was excessively cautious, too much a Washington bureaucrat. Privately, however, Cooper made it clear to me he wanted to be kept on the straight and narrow path of compliance with the rules.

Jim Weiner met his Waterloo with Mrs. Cooper in the incident of the air freshener. This is a liquid poured with an eye-dropper into a narrow, grooved ring that is placed on light bulbs in lamps to get rid of such smells as cigarette smoke. It is scented and emits light smoke when subjected to the heat of the bulb. Jim had never seen one of these before. On the evening in question, during a large, elegant reception at the residence in the diplomatic compound, at which arriving guests were announced at the top of the stairs by the butler, Jim spotted this smoke, and shouted "FIRE!" Pushing his way past the orange trees and through the guests, he smartly yanked the lamp cord out of the wall. When his gaze eventually met Lorraine's, however, he realized that, somehow, he had sized up the situation incorrectly.

On issues of policy and the bilateral relationship, Cooper did not intend to go further with the East Germans than Washington was willing to accept. But he had differences with State over tactics. Cooper did not appreciate guidance on *how* he should carry out his instructions. He felt tactics were his business, and I supported this view. Our relations with the State Department and embassy in the West German capital of Bonn were unavoidably sensitive and complicated. There was in Washington a certain awe of the politically prominent and respected Cooper, and concern that we in East Berlin might stray from the well trodden paths of Allied practices with initiatives of our own and cause trouble. As Cooper's deputy and the ranking foreign service officer, I felt the breath of Washington on the back of my neck more than anyone else. Because we had no serious substantive differences within the US government over East Germany, it was fairly easy to keep our embassy on a steady course.

The Western Allies, West Germans, and ourselves worked closely on Berlin issues. It was Bonn that carried the major share of dealing with the East Germans. Their interests were more numerous and immediate than anyone else's. This placed great importance on staying in close touch with our West German colleagues in Berlin, so we could give Washington well founded reporting on what they thought and did. Had there been malevolence, personal jealousies, lack of competence in any of the Allied embassies, or in the West German mission in East Berlin, we would have had serious problems. None of this happened.

The years of 1972 through 1979 were the Cold War's period of *detente*, or easing of tensions between the United States and Soviet Union. *Detente* occurred because it suited the interests of both powers at the same time. This thaw in the Cold War did not diminish any underlying antagonisms, but permitted a change in the quality of relations on the surface, as well as progress toward peace. *Detente* was the product of Kissinger's thinking, put into practice by Brezhnev and Nixon. It provided the Soviet economy a respite from defense spending and allowed its regime to focus on issues elsewhere, as in China and, to its eventual regret, Afghanistan. In East Berlin, the Soviets replaced Walter Ulbricht, an opponent of *detente*, by Erich Honecker in 1971.

Detente produced the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), and the initially controversial Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) whose Final Act was signed in Helsinki in August of 1975. This agreement legitimized the post-war boundaries of Eastern Europe, but permitted a formal monitoring of the human rights of people in the region with benefits to us the Soviets had not anticipated and the West exploited. In their communiqué at the end of a North Atlantic Council meeting in Brussels in December, 1974 the ministers specified that success of *detente* in Europe was linked to implementation the 1972 Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin.

The joint space flight *Apollo-Soyuz*, in which spacecraft from the two superpowers docked in outer space in July, 1975 symbolized the benefits of cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union. Berlin, where US and Soviet forces stood toe to toe, functioned as a barometer in the relationship. It came naturally to us who served there during *detente* to reflect and reinforce this newly changed atmosphere in our statements and diplomatic relationships.

The East German regime found itself left out of this process. They were not actors in *detente*, but spectators who must have felt uneasy about a shift in Cold War politics that warmed relations, at least superficially, between their protectors and ourselves. It is not too much to say that during this period Soviet Ambassador Piotr Abrasimov in East Berlin permitted a few visible rays of light to fall between himself and the GDR's party general secretary Erich Honecker. Abrasimov, for example, greeted Cooper warmly at public receptions, holding up the receiving line for all to notice.

Nowhere was diplomacy more intricate. With ourselves, the Soviets, and the GDR's leadership at each of three corners, diplomacy in Berlin was a continuing, subtly balanced process of triangulation. US interests had been driven by global considerations in the Cold War, our quadripartite treaty obligations, ties to our Western Allies and NATO, and the primacy of our relations with Bonn. The Soviets shared Cold War and treaty responsibilities, but had created the German Democratic Republic as a pseudo-sovereign, puppet entity in their zone of occupation, thereby greatly complicating the picture. The GDR's corner in the triangle was a largely powerless place for a pawn between the two antagonists, and a *protégé* of one of them. The regime, Berlin's diplomats, and even the general population watched with fascination as this temporary Cold War *rapprochement* between the two giants played itself out on the world scene and, more immediately, in the confrontational setting of Berlin itself. What would this lead to?

Ambassador Piotr Abrasimov had been assigned to East Berlin for more than ten years and was proud of the fact that he spoke no German. When we began to see him socially in 1974, he did not conceal his unhappiness at being kept so long in Berlin. He did not respect or like Germans, as his asides in conversation soon made obvious. This reflected a Soviet attitude Abrasimov, in the spirit of *detente* and social conviviality, felt he could impart to us, believing that as allies against the Germans in World War II, we would agree. We did not, but didn't say so. Triangulation, again.

Abrasimov and Cooper went out of their ways to develop a cordial relationship, and this proved quite easy to do. Cooper was not a naturally effusive person, but he and Abrasimov, also not effusive, soon warmed to each other. The Soviet deputy chief of mission was Anatoly Gromyko,

son of the Soviet foreign minister, who was posted to East Berlin shortly before my arrival. He was my counterpart in many discussions.

The Abrasimovs began to invite the Coopers, the Groves, and the Gromykos, Anatoly and Valya, to their residence for dinner. These were held in the private quarters upstairs, which were far more intimate than the cavernous and formal areas below. The furnishings bore a flavor of late 19th century European elegance in a faded, gilded, overstuffed way. Russians favored this style, which probably seemed imperial to them. Huge paintings from the school of Socialist Realism hung incongruously from the walls. Their building, covering an entire city block, served as chancery and residence, and was of post-war construction. It had an intimidating exterior meant to underscore the authority of its occupants to one and all.

The Abrasimovs lived comfortably, as did the Gromykos. They had efficient household staffs, and all the food and liquor from West Berlin they might want. Dishes at their dinners were excellent, and the meals were served in elaborate courses, in the Russian fashion. Caviar seemed to come out of buckets. Their hospitality was generous and sincere. Kissinger allegedly said in Moscow, "I will do anything for caviar!" a weakness I have always understood.

The most festive occasion was the Abrasimovs' invitation to a dinner celebrating the *Apollo-Soyuz* docking in space on the day after the event itself, in mid-July of 1975. Eight of us sat down to a colorfully decorated table that might have been prepared for a birthday party, but here the theme was outer space and spacecrafts, not an easy one for the embassy's staff to grapple with. After all, how best to represent space? Anatoly Gromyko proposed we sign and exchange the typed menu cards, and we cheerfully did so. There was a hollow ring at times to the toasts and joviality, because the basic strains in US-Soviet relations, among them the Berlin wall a few meters away, remained unchanged, something we all recognized. Nevertheless, the corniness of the decorations and pride of our hosts in them, the elaborate plans to please American guests, were touching. Our moments of forced gaiety reminded me of well meant efforts to cheer up a sick patient. If occasionally our voices were too loud, these were the benefits and contradictions of *detente*.

I particularly recall Cooper's explanation of our 1976 elections to Abrasimov. We were at dinner one night during which the conversation turned to these elections. Cooper sat back and described the US and our democratic processes with great eloquence. In his soft voice and personal way, he talked about Somerset, Kentucky, where he was born, his experiences there as a judge, the political life and concerns of near-poor Pulaski County. He described elements of the 1976 elections: the personalities involved, the issues being debated. Abrasimov was captivated. He obviously had never heard a lucid explanation of our political system from someone deeply versed in that system. It was an extraordinary moment of outreach by Cooper. Abrasimov made no attempt to change the subject, but sat as engrossed as we all were around the table. It was a moving experience because Cooper found words that reached the souls of his listeners, among them three proud Americans.

This is what a good ambassador can do to explain his country, particularly in circumstances as difficult as East Berlin at the time. After a few halfhearted comparisons, Abrasimov gave up trying to praise the Soviet system. It was not that Cooper had made a convert of him; he hadn't.

Rather, Abrasimov and even Gromyko had gained new insights and respect for the US in ways they had not expected.

We usually reported on such social affairs to Washington, although I doubt there is a record of this particular evening. None of us foresaw the consequences for communism in the late 1980s. We had few expectations of even modest change in that system. But there is always the first step in a long journey, and the change in tenor of our relationships in East Berlin during *detente* gave us small hope for a better future. Murderous incidents at the wall did not decrease; the US-Soviet relationship did not blossom into lasting friendship. But it was clear to us that Abrasimov had registered a change in his assessment of Americans. *Detente* finally ended with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on Christmas Day of 1979.

Gromyko and I had a bantering relationship. He was a vain man, a Marxist ideologue conscious of his status as the son of the foreign minister. He was also loquacious, pompous, and a braggart. Anatoly was not so secret an admirer of the US: he regularly wore cowboy boots, which amazed me. Valya Gromyko was glamorous and westernized. She was his second wife, and had an engaging streak of rebelliousness. Valya liked to go to West Berlin occasionally with my wife, whose origins were Russian, to look at the latest fashions and buy perfume. She was flirtatious and a smooth dancer. I liked her.

Anatoly was not a person I could feel close to or trust. On occasion, we invited the Gromykos to our garden to grill hamburgers. When out of sight of his Soviet colleagues, Anatoly fancied himself an expatriate from, say, Chevy Chase, Maryland. He strutted around in his boots and loud sport shirts and spoke with an exaggerated American accent, believing himself to be truly one of the boys. He had a lot of exposure to the US and the western world, although nominally an expert on African affairs. There were always unstated limits to the closeness of our relationship. I saw Anatoly briefly a year after Berlin, on a trip to Moscow where he was director of the Soviet Africa Institute. I called on him at his office and brought a small present for Valya. Anatoly did not invite me to his home. We no longer had the give-and-take we developed in East Berlin, which was not surprising, based, as it was, on the convenience and opportunities of the moment.

Our embassy was assigned two officials for regular contacts with the East German government. One was the gnome-like Dr. Hans-Otto Geyer, who headed the American hemisphere desk of the foreign ministry, and the other was his immediate superior, under secretary Horst Grunert, who later became an effective ambassador to Washington. I saw the former, Cooper the latter. In Washington, too, the State Department kept East German contacts below senior levels. We were asked to request appointments with other government officials through Dr. Geyer. We were also asked to submit guest lists in advance of our social functions if they included East Germans, and to cite the subjects to be discussed. We complied only to the extent of inviting East German officials through the Ministry's protocol office.

Geyer and other GDR officials were correct and courteous, but distant. Periodically, we would be treated to a pro forma lecture about the wonders and successes of communism, but this was an exception; our relations with East German officials were businesslike. Interested in promoting our presence, they tried to accommodate us and not offend us. They sought visible

rapprochement as a propaganda objective, and understood that preaching ideology would not make a dent on us and might even have a negative impact. Occasionally, Geyer would offer some barbed comments about the failures of capitalism. He was a hardline, believing Marxist, stubborn, and a Prussian to boot, which made him formidable as an adversary. But he had his sense of humor, a sly smile connoting appreciation of our position, and we managed to get along satisfactorily with this granite, school-masterish personality who sprayed saliva between the spaces in his teeth.

Doctor Geyer, of all things, fancied himself a bourbon connoisseur, a fact of which we took due note. At Christmas, we would give liquor or American cigarettes to East Germans who worked closely with us. Our best bourbon went to Dr. Geyer. No one ever refused gifts; we were careful to make sure we could not be accused of passing bribes, adhering to the pattern of gift-giving which had become acceptable in the diplomatic community. Some of our non-Allied diplomatic colleagues, however, engaged in lavish greasing of the skids in the spirit of Christmas.

In December, 1974 we at the embassy began preparing our children for the spring semester at the American schools in West Berlin. This would entail crossing through the wall twice each day in a small school bus we had acquired. The drivers were East Germans given permission to enter West Berlin. One of these, young and brash Herr Kuenast, was fired by the Diplomatic Services Agency for regularly returning from the west with pornographic magazines for resale.

We needed some form of identification for our children, other than their diplomatic passports. We had first graders who could not be expected to hold on to their passports, show them at the checkpoints, and bring them home every afternoon without losing them. Or so we thought. It took NATO, London, Paris, Bonn, and Washington several months to accept our proposal of a laminated card, worn on a beaded chain, which would not compromise allied rights and practices in Berlin. The issue of children's IDs affected children of all three Allied powers who traveled back and forth, and was therefore a matter to be resolved in the same way by the three occupying powers. It also had to be accepted by the Soviets in practice, as well as the East Germans, if unofficially. Never did a child misplace a diplomatic passport or ID, a remarkable achievement in exercising responsibility. I suspect my children still remember our firm words of instruction to them about their passports and cards.

The social scene in East Berlin was an active one among non-communist diplomats. We were kept busier than we wished; other opportunities for social life in East Berlin were limited. We saw the same people, most of whom were interested in us as sources of information, or were fishing for invitations to the now fabled Cooper residence with its orange trees. There were some ambassadors who were extraordinarily well informed. They became important contacts for us because of our limited access to East Germans. Foremost among these were the representatives of Sweden and Pakistan. Diplomats from East European countries kept their distance, and we never had productive relations with them. They felt watched by each other, the Soviets, and their GDR hosts. When a large social function such as the Fourth of July came along, they would cheerfully enjoy our food and drink. We managed these contacts carefully.

The United States did not establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China until January, 1979. The Chinese had of course been represented in East Berlin for many years. When

we encountered their diplomats at various functions, we followed the practice approved by the State Department of exchanging greetings or handshakes, but not lingering to speak or discuss anything beyond the weather. It was surprising to me, therefore, in August, 1975 when the Chinese *chargé* came up to me at a large East German function at a time when I, too, was acting as *chargé*, and asked me in excellent German whether I could join him for a cup of tea and a brief conversation at his embassy. After thanking him, I answered that I would reply shortly.

The State Department cabled back that I should accept. My driver was astonished when I gave him the address, and the dutiful East German guards in their booths outside must have been equally so. I waited for my host's message as we sipped tea in Oriental surroundings and talked about life in Berlin. He had been there for a long time, and said German affairs would be his life's work. Finally, he got to the point. Former President Nixon, who had resigned from office in August of 1974, was considering a private visit to China. The *chargé* asked me to report back on behalf of his government that Mr. Nixon was welcome and would be well received. Why the Chinese picked Berlin as the channel for this message remains a mystery. They may have recognized that Cooper, a political appointee, was a friend of President Ford and knew Nixon, and that his embassy might be the most direct way to get a political message through.

I had another encounter with the Chinese deputy chief of mission some months later, in January 1976. Premier Zhou En-lai, who with President Nixon negotiated the opening to China, had died of cancer. Finding my interlocutor again at one of Mr. Honecker's grand receptions, I shook his hand and said the world had lost a great statesman. He thanked me with tears in his eyes.

At the top of the East German government's agenda in Washington was promotion of its exports. A concomitant goal was to gain respectability in our eyes. They sought to establish an image of friendliness, accessibility, and charm. In this view, the Berlin wall became "a necessary and not unusual international border demarcation." Good relations between us, they said, were to be expected. When Grunert became the GDR's ambassador to Washington, he made a good impression with his bonhomie, well-cut suits, and frequent entertaining. No one was asking him to submit his guest lists to the State Department for approval, either.

We viewed ourselves in East Berlin as the post-war embassy in the "other" Germany, a part of central Europe not directly covered by American diplomats since 1941. Negotiations for a consular convention to protect our citizens were successfully concluded by a State Department team of lawyers and consular experts, with myself at its head. Two sticking points concerned issues of notification of arrests, and access to prisoners. I found the East German side, in these first negotiations since relations were established, formal and proper almost to a fault, but forthcoming and willing to engage in banter if they thought things were going well. I learned the benefits of understanding the other side's language and their discussions among themselves, and of taking advantage of time devoted to translation to think ahead to our next round of tactics and responses when the discussion shifted to us. The East German consular experts seemed not particularly aware that I spoke German.

We also set about finding and registering American citizens, for whom we had consular responsibility. They were few in number. Our small USIS operation sought to explain America and its values. This "propaganda" became the most sensitive area of our activities, one Dr. Geyer

found threatening, and sought to constrain and disparage. We urged the GDR to vote with us on certain UN resolutions and on other issues in multilateral diplomacy. Our interests converged sometimes, and we strengthened our relations by discussing multilateral affairs in depth. We followed the Law of the Sea convention closely with them, on many of whose key issues we, the GDR, and the Soviets held similar views.

When we raised questions about untended Jewish cemeteries in Berlin, the East Germans were forthcoming. We had several concerns in this matter: burial records, some of them of Americans; replacement of tombstones which had been removed or vandalized; and responsibility for cemetery maintenance. We also became involved in property restitution issues. These cases were always complex, and tended to be precedent-setting. Progress was extremely slow.

I have described elsewhere the isolation we felt while we were living in West Berlin from 1965-69. It was more pronounced in East Berlin ten years later. We were able to travel into East Germany, after obtaining the necessary clearances from Dr. Geyer if we were going to stay overnight. On day trips, we could drive wherever we wanted, except in restricted areas, and were always observed by the local Volpos, or People's Police, who uninhibitedly wrote down our license numbers.

The countryside was in a time warp. I had known Germany nearly forty years earlier when I lived with my parents in Hamburg for several years as a boy. By the mid-70s, it appeared that little outside the cities had changed. Many roads were old and narrow, steeply cambered with ditches along their sides, the farm houses run down. I remember a tranquil softness, as in farmland paintings by impressionists in the late nineteenth century in which dark-earthed open fields were worked by women bending down in their bulky clothes to reach the soil.

Arriving at a village, we noticed the two or three stores that had been constructed recently, with their glass fronts and neon lights. They seemed jarringly out of place. The acronym for government-run food stores was an astonishing "HO-HO-HO." Municipal buildings, such as the city hall, police headquarters and schools, were usually of more recent vintage. Except for automobiles and these modern touches, the villages could not have been much different seventy years earlier.

Farmers, who grew their own food, ate better than their city kin, but the standard of living, while far higher than in the USSR, was not much different from Poland, and perhaps slightly below Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Our conspicuous diplomatic license plates were red with white lettering. People would go out of their way to avoid contact with us, fearing the STASI secret police would make trouble for them. We called on nervous and unforthcoming city officials, after appointments had been arranged by the foreign ministry. We participated in the Leipzig fair in 1975, the first full year after US-GDR relations were established. This step was a success, with Honecker making a highly publicized point of visiting our modest booth of trade catalogues and chatting for the cameras with Cooper. Recognition was being burnished by a touch of surface friendship.

Erich Honecker was head of state and general secretary of the Socialist Unity Party (SED), the successor to Walter Ulbricht and architect of the Berlin wall. He was smoother, more worldly

and flexible, and less doctrinaire than the squeaky-voiced Ulbricht, and in a sense he was therefore a more dangerous adversary. If our infrequent official and personal relations with East German officials such as Dr. Hans-Otto Geyer, the North American desk officer, can be described as two-dimensional and unfailingly formal with few human flashes, our ties with Erich Honecker himself, whom I saw only at official functions, were one-dimensional. His face, set on such occasions into parodies of affability that were out of character, was dominated by his glasses, behind which cold, calculating and unfriendly eyes stared out. Everything about him was tensely self-controlled. Cooper, with his instinct to reach out to others in public life, found Honecker unchanged in their few private discussions, from which I was excluded although Honecker had members of his own staff present and provided the interpreter.

Honecker's fawning, sycophantic relationship with Soviet Ambassador Abrasimov on public occasions, including protestations of gratitude for the Soviet presence in his country, was disgusting to many in his audience. I have no doubt Abrasimov held this obsequious toady in contempt. In our many private conversations with Abrasimov, he never had a generous word for the GDR or its leaders. Not that he pointedly disparaged them; he didn't seem to find them worth discussing.

The GDR was a state that never existed in any respectable sense, and whose sovereignty was severely curtailed. A creation of the Soviet Union, it dissolved of its own accord as its patron state disintegrated. When this occurred, four-power agreements first concluded at the end of World War II and subsequently modified were firmly in place. The unwavering commitment of the three Allied powers in Berlin, insisting on the exercise of every legal right, holding out for dreary decades against assaults of nearly every kind from Moscow, kept intact the basis for the most profound peaceful revolution in modern Europe when the wall came down in 1989. The tedious, repetitive and patient exercise of Allied rights, so often boring and seemingly without imagination, paid off in the end. So did diplomatic negotiations among the Allies, Soviets and West Germans (and the "small steps" of West Berlin's authorities) in such understandings as the West German-Soviet Treaty of August, 1970 and the Berlin Agreement of September, 1971.

I had an extraordinary experience when, as director of the Foreign Service Institute, I returned to East Berlin fifteen years later, in 1989, with FSI's Senior Seminar group. The wall had just come down, and the Cold War was over. Our embassy had arranged a luncheon briefing with several former East German officials; one of these had been a young man working for Geyer whom I had known well. I was astonished to see him again, and asked what he and Dr. Geyer thought of the Americans in 1974, as Cooper and I established our embassy. He said we were always correct and open, and that Cooper was very much liked. Our "correctness" in official relations had been appreciated. But, he added, he and his colleagues could never understand why we called ourselves the "American embassy to the German Democratic Republic," rather than "in." Despite all the explanations we had provided, he alleged that the East Germans did not understand this phrasing. The Allied rationale, I explained, was that if we had said "in" this would have implied that East Berlin was part of the German Democratic Republic, rather than part of a unified city under post-war occupation by the four victorious powers.

He remained politely unconvinced and I think sincerely so. He thought, in 1989, that things would not go well for East Germans. He was still in the foreign ministry, but did not expect that

when the two Germanys were unified, which happened the following year, East German diplomats would have much of a future in the new government, and he was right.

The Berlin wall was an ever present reality, a physical reminder of the East-West split which took on an eerie existence of its own. One spoke of the wall with casual familiarity. It became common, where choice existed, to capitalize the "W," giving the structure a kind of respectability and legitimacy. The wall slashed through the center of a once bustling and thriving city. It was not only the wall itself that had a dampening effect, but also the shabby areas abutting it, the empty lots along the Leipzigerstrasse and other streets where anything that might serve as a hiding place had been razed. It truly was a hideous sight.

While we were in East Berlin, the GDR, with Soviet acquiescence, undertook what it cynically called a "wall beautification" program. The *Neues Deutschland* party newspaper printed, day after day, photographs of "improved and beautified" areas, describing the wall as a normal barrier between sovereign entities, with normal traffic crossing points such as their side of Checkpoint Charlie. Shrubs and flowers were planted. They got rid of the zig-zag approaches to the checkpoints, emphasizing, they said, courtesy to visitors. Border guards were portrayed as extending hospitality to those who had come to make the crossing. Such propaganda not only lauded the wall's beautification and its normalcy, but its efficiency. The GDR placed large rollers on top of the wall further to impede escape for anyone who tried to climb over. Once in a while, one of the GDR organs would run a human interest story about a border guard and his dog, man and his best friend.

Men and women who tried to escape were called traitors. Escape attempts were mentioned in the papers only when witnessed by many people, and therefore widely known. The GDR could not conceal major attempts or shootings, since western television, which played up these incidents, was watched throughout East Germany. The East German media gave an escape attempt two or three lines on the back page, where it was depicted as the act of someone breaking the law who had suffered the consequences of transgression.

The wall was more than a physical barrier. Its existence changed the city, separating people of the same parents into two different ways of life. Each recognized what was happening to the other. Many East Germans began to take pride in their hopelessly incompetent system, despite their envy of material standards in the west. They found in their own spartan existence a socialist's sense of satisfaction in the leveling nature, and what they believed to be the security, of their system in such matters as health care, schooling, and pensions. We concluded that if the wall were to come down, there would not be a wholesale rush to the west. Younger people and professionals would migrate to West Germany, where opportunities were greater, but most others would stay, or return voluntarily to the east after visits and shopping sprees in the west. And that is what happened.

Many East Germans found it convenient to take the high ground in comparing the two systems and a surprising number, as we now know, viewed theirs as superior. Government propaganda seized on decadence and corruption in the west as a central, strident theme. People were unable to criticize the GDR openly or vote for anyone but Honecker, and many sensed that the STASI secret police had invaded their lives and set informer upon informer. Corruption in their own

government was concealed from view, but many knew of it. And yet, they felt their values and stability threatened by what was going on in the west.

What they saw was western television. In the late 1960s, they watched Rudi Dutschke and students at West Berlin's Free University create anarchy and celebrate free love, men with long hair playing rock music. We have forgotten what a powerful symbol of rebellion long hair on men amounted to. The staid and prudish East German burgher living outside Berlin remained appalled by the morals and crime rates of the west. If there was one thing he expected from government, it was social order.

Much of the west's opulence was considered vulgar. In this view West Germany's "economic miracle" amounted to crass materialism, and West Germans had lost their moral bearings. Most East Germans did not wish to be like their western cousins; if they were to rise to western economic standards, they would do so by their own means, protecting their own values. The universal envy of East Germans, however, was the freedom of West Germans to travel.

There was one particularly sinister aspect of the wall: it brain-washed us all. People believed the wall would stand for years, and accepted its presence as an immutable fact. It stood as a permanent monument to the tyranny of a government over its people. I was all but certain in the mid-1970s that the wall would not fall in my lifetime, and I know of no one who thought otherwise. "Mr. Gorbachev, open this Gate...Tear down this wall," Reagan demanded in Berlin in 1987, but no one seriously believed the Russian leader would permit this to happen.

This shows how the world had adjusted to the Cold War as a struggle without foreseeable end. The west accepted its costs and global nature as if the Soviet Union and Russian people could bear, indefinitely, the increasing strains between their domestic needs and military expenditures. *Detente* did not last. There were noble and heroic exceptions in the actions of many individuals, but it seemed that to struggle for freedom under communism was to grapple with the unattainable. We believed the best way to deal with the Soviet system and Soviet expansionism was to contain them, and tolerate such actions as the construction of Berlin's wall as not threatening basic western interests.

In hindsight, we should have had a more accurate understanding of the internal dynamic of the Soviet Union, a major failure of western intelligence and analysis. Future historians, and documents of both sides now coming to light, can show us opportunities missed. While I doubt a better or more enduring framework than containment could have been devised to avoid a nuclear war and achieve the ends we sought, a question remains: did the Cold War need to last this long?

I was traveling in Tunisia in November of 1989, when the wall was opened. In the newspaper delivered one morning to my hotel room with breakfast, I saw a banner headline announcing the event. My French must have deserted me, I thought. This headline makes no sense." I understood the words, but could not believe my eyes. It was true, and though I was far from concerns about Berlin at the time, I was deeply moved. Having experienced life on both sides of the wall, it was a stunning moment for me. I realized the Cold War would soon end, and that freedom had triumphed over despotism. Just as the building of a Wall had symbolic meaning, so did its crumbling.

It was disappointing that our government remained largely silent at this time. A statement about the force of freedom was needed from our president. The Bush administration's initial caution was driven by a desire not to gloat or provoke reactions from the East but I found its silence at such a breathtaking time inadequate. We led the west in the Cold War, and were tongue-tied at its end.

Like others who knew Germany, I recognized that the transition period would not be easy. Perhaps the most courageous act of the West German government since its creation in 1948 is Chancellor Helmut Kohl's decision, when the wall opened, to exchange one East German mark for one Western. The cost to West Germans was even greater than he expected. To this day, the unification process between the eastern and western parts of Germany continues painfully and slowly and is by no means complete. Psychological adjustments, in particular, take a long time for people on both sides.

I hope that someday soon I will be able to walk slowly through the Brandenburg Gate, taking time to think and remember.

Germans still struggle with their Nazi past, although I never met anyone on either side of the wall who admitted to having been a Nazi. From my boyhood years in Hamburg I knew differently. In a way, adjustment to the experience of Nazism was made easier for East Germans. The GDR's leaders themselves, men like Ulbricht and Honecker, were prewar communists in Berlin who had suffered in Nazi prisons. Their condemnation of fascism was heartfelt. With their Soviet occupiers, they seized every opportunity to remind people in the GDR of what had happened in Germany under Hitler, and during a war Soviet forces were portrayed as having won largely on their own.

The most striking street theater on Unter-den-Linden, East Berlin's main thoroughfare, took place at the GDR's memorial to the victims of fascism, guarded by their soldiers whose very goose-stepping recalled fascism. A gigantic statue dedicated to fallen Soviet fighters towered over the Russian cemetery near the heart of East Berlin. It was a forceful reminder of Nazism and the costs of a war like no other in history.

Somber commemorations of World War II victories staged by the Russians and the East German regime drove these points home year after year. Paradoxically, leaders of the regime, themselves German and therefore among the vanquished, were able, because of their political pasts as victims of fascism, to side with the victors and do so with sincerity. They believed they, too, had triumphed over fascism. Large numbers of East Germans, particularly in older generations of Berliners, were dedicated communists and their condemnation of Nazism was genuine. Berlin, the Red City, had been the Communist Party center when the Nazis came to power. For other East Germans these rituals and symbols became a form of absolution, and a convenient way, sometimes, of moving on.

The smaller number of commemorations in West Germany was widely publicized, and through clever GDR propaganda had a subtle psychological effect of passing guilt to others--the seemingly less remorseful and less caring West Germans. West Germany's leaders, it was

argued, had not been principled communists struggling in Berlin during Hitler's rise to power. They formed the core of the Nazi movement in places like Munich and remained fascistically inclined. These propaganda themes were an underlying element in the GDR's disparagement of West Germans, generally, as crassly materialistic and morally bereft.

There were, of course, condemnations of Nazism in the West in many forms. Allied victory brought freedom to West Germans, as it had not to the East. In West Germany during the Cold War, celebrations of that victory were broadly based and enthusiastic, nowhere more than in free Berlin. In facing the question of guilt, younger generations in both Germanys held their parents and grandparents accountable for the Nazi past, not themselves. They did not want German history as a personal burden and this is understandable.

What became of anti-Semitism in Germany during the Cold War years? This question has little to do with the east-west divide. In latent form anti-Semitism persisted, perhaps to a greater extent than one would like to think, as it did in countries such as the Soviet Union and Poland. In West Berlin's atmosphere of freedom of expression, one too often came across graffiti of swastikas, twin SS lightning bolts and Jew-baiting slogans. What is particularly disturbing is that these were the work of the youngest generation.

WALLACE W. LITTELL
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
East Berlin (1974-1976)

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

Q: Why don't we talk about East Germany? That was quite a breakthrough at the time because East Germany had been unrecognized for so many years.

LITTELL: I went to East Germany when I was approached by our Washington offices on it. We went in to open up the embassy in '74, and I went primarily because I had had a good long experience in West Germany, and actually had gotten to East Germany to the Leipzig Fair, or to East Berlin on occasion, but never had been able to really move around there. I went really because of my interest in Germany. It was not as big a job as I had had in Yugoslavia or Poland, or had subsequently, of course, in Moscow, but it was interesting. So I figured it was worth a two-year assignment, and it was. It was interesting. However, I didn't think I'd find bureaucrats that were worse to deal with than the Soviets but the East Germans were really bad.

Once again, if they were permitted to do something, then they were much more efficient than the Soviets about helping you do it. But if they weren't, and most of the time they weren't, then the foot-dragging was very obnoxious. My contempt for the East German bureaucrat was exceeded by none I have met anywhere. But it was understandable. I was able to move around in East Germany quite freely, and knowing German as well as I did, and having the contacts that I had in

the Church, and so on, I met a lot of people and talked to a lot of people. There's certainly no feeling on my part that there was a great degree of loyalty to the system there among the people.

Q: One might note too that since East Germany was so close to West Germany, and particularly since you had Berlin embedded in the middle of East Germany and one could, I suppose, hear West German radio, maybe television...

LITTELL: They could watch West German television. In fact, they watched nothing but West German television.

Q: So on the information side they were already getting a great deal of input from the West to a much greater extent than certainly the Soviet Union, and perhaps the rest of Eastern Europe. Did this result in an emphasis in your programs more on the cultural side and the information side, or if you had a fair amount of emphasis still on the information side, did it take a different form than it would have taken in the Soviet Union, and perhaps, say the relationship of a magazine to a newspaper kind of filling in the cracks and being more analytical, or something that was different than straight direct information, or direct news, since they were getting that anyway.

LITTELL: Well, once again, it was a beginning operation and a lot of my time there was involved in setting up the library, and the physical facilities, and hiring a staff, and getting things going that way. Also, I was a one-man staff, really, although I had a secretary with me at the time. So it was a small operation. We did try to draw on cultural groups that came to West Germany, or particularly, Berlin being a city where a lot of them came. We had had some success that way, but we didn't in the time that I was there, have a lot of either performing arts programs or other programs going. We had scholars coming in quite frequently, and some students. Our old friend Bill Griffith used to come in regularly to East Berlin and he was always fun to take to the various ministries or to their research institute on the United States and Canada, paralleling the Soviet one, because he hauled them over the coals so unmercifully.

Q: This is a professor that was one of the major scholars dealing with the communist world?

LITTELL: Yes, that's right, Bill Griffith. Actually he was head of RFE in Munich for years, and then he was at MIT for many years, and Fletcher too. He's a guy with a lot of humor. Actually I used to take him in Moscow to see people including Primakov, who I see has just been named to be the first civilian head of the KGB. Primakov was head of their mid-east institute originally, and has been very close to Gorbachev; an adviser to Gorbachev.

The one problem we had in East Berlin, which was very comparable to the Soviet Union, was access to the embassy on the part of the public. We established a very good and attractive American library there, but very few people came in. They were intercepted a few blocks away and just not allowed to come in.

Q: We had that problem in Romania too in my time.

LITTELL: Although, of course, eventually we did get the cultural center in Romania.

Q: We had the cultural center when I was there. It came in shortly before I arrived, but access was difficult. There was a certain amount of pressure against going, and when people did go they were making a mark for themselves in the books of the Securitate, I'm sure.

LITTELL: Well, on rare occasions we would get harassment of this type to our library in Poland -- there'd be some harassment there. In Yugoslavia, almost never; and in East Germany, almost always.

Q: What were your relations...were the West Germans establishing very much in the way of programs in East Germany, and was the interest on the part of the East Germans more in West Germany than in the United States?

LITTELL: At that point they didn't have diplomatic relations.

Q: Even then?

LITTELL: Yes, but they had a liaison office, which for all practical purposes was an embassy headed by an ambassador, but it was not called that. It was called a liaison office and he was not an ambassador. He was head of the liaison office. Obviously the East Germans had extensive contacts with the West but the West Germans were not allowed to do a lot of public things, for obvious reasons because the appeal was so great. And, as I mentioned before, the East Germans listened to West German and European radio, and watched nothing but West German television. I remember one time staying with a family in Leipzig at the fair who rented out a room. They were obvious Party members. They had a nice apartment in a building that had just Party members, and the two kids were running around in FDJ (communist youth) uniforms. But I came in at night after dinner and they were all gathered around watching West German television, so I said, "What's the matter? You can't get East German television here?" And they laughed, and said, "Oh, yes, its here, this channel here, but we never watch it."

FRANCIS M. KINNELLY
Economic Officer
Bonn (1974-1977)

Francis M. Kinnelly was born in Brooklyn, New York in October of 1935. Mr. Kinnelly received a bachelor's degree in European history from Bowdoin College in European history in 1957 and a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Mr. Kinnelly then entered the U.S. Army, serving in Korea from 1960-1961. His Foreign Service career included positions in Manila, Bonn, and Madrid. Mr. Kinnelly was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 6, 1997.

Q: Where did you go in '74?

KINNELLY: I went to Germany as an economic officer.

Q: Going to Bonn in 1974. You were in Bonn from when to when?

KINNELLY: From the summer of '74 to the summer of '77.

Q: What was your impression of the state of Germany in 1974?

KINNELLY: The last time I saw Germany was in '58 when I was a student at Bologna. I was impressed by how much had changed. The scenes of war-time damage and the efforts at rebuilding had all passed. The economy was alive and well. It was a booming, strong place. Germany was, economically anyway, asserting itself very well and feeling quite assured of itself - less so, I guess, on the political side.

Q: Who was the ambassador at the time when you arrived there?

KINNELLY: Marty Hillenbrand, a very fine, thoughtful man.

Q: What was your impressions of how he ran the organization or at least maybe you were dealing with the DCM? How was the embassy managed?

KINNELLY: I had the feeling that there was a good understanding of what was vital in U.S.-German relations, very good substantive comments being made in embassy reporting, close contacts with the German establishment. I think that the embassy itself was well-run. It was always a bit of a surprise how big an operation it had to be, how much had to be involved in terms of administration. We had the regional communications people there and all sorts of other regional offices. There were just so many people. I would expect that it was a bit difficult for the DCM and for the administrative people to keep a hand on all of this. I was engaged only in the key purpose of the Embassy, that of U.S.-German bilateral relations, and I think that was managed very well.

Q: What would you call the key areas?

KINNELLY: Looking at it from my perspective as an economics officer, Germany's growing economic strength in Europe and its growing role within the European Union and, in that context, what this meant for bilateral trade, investment, overall economic relations with Germany. It was a time when Germany, on the economic side anyway, was starting to consult more closely with the French, not always successfully, but when there was an accord with France, the two countries could push their position within Europe quite effectively, just as they are doing today with the euro and monetary unification.

Q: In '74, there was not yet really a European Union. What was it?

KINNELLY: It was the European Community. The European bodies that were formed in the early post-war years, the coal and steel community and the atomic energy, were still active. At that time, a more far-ranging move toward European unification was taking place. The European

Commission in Brussels was being given more powers. The European Community as such was based on the 1957 Treaty of Rome.

Q: What was your job? You were in the Economic Section.

KINNELLY: Bilateral trade policy and Germany's role in GATT, U.S.-European Community issues as far as Germany was concerned, German development assistance. Germany was just joining the Interamerican Development Bank. I remember dealing with Germany on that, and working on German aid programs. Monetary issues as well. We had a Treasury attaché and much of this was done by the Treasury people, but I did some.

Q: Speaking of bilateral trade issues, Germany doesn't seem to raise its head up much in that particular regard, as opposed to Japan or France, with whom we always seem to be at loggerheads. During this '74 to '77 period, were there any particular issues of concern or tension on trade issues?

KINNELLY: It was not so much bilateral issues as discussions on dealing with larger institutions: how strong a role should GATT have, how far one should go in the direction of trade liberalization, how fast should the European Community dismantle its external tariff barriers, as we wanted, versus the European interest in maintaining their external tariff barriers as they did away with internal barriers. These kinds of issues. I also remember nitty-gritty stuff, such as dealing on standards for screws. Most German officials were pleased to have an opportunity to practice their English, and it was quite easy to deal in English. When I later went back in the '90s, I found that officials, especially in the Foreign Office, thought that a diplomat being in their country should darn well speak their language. There was a real change there. But getting back to screws: there were many differences between the German and U.S. standards. It was my task to try to resolve differences in the pitch of the screw, the length of the distance between the ridges and such, all in German because my counterpart only spoke German. I had quite a time with that one.

Q: Within the Economic Section during this period you were there, was there any contemplation, discussion internally about the German social program and the cost to it and all that, sort of wondering whither that program over some generations?

KINNELLY: To some degree. I had just come from a job in Washington dealing with the OECD. Included in that job was a look at manpower and social programs for all the OECD countries. The U.S. under the Nixon administration had done a lot of innovative work in terms of looking at social indicators. I think these issues came out later in Germany, issues such as the cost to the economy of the large programs to protect workers in terms of health and social security. We were at the embassy always a bit intrigued by the amount of free time, vacation time, that German workers had, starting with about four and a half weeks of leave when a worker started, and then every several years, a week at a spa somewhere for a cure.

Q: Bad Homburg or one of the Bads.

KINNELLY: Yes. We wondered how productive the German economy could be in order to pay

for these costs. It was still a time when the economies in Western Europe as well as the U.S. were recovering from the energy shock that started in '73. The Germans in their traditional way were worrying about inflation and keeping interest rates high while trying to suppress demand. So, the economy wasn't really growing very much. But we still had a sense of its competitive strength.

Q: You mention the Germans were beginning to start essentially a foreign aid program at that time. Were we trying to have any influence on directing them towards certain things so that maybe we would complement each other or was it just a matter of sort of watching them do it and cheering them on?

KINNELLY: I think it was welcoming their growing involvement in the world and encouraging them, as a wealthy country, to be doing more. For example, we were supporting their participation in the InterAmerican Development Bank. There was a growing level of consultation with the Germans as to aid programs in particular countries, especially when problems arose. I don't recall any effort to say to the Germans, "We'll take care of this country, this part of the world. Why don't you take care of that?" We did encourage them to get into Latin America.

Q: Were there any other developments during this time that you can think of? Was anybody in your office taking a look at the economy of Eastern Germany? Were you getting anything from that?

KINNELLY: No. I think the Berlin office at that time was doing this. Much later, it came out in the course of my second tour there right after German unification, how we had an appreciation back in the '70s of East Germany being the real industrial powerhouse of the communist world. There was a lot of German technology, after all, coming out and being utilized behind the Iron Curtain. There was an impression that it was a very harsh world over there, but that the East Germans were still quite well-advanced for the communist world. That, as it turned out, was not a very accurate impression.

Q: I was wondering about the feeling within the embassy. Was there any feeling about World War III was ready to start? Did you have the feeling that the Soviets at that time, really something might trigger them to take off and do something?

KINNELLY: There was a little bit of an edginess in that respect. I had talked with the German military and knew where the Faulty Gap was, and the potential for a heavy Soviet armed thrust. I sometimes had the feeling that all hell might break loose. So, whenever anything anywhere in the world triggered any sort of alarms, we were sensitive to that.

I remember participating in an informal association of German military officers and German economic and professional leaders. The group held conferences at a resort not far from Bonn. This was an effort to involve the German military in the civil world of Germany, the thought being that in earlier times, the military had led its own existence apart from the rest and that was unhealthy. So, as the German military began to grow, here was an effort of "Let's not go through that again."

VICTOR WOLF, JR.
Consul General
East Berlin, GDR (1974-1977)

Victor Wolf, Jr. grew up bilingual with his German-born parents. He received a bachelor's degree from the City College of New York and a master's degree from Columbia University. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II. His Foreign Service career included positions in Baghdad, Iraq; Istanbul, Turkey; Cebu, the Philippines; Copenhagen, Denmark; Warsaw, Poland; and Washington, DC. Mr. Wolf was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1986.

Q: Moving from Denmark, very much a friendly country, I note that your next assignment was as consul general in East Berlin, in which you were there when the post was opened. I wonder if you could tell us something about opening a post in a hard-line Communist country.

WOLF: Well, it ain't easy. The East Germans were pretty much on their good behavior as far as we ourselves were concerned. We were treated with courtesy and politeness and all of that. When it came, however, for me to do my official duties, which were such things as negotiating a consular agreement, starting the process on claims by Americans against the East Germans, and most particularly uniting divided families so that members in East Germany could emigrate to their relatives in the United States, I cannot describe the East Germans as cooperative. They were anything but.

Just getting a consular operation started was very, very difficult, because the East Germans didn't really understand that. They didn't understand the idea that one of the things a consul does is to provide services to citizens of his own country and citizens of other countries that wish to visit his country for whatever purpose. This is something that is really quite alien to the East Germans in any sort of deep philosophical sense.

So one of the things that we had an enormous difficulty with was establishing a medical examination process. If a person is supposed to emigrate to the United States, he's got to get a medical examination to see that he doesn't have an infectious disease. Usually, in most countries, you go to private physicians, you contract out with them, and the procedure runs, and the government isn't really the least bit interested in that. East German--nuh-huh. You couldn't go to a private doctor; there were no private doctors. You had to go to the state. So I wrote a note to the East German Foreign Ministry, explaining what it was that we needed, and they didn't understand. They simply didn't understand really what it was I wanted. So I had to explain this several times to them in personal conversations, where I'd go in myself and talk about it. Finally, they understood that this had to do with emigration. Emigration was something they were completely disinterested in, so they were disinclined to be very cooperative.

Finally, it went to the point that Washington was getting after us to get an immigrant visa processing capability established, and I went to the ambassador. At that time the ambassador was John Sherman Cooper. I asked the ambassador to go and talk to the foreign minister about

getting a consular department, the main consular department, as the bigger administration was called, to establish a procedure for medical examinations, with our being told who the doctors were, making arrangements for the appropriate forms to be delivered, making arrangement for a German-language translation of the medical manual to be delivered to all of these doctors, and then, in due course, the people would go there, the examination would occur, and the results would be sent to us. Simply getting started as a consular operation was a great difficulty.

Q: How many people are you talking about for emigrating from East Germany?

WOLF: The only emigrants you could get were people who had reached the age of retirement and pensioning. The East Germans were indifferent as to whether they left or not. And specific divided family cases where, with great pain and agony, we persuaded the East Germans to let this person go to emigrate to a relative in the United States.

Q: About how many people were getting immigrant visas, approximately?

WOLF: I can't give you a precise number at this time. I do know that on the initial representation list which we insisted on presenting to the East Germans, there were about 84 people, possibly divided into about 55 or 60 cases. We had made it a condition of establishing relations with the East Germans that, one, we would give them the initial representation list; two, we insisted on the right to discuss these in a continuing way; and three, we insisted on the right to present and discuss with them any new divided family cases that arose.

Q: How successful were you on divided family cases?

WOLF: In the three years that I was there, which was the first three years of the post, or less than three years, we resolved, I think, all but two of the cases that were on the initial representation list.

Q: Talking about 80-ish.

WOLF: Eighty people.

Q: Yes.

WOLF: In addition to that, we resolved about, I think, one-third or so of a new 100 cases that arose after we opened.

Q: How did you resolve the cases? What was the process in resolving the case?

WOLF: The process of resolving the case was when we were informed that a case existed, usually we learned of it because an immigration and nationalization petition approved would arrive. Thus for one of the preferences, a fiancé visa, an immediate relative petition, and the like. We would contact the person and call them in, ask them to come in, and they would immediately be worried could they walk into the American Embassy without getting into trouble. We had an assurance that they would not be hassled if they came into the American Embassy, but we could

not, of course, assure them that that was really going to happen when they returned to their homes.

In effect, we always had to say to these people, "Look, if you want to leave, you're going to have to have contact with us, and you're going to have to decide are you prepared, do you want to leave that much and join your loved-one overseas to take whatever risks are involved in doing something that this regime doesn't want." They all, of course, ultimately agreed, but you had to talk them through it. They would come in, we'd explain to them what the procedure was, and, in effect, say, "The next step is for you to apply for exit permission, and when that happens, the chances are pretty good that your life will begin to be difficult, changing all the way from dismissal to a job, to hassling, to pressure on leaving your housing, to abuse on the street, to abuse in the police offices where you applied for this, to all sorts of trouble. You'd better reconcile yourself. And you should also reconcile yourself," we told them, "to the fact that this is not going to go quickly," although in some instances, curiously enough, it did.

They would go back, they'd do their application, and we told them that they should just keep us in touch, write us a letter, call us up, and then when the first refusal for inordinate delay, we decided that eight weeks was an inordinate delay, I would go in and say, "Now, Mr. So-and-so, about the case of Hans Schmidt, for example, he came to see us. He has advised us that he has applied for application. He's heard nothing, and he's been denied. I want to tell you the embassy is interested in the case. We are prepared to process him for an immigrant visa," and so on and so on.

Their response, inevitably, would be, "It's none of your business. This is the internal affairs of the German Democratic Republic," and so on and so on and so on.

We would always say, "We beg your pardon. It is our business. One, when we established relations with you, we said--and you agreed--that we would be discussing these cases as cases that involved your citizens and involved our citizens. And we assume that you intend to live up to the communique that accompanied the establishment of relations between the two countries." Secondly, we said to them, "Additionally, you signed the Helsinki Accords in the summer of 1975, in which the signatories agreed that they would process, consider cases of humanitarian concern involving immigration movement, what have you, in a charitable and helpful way. We think you are obligated, one, to get involved in these cases, to process these cases in a decent way, and we think it establishes our right to discuss it with you." We'd go back and forth and back and forth on this, on again, off again, on again, off again.

Usually cases were resolved for a number of reasons. One, they simply got tired of the case, it had lasted long enough, and they decided they had made the point they wanted to make, and they would grudgingly give the person the exit permit. We would then process them for an emigrant visa out.

Another way something would happen would be if they were getting ready to a particular political or economic thing that was really important for them, there would always be a certain resolution on a certain number of cases shortly before. Thus, before the Leipzig fairs which occurred in spring and autumn, there always were several of these cases resolved. Whenever a

fairly important American visited, there were several cases resolved. Whenever they were going to send someone to Washington, several of these cases were resolved. If a particularly significant congressman and senator had made an intervention in Washington with the ambassador or the deputy chief of mission, we would be notified about that, because the arrangement was that Congress would always let the Department of State know. It would be reported to us, and from time to time, there seemed to be a correlation within a few weeks after such an intervention, they would break a case loose.

Finally, there were what I call the curiosity cases. We had from time to time, when the East Germans wanted to do something that we wanted, but at the same time do it in a way that created problems and difficulties for us, they would release them in a curious way. Once, for example, they took a person who was on a list, who we had been trying to get out, and instead of giving them an exit permit so they could come and get an immigrant visa for us, they simply drove them to one of the borders with West Berlin and pushed them across into West Berlin. Suddenly, we would get a telephone call from our mission in West Berlin, "Hey, we have So-and-so from your office. Is he one of yours?" I'd check my list and I'd say, "Yes, he is one of ours. What happened?"

Another time someone was pushed across the border into West Germany, and I got a call from our embassy in Bonn saying, "This has happened. Does this mean anything to you?" And I'd say, "Yes, you will be receiving our telegram." And we would make the reporting on that.

One other reason why they sometimes sent people over into West Berlin was they perhaps thought of this as a way of asserting some sort of four-power rights over the Western sectors of Berlin, and they figured this did something like that. I think that's really all that I could usefully say about these divided families cases.

WALTER E. JENKINS, JR.
Consul General
Stuttgart (1974-1978)

Walter E. Jenkins, Jr. was born in Texas and spent his teens in Boston, Massachusetts. He graduated from Harvard University in 1940 and served in the military in China from 1943 to 1945. His Foreign Service career included positions in Washington, DC, Poznan and Warsaw, Poland; and Taipei, Taiwan. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.

JENKINS: From '74 to '78 I was Consul General in Stuttgart, in what I consider is one of the nicest consular districts there is. It included Heidelberg, Lake Constance, Baden-Baden and the Black Forest. Furthermore, it was where all of our major military commands were located. The European Command, EUCOM, was just outside Stuttgart; the Seventh Corps was in Boblingen, near Stuttgart; the Seventh Army was headquartered in Heidelberg. So we had a very close relationship with the military.

The way I would like to start out with Stuttgart is to hark back to my Resident Officer days in Schwäebisch Hall, which isn't too far from Stuttgart. When people asked me then did I think that democracy was really going to work in Germany, I tended to be rather positive by the end of my Schwabisch Hall tour. I felt that: (1) if national security was assured, (2) if viable democratic institutions were developed, and (3) if reasonable prosperity developed, Germany might make it, in a generation or two, and really become democratic, maybe not exactly the way we are.

My tour in Stuttgart, although maybe it was too localized, sort of convinced me that I was right. We did have this American security presence working together with the German effort. We had one of the most prosperous regions you can imagine, with Daimler-Benz, Porsche, Robert Bosch, IBM, and all the machine tool and electronic companies located in that region. It was a pretty booming place. And also the political institutions seemed to be working. You know, you had three parties, but basically the Socialists (SPD), the CDU and the FDP. You didn't have a lot of little splinter parties as in Italy and France at that time; it was working well. The federal relationship was working very well between Bonn, Baden- Württemberg and the others states. So I sort of felt that, gee whiz, maybe I was right. But this has only been two generations between Schwabisch Hall and the present; let us see what happens from now on.

Americans developed close relations with the Germans. We had a lot of friends, particularly in "the upper crust." They seemed to cultivate the commanders of our forces and our Consul General.

However, all wasn't a bed of roses. At that time, one of the outstanding attention getters in Germany was the Bader-Meinhof Gang, which later became the Red Army Faction. Now these young terrorists, strangely enough, mostly came from around the Baden-Württemberg area. Sons and daughters of Calvinistic elements who were very puritanical and who "knew what was right." They were nearly all well educated. And they had turned to terrorism as a way of expressing their frustration and point of view.

So, they came and were operating mostly in our consular district. Most of them, when they were caught, were put in jail in the Stuttgart area too, in Stamheim. So we had quite an intimate contact with the Bader- Meinhof environment.

Of course, they did wound U.S. General Fritz Klosson, the commander of the Seventh Army in Heidelberg, in his car on his way to work. And our own security was very, very tight. But actually I began to see developing an approach to even difficult situations like this that reinforced my feeling that, given a continuation of good conditions, democracy was developing well in Germany. At first, the courts had a frustrating time with the Bader-Meinhof. They didn't know which way to go. They didn't want to be too tough, like the Nazis had been, and they didn't want to be too wishy-washy. And yet quite often they were wishy-washy, you know, insufficient evidence, etc. But, finally, in this two-year period when they were the most active, the courts developed a very well-balanced, fair, not oppressive way of dealing with this type of crime. They were very uncertain and unsure of themselves at the outset, but much more confident and just at the end.

A second thing that impressed me was that the press and the media had a very different way of

dealing with the Bader-Meinhof than, say, our press would. Without censorship, but doing it on their own, when Schlier, the national head of the German equivalent of our Chamber of Commerce, was kidnaped and killed, it was put on page three. The Gang rarely gained the advantage of being front page, which is what they really wanted to be. And this was the initiative of the people in the press and television themselves.

Another thing that I saw developing in Germany that interested me, taking another one of the three economic prosperity elements, was that, whereas you had free enterprise, you had a much closer relationship between government and industry, and between industry and labor than we are used to having here in the U.S.

I will never forget the time when I was sitting down with fellow Rotarian, Prof. Dr. Joachim Zahn, then the director of Daimler-Benz, when he got a phone call from a colleague up in the Ruhr. And he came back to the conference room absolutely furious. He said, "You know what they have agreed to up there in Bonn, and this industrial leader friend of mine agreed to it, is Mitbestimmung!" That means "co-determination" -- trade unions would be taken onto the executive boards of the industries and they would work together. Well, Zahn was against this at Daimler-Benz, but it became the norm and they all got used to it.

Another was when there was going to be a big negotiation, say, between the steel workers and the industry. I would have lunch with the head of the steel workers' union. He would say, "Well, I know these are difficult times; we are just coming out of the '74-75 recession, but we are going to ask for an eight percent raise. They are going to tell us they can't do more than two percent. But we are going to compromise on five percent." The next week, I had lunch with the local head of the industry for steel. He said, "We have it pretty tough, you know, that guy is a hard-nosed so and so, but we are going to say, 'In the wake of this recession nothing can be done -- two percent.' And they are going to ask for eight. And we are going to compromise on five." And so, you know, it was all sort of a sense of what was going to happen. They knew each other well.

Again with Zahn and Daimler-Benz, during the recession he said, "What on earth is going on in America? Your General Motors has laid off 20,000 workers. That is terrible. We never lay off workers. We put them on Kurzarbeit." (That means half pay.) And the government picks up the other half, and that tides us through a recession. I can't understand why you would...."

So what I am saying is that Germany isn't the old corporate state, but there is a much closer relationship and cooperative relationship between government, industry, and trade unions than we are familiar with in the States.

Those were my principal impressions of Stuttgart -- outside of a wonderful four years.

RAY E. JONES
Secretary
Berlin (1974-1978)

Ray E. Jones attended the Lafayette Business College. After a year in Washington, DC working for the Department of the Interior, he entered the U.S. Army. In 1946, Mr. Jones went to Berlin with the Department of the Army. Mr. Jones also served in South Korea, Vietnam, Switzerland, Austria, Liberia, the Netherlands, Sudan, and China. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on August 23, 1994.

Q: You'd come full circle?

JONES: I came full circle, yes. So I received a direct transfer in May, 1974 back to Berlin and I stayed there until I retired in 1978. I had two very, very good Ministers to work for. One was David Kline, and the other was Scott George.

Q: Oh, yes. And how had Berlin changed since you were there?

JONES: Tremendous. Very good housing. I still had a lot of good German friends from my earlier days and the local staff at the US mission there was probably some of the best I've ever seen in the Foreign Service. They could practically run the place.

Q: Now, we also had a mission in East Berlin at that time.

JONES: It was probably about mid-seventies that we decided to establish relations with East Berlin. I believe that first Ambassador was the renowned senator John Sherman Cooper, and his DCM was also quite au courant with Germany, Brandon Groves.

Q: Did you get to meet these people or were you separated by the wall or ...?

JONES: No, because being stationed in Berlin, we had what you'd call a yellow card that we could go through Checkpoint Charlie at will, anytime of day or night. Our relations with Ambassador Cooper were very, very good.

Q: And what about the mission's relations with the Embassy in Bonn? Were they close?

JONES: They were very close. They left it to the Minister in Berlin to handle everything and we were in constant telephonic conversations with the Ambassador at that time. When I was there it was Marty Hillenbrand. I believe the DCM was Frank (Cash). He was the Minister.

Q: I know this has always been a problem over the years. The things are seen a little differently from Bonn than they are in Berlin. but if there is a good working relationship you can sort these things out.

JONES: There was a very good working relationship. Excellent.

HERMAN REBHAN

**General Secretary, International Metalworkers Federation
Washington, DC (1974-1989)**

Herman Rebham was born in Poland and raised in Germany. He came with his family to the United States in 1938 and settled in Cleveland, Ohio. After working in auto manufacturing plants in the Midwest, he became Administrative Assistant to United Auto Workers President Walter Reuther, and dealt with domestic and international labor matters throughout his career. In 1972 he became the United Auto Workers Director of International Affairs in Washington, D.C. Mr. Rebham died in 2006. Mr. Rebham was interviewed by James F. Shea and Don R. Kienzle in 1995.

Kienzle: But Communists integrated into an umbrella organization [were acceptable]?

REBHAN: Yes, like the Austrians had a Communist faction. The Danes, too. You know, it's interesting. You mentioned the Communists. The Communist Metal Workers International always wanted to meet with us, and cooperate [vis a vis] the multinationals, and I said, "No. No." At the ILO at metal trades meetings we always gave them some vice presidency because of the Russians. So they kept bothering us, especially me and especially the Germans because of the Ostpolitik. Finally the President of the Finnish Metal Workers Union was having his 60th birthday and everybody was invited, and I was up there. So they maneuvered a meeting between the General Secretary of the Metal Workers International, who was a Frenchman from the CGT, and the President, who was an East German, and Loderer and myself and I guess somebody from Finland. The fellow from the Communist International, the WFTU, was talking about cooperation, solidarity, and multinationals. "We have a joint fight," and he goes on and on and on. This was shortly after the ILO annual meeting in Geneva. So I said, "This is very interesting what you are saying. There may be something to it, but it is very difficult for me to be prepared to cooperate with you. I have just attended the ILO annual conference in Geneva. During the meeting of the Workers' Group, when the representative of Solidarnosc got up to speak, all the representatives of the WFTU affiliates walked out as a protest. If you people cannot tolerate a speech by a representative of the Polish workers, it makes it impossible for me to even discuss any cooperation or joint activities."

After this they couldn't answer. That was the end of the meeting.

I was also on the Executive Committee of the ICFTU, because the ITSs have representation there.

Kienzle: Would you describe the relationship between the ITSs and the ICFTU

REBHAN: There's a long history. The ITSs were at one time completely independent. During the big fight with the WFTU in 1947 and 1948, there was the question of merging the ITSs, the industrial unions, into the WFTU as departments. That was what basically started the split in the WFTU, besides the Marshall Plan and all the other things. So when the ICFTU was organized. . . -- I forget what year it was. 1949? -- there was an agreement signed between the ITSs, including the International Metalworkers Federation, and the ICFTU called the Milan Agreement, which

[established] the independence of the ITSs but [pledged] ideological cooperation with the ICFTU. There was an arrangement that the ITSs would have four representatives on the ICFTU Executive Board. My relations with the ICFTU were very good. First of all, we were not dependent on ICFTU money, which makes for a pretty good relationship. The little ITSs, like the Food Workers and the others that depended on ICFTU money, had a little problem getting money out of the Solidarity Fund, etc.

Shea: Dan Gallin

REBHAN: Dan Gallin and so on. Also at one time everyone was against the Americans [AFL-CIO] having the [labor assistance] institutes. "You should all go through the ICFTU." Then all of the sudden, all the others had institutes. The Germans had the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. The Swedes had their foundation. (S.I.D.A.) The Danes had a foundation. The Dutch. They all had foundations, and they all operated separately. How things changed, but at one time that was the biggest schism that the Americans had committed: having the institutes and getting government money.

Kienzle: Did you work through the institutes at all with your assistance activities?

REBHAN: Very little, because we really didn't need it. At one time, we were financially in good shape. Not now, because of the unemployment in the metal industry. In the old days, the UAW used to put a lot of money into IMF. If you read some of the old IMF minutes, Victor [Reuther] would come to a meeting and say, "The UAW gives \$200,000 for this project" and things like that.

Kienzle: Did the IMF work through the ICFTU at all in assistance activities?

REBHAN: We didn't need it really. The ICFTU took care of affiliates in the developing countries and a lot of these little [groups] like the plantation workers, the teachers unions, and ITSs of that nature.

Shea: Tom Bevin really was a . . .

REBHAN: Tom Bavin was a from the plantation workers.

Shea: Yes. Frank Lyons. . .

REBHAN: I don't remember him.

Kienzle: Was there much coordination among the International Trade Secretariats (ITSs)?

REBHAN: Yes, we used to meet. We called it an "ITS General Conference," and we used to meet at least once a year. We would discuss things and exchange ideas and acted on items we could agree on.

Kienzle: What kinds of issues would you discuss?

REBHAN: The ITSs would report what each one was doing: Problems they had with foundations, money, and sometimes campaigns in various countries. They would ask our affiliates in various countries to cooperate and work with their affiliates and so on.

Kienzle: Did that work very well? How many joint campaigns were actually launched?

REBHAN: Not too many. Everybody has their own problems. It's hard. Then there are personality clashes a lot of times with these things, too.

Kienzle: Would there be joint efforts in a single country among the ITSs?

REBHAN: Yes. Mainly the meetings were more informational and also to have a general policy on the ICFTU maybe and things of that nature.

Kienzle: Was there ever any concerted effort to pressure, say, a single multinational corporation?

REBHAN: If there were some [special] relationships there between the [parties], we would do it.

[Referring to written notes], let me give you something on Mitbestimmung, the German system of co-determination. In 1976 or 1977 the German law was amended. First of all there were two systems; one was in coal and steel, which was really co-determination, because there was a fifty-fifty [parity between management and workers on the board]. Then the law was amended in 1976 and 1977, to change the composition of the Aufsichtsrat, the supervisory board. It became "ten and ten," ten from management and ten from the employees, and among the ten from the employees, three had to be from the outside. That meant in most cases the union could determine who the three would be. The Ford workers came to me and said, "Herman, since you know something about the auto industry, we want you to be on the Ford board."

Kienzle: When was this?

REBHAN: This was in 1977 right after the Co-determination Law was passed. So I said, "Well, how does it work?" They said, "We have to elect you. You have to be a candidate." So there were two ways of electing [someone] to this supervisory board. One was by having a secret ballot vote of all the people in the plant; [in the other] people vote for electors and they elect. At Ford they voted for electors. Ford had about 40,000 to 45,000 people employed in Germany. The company started saying, "What's this American doing on our board?" Henry Ford told me that the people in Dearborn were climbing up the wall. [They felt] they were being expropriated. So I became a candidate, and there were two other candidates, who wanted that job. One was from a white collar union and somebody else, because in Germany there is a separate white collar union. Anyway, the [Ford union people] said, "You are going to speak at one of our Betriebsversammlung, a meeting of all employees on company time. This meeting is held on the basis of the labor law." So we held this meeting, and I spoke there. At the meeting of the electors, and I won the election.

At the first meeting of the board, I was elected to be a vice chairman of the board. What was interesting was that one of the [members], who is now president of Chrysler by the name of Lutz, was the Vice President of Ford in Europe at one time. He was an interesting guy. So at the first meeting [of the board, which was held] after a German stockholder meeting, we organized and the company was very reluctant to give us information. We had all kinds of troubles. Luckily the law also provided that the Arbeitsdirektor, which means the Personnel Manager, has to be elected by a two-thirds vote of the board, that is on the first vote; then on the second vote it is just a majority. What happened was that the personnel director, who was a very decent man died, and the company said, "No, we don't have to elect [the successor] through this [process]." We said, "Oh, yes. You have to elect through this [process]." So we had a big fight over the Arbeitsdirektor, and actually it was more to show the company what authority we had, because we had *a candidate*, but we really didn't have a *real* candidate. So we went through the motions and [the story] got into the press. Ford in Germany didn't look very good. Then the company said, "Well, we are not going to have this circus anymore." I was on TV, and the company was not very good at those things. Their PR guy was [used to] a one way street. He would tell everybody [Ford is producing] a new model and it's going to be great. He didn't have any of these arguments with radicals like myself. I knew all the tricks of the trade.

So after that, we cooperated. We got all kinds of information. The union people from the plant, who were sitting on that board, I have to give them credit. First of all, they were Ford workers. Most of them were skilled workers. Most of them went through an apprenticeship with Ford and they knew the company backwards and forwards. In addition to this, they played politics inside the company, one building manager against another one. For instance, the company wanted to move work some place else. Well, the manager of that building didn't want the work to go to England or to Spain or to the United States. So he would provide the Betriebsrat, people or the bargaining committee, with all kinds of information on how he could manage to produce cheaper or at the same price. Boy, the company was just climbing the walls! Where did they get all this information? And it was *good* information. In many cases it saved jobs. The jobs stayed in Germany.

Another thing which really impressed me was their knowledge. One other thing that impressed me greatly. There was an auto crisis in Germany in the 1980s, and they had to lay off [something on the order of] 14, 000 people. They negotiated for months on what kind of a severance pay they were going to get, and this committee negotiated a number of other layoff benefits. In the United States, the contract says "we are going to give 24 hour notice. You're out." That was really impressive.

Kienzle: What about efficiency? Was there any greater efficiency as a result of the transparency?

REBHAN: Yes. The union and the workers cooperated on these matters. They knew their jobs, and they knew what it takes to do this, and the company cooperated on these things. Before [Ford] put out a new model, they really worked with the people in the plant to make sure that they did not have a bunch of lemons coming off the line.

Kienzle: How did the AFL-CIO view Mitbestimmung and your participation on the board?

REBHAN: They ignored it for the most part. Once in a while they had an article in their magazine, *The Federationist*, criticizing Mitbestimmung. They didn't know what they were talking about. Now everybody wants to cooperate. This was different. These unions were not patsies. I. G. Metall is not a patsy union. It's a class-conscious union. It's a militant union. They struck recently to maintain the 35 hour week.

There's the master or basic contract, but then there are conditions over and above that which each plant negotiates separately, and these workers have conditions [of employment] that you have never heard of.

JAMES C. POLLOCK
Media Affairs Officer, USIS
Bonn (1975-1977)

James Pollock was born in Michigan in 1942. He graduated from Princeton (BA) and University of Pittsburg (MA). He joined USIA as a Foreign Service officer in 1967. His overseas posts include Malaysia; Medan, Indonesia; Conn, Germany; Rabat, Morocco; and Dakar, Senegal. Mr. Pollock was Deputy Director of USIA's International Visitor's Program. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2002.

POLLOCK:.... So one of the things that happened on my home leave was that it was discovered through the computer that I was a fine arts and graphics major in my university studies. This, of course, had not been used because I had taken the Foreign Service exam in politics and economics and the graphic arts had been left behind. I hadn't had a Washington assignment yet. I wasn't in the books division or I wasn't in the exhibits division and overseas I was not using my graphic arts. It had been decided that there would be a reorganization of USIS Germany. They wanted to modernize all of the offices and all of the Amerika Hauser. It was decided that they were going to go this graphic arts route of color coding the library and changing all of the stationary. They were going to get away from red, white and blue and flags and stars and stripes and all of these things, and lo and behold they had a Foreign Service officer who was a graphic artist or had had graphic artist training.

So in the midst of my home leave I received a telephone call from the area personnel officer for Europe informing me that my assignment had been changed and I was no longer going to Istanbul. I instead was going to Bonn, Germany. I let it be known in no uncertain terms that no, no, no, no I didn't want to go to Bonn, Germany, I wanted to go to Istanbul. The personnel officer was rather flabbergasted by this because in those days the intent of many people was to become members of what was known as the European club. That meant that you would get an assignment to Europe, you would ingratiate yourself with European hands and you might be able to serve out your career between Bonn and Paris and London and Rome. That was very appealing to many people. It was not to me and I wasn't interested in getting into the European club and at the time Turkey was considered the Near East and South Asia rather than a part of Europe. So I argued, no, I was really interested in Islam at this point and I would be delighted to

retain my assignment to Istanbul. But that was not to be. The European area director wanted me so my assignment to Istanbul was broken.

In January of 1975 I arrived in Bonn, Germany, in a newly created slot of program officer, media affairs officer I guess, and this was designed to bring an American officer onto that staff to be in charge of the new graphic look for USIS Germany. I had asked for language training and, of course, that wasn't possible because I really wasn't programmed enough. I was only working with that element of the German population that only spoke German, they didn't speak English but never mind. It was a challenging and a very interesting time and I was fortunate enough to have the resources and talent at my disposal of Ray Camay. He was a very highly decorated artist and designer in USIA at the time. He was detailed to Bonn at the same time that I was there and over the course of two years we renovated all of the Amerika Hauser six America houses. We color-coded the libraries, we used super graphics, we designed a rather inventive, I think, invitation format in which we used colored paper corresponding to the super graphics and the color-coding at the America Houses. We designed a system of folding these pieces of paper into several different shapes and using our in-house printing presses to use these colored pieces of paper as invitations. You put the address on one side and then you would unfold them in sort of an ikebana fashion and there you would have an invitation to an Amerika Haus event. The idea was to get away from using the old standard sized envelopes that probably went into in-boxes and were never opened and replace them with something colorful that had an unusual shape to it and would attract the attention of the individual that we were inviting. This was in a highly competitive German society in which individuals who were receiving the invitations were receiving many competing invitations at the time. We thought that sending them these sort of attractive and unusual invitations might attract their attention and bring them to events. We did see an increase in attendance; the Amerika Hauser were a big hit as they reopened with these super graphics. It was a vibrant and rather exciting time but it was a time in which I did not have the good fortune to have much of an interface with the German population or the population of the country to which I was assigned in a programming sense. That was sort of frustrating. I felt as though I had done a good job but it wasn't the job that I had joined USIA to do.

At the end of those two years we did have program successes. But it wasn't rewarding to me in terms of the intellectual exchange of ideas which was part of my inspiration in going into the Foreign Service and I wanted to get back to doing that.

Q: Well, were you feeling any of the impact of Amerika Hauser of the Vietnam War or were they disengaged and all that or I mean were these buildings the center of demonstrations or not?

POLLOCK: No. The demonstration period that I had been aware of in Southeast Asia going on in the United States and going on in Europe had pretty much receded by the time I arrived in Bonn. I don't recall during my two years there any situation in which we felt challenged on Vietnam policy.

Q: We were getting out, of course, at that point, weren't we?

POLLOCK: We were drawing down in those days and people in Germany seemed focused on other things, at least that was my feeling. A lot of our programming was focused on economic

issues, it was focused on political-military issues that were NATO-Warsaw Pact oriented more than they were Vietnam centered.

Q: Did you get any feel for what were the main reasons why the Germans would go to an Amerika Haus?

POLLOCK: The United States remained just a fascinating country. One of the things that one could do in Europe, in particular, was to exchange between countries American intellectuals, expatriate Americans, Fulbright professors, American university abroad professors, all of these individuals who would be in Europe for one set of reasons or another. They would make themselves known or USIS personnel in the cultural sections and programming areas, the information areas, would seek them out. During this time we started our own little speakers' bureau. The idea of a speakers' bureau had grown out of the European area and individuals, conferences on ideas and issues could be very easily put together and staffed with American personnel to stimulate the exchange of ideas. There was a great sort of yeasting that was going on that covered all areas of U.S. society. I remember once we were holding a writers conference and Heiner Müller and two or three other very well recognized and award international renown award winning writers were quite interested in meeting with Americans.

Washington came back and said, "No, no you can't program James Baldwin." We immediately assumed that it was because of his writings and the fact that he was part of the Black Pride Movement and was critical of U.S. policies in certain areas. It turned out none of that was true. The reason why Washington didn't want Baldwin to come over is that he was gay. So the discrimination was not because of color, it was because of sexual preference. It was this sort of discrimination nevertheless so we couldn't program James Baldwin. As I recall we got Paul Theroux as a Baldwin replacement. He was in London or resident in England and was delighted to come over. I specifically remember a question that was posed to him by Heiner Müller and Müller said, "I don't believe any of this stuff about your Americanism. Look at you, you live outside the United States, you are an ex-patriot." Theroux said, "You know in some ways I do this by choice. First, I am married to a lady who is a citizen of Great Britain. Beyond that one of the benefits of being an American living outside of the United States is that every time you go back it is all fresh and new and so exciting all over again that you realize what a grand country the United States is and can be." It was a very startling answer for...

Q: Paul Theroux is a commentary on present day society and different places. He writes all about trains and kayaking in the Pacific but also the Appalachian Trail, I'm not sure about the Appalachian Trail but he's done a number of...he essentially is a travel writer and he hits the United States rather frequently I believe.

POLLOCK: We had a very lively dynamic arts program as well. Nanjun Pike and various other people who would come to Europe, video art exhibits; this was all new and exciting. In many ways Vietnam was in the background and Vietnam politically was certainly still with us, but my recollection of those years was that the vibrancy of social dynamic and what was going on within the society of the United States and the culture of the United States was of more interest to the German public than our politics or our international involvement.

That doesn't necessarily speak I believe for the quiet diplomatic dialogue that went on between our embassy officials and officials of the Bonn government. But certainly in our public presentation, the social dynamic was more compelling or appeared more compelling than the other.

Q: Did you find I realized that you are saying you were somewhat removed from the Germans but still you are dealing with in many ways the art scene, the intellectual crowds and all of that in Germany? Now were people in France, we've always had to fight this thing with intellectuals in France, tend to turn up their noses at American culture and American things wear as the general populace, particularly young people, gobbled it up like mad. Did you find in Germany that the intellectual class was of a different sort you might say than the French?

POLLOCK: I found that as an individual I couldn't speak to it in the same depth as those of our officers who were the cultural affairs officer or the assistant cultural affairs officer would be able to. One of the things that is marvelous about Europe frankly is sort of this idea that at the end of the day you go out and you have a glass of wine on the way home. You sit in the café, you have a cup of coffee or whatever it happens to be and we were as disposed to do this as anyone else.

I have not been back but at the time Bonn was really a rural city on the banks of the Rhine river with a university and a historic plaza downtown. The Americans were all concentrated along the banks of the Rhine and the local population referred to our living quarters as the "golden ghetto" because it had all been built, it was the home of the American occupation administration following World War II and we were still there. Part of what I sensed in Bonn was this coming of age in which there was one generation following the war where we had at one point in Germany twelve or fourteen Amerika Häuser. We now had German-American Institutes and America Houses. We had kept our America Houses in Berlin and Hamburg and Stuttgart and Munich and Köln and cities that we considered important, Frankfurt. But in the smaller cities or the cities that for policy reasons we considered less important we had gone in with the intent of closing our libraries. It was this German population, the town fathers, the university presidents in these cities that said, "Oh no, no, no you can't do that. We will pay for them; we will pay to keep them open. We will provide housing in the university for you, you can donate your library collection and we'll have an American wing in the university library, whatever, but please see if you can keep an American officer to represent you." So on one hand there was this movement. If you were with a group of university students, graduate level or senior level students or artists in a café in Bonn or again in Köln, Munich, you were much more likely to hear a story that "you know, our economy is doing well, we are back, we don't need American tutelage anymore. We need to understand our Germanness again and that needs to begin to flower." You wouldn't hear that sort of conversation at the Bragan Center in Paris. On the contrary, they knew they were French, they had always been French and the conversation was a different conversation all together. It could be snobbier if you were sitting talking to a French man than if you were sitting, talking to a German lady.

It was a time during which those Germans on our staff who had come to work for us immediately following the war were now at retirement age. We were facing the retirement of some senior people who had been very instrumental in building United States representation and translating United States representation effectively in Germany. It was quite a quandary during those years,

'74, '75, '76 as to how we were going to replace these individuals. They, because of German economy and European currency, in general vis-à-vis the American dollar, these were high priced individuals. Our senior staff in a couple of cases made as much if not more than our senior American officers. On the one hand there was this idea that almost like professional football today "You know we are going to get some salary cap room when Frau Norataya van Staten retires but how are we going to ever replace her?"

We initiated a hiring practice. We went to the universities for young graduates or for assistant associate professor level personnel, young, dynamic, very current in their knowledge in their interests and we offered them a package that basically said to them, "We cannot pay what German business can pay when you graduate. You can go into a German firm and you will begin making more money than we can offer you and five years from now you will probably still be making more money than we can offer you. However, what you will be doing for us will introduce you in terms of identifying program areas of interest to the German society, economy, political structure, arts, media, that will help advance the dialogue between the United States and Germany. In the process of doing that you are going to meet people and work with people who are the people that you want to work for ten years from now. So, if you come to work for us for five to ten years we will through networking (it wasn't called networking in those days, if we'd thought of that term it would have been great but it was like you'll make introductions, you will meet people) and ten years from now you can go out on the local market and get hired at a salary much higher than your counterparts are going to be able to obtain because you are going to have the right doors open for you." I really didn't follow events in Germany very closely after I left, but to my knowledge of the four or five people that we hired during those two or three years only one is still working for USIA in Germany. The others all took exactly the package that was described and within five to ten years left for prominent jobs in the German economy.

Q: OK, in 1977 was it or when did you leave?

POLLOCK: I left Bonn at the end of the summer in 1977.

JOHN A. BUCHE
Counselor for Consular Affairs
Bonn (1975-1978)

John Buche was born and raised in Indiana. He attended St. Meinrad Seminary, Purdue University, and the University of Tübingen in Germany. He served in the U.S. Army and entered the Foreign Service in 1959. He served in Canada, Ethiopia, Malawi, Niger, Germany, Switzerland, Zambia, and Austria. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: This is very German bureaucratic approach. You served in Bonn from when to when?

BUCHÉ: It was August 1975 until August 1978. When I arrived in Bonn and met with Ambassador Hillenbrand and the DCM, Frank Cash, they told me specifically of their

unhappiness with the way consular services were performed, particularly in Frankfurt. I was expected to use my management ability and leadership to put things on a service-oriented basis. Frank Cash told me bluntly: "I will judge your performance by the number of complaints the Ambassador or I receive about consular services. I responded that there were so many things I cannot control. He said, "But you will, I'm sure of it. Improve the record." So basically, these were my marching orders.

I had never served in as large an embassy as Bonn. It was overwhelming in many ways. Showing up in the first staff meeting of "senior officers" was a revelation. There were section chiefs, counselors, minister counselors, attaches, the DCM, and the Ambassador, nearly twenty persons in all. The weekly staff meeting (the next layer) brought together about forty persons. There was no regularly-scheduled staff meeting of all the Americans at the Embassy. It would have required the post theater to fit them all in. I soon learned how hierarchical a large embassy such as Bonn was, and how large several of our consulates were. I attended the various staff meetings and was fascinated with the complexity and breadth of our relations with Germany. After several months, I decided that the weekly staff meetings were sufficient, unless there was a consular issue to discuss. I think I did a much better job as the supervisory consular officer by being available for calls and for the public, rather than spend an hour each day in the Senior Officers staff meeting.

Another new aspect of serving in a large embassy was observing and participating in the work of programming and assisting the many official visitors. There seemed to be a constant stream of Congressmen and Senators, assistant secretaries, Cabinet members, judges, academics, generals, Vice-President Mondale (twice during my posting), and President Carter. The flow of visitors never stopped. The Visitors Section of the Embassy had ten employees whose primary task was to service official visitors to Bonn. The administrative staff of the Embassy was enormous and had every conceivable resource. The Embassy could call upon the U.S. military for logistical help, if needed. The motor pool was enormous. I could order a car with a driver for official use at any time of the day or night. I learned that the German Government paid for the Embassy cars and trucks. The State Department had such budgetary problems that Washington could not afford to pay for more than a few new cars each year. The solution was simple. We told the German Government that the cars were needed for our Mission in Berlin. Since the Germans were responsible for paying the administrative costs of the Berlin Mission, several hundred cars would be ordered each year by the Mission, paid for by the Germans, and then driven from Berlin to Embassy Bonn and to the Consulates General in Stuttgart, Munich, Bremen, or Hamburg. So we all had well-stocked motor pools.

Q: Frankfurt, too.

BUCHE: Frankfurt, of course. The Germans were so eager to have the three Allied powers remain in Berlin that they picked up much of the cost. We stretched the definitions of allowable items to some extent, but not so blatantly as the French. In addition to the car scheme which we picked up from the French, the French military would periodically rotate troops from Western Germany to Berlin to have them outfitted with new uniforms and other equipment. We and the British kept the Berlin purchases within bounds.

Q: Well, now, you were faced with the problem of getting essentially the Consular Sections to be

responsive to the customer. How did you go about that?

BUCHE: Two ways. I decided to hold off-site consular conferences every six months. I chose a US Army-owned resort hotel at Berchtesgaden for our first session. Frank Cash, the DCM, and the Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, Barbara Watson, also participated. She delivered a strong message. "Complaints are coming from all over the world that American citizens are not being served well by our consuls. This must stop. You must improve your service to Americans!" She threatened that the careers of consular officers would be negatively affected if attitudes and performance did not change for the better. The main culprits were not the officers, but the locally-hired personnel. The FSNs were too often allowed free rein to deal with the public as they wished, with little supervision from the Consular Officers. Service with a smile, flexibility, and going that proverbial "extra mile" were not in the operational vocabularies of some of the FSNs. They worked for the American Government, but their attitudinal role models seemed to be the Prussian bureaucracy.

Ms. Watson also proclaimed a new requirement that every American prisoner held in German jails and prisons had to be visited once a month by a consular officer. This was to be the policy worldwide. Previously the frequency of prison visits was left to the discretion of the consuls. There was strong opposition from some of the senior consuls in our meeting. "We can't do this; we don't have the people." She answered, "You have sixty days to find a way to do this. If you need more money for your travel budgets, let Washington know." She then turned to me and said, "Mr. Buche, you are the supervising consular officer, so you will see that this is done. I will hold you responsible." I suspected she still had some animosity toward me because I had defeated her candidate for the prestigious Bonn position. I calmly replied to her that I would see to it that all the German posts complied within sixty days to the new requirement. All of us in the room knew that monthly visits to 300-400 prisoners would be difficult to carry out without additional vice-consuls, and to obtain incremental personnel would take almost two years. Most of the incarcerated American were in Bavaria, held in a dozen prisons. Since the Munich Consulate General was responsible for Bavaria, the most difficult adjustment from the new order fell on Consul Ira Levy. He showed great management skill and ingenuity in working out methods to carry out the command. The others had to adjust and shift workloads, but their tasks were not as complicated. Frank Cash informed all the Consuls General (the supervisors of the Consuls) of the new requirement from Washington and told them to do whatever was necessary to carry out the directive. I then visited all the Consulates to work out details. I was able to report to Ms. Watson that we had met her deadline!

The second tool I used to ensure better service was the annual performance review of the individual officers. I offered to serve as the reviewing officer for the reports, if the rated officer so wished. I was not the direct supervisor of any of the officers in the outlying post, so I could not be a "rating officer". I did, however, send evaluation reports on each of the officers to his or her direct supervisor for inclusion within the report. Several of the officers took up my offer to serve as the reviewer of the report of the direct supervisor.

Fortunately, the main problem was resolved by a change of personnel. One of the older, consular officers became ill and was hospitalized and eventually retired. Another left in a normal rotation. They were replaced by officers with a much more positive attitude. The new officers approached

the job in the way the Ambassador, Frank Cash, and I desired. Things were looking up, except in Frankfurt. There were still several embittered, old consular officers who had heard and seen it all, and were not about to change. They were also being goaded by some of the local German staff not to yield to the Ambassador's and my "smile and charm campaign" (as they described our efforts to provide better service).

Q: I'm just curious. What could you do in the Frankfurt situation?

BUCHÉ: Well, it took a little longer, but we found solutions. The most significant instrument for change at Frankfurt was the quadrennial post inspection. In early 1976, all the German posts were inspected by officials from the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of State. The Ambassador, Frank Cash, and I shared with the Inspectors our general concerns about the quality of consular services. During subsequent discussions with the Inspectors, I suggested they should observe first hand over an extended period how the Consular Section of the Consulate General Frankfurt interacted with the public. I also told them that I thought the organization of the Consular Section was flawed. I also raised the issue of the delineation of the Frankfurt Consular District. Regarding the organization, there were three chiefs, one for visa operations, one for passport operations, and one for special consular services, and they all reported directly to the Deputy Consul General. The DCG also had other section heads reporting to him. No one person was really responsible for overall, daily consular operations. The problem with the consular district was that Frankfurt served the States of Hesse, Rheinland-Pfalz, and several others, but not Bavaria. Yet northern Bavaria reached to within twenty miles of Frankfurt. (Incidentally, my great-great grandmother lived in the northernmost part of Bavaria, Hoerstein, before migrating to New Albany, Indiana.) Our Consulate General in Munich (which served Bavaria) was some two hundred miles away.

After spending several weeks in Frankfurt, the Inspectors returned to Bonn and discussed their findings on the consular side with me. They agreed with my point of view about the structure of the section and the interaction with the public. Their inspection report recommended that a new position be created for a Chief of the Consular Section. Since this person would not be on board for at least a year, there was no immediate problem regarding the three incumbent sub-section chiefs. They were all scheduled to retire within two years. The Consul General and the Deputy Consul General were told by the Inspectors of their negative findings about consular services. (Both had been told about the very same problems by the Embassy, but they did not take our concerns very seriously, since their own staff members insinuated that we were exaggerating the problem.) The DCG began to focus more on the consular issues, and so there were improvements. Fortunately there were some young officers in Frankfurt who were not pleased with the prevailing attitudes of their bosses or of the FSNs toward the public. I stayed in contact with them and encouraged them. They were saying, in effect, "John, you're pushing on an open door, as far as we are concerned. We try to do something beyond the call of duty, and our boss says, 'To hell with that - it's ten minutes past closing time. Don't issue the visa. Tell him to come back tomorrow.' or 'No, don't serve that person because he is from outside our consular district. Tell him to go to Munich.'" The Inspectors also agreed with the approach on the consular district issue which the Embassy was advocating. Serve people from Northern Bavaria, if legally permitted. To wit, issue visas, passports, and provide some other services. Only notariats and official certifications were not legally permitted to be performed out of district. After the

Inspectors weighed in, Frankfurt officially changed its policies and provided services for clients in Northern Bavaria. This was a breakthrough because there were several large U.S. Army units stationed in the area. The soldiers and their dependents no longer had to travel to Munich for most consular services. The Ambassador and Frank Cash were delighted with the backing from the Inspectors and the subsequent changes in attitudes at Frankfurt. We achieved our goal of providing excellent consular services at all the posts. People began to note the change. I received kudos from Frank Cash and the Ambassador, as well as from Washington. The accolades I most appreciated, however, were from my colleagues, especially the younger officers.

The assignment to Embassy Bonn was rewarding in so many ways. Professionally, it expanded my horizons considerably. Although I had served in two small embassies as DCM and as Charge, the extent of our national interests in Malawi and Niger was quite limited. Germany, however, was a focal point of our global strategy. The Embassy was a key component in carrying out that strategy. As a member of the Ambassador's "Management Team", I played a role in the day-to-day activities in furthering our national interests. Making sure that our consular activities were carried out properly was considered important to the Ambassador. That is the reason he fought so hard with the Washington bureaucracy to fill the position with an officer of my background and proven capabilities, rather than a "business-as-usual" career consular type. Ambassador Hillenbrand was fully aware that every working day several thousand Germans came to our Consulates seeking services. He was determined that they would be served in a professional, efficient, and friendly manner. I also had responsibilities to deal with foreign members of the diplomatic and consular corps accredited to the Federal Republic of Germany. On several occasions, I was the official contact between the Embassy and the East Germans on issues involving Allied access to Berlin. Washington made the decision to deal with certain contentious issues on a Consul-to-Consul basis, rather than at the Political Counselor level. Even when I was not directly involved in an issue, I could observe up close how the Embassy team was handling the matter.

I was impressed with the way Ambassador Hillenbrand, and later, Ambassador Stoessel managed various crises or important issues. They were both superb diplomats, with a breadth of experience relating to Europe. I liked and admired both of them and got along well with them. Hillenbrand was the more outspoken of the two. His analyses of events and developments in Germany were accurate and were reported straight. He did not gloss over differences between the U.S. and Germany, particularly on issues where we were attempting to push the Germans into taking positions, with which they disagreed. Since Secretary of State Kissinger fancied himself as the expert on Germany, he often took issue with what Hillenbrand reported or advocated. Kissinger eventually forced Hillenbrand to retire.

Walter Stoessel was transferred to Bonn from Moscow. Not only did I have a good working relationship with Ambassador Stoessel, but we were frequently together on the tennis courts. Walter and his wife liked to play tennis, and their playing level was about equal to Anike's and mine. We played twice a week mixed doubles, Stoessel and Anike on one team and Mary Ann and myself on the other. A Stoessel and a Buche always won (or lost). We got to know them very well over the two years. After the game, Walter was relaxed and would often like to talk about something on his mind. He and I would sit together, while Mary Ann and Anike carried on their conversation elsewhere. What was on his mind was usually a current problem. I served as a

sounding board. He sensed I was very discreet, so he trusted me. He knew I would hold whatever he told me in strict confidence. I was reluctant to offer advice on complex diplomatic issues to a person of such great experience and intelligence. That was not his intention. I sometimes was asked directly for my views, but mostly Walter simply wanted to get something off his chest. By telling me what he thought about a situation or problem, he clarified in his own mind what he should do. Later I would read the cable he had sent to Washington offering his views or solutions. Or if it were a matter for him to handle, I would learn that he had taken such and such a decision, just as he had suggested to me he would do. I learned much about diplomacy from the-post-tennis sessions with Walter. I realized what problems of our own making (the US Government) that someone such as an ambassador to Paris, to Moscow, or to Bonn has to resolve. It is difficult enough to run a huge embassy and to be responsible for US relations with the host country, but a big part of that job is trying to figure out what Washington is trying to do, where a change or shift in policy is leading, why they are going there, what they think they will achieve, what are the chances of success, and what will be the results if we are not successful. I think this is what was very often on Ambassador Stoessel's mind. He was puzzled or uncertain about an issue and wanted to think out loud about how to respond. I certainly appreciated his confidence in my discretion, as well as the chance to share his thinking on some big (and quite minor) issues.

Notwithstanding the problems of the first year in dealing with some stubborn personalities, our tour at Bonn was really enjoyable. It was rewarding in so many ways, culturally, gastronomically, intellectually, and professionally. The children attended an excellent French school, and they liked the experience. It was so much better in their eyes than the school in Niamey. We lived in a comfortable apartment close to the Rhine and surrounded by green areas. There were clubs, theaters, restaurants, recreation facilities, a military post exchange, and a library on the grounds. We were within an hour's drive to Cologne, and other interesting Rhineland cities, the Belgian border, or to the Mosel wine district. We took advantage of the fabulous travel opportunities to visit throughout Germany and into Belgium, France, and especially the Netherlands, where Anike had many close relatives. After our two tours in Africa, we felt we had arrived in a tourist's paradise. We explored the menus of some excellent restaurants and treated ourselves to some fine wines.

We knew a few Americans and Germans from our previous tours, and met other interesting people at the Embassy or in the constituent posts. (Because of my country-wide responsibilities, I traveled to the other posts in the Federal Republic on a regular basis.) Some of the colleagues whom I met during my Bonn assignment have remained close friends to this day. Doug Hunter was in charge of the Consular Section in Bremen. I met him at the first consular conference and was impressed by his contribution to the discussions. He offered positive, practical ways of reaching the goals the Ambassador sought. I was also immediately attracted to him. We worked so well together over the next thirty some months. There was never a problem or complaint about any aspect of the consular operations in Bremen. I looked forward to my visits to that post, since spending time there was such a pleasure, both professionally and socially. Little did I realize at the time that we would both be assigned to the U.S. Mission in Geneva or that we would spend years together in the Refugee Program/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration in Washington. Other long-standing friends from Bonn are Dick and Sally Smyser. He was the Political Counselor. We got to know each other through work, but our friendship

developed through shared cultural and intellectual interests. Several years later, we were both involved in refugee issues. He came to Geneva as the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, while we were posted there. There were other American colleagues from the Bonn era whom we still see occasionally in Washington. On the German side, we met Gunter and Christine Joetze, when he was Ambassador to Niger. We continued our friendship in Bonn, where he was assigned to the section of the Foreign Office dealing with the Four-Power Negotiations, and later in Vienna, where he was the Head of the German Delegation to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Q: Well, John, this might be a good place to stop. We'll pick it up next time. You've left Bonn.

BUCHÉ: I have finished with Bonn. I think this is enough.

HARRY JOSEPH GILMORE
Political (Internal) Reporting Officer/Liaison to Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty
Munich (1975-1978)

Ambassador Gilmore was born and raised in Pennsylvania and educated at Carnegie Institute of Technology, Indiana University and the University of Pittsburgh. He entered the Foreign Service in 1962 and served at the State Department in Washington, DC and at the following posts abroad: Ankara, Budapest, Moscow, Munich, Belgrade and Berlin. He also served as Deputy Commander at the Army War College. In 1993 he was named United States Ambassador to Armenia, where he served until 1995. At the State Department in Washington he dealt primarily with Central European Affairs. The Ambassador was interviewed in 2003 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

GILMORE: I was posted to the Consulate General in Munich, to one of the most beautiful posts in the Foreign Service, and a very difficult job but a very good one. The political section of the consulate general had shrunk in size, and two officer positions had, just before my assignment, been combined into one. They covered the domestic political reporting position for Bavaria, which was very important, because of Bavaria's strategic location in Germany. It had been in the U.S. occupation zone, and it was very, very pro-American. The political reporting position had been combined with the position of liaison to Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, the two U.S. radio stations located in Munich. I was assigned to the Consulate General right after Congress terminated the long-time CIA funding relationship with the radios. A new Congressional oversight mechanism, the Board for International Broadcasting, had just been set up to oversee the radios, including the direct congressional funding of the radios. So I basically had two jobs combined into one. It was a fascinating time. The job got me going in German politics, an interest which I retained to the end of my career. It was also a very difficult time for Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. I don't know which one I should talk about first, Germany or...

Q: Let's talk about Germany first. You were there from 1975 to 1978. Overall, what were the politics that were going through Germany that the U.S. was concerned with? Then we'll move

down to Bavaria.

GILMORE: We were concerned about what became known in journalistic shorthand as the “neutron bomb.” The enhanced radiation warhead is the actual name of the warhead in question. The Army had developed an enhanced radiation warhead for the Lance missile. This warhead would be more lethal to personnel while causing minimal destruction to property. Initially, the U.S. hoped to deploy Lance missiles with enhanced radiation warheads in the Federal Republic of Germany. Ultimately, however, in the face of widespread negative publicity, we did not succeed in deploying this system in Germany.

Other issues in U.S.-German relations in the mid-1970s included maintaining the headquarters of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty in the Federal Republic. There was some pressure from the Helmut Schmidt government to get these radio stations out of Germany, which we very much didn’t want to do. The German government had to issue a license for Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. We knew that the Schmidt government, as it pursued its Ostpolitik, wanted very much to be more accommodating to the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. Not to the point of undermining Western security, but more accommodating. So, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty’s continued operation in Germany was an issue. The Bavarian government wanted the radios to stay. The Minister President of Bavaria, Alfons Goppel, who was succeeded by Franz Josef Strauss, was very strongly for keeping the radios in Bavaria. Goppel, by the way, had his own independent standing in the CSU, the Christian Social Union of Bavaria. Strauss also supported the radios strongly. Playing the delicate game of keeping Bavarian support for RFE/RL strong, which wasn’t that difficult, but keeping the Federal government content to continue to license Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty was tricky. It was a time when Radio Liberty, the radio that broadcast to the Soviet Union in Russian and minority languages was in turmoil. The Russian Service had just had an influx of “refuseniks.” “Refuseniks” was a term used to refer to Soviet citizens, most of them Jews, who had been originally denied permission to emigrate to Israel. The “refuseniks” hired by RL’s Russian Service included some very talented Soviet Jews.

So in the Russian Service of Radio Liberty, there was a tremendous tug-of-war going on over program content. Basically, the struggle was between the older Russian émigrés, most of whom were great Russians who had gathered around the journal Possev – “possev” in Russian means the sower, as in sower of seeds. They were Russian nationalists who wanted to see RL take a particularly hard line toward the USSR, and the “refuseniks.” The latter gathered around some relatively younger people, particularly one very gifted but controversial young broadcaster named Vladimir Matusevich. So there was quite a struggle inside the Russian service of Radio Liberty. It spilled over into the press as both sides would try to feed friendly journalists in Germany and elsewhere with material supporting their views. The RFE/RL management tried desperately to keep the controversies under control, and it took a while for the controversy to quiet down. In addition, during my time as liaison with RFE/RL at the Consulate General, there was quite a bit of tension between the American RFE and the staff of the newly created Board for International Broadcasting. My task was to promote dialog and compromise among the managers and respect for the highest professional standards of journalism on the part of all of RFE/RL employees.

And then there was a third issue, and that is the relationship between the radios and some of the CIA people who had been very close to them during the time the radios were financed through the CIA. From what I was able to observe, the CIA had really not tried to manipulate the content of the RFE/RL broadcasts at any kind of micro level. The CIA wanted the stations to exist, they wanted them to reflect overall U.S. policy, and they wanted them to be surrogates for non-existent domestic opposition radio stations in the target countries. In other words, they wanted them to be kind of an ersatz, free radio medium in each of the target countries. Basically, that is what the Board for International Broadcasting wanted too. But the Board for International Broadcasting wanted to be sure no intelligence operations were conducted under the umbrella of the radios. So that was yet another dimension to be monitored. But I think I succeeded in playing a positive role.

Q: Well, what kind of a role could you play? Because technically, these were not under your guidance.

GILMORE: No. No, certainly I had no authority over the RFE/RL management. But the standards of what the radios could broadcast were pretty clear. There was quite an elaborate set of written internal guidelines, which, if followed by reasonable human beings, would have produced ersatz, free media, broadcasting to each of the target countries. What was the role I could play? Since the State Department could provide overall policy guidance to the radio management, not to the individual services, I could provide that to the American management in a careful way. Also, people from the management came to me to air their gripes. There apparently had been a tradition of this, a hangover from the past when the CIA had run the radios and some senior agency officials were responsible for them. But I think also it had to do – I want to be modest here – with my personality and the fact that I knew quite a bit about Eastern Europe, particularly, and also the former Soviet Union, having served there. Also I think the radio management, the American managers of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty and the heads of the both radios had confidence in me. So what I basically did was play a kind of conciliator's role, encouraging dialog. So what I basically did was play a kind of conciliator's role, encouraging dialogue. And particularly in the case of the Russian Service, where you had this deep divide between the old émigrés and the new "refuseniks." I think I helped keep the proponents of each view engaged in dialogue through a difficult period.

Also, there was the question of whether RFE/RL could be accredited to the 1976 Olympics, which by the way was a big thing, since the Olympics were a huge topic in all of the countries to which the radios broadcast. In 1976 they didn't get Olympic accreditation. The problem was the Federal Republic didn't put them on the list of its journalists to be accredited. But we laid the groundwork for a more effective campaign for the next Olympics. I was gone by then, but RFE and RL were accredited to the 1980 Olympics.

So there were these issues. They don't any of them sound like they're earth-shattering, but if one knew these countries well, all the Eastern European Warsaw Pact member states and the Soviet Union, these radios were important.

In Poland, the RFE Polish Service was immensely popular and important. Also, the RFE Polish Service developed close ties to the Polish church and the Vatican. We used to say that the RFE

Polish Service had an underground connection to the Vatican and then laugh about it. The American ambassador to Poland or an embassy officer would be called in by the Polish government from time to time to receive a complaint about the content of this or that specific broadcast. He'd send a message back to the State Department with a copy to the Consul General, and I would brief the radio management on this. But, in fact, and I should put this bluntly, RFE often knew more than our embassy in Warsaw did about what was going on in Poland. This was particularly the case after \ Cardinal Wojtyla became the Pope John Paul II. In Poland RFE was very much a factor in political as well as broader social and economic life.

RFE was important in Hungary too, although there were allegations that during the revolutionary uprising of 1956, some of the native Hungarian broadcasters of RFE's Hungarian Service – and perhaps encouraged by members of RFE's American management – may have broadcast materials encouraging the revolutionaries in 1956 to take action and to expect outside help, that they didn't get.

In Romania, RFE was an important factor. It was harder to tell what impact Radio Liberty had in the USSR because it was so much harder to do audience research there. But it turns out that RL broadcasts were a pretty powerful influence there too. I'm convinced the more I look at it, the more I learn about the area, that RFE and RL were a very significant factor in producing the broader political context which ultimately led to the demise of the Warsaw Pact and the fall of the Communist regime in Eastern Europe and the USSR.

Q: Who was consul general in Munich when you were there?

GILMORE: The Consul General was first Herb Spivack, and then David Betts. I was with Herb Spivack I guess a bit over a year (1975-1976), and then almost two years with David Betts. Both were very able but very different people. Herbert Spivack had just come from Bangladesh where he'd been chargé. He'd gotten into hot water with Secretary Kissinger for allegedly being more sympathetic to the Bangladesh Unity and independence forces than the pro-Pakistan State Department policy would have wanted him to be. [Ed: Embassy Dacca (now Dhaka) was established May 18, 1972, with Herbert D. Spivack as Chargé d'Affaires ad interim. He was replaced in October 1972.] David Anderson Betts was one of the most senior consular corps officers in the State Department. He had had a very successful career as consul general in Manila, consul general in Palermo, and then, after Munich, finally Montreal.

Q: Well, now let's talk a bit about internal politics. You had Helmut Schmidt as the chancellor, a very powerful figure. And then you had in Bavaria Franz Josef Strauss, Chairman of the Christian Social Union, the Bavarian sister party of the Christian Democratic Union. What were your observations? What were we interested in, in this Strauss-Schmidt relationship?

GILMORE: Well, you know, we had some differences with Helmut Schmidt, for example, on the so-called "neutron bomb" and other issues. And also there were some problems stemming from the fact that President Carter and Chancellor Schmidt were initially virtual strangers, unfamiliar with each other's very different style and manner. But we were very solicitous of our relationship with Helmut Schmidt, and we were not favoring one leader or the other. We weren't pro-anybody. But we wanted a good relationship with the chancellor and we also wanted to keep

a good relationship with Strauss, although there were some issues on which Washington and our embassy in Bonn found Strauss a bit extreme.

For example, Angola. Strauss was strongly pro-Savimbi, and we didn't agree with him on that. He was sometimes considered harder line on the East-West issues than we liked, although I quickly learned that that was largely an illusion. I had a wonderful mentor at the consulate general, Herman Stoeckl, the senior Foreign Service National employee in the political section. He was a Sudeten German, who was very young when drafted into the Wehrmacht after Hitler incorporated the Sudetenland into the Reich with the Munich Agreement in September, 1938. At the end of WWII, Stoeckl found himself in Bavaria with his fiancée, also a Sudeten German. She, by the way, was shipped out of Czechoslovakia at the end of WWII in a cattle car by the Czechs with just the clothes on her back. Stoeckl had been from a Social Democrat family, and by the way wasn't anti-Czech, although he had his issues with the Czechs. We'd hired him immediately after WWII as a public safety official in our military government in Bavaria and he just remained a U.S. Government employee until his retirement. So, he knew Bavarian politics like a clockmaker knows a clock.

We had some important tasks to accomplish during that period. One thing we had to do was to deal with the allegations against Strauss that he'd taken Lockheed bribery money as Minister of Defense. Remember the Lockheed F-104G Starfighter, the aircraft that was involved in numerous crashes in Germany, partly because, by the way, it was not designed for flying in those perpetually cloudy German conditions with tight borders. But in any case, there were allegations that Strauss took what the Germans called "Bestechungsgelde," bribes from Lockheed, the manufacturers of the F-104. By the way, I could never find anything to confirm that. Meanwhile, we had to deal with an investigation on Capitol Hill that appeared to me might be politically driven. I had to be very careful because there was at least one colleague in Embassy Bonn who seemed to believe the allegations despite the fact that we had nothing by way of proof.

Q: Who was the officer in Bonn?

GILMORE: I'm hesitant to mention his name.

Q: Why not?

GILMORE: Bill Bodde. Very capable fellow, a good friend.

Q: I interviewed Bill [Ed: and his interview is on the ADST website].

GILMORE: He's a very good fellow and he's a friend. He believed that the congressional investigators had some evidence. If they did, I never saw it. What I wanted to do was basically to preserve the close U.S. relationship with the CSU and not put us on one side or another as to whether these rumors were true. When the congressional staffers came to Munich after they had been to Bonn, I put them in touch with the Christian Social Union. It upset the CSU people a bit. But I was very careful to indicate that we, the U.S. government, were not accusing anybody of anything. That was an issue that could have seriously strained our relationship with the Christian Social Union.

There was another interesting development relating to Strauss and the Christian Social Union. I got a call one day from one of Strauss's senior aides. By the way, I had excellent relationships with Strauss's staff. It was my job. The aide who called me said he had an urgent matter to discuss, and he came to the consulate general to meet with me. He handed me a copy of a letter in pretty darned good English, purporting to be on official CIA letterhead. It accused Strauss of improprieties in his relationship with Lockheed and the F-104 fighters sold to the FRG. Within 24 hours we were able to report the matter back to Washington, both to State and CIA, and informed both the chancellor and then Strauss that it was a forgery. Presumably it was a GDR (East German) forgery. The forged letter could have been very damaging had it hit the press before we clarified it. But, we were able to get an answer back to Helmut Schmidt, to brief him, the chancellor, and Strauss, that this letter was not in any way a U.S. or CIA document. Strauss's office quickly informed the press and emphasized that it was a forgery. So we defanged that issue.

There was one other important issue with Strauss. It was not one that concerned the U.S. directly, but it really roiled German conservative politics for a while. Strauss was very frustrated that the Christian Democratic Union and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union, the "Black" or Christian conservative parties regularly won the largest number of seats in the Bundestag, the federal parliament, but were unable to form a government because the liberal Free Democratic Party was committed to forming a coalition government with the Social Democratic Party. Helmut Kohl, the leader of the CDU, sought to persuade the FDP to leave the SPD/FDP coalition and to form a government with the CDU and CSU. To everyone's surprise, at a CSU retreat in the Bavarian spa town of Wildbad Kreuth, the CSU passed a resolution proposed by Strauss calling for the CSU to expand beyond Bavaria and to run in all the German states in the Bundestag elections. Strauss argued that by running candidates outside Bavaria, the CSU could win the few extra Bundestag seats the CDU/CSU/FDP needed to out Helmut Schmidt's SPD/FDP coalition. Kohl and the other CDU leaders were upset and were strongly opposed to the idea. Kohl threatened to arrange for the CDU to run as a separate party in Bavaria. There was a tremendous row between the CDU and the CSU, and Strauss was forced to retreat. This was the kind of issue where the Consulate General's reporting was important.

Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's Social Democratic Party was weaker in Bavaria than in the other German states with the possible exception of Baden-Wurttemberg. The SPD was well led in Bavaria, but it just couldn't compete against the CSU which was wrapped in the white and blue Bavarian flag. The SPD had internal problems too, especially with the "Young Socialists in the SPD," the JUSOS in Munich, who were among the most radical JUSOS in the Federal Republic.

The head of the FDP in Bavaria in those days was the Federal Minister of Agriculture Ertl. The Consulate General maintained close contact with the Free Democrats in Bavaria because they needed to maintain their ability to win at least 5% of the vote in Bundestag elections. Had they failed to do so, Ertl would have lost his seat and the SPD/FDP coalition government might have fallen.

So we dealt with a range of political issues at the Consulate General. In retrospect, I believe the most important issue to Washington was ensuring that Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty

could continue to broadcast from Munich.

Q: At this point, you talked about the neutron bomb, and the use of this weapon became quite an issue. President Carter put a lot of pressure on Helmut Schmidt to accept it. After he went through a lot of political turmoil to get Germany to accept it, Carter turned around and decided not to do it. Sort of an overnight conversion.

GILMORE: There never was a weapon which the U.S. or NATO called the “neutron bomb.” The “neutron bomb” was the name some elements of the media, perhaps fed by Warsaw Pact intelligence agencies, gave to the enhanced radiation warhead for the U.S. Army’s Lance missile system. It was a small thermonuclear weapon which would provide minimal blast and heat but release large amounts of lethal radiation. Its proponents saw it as a weapon which could be used against Soviet forces and their allies in Europe without destroying large swaths of the Federal Republic of Germany. The intense negative publicity surrounding the initial reports of possible deployment of this warhead was never overcome and there was never any real political support for it in Germany.

Q: A so-called capitalistic bomb.

GILMORE: Right. And what it would do to populations, and everything else. And how it would harm East-West relations. The German media, including some of the more responsible media, had a heyday.

Q: But this rift between Schmidt and Carter, was Strauss taking any advantage of this? Were we watching this...?

GILMORE: The interesting answer is “no”, and in fact on the big issues, Strauss stood with Helmut Schmidt. We were able to report on these issues from Bavaria because of our very good connections with Strauss’s staff. For example, my wife and I went to the CSU annual ball as the guest of Gerold Tandler, secretary general of Strauss’s party, and sat with him at his table. If I needed to see him, or Strauss’s senior aide, Wilhelm Knittel, I could do so on short order. In any case, on the central issues of trade and security policy, Strauss stood with Helmut Schmidt.

And I have to add here something I learned then, but I learned even more convincingly when I was in Berlin. There’s a belief in Germany, in Berlin and in the Northern German states, that the Bavarians are kind of country bumpkins. They speak this dialect, this Bayerisch, which nobody few outsiders can understand, and supposedly they’re not very well educated and even backward. Well, it’s not only nonsense, it’s total nonsense. On the Abitur exam, the examinations at the end of gymnasium (high school), for those going on to university, Bavarians often have the highest, or the second highest results in the country. Also, largely due to Strauss’s party (the CSU’s) economic policies, many of the companies that were headquartered in Berlin before WWII, which had to fold because of the division of Germany, transferred their headquarters to Munich. Siemens was one example. I should add that now that Germany is reunited and Berlin is again its capital, firms like Siemens are again moving their headquarters to Berlin. And the two southern states, Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg, are the two economic powerhouses, in terms of new technology, in Germany.

Also, Strauss found Helmut Schmidt a very pragmatic, gutsy guy. I remember while I was posted in Munich, Germany faced the famous kidnapping of Hans Martin Schleyer by the terrorist organization RAF (Rote Armee Faktion, or Baader-Meinhof Gang). And Schmidt put the interests of the German state ahead of trying to save Schleyer's life by making a deal with the terrorists. Strauss admired him for that. What I'm saying is that at a level above politics, at least ordinary day-to-day politics, Strauss and Schmidt were often on the same wavelength.

Q: Did you see the French playing around in Bavaria?

GILMORE: There was a French consulate general there. They had very good trade relations, but politically they weren't much of a factor. There were very good, cordial relations between Bavaria and France. Where the French worked diligently with the Bavarians and Strauss was, on the European issues especially, getting the European Union (EU) underway. Strauss was an ardent Europeanist, and he had deep respect for the French commitment to the European Union. The other issue where the Bavarians and French played footsies was on EU agricultural policy. The French farmers and the Bavarian farmers have parallel interests. They don't have huge land holdings. They're very dependent on the "right" economic policies in the EU. So Strauss's interests in the European Parliament and Strauss's party's economic interests were very close to the French. But the French didn't have a high profile politically, in Bavaria particularly, and not a low one either.

The British had a consulate general in Munich, too. The high profile foreigners were invariably the Americans. And of course, we had forces stationed in Bavaria and important military installations in Bavaria. We also had some intelligence cooperation with Bavarians. Interrogating refugees from Eastern Europe and that sort of thing. There was quite a bit going on there.

JAMES ALAN WILLIAMS
Economic/Political Officer
Bonn (1975-1979)

Mr. Williams was born in Wisconsin and raised in Virginia. After graduation from Princeton University, he joined the Foreign Service in 1965 and was posted to Ankara, Turkey. During his career Mr. Williams became a specialist in Greek/Turkish/Cyprus affairs and served as Special Coordinator for Cyprus, with the personal rank of Ambassador. His foreign assignments include Ankara, Nicosia, Bonn, Berlin and Athens, and he had several tours at the State Department in Washington. Mr. Williams was interviewed by Ray Ewing in 2003.

Q: We're picking up the oral history interview with James Williams on the 22nd of October 2004, and Jim we pretty much completed your discussion of being a political officer in Nicosia from '73 to '75. And then you were assigned I believe to Bonn? What did you do there?

WILLIAMS: I was assigned to Bonn initially as an economic/commercial officer to what was

then called the general economic policy section. GEP, as was the acronym. I had had only a few months of economic/commercial experience. That was during my time as a central complement rotational officer in embassy Ankara. So my credentials for that assignment were fairly thin. So, as part of my in-processing when I was back on leave in January of '75, I went over to the Department of Commerce to meet their EUR folk and show them I didn't have two heads, or whatever it was I was supposed to show them. Anyways, apparently they had no objection to my assignment; we pledged a good working relationship which we had, so I went on to Bonn to be a member of the economic/commercial section.

Q: And as I recall you explained that this was actually a direct transfer and that there was also an opportunity for your family to rejoin you after they had been separated?

WILLIAMS: That's correct. Ann and I had decided when Laura was born, on the day that another mob had hit the embassy in Nicosia, that going back to Nicosia with a family in the near future was not a very smart thing to do, even if the department allowed it. And indeed the families began to return as I recall in the spring of '75. At that point, when Laura was born in January of '75 I still had a year and a half to go. And so I asked for curtailment and direct transfer to some point that would be more family friendly. And by good luck and the assistance of some friends the job in Bonn was identified and my assignment to Nicosia was broken. This did not for obvious reasons go down very well with the ambassador in Nicosia, Bill Crawford, who thought he was losing an important member of his team at a critical time. It was a critical time. He listened to my reasons; I don't think he ever agreed with them but he never opposed to curtailment or the transfer.

Q: So in Bonn you became an economic officer?

WILLIAMS: In Bonn I became an economic officer. The economic section job to which I had been assigned had been held by John Winder, who had left some months earlier.

The job itself was primarily energy. This was in the post-OPEC embargo era when IEA – the International Energy Agency – had been inaugurated and was very much in the ascendancy. There was a lot of interest in Washington and the energy portfolio was fairly interesting at the time. I knew very little about energy so I had a learning curve to go through. My contacts were primarily the ministry of energy, natural resources, there were some other contacts as I recall in the ministry of industry. And perhaps the ministry of foreign affairs when it came to dealing with OPEC and IEA. But as I learned after I got into the job a bit, what had happened when Joe Winder left some months before I got there in the summer of '75, his job had been picked apart and certain parts of it had been transferred to others who were hungry, as they say, for more work. And once I got the energy portfolio down – it took me a few months, maybe six or seven months – I quickly started looking for other things to do.

Ed Crawley, who was the head of the overall economic part of the embassy which included a whole lot of other agencies such as the DEA, the IRS and others, would give me jobs from time to time. I was asked to write speeches for Ambassador Hillenbrand which took a lot of time, and it was nice to get the attention of being a speech writer, but it wasn't exactly what I wanted to do. My contacts in the Ministry of Energy were first rate people, I really enjoyed working with them,

and I stayed in touch with them for years after that. But as I had fancied myself a political officer from the start of my career - I had never really done political work except for my abbreviated tour in Nicosia – I looked for an opportunity to move over to the political section. That opportunity came unexpectedly when a member of the political section had to curtail for health reasons, so in November of '76 he left very suddenly, and I was offered the job.

Unfortunately this was not done through channels. Ed Crawley had heard about it after the decision was made and after I'd accepted, and it was a painful lesson for me – I should've known better – I had to explain to Ed what had happened. He was gracious, though he didn't like it, but he graciously let me go and did not object to the transfer. So in November of '76 at Embassy Bonn I was once again a political officer.

Q: And that was arranged at Embassy Bonn without much involvement from Washington?

WILLIAMS: I don't know what Washington's involvement was because there was no powerful central personnel system at this time; I'm sure Washington was informed, because the billet that I was moved into was unencumbered when Jack Hurley left and my billet had to be filled by somebody else from Washington. But basically the switch was made at embassy Bonn.

Q: And what sort of political work did you do in the political section at Bonn beginning November of '76?

WILLIAMS: Well I was the junior member of a two man section dedicated to the internal political affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany. As the title implies it's a federal system so politics is very important at the state level. There was a lot of travel involved to the so called youth political wing – it's like young republicans, young democrats – but they meet every year. They're well financed, and these organizations were very assiduous in hosting foreign diplomatic observers who were invited to view what they had to do and say because they were the rising generation of politicians in Germany. For example, the current chancellor was one of the young socialist leaders towards the end of my tour there. There were others who came up through the ranks of the young union. The free democrats, the youth branch and so on.

Bill Bodde was my boss for the first part of my tour in internal affairs, until the summer of '77 and then Vlad Lehovitch came and for the balance of my tour –the next two years – Vlad and I were the domestic affairs unit. It was a lot of fun. The travel was fun because we would go together to the large political congresses of the SPD, the CVU. We didn't cover the CSU, the Bavarian equivalent of the Christian Democratic Union, led by Franz Joseph Strauss. That was done and guarded very jealously by the consulate general in Munich. Harry Gilmore did that at the time and he and I were very close colleagues. My only experiences with Franz Joseph Strauss unfortunately were as observer in the Federal Parliament (Bundestag). Even in that late phase of his career he could give some of the best speeches of any member of the Bundestag. In fact, Strauss was so good, so extemporaneously good, and so witty, and so pithy, that even the backbenchers of the SPD who normally – always – hated his politics, admired his rhetorical art and would laugh and even applaud at some of his wittier sallies. It was a lot of fun to listen to, sometimes hard to follow, but essentially we reported on what the German politicians were doing in their congress, what the main debates were, whether it was missiles, or defense, or budget, or

taxation or whatever. Political scandals that came up. We had a reporting plan to be sure.

But most of the stuff we assigned ourselves – it was our choice. It wasn't to meet some plan, so a lot of the stuff – as politics tends to be – was ad hoc; a scandal, an opening caused by a death, a change of coalition partner, whatever. It was a lot of fun. Largely because of the subject matter, which inherently interested me, largely because of the freedom we had – we had a budget, a modest budget, that allowed Bill Bodde and me, Vlad and me, sometimes just me alone when it was a young political group, to travel, to spend several days with the German political groups and to really develop fantastic contacts. This helped considerably when the time came to schedule a visit to Bonn by President Carter.

Brzezinski came often. A few folk came from Washington. We had scheduled quite a few folks from Germany to Washington, it was a lot of fun.

Q: And your German was good enough to do all of this?

WILLIAMS: Fortunately I'd minored in German and I'd studied the language seriously since high school and through college and came in with a 3 + 3+ it was tested at 5/5 in my home leave during the summer of '77 – that was the days when the testers at FSI were perhaps more quickly dazzled than they are today, or feeling more generous. But in any case my German was very good, and stayed very good, got even better for the whole tour.

Q: Were you the control officer for some of these visits? Or were you just with others in the embassy involved with them?

WILLIAMS: It would depend. For example, I had a contact in the Federal Chancellor's office which was kind of like the NSC only it handled both domestic and foreign issues. It was a contact I had inherited from somebody. He was sort of in the third echelon below the chancellor, but one of the chancellor's closer associates. So, for example, when Carter's visit was being set up, I was the liaison to arrange logistics, to include intelligence support, that is make sure we had secure rooms for our intelligence services. So that helped me develop my vocabulary in the intelligence field which was not too full before then.

But there were visit by the IPU – the Inter Parliamentary Union – the IPU had one of its quadrennial meetings in Bonn in '78, I believe, or late '77. Our delegation was led by Senator Robert Stafford from Vermont. It was a bipartisan delegation of ten members, House and Senate, and as many staffers and more. I was the sole control officer for that group and covered everything from making sure the arrangements at the hotel were acceptable to handling any particular issues they had. They were a self sufficient delegation, they had their own liquor and their own control room and this and that but I was the one from the embassy to make sure nothing went wrong.

There were certain other visitors that came – I can't remember them all now – but we had a fairly busy time with visitors. Sometimes we would grouse to ourselves – only half seriously – about how we thought we were a travel bureau, but it goes with the turf and it added ultimately to the enjoyment and the success of our work there.

Q: The Federal Republic of Germany was certainly an important ally, an important country to the United States, Berlin, throughout western Europe in the period you were there...did you have the sense that agencies in Washington were really interested in the domestic political doings that you were reporting on? I'm sure they were at the times of elections, and things like that but some of the future leaders and some of the detail...did you have the feeling sometimes that you were sending something to the files?

WILLIAMS: If not to the files certainly to a limited number of desk officers in the agency and at State. Perhaps in the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) who followed the Federal republic of Germany closely. We didn't often get feedback or comment or request for information on our basic reporting on what the SPD had done in its congress in Hamburg or what the Bundestag debate on taxation really meant for the stability of the government of Helmut Schmidt. However, he had a very narrow majority for the bulk of the time I was there. After the federal election of '76 he governed essentially with a five vote majority, which in American circumstances would be almost impossible. But given the party whips and the effectiveness of party discipline over all parties in Germany, it worked. But what that meant is that Schmidt often had to satisfy the so-called rebels within the ranks of the SPD – these were backbenchers of no particular consequence who saw an opportunity to get a few headlines and sort of exploit a situation for their own benefit, and they did.

That situation and the prospect that Schmidt might lose a vote on some key issue because of these guys made Washington a little bit more interested in some of this stuff. But your basic point is correct – there wasn't a whole lot of expressed interest, at least to me, on issues that we reported on with one major exception. There were other exceptions but the one that really sticks in my mind favorable was the debate the German people and their representatives in the Bundestag had for over a year when the issue of the abolition of the death penalty – I'm sorry, the issue of the law came up that provides for life in prison. I've got this wrong. Under German law, there was no death penalty first of all.

But there was the possibility of giving life in prison for Nazi criminals if they were prosecuted within initially a 20 year period and then a 30 year period. The issue was the statute of limitations that affected the penalties for Nazi crimes. I was in Germany in this political job from '77 to '79. At that point the 30 year statute of limitations on capital crimes in the Nazi period was about to run out. Because it started running several years after the war ended. At that time there were still a few trials underway of minor officials from Auschwitz, from other camps, though the witnesses, the survivors, the people who took part in the proceedings were old and memories were fading. There were still enough of them alive to be of consequence, and there was a broad feeling among certain members of the German people, and more importantly, a large number of American people, who felt that justice should be done here, and not allowed to be thwarted because the statute of limitations had run out.

We did not have such a statute of limitations in America. So one of the initial things to explain to our reading audience back in Washington – which on this issue was very large – because of the political dynamics of holocaust issues in America - was that the German system was different, why it was different, and what the options were. The decision to essentially abolish the statute of

limitations on murder, which is what it came down to, murder in the broadest sense, was a political one. There was a substantial body of opinion in Germany, including in Schmidt's own party, which opposed any further tampering with the statute of limitations, on the grounds that that is what the Nazi's had done with the law books in their times. And therefore, once laws had been passed they should not be changed for essentially political ends, even though the stated objective was a worthy one.

So it was a debate of principle, a very passionate debate on both sides, and one in which a number of people came from Washington, or from America, to express their concern to the Chancellor and to the political leaders of Germany. I was the embassy liaison with these groups. I remember one group; it was an interfaith group, with the head of the anti-defamation league, the NAACP, labor leaders, about ten or fifteen distinguished Americans, most of whose names I'd read about in the papers but I'd never met before. They came as part of a bipartisan interfaith delegation to express their concern to chancellor Schmidt – who spoke fluent English.

And he spent easily an hour of time with them, discussing the issue, his own personal views, the politics of it, and without committing himself to the outcome said he could assure them it would be an outcome of integrity. And in the end I think they left, more or less satisfied that they had been heard. When the vote finally came, the Bundestag did vote to abolish the statute of limitations on murder. But over a period of, I would say, four months, maybe longer, this was an issue on the front page of the German press, it was something we reported on almost every week. there were special reports written on it based on our reporting, sometimes they would quote it verbatim – I was rather amused about that – without giving us credit. I chided my friend John Maypothor who did that once, but I mention it just to indicate the degree of interest back here in an issue that was far more than just a German domestic political decision.

So at the end of the day the statute was abolished on that particular crime and that meant that any Nazi criminal from the third Reich, no matter how ancient or feeble, could be captured and prosecuted if evidence was found to deduce his guilt during the third Reich. This was a victory more of principle than of practicality. I think the number of trials that followed the abolition were very very few.

Q: Was the Schmidt government in coalition with the free democrats?

WILLIAMS: They were indeed. And that coalition was under some strain because they'd been in power – they'd been together – for some time since the free democrats had switched to coalition with the SPD. There were always conservative members of the FDP who wanted to go back to their earlier coalition with the CSU, but Hans-Dietrich Genscher who was the head of the FDP and the foreign minister, and Schmidt managed to keep the wild men in both their parties under control, and keep the coalition going for the whole time I was there.

Q: And during this period I think in Italy and in Rome and in London, political sections with several officers covering the domestic political situation tended to specialize, so in London I think there was someone who did the conservatives, someone else who did the Labor party, and I think that was true in Rome. That was not true in Bonn?

WILLIAMS: That was not true in Bonn. We discussed that several times, but essentially, even though our political section was large, there were only two of us who did domestic affairs. We thought – this decision was made before I got there and I think it was a good one, we certainly affirmed it any number of times – that was better for Bill and me, and later Vlad and me to be acceptable and known and welcome in all the parties and their youth groups rather than to be specialized in one or the other. And it worked out fine.

Q: Now you did tend to mainly connect with the three main parties, CDU, SPD and the free democrats, what about the small parties both the left – the communists – and the far right?

WILLIAMS: We had no dealings with the communists, or whatever their name was at the time. With the Greens we had some dealings, particularly after they entered the state parliament. We did meet with a few of the greens. I think we even went to their national convention once, again on invitation. And that was fun, but they were quite different from the other groups, deliberately so, they were also a bit more awkward with our status, and how to deal with us as members of the so-called capitalist, imperialist NATO class. But on a whole our relations were cordial and I had a lot more to do with them in Berlin, and we'll get to that later.

There's one more issue I should have mentioned, that really was at least as neuralgic and explosive in Germany and watched as carefully in Washington as was the debate on the statute of limitations on murder. That was the whole question of terrorism. The Baader-Meinhof gang was still active, or at least members of it were, even though Baader and Meinhof had been arrested. Some of their adherents were still active. There was a lot of clear sympathy for and support for radical revolutionary groups in the German intellectual class and elite groups. And there was a lot of violence, because there were individuals – not many of these folks – but they were very good at what they did. When I was there, rode up on a motorcycle with a friend one day and machine gunned the solicitor general of the Republic of Germany in the car with his driver. Killed him. Hanns Martin Schleyer who was the head of chamber of commerce was kidnapped and in broad daylight in Cologne by one of these groups and murdered, several weeks later before the federal authorities could find them.

And the German reaction to this type of terrorism, which was also going on at Italy at the time too, they had Red Brigades and there'd been other groups in Ireland, in Spain, the ETA, these groups seemed to for awhile have a sort of Robin Hood-esque quality to them. They were invincible, the authorities could not catch them, they got bad people who prosecuted left wingers or represented the imperialist class. And it was really difficult for the Germans to come to grips with this. Finally they did catch these people and put them away. But even when they put them away there was trouble because in Stammheim Prison, which is the maximum security prison that was built in Stuttgart in southwest Germany, to take care of these people, to house them, several prisoners were able to coordinate their own suicide on the same night without anybody aware of it or able to stop them. So these suicides raised a great human cry, debates in the Bundestag, demands for investigation, it was really something.

And there was a lot of interest back here on just what is this going to mean because the German self-confidence seemed to be shaken by all this. They didn't know how to deal with these people even when they captured them. They didn't know how to deal with them: to keep them alive, to

prosecute them, to keep them in jail doing their penance, and there was a lot of soul searching and hand wringing about just what all of this meant for the republic of Germany.

We had to take precaution at the embassy because we were targets too. There was initial surveillance that I knew of, even though I was not in the security or intelligence part of the embassy of the embassy compound. That led us to increase some of our precautions against that. There were later efforts to shoot rockets after I left Bonn. In the early 80s, there was an effort to shoot a rocket into the embassy compound from across the Rhine. I don't recall what happened in that effort but it was made by these groups. They were dangerous people. And there was a concern in some quarters in Germany and in Washington that the government might overreact and impose martial law or the equivalent of it in trying to get the domestic security situation under control.

At one point after Schleyer was abducted and murdered in a rather grisly fashion and more threats were made there were actually armored vehicles and tanks on the street of Bonn, in the government compound and near the main embassies. And that was a sight that I don't think had ever been seen in Bonn before. It brought back very unpleasant memories of the not-too-distant past. A lot of Germans worried about it. It made the front page of the Times, caused a swath of difficulties for the Germans, internationally, including the United States. So reporting on that and trying to make sense of it in terms of what it really meant to the Germans, how the Germans sized it up, how they were reacting. That was a big part of what I did, and not just what I did but what Dick Smyser the political counselor, Vlad Lehovich my boss, the ambassador, Walt Stoessel and Frank Munoz his DCM and all of us, and the intelligence services too, were all reporting on this with our contacts and from our perspectives. It was a major issue for I'd say most of the '77 – '79 period I was there.

Q: Okay. Anything else we should say about Bonn? There was an election in '76 but you weren't in the political section then.

WILLIAMS: No, no.

Q: So you weren't there in the political section for a major election?

WILLIAMS: No but we certainly followed it. Our son was five years old at the time and we lived in the suburb of Bonn which essentially had garden apartments and a few houses and lots of kids. So even though Ben went to the American school, learned in English, he played in German, with German playmates. So one day he came home singing a song, I forget the tune and I forget the lyrics, but essentially it was an SPD election song, because that part of the Rhineland was very SPD. Very red as they said.

And so it was an SPD election campaign song against the Americans. So Ben, though he spoke German, didn't quite understand the import of what he was singing although he had the tune down right and he and the kids were singing happily along. So Ann had to explain to him what the song was and when she talked to his friends she said "You really want us to leave?" and they said "No, no no we don't mean you" so they were a little vignettes like that. But that was all personal, not professional and it was not part of the political team.

Q: Now you had been previously in Cyprus, served in Turkey, and Germans were kind of involved in that part of Europe, during the period you were there. But you weren't involved at all yourself? There was an external part of the political section that did get involved.

WILLIAMS: Right. Mike _____ and his deputy, they had a two man section also, who covered essentially the foreign ministry. As well as it could be covered by anybody; we had our hands full with the political parties. It was a clear division of labor. We had a two man section for the political military issues liaison with the ministry of defense and to some extent the armed forces. In the last year I was there we got a DOD (Department of Defense) colleague who was detailed to us. A civilian from OSD who was detailed to us to help with the reporting effort. And he reported through embassy channels but this was one of the handful of positions created world wide when SECDEF and SECSTATE agreed to do it.

Q: And there was somebody in the political section that spent all their time on issues related to Berlin?

WILLIAMS: There were two people. There was a lawyer, Peter Funge, Jim Whitlock, and a head deputy – there were four people – because the deputy political counselor Bob German did a lot of Berlin, but not exclusively, and there was a political counselor. So we had a fairly extensive section. A number of locals who did translation for us, we had a clipping service, we had a fellow Irving Gross who had a room full of cabinets full of clippings he made, and pasted them in the center of a nice piece of paper with annotations of date and publication. He was a tremendous resource because at the drop of a hat he'd get you biographic information, factual information of what happened when, and gossip information. He was very useful as a resource.

I had a colleague who took me to the Bundestag. He knew everybody in the Bundestag and everybody knew him and he could open any door there and it was very helpful.

Q: You mentioned before being present for some of the sessions of the Bundestag. Was that something you did regularly?

WILLIAMS: Well the Bundestag met several days most weeks. There was summer breaks and Easter breaks and Christmas breaks but we had the calendar so several days a week they'd be in session. And depending on what the topic was, we would go and sit in the tribunes upstairs and listen to it. This was something I didn't have to do all the time but I enjoyed it, particularly when someone like Strauss was going to speak, or the chancellor, or Willy Brandt who was first rate.

_____ was the fellow who had started as a communist, switched over to the SPD after he had a falling out with Stalin and had risen to become the head of the SPD caucus in the Bundestag. And he was called Uncle Herbert, with good reason. He had a vicious temper, and tongue, he didn't hesitate to discipline members who got out of line, and he knew every issue backward and forwards. So nobody was going to cross him.

But he was also, perhaps with Schmidt and Brandt, the only one in the Bundestag who was as gifted oratorical as Franz Joseph Strauss. And occasionally when they would speak on the same

issue, taking entirely different sides, and alluding to each other's position in the most caustic way, it was both a political and rhetorical pleasure just to listen to them go at it. So I enjoyed that very much. It took a lot of time, obviously. There's no speed up on those debates, and they would go on for hours, but I learned a lot about Germany and German politics that way. And I developed tremendous admiration for some of these war horses of the main parties.

Q: Did the Bundestag operate through committees? Were you involved with the committees or more with the body as a whole?

WILLIAMS: Oddly enough I only attended plenary sessions; I could only attend plenary sessions.

Q: Ok, Jim you wanted to say a few words about President Carter's visit?

WILLIAMS: Jimmy Carter came to Bonn in the last year we were there. I think it was in the summer. And I was involved in setting up that visit, helping a large team, obviously, do that. It was an interesting visit because it was widely believed and I think with good reason, that Chancellor Schmidt and President Carter did not like each other. You'd read all kinds of gossip in the German papers that obviously came from some source in the federal chancery about Schmidt's acerbic comments one way or the other. But at the end of the day, the visit went, as far as I recall, very well. There were no fireworks. Ann and I were involved in one particular aspect of the visit. Carter, being a very religious man, wanted to attend church services on Sunday and he was there on a Sunday, and it so happened that our community, the American community in Plittersdorf, had an American church built in New England style with a steeple, white wood and brick. Ann and I were regular members of the congregation and we were part of the liaison team with Russ Montfort the minister to make sure the visit went well. Basically, Carter came in, sat down through the whole service, and then went out and shook hands with the congregation after it was over. It was a very nice service, I forget what the sermon was, but everybody was very happy, the church was packed to the rafters which it wasn't always.

Q: Sometimes he reads the scripture or even gives the lesson.

WILLIAMS: I don't think he had any role as I recall. He came in and sat down and Ann was in one of the back rows and some fellow with a huge satchel came in and sat down next to her and she was very aware of security and had no idea who this guy was. He was in civilian dress and he had a satchel which was bulging. She didn't know what in the hell it was, and finally she nudged somebody from the Secret Service from our own security office and said what is this guy with his bag over here. It was the President's physician with his medicaments Carter might have needed. Carter didn't need any medication.

Q: I thought you were going to say it was the nuclear codes.

WILLIAMS: No, it wasn't the package; this was a doctor as it turned out. Carter, who has wonderful interpersonal skills, and Mrs. Carter, and Amy who was there, spent a lot of time shaking hands with the congregation. Amy at one point took our daughter Laura's hand and walked with her around a bit, we have a picture of that. And years later when I was in Athens

and President and Mrs. Carter came there for another reason, we showed them that picture of Amy and Laura from Bonn in the late '70s and they autographed it for us. We reminisced a bit about the visit, so that was a lot of fun.

Q: Alright, anything else?

WILLIAMS: Well a big part of my off-duty time in Bonn was the tennis committee of the American Club on the Rhine. The whole time we had an embassy in Bonn and had the residential area in Plittersdorf we had essentially a country club which was part of that Plittersdorf complex which had swimming pool and tennis courts, and for the last two or three years of my tour in Bonn I was the chairman of the tennis committee which meant setting up tennis tournaments, sometimes officiating at, in which I discovered the hard way is a lot more difficult than it looks on TV. Making line calls that the players don't like is not always easy. But it was quite an education in how to run a committee, how to set up a banquet where the ambassador came, because he was an avid tennis player, and Mrs. Stoessel was too. That added to the overall pleasure that we had. I think from the point of view of the overall enjoyment of the whole family I guess the total experience professional and personal, Bonn would be one of the top parts of our Foreign Service career. That was great.

Q: Being involved with the tennis committee sounds better, I've done a number of these oral history interviews where there was an experience being a member of the school board of the American school and that was often very difficult and heavy responsibility. This sounded like very responsible and some difficulty, but probably a lot of fun too.

WILLIAMS: There was rarely difficulty. The only problem we had was a rather embarrassing one. As I said we had an annual banquet to award trophies to those who'd won the club tournament in various divisions, and the first year I did that I assumed that the staff from the club would have the names engraved properly on the trophies, but when I made the awards I discovered that virtually every name had been misspelled. So I had to make the presentations and then go back after the ceremony and get the trophies back to have the name plates done correctly. After that, we checked the names before they went to the engraver.

ALEXANDER A. L. KLIEFORTH
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Bonn (1975-1980)

Alexander A. L. Klieforth began in radio while in college in Wisconsin. He served with USIS in Germany, Hungary, and Indonesia. Mr. Klieforth was interviewed by Cliff Groce on August 15, 1988.

Q: So, where to then -- Bonn?

KLIEFORTH: Bonn, Germany -- which was the assignment that I was really interested in. The ambassador was Martin Hillenbrand, whom I'd known from the time when he was assistant

secretary for Europe, and I'd known him when he was the DCM in Bonn. He was succeeded by Walter Stoessel, who wound up being Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, a very great diplomatist, really first-rate. Now, the German program was the largest that we had in the world at that time. In refreshing my mind here, we had 32 Americans, 160 Germans in Bonn, and seven branch posts, five German-American Institutes, with 48 Germans, plus the operation in West Berlin, plus general oversight over RIAS. So it was a big program. And one of my accomplishments was to get John Clyne there as my deputy. Alan Dodds was the cultural affairs officer, and we formed a troika.

When I arrived in the summer of '75, what was coming down the pike was the U.S. bicentennial. It very rapidly became clear that the Germans were going to celebrate this, not only with enthusiasm but to an enormous degree quantitatively. How it worked out qualitatively was to be seen. We not only had to get plugged into this, I wound up having to help the Germans coordinate among themselves, because it reached proportions which were absolutely staggering. In 1976, there were over 4,000 events in Germany to celebrate our bicentennial, of which 400 plus were developed entirely by USIS Germany, and we supported one way or the other another thousand. And we had some kind of American representative at almost each one of these. This was great, because we had all the consuls general, the consuls, forgotten vice consuls, the third man down in the agricultural attaché's office. "You go out and spread the word," and boy, did they enjoy it. They got into these German festivities. They were briefed what to do. It went beautifully. So we had an official, saying, "I'm from the American embassy. I bring you greetings from the ambassador." They enjoyed it, and it also brought immediate integration between USIS and the entire embassy.

Then, because of my military background -- I'd been in the Air Force; in fact, I was on a tour of duty in the Air Force before I came to the Agency -- and especially the Senior Seminar, I was able to get the assistance of EUCOM, EUSAREUR, and USAFE. You know, open up your coffers and do everything; every marching band in Germany participating, and so on.

To answer your question, Why? I began thinking about this, and decided that what this portended was a rite of passage. The Germans had been under American tutelage since the end of the war, and this was now 1976, 30 years after American military government really became functioning after the first six months of occupation; in '45 and early '46, they were making shift. They'd gotten where they had gotten in the world. This was unconscious, it wasn't planned, but they wanted to thank America, and it was overwhelming. In proportion to the population, there were far more celebrations in the Federal Republic of Germany than there were in the United States. So this was something, and the Agency came through with everything that it could.

The German government had decided that they were going to have several events, but nobody expected this (kind of outpouring), and that's why I got into the middle of it, because we were the only ones who knew what the hell was going on; they kept coming to us for anything. There again, I'd go to places like the Park Service and you name it to get something to enhance what they were doing. The military were tremendously helpful; not the usual thing of weapons shows and that sort of thing, but get out your officers who speak German, or sergeants or privates, and we worked out a whole series of programs for them. They were a little nervous in the beginning, but I sold them on the idea of a troop-community relations program, saying, "This is the greatest

chance you're ever going to have." I had to deal with the generals, and they bought it. It left us exhausted, but we went through this thing. The result was that we were plugged in everywhere in the national government, the lender governments, and local governments.

There was nothing parallel to it except the time immediately after the war when, as you know, we had USIS posts all over Germany and public affairs officers and all that sort of thing. Then we were the masters and they were the subjected, and here we were as partners. That greatly increased German support for the German-American Institutes, which cost the Agency practically nothing -- books, one American officer -- and they paid everything. It was a great opportunity, and there again, especially after Ambassador Stoessel arrived, we had a small working committee -- the ambassador, the DCM, the political counselor and myself -- and worked out a public diplomacy program that affected every part of the U.S. presence in Germany, including all the military. As I mentioned earlier, there I was given absolute purview. The rule was that if this were a local flap or problem that you can solve, don't bother us, but anything that might remotely hit the press, you've got to let me know ahead of time. That worked out very well, though there were some boo-boos, like when the Air Force flew in some fancy planes without letting the Germans know ahead of time, and then they called on me to help, but from then on it worked beautifully.

Q: After hearing this description it sounds anticlimactic to ask: what was the routine running of USIS in Germany?

KLIEFORTH: I had a large staff and a very good one. A normal program year had a thousand events, that was par for the course. With all the bickering back and forth, which is normal between a field operation and the central (office) -- if you read Caesar again, you'll find how he bitched about those bastards back in Rome who didn't give him support -- what the Agency could give, it did give. Some of the things were really remarkable. The other thing is that because of this bicentennial thing and because of the fact that I'm bilingual, I traveled all over Germany and gave about 150 appearances -- radio, television, stand-up speaker, lecturer at universities, high schools, you name it, utilizing myself as a resource.

Q: When did you retire?

KLIEFORTH: October, 1980.

Q: Since you retired, you've taken on some special assignments for the Agency. Would you tell us about some of those?

KLIEFORTH: No, I haven't taken on special assignments for the Agency other than doing some inspecting in the Far East, but I became very involved in youth exchange programs, and worked primarily with Youth for Understanding. In the end I had to create my own corporation because we -- we being Gloria and myself -- we had to hire people, and when you hire people you have Social Security deductions, health insurance and other things, so we incorporated under California law, and the contract was with us. The major program we worked on was the German-American, U.S. Congress-German Bundestag program, which has grown and proliferated and is really doing beautifully. And I've sort of midwived not only between the Department of State and

the Agency and the three major participating organizations -- which were Youth for Understanding, AFS and EIL -- but when I got to Germany, between the Bundestag and the foreign office and the various German exchanges people, who were all in separate corners and not really talking to each other much. Because I knew all of them from before, I went around wearing several hats and got them together and helped to get the program launched. The other one was a program in Great Britain, which happily is going along very well under quite a few auspices.

To come back to the German program, one of the things to do is, you've got to think big. One of the things we conceived was to have a retrospective exhibit of 200 years of American art. The Agency was tremendously supportive from the beginning, especially Hal Schneidman, who had worked with me in Rome; he understood what I was up to. And he should, we were very close. As a matter of fact, he gave my wife away when we were married. We had a message from President Ford, and so forth and so on. It started with people like Benjamin West, John Singleton Copley, John Trumbull, Ralph Earle, Charles Wilson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, Washington Austin, James Peale, Thomas Sully, then going through the following century into the moderns: Arshile Gorky, Jackson Pollock, Thomas Hart Benton, Andrew Wyeth, Hans Hoffman, Mark Rothko, Frank Stella, Rauschenberg, and so on.

My suggestion was to go to a lesser-known good museum, and they went to Baltimore, which is a very good museum. They had never done anything like this. They got the contract, and found a lady whose name was Anne Vandevanter, who was the guest curator of the Baltimore Museum of Art. She got all these great paintings from museums and private collections all over the United States. Nothing like this had ever been seen in Europe. It was an eye-opener, because they knew nothing about 19th-century or 18th-century American art. They knew Lichtenstein and Jasper Johns and Andy Warhol, Frankenthaler and Willem deKooning, but this was a real eye-opener, and when it became known, people were complaining that it was shown in Bonn and not in Cologne, Hamburg or what not. But Bonn was the capital, and for the two hundredth anniversary of the U.S. we wanted it to be there. It then went on to Belgrade, Rome and Warsaw. But this was an absolutely first-class show. I told the Germans, "We're going to deliver a first-class show, but it's going to cost money, and you're going to have to help with the money." And they did. They took over all of the insurance, which is a very costly aspect.

The last one we did was on von Steuben. This was in Berlin, and opened shortly after I left. A very nice thing: the Germans dedicated the whole exhibit to me. I felt that was very nice. It was a lot of fun.

PAUL H. TYSON
Rotation Officer
Bonn (1976-1978)

Mr. Tyson was born in Virginia into a US military family and was raised in army posts in the United States and abroad. Educated at Dartmouth College and George Washington University he entered the Foreign Service in 1974. As a

trained Economic Officer, Mr. Tyson served in a number of foreign posts, including Bonn, Dhahran, London and Kuwait City. His Washington Assignments were primarily in the petroleum and international economic fields. Mr. Tyson also served with the Sinai Multi-National Force & Observers.

Q: What were we saying to the Germans and what were the Germans saying to us on this?

TYSON: We were saying to the Germans that we don't want you to do this for the following reasons, and they were saying, "Oh don't worry, it probably won't happen, and if it does happen, it'll happen way off in the future." There was a serious disconnect there. Germany, at this point, also was looking at using this to leverage commercial and political advantage in Brazil, which even then was seen as a comer.

Q: Were we just sort of saying what we were saying; I mean, was there any coercion or sort of plus side to it, or not?

TYSON: I think the fact that we sent the deputy secretary of state gave an idea of how important it was, and it was the type of things that in high level meetings there was often a talking point. Much more Draconian stuff; I think we'd have to wait for stuff to be declassified. I think at various points we didn't make our views known, but that's one that I think the records will have to speak to it down the line.

Q: Were the French a player in this at all? Was this strictly a German thing or were the French involved?

TYSON: I think part of the German concern, and one of the reasons they were doing it, was that they could tell us no and if the Germans gave in their view was the French would step in. The French were sort of seen as the whores of the universe or something like that. As I said, in terms of individual deals with countries looking to make their own arrangements. Not particularly popular, and yet on the other side, you've got the French-German axis which underpins the European community. They had their political pressures, too.

Q: Did you get any feel for the German foreign office and how they operated?

TYSON: Yes, I did. My better feel for it came much later on in the tour when I was actually in the political section in the labor office, in dealing a lot with the trade unions and the people in the party organizations, the SPD (Social Democratic Party) organization, doing the trade unions because they had much better political information than the foreign office did. They were much more tied in to the political leadership.

The German Foreign Office was pretty good. Their science people were very good, had good cooperative arrangements with the other science ministries. It was really much later on when somebody in the SPD party structure and it was an SPD government, just knew more.

Q: Were you there during the neutron bomb business?

TYSON: No, that came later on, but what I was there for the first contacts with what became the Green Party; I did them. I was twenty-six, the assistant labor attaché. As I said, I'd taken Labor Law and was working for the labor attaché. Yes, there were interesting things in what the Germans were doing, but one of my adjunct things was to start meeting with what were then the people in the Berliner Initiative or the citizen's initiatives groups, which was the beginning of the anti-nuclear groups.

Q: Was Petra Kelley in this group, or not?

TYSON: She was just starting to come in on the fringes and I later met her in the summer of '83. But it was even lower level, more diffuse at that. I knew an American woman who was over there working on some projects and she had some contacts there, and Dick Smyser, the political minister, was interested in starting to see where they were going. In a way, I fit the profile. I remember him, as I'm running around in my madras shirt, my leather sport coat, and my blue jeans, saying, "Please don't get arrested." (*laughs*)

But I mean, I did some of the initial reporting on that and it was the anti-nuclear groups in Badenburg, I talked to a guy in West Berlin who later became a member of parliament under the Green List. Stuff like that. I mean it was clear that you dismissed these people at your peril. You know, junior officer, you're out on the street, you're hanging out, you're writing stuff that people are reading. It was fun.

Q: Was the anti-nuclear then pointed strictly at weapons or was it also moving towards the environmental?

TYSON: It was pointed a bit at weapons, but it was really much more focused on proposed power plants. There was one in Badenburg and Whyl that got a lot of opposition and then nuclear reprocessing and disposal sites and stuff. I think later on as the cruise missiles, actually the neutron bomb did start then, and yes, there was more of a cross-over. But a lot of this had basis in local groups driven by, "not in my backyard" opposition. And in a densely populated country like Germany, that resonated even more.

Q: While you were working sort of on the labor side in SPD, what was your impression of the SPD people you were meeting?

TYSON: By and large, my impression of the SPD people was pretty good. I still have some friends involved in it. It was interesting. It was a bit more of the newer generation. I mean, the older generation had gone through the streets, fights with the Nazis and the Communists. This was more upscale. This was the SPD in suits. This was much more of, if you will, a Tony Blair type of thing. They cleaned up well. They had their political viewpoints, but also it was a wealthier country; it was a country that was much more powerful in Europe. They were playing more of a role.

Q: Did you find that sort of the older people in our embassy were having trouble sort of adjusting to the new SPD as opposed to, you know, the old time, as with the Labor Party in Britain, you know a bunch of people got around and saying they're a red flag forever and used a

lot of the rhetoric of the '30s. You were seeing the change, but was this change becoming apparent within the embassy?

TYSON: Oh, yes, I think Dick Smyser was an extraordinarily astute political counselor and he had a lot of political contacts in the party and used to meet with them regularly on a one-on-one basis. Rick Large, Willy Brandt, others - we dealt with them. There wasn't that type of feeling. You'd get some of the older guys further down in the organization, you know, "the red flag" or, you know, "Hamburg is red", or something like this, but the leadership at that point, after the grand coalitions in the '60s; the Godesburg Accord, there was a "regiom sayeg" literally capable of governing. The SPD had fought hard to get that perception amongst the German public and they were not particularly going to let go of it lightly.

Q: Was Helmut Schmidt on the scene at that point or was he...

TYSON: Helmut Schmidt was the chancellor at that time.

Q: Chancellor. Later, the relations between Jimmy Carter and Helmut Schmidt were poisonous, particularly over the neutron bomb, but even before that. Did you get any feeling for this?

TYSON: That was the beginning of Carter being seen as something of a weaker president. Schmidt was quite a personality; a dominating personality; one of the truly magnetic men. You know, you're in a room and he walked in with that Leonine hair and just those good looks and, I mean, you knew he was there, you knew he was the chancellor. Interestingly enough, he was shorter than I would've expected.

I think he found Carter and the administration weak and vacillating. There had also been, I think, a famous quote by one of the more leftist in the SPD that the neutron bomb was the perfect capitalist weapon; it destroyed people and not property. And boy that was a statement that really resonated through Germany and the north German plain.

I think Carter, in his own way, and history is treating him much kinder, had a lot of the right instincts, but in some ways he had some amateurs, really, running the business. They didn't understand it, and I think he felt that if he, in a southern fashion, and I can understand, that if he just sat on the porch and visited with someone, it would be right. It wouldn't be right with someone like Schmidt who's a serious player politically in Europe and on the world stage. I think there had been something in the '76 election that it had been sort of leaked that actually even the SPD had sort of preferred to see the Republicans in. So I think there was a little bit on our side, or some of the Carter people, about that. The other thing is people forget Carter and others coming from Georgia, and the difference between Carter coming from a state like Georgia and Reagan coming from a state like California was night and day. You know, the Carter people just couldn't believe that houses cost as much as they did in Washington. Some of the people, obviously, were pretty savvy, others just weren't. It was, you know, "Guys, this is the big league." I think Carter, in a sense, and this is something that I later saw when I came back and I was a staff aide, was too seized with the minutiae. You're the president, let others take care of this. He'd start getting down into the weeds on different memos and stuff that the President of the United States does not need to do that.

Q: You left there in '76, when...

TYSON: I left in '78.

Q: '78, I mean. And you had quite a good rotation then, really. I mean, you got your chance to try a few things and...

TYSON: I can go into that in the next session because there was actually some more there.

Q: Would you name these things and we'll put it on in that session.

TYSON: Sure, I was in the consular affairs section, I was in the science office for nine months, then I actually did a special project for the admin. Counselor, Earl Ballinger, and then I was the assistant labor attaché and I did the citizen's initiatives and I also did a series of six reports on the foreign workers in Germany; the Gastarbeiter.

Q: Well let's go to Bonn then. We've talked about some things in Bonn. In consular affairs, was there anything of note that you were doing there?

TYSON: Consular affairs was sort of interesting because I had no training for it, but in 1976 the Overseas Voting Act had come in and I'd mentioned that I ended up rotating down there; working for John Buche who is a lovely man to work for and just a truly humanitarian man and did a lot of outreach and American Citizen Services work. But he quite sensibly said, "Well, I've got a newly minted lawyer here. You take it over and do it." So I was doing a lot of the paperwork on that and some standard consular things. Bonn, in a sense, was a real country club of the system. You have basically affluent Germans going to the States. During that period, the embassy looked out for people with Nazi or concentration camp records, or in the younger set, the Bader Meinhof types.

There were about five junior officers there and John ended up using two of us, me and David Straub, because we took an extremely liberal viewpoint on unmarried German couples traveling to the U.S. together. My attitude, having done the Eurail pass myself, was "Have a great time. Tell me if you're going to Mexico; I'll give you the multiple visas." So that, by and large, was fine. Your problems came with the third-country nationals.

The other thing that was interesting was you had to go out and work the line if you had American citizen indigents, because our German employees just really hated them and were more than borderline rude to them. So you needed an American to handle it. The one thing we had going for us in Bonn was an arrangement with the "caritasheim" downtown, and the Sisters were much stricter than we ever could have been. And in that era, it was the '70s and we were sort of the beginning stop on the trek to Nepal so some of the ones fell out on our doorstep. You got some real hustlers, but every now and then you just got that incredibly sweet, dumb American kid that all you could do was say, "It'll be alright. We'll help out," and we would. But we also had an ACS case involving a naturalized American German-Jewish...

Q: ACS being?

TYSON: American Citizen Services.

John and I ended up working a great deal on that, but the man eventually died.

Q: What was...

TYSON: He was just an older man in his eighties or nineties and he was in a care facility in Germany, and we would call in on him and just check and see that he was okay, but John really went above and beyond on that. It was about an hour ride down the river to the place where he was, the people were terribly nice to him and it was all fine, but John would take me along and we would go and do that. I was there full-time for about two months, and then periodically when John was away, as I said, because of my liberal viewpoint on visas, I often ended up covering for him.

Q: Can you explain what the problem was in the liberal versus non-liberal points-of-view?

TYSON: Three or four junior officers were devout Catholics and wouldn't issue visas to unmarried couples traveling together to the States. I did. *(laughs)*

Q: (laughs) Oh John.

TYSON: I mean, the unspoken things in the Foreign Service. I wasn't a consular officer, but, you know, John had a problem and David Straub and I would run the visa section in the fashion that he would like it.

Q: I know when I was a line consular officer, we used to rotate cases of this nature, that certain people we'd make sure didn't interview them.

TYSON: Exactly.

Q: Was there any problem with the Overseas Voters Act?

TYSON: Some of the state paperwork, particularly from the smaller states wasn't particularly good or clear. But one of the things that was amazing about the consulate in Bonn is they had saved every rubber stamp that had ever been utilized in the universe, so when in doubt we just threw more stamps on the paperwork, and at the end of the day it all seemed to work.

The other thing that was interesting about the consulate, from a lawyer's viewpoint, was some of the notariats; notariats involving trusts and estates cases. Aunt Hilda had gone off to marry Uncle Fritz in St. Louis, they never had kids, he died, you know, in the late '40s or something like that, she stayed on and there's a distribution of an estate. All very straightforward, but just reading some of the documents out of Missouri or Wisconsin or so forth reveal some life sagas in immigration stories. Germans were always terribly nice about it. The biggest problem that we had was that occasionally just doing a straight notarial, it just wasn't impressive enough for some

of them, so we always had the ribbon and the foil there. We got an older German who really wanted it and it was a slow afternoon, we'd put the ribbon and the foil on everything and that seemed to make them feel better.

Q: Oh, yes. You know I've made a certain number of equivalents in non-documents. "This is to certify that the American Embassy cannot do such-and-so," and it was a big seal and it usually got them through whatever they had to do. (laughs)

TYSON: Well it was very interesting with particularly some of the older Germans. Bonn was the type of place where periodically you just had strange things coming up. I remember one day later on in my tour my boss and I were suddenly tasked with representing the embassy at the anniversary of the capture of the Ludendorf Bridge in Remagen. And you know, like, "We're going down there, and they're happy to see us?" "Oh, yeah, yeah, go on down. Have a great time."

The other thing that was always interesting was the ex-prisoners of war associations used to ask for embassy representatives and since I spoke German I'd go. I figure in the grand scheme of things they must've done something right in that these people were still asking us back and actually had fond memories of being an eighteen-year-old POW (Prisoner of War) in Colorado or something.

Q: Yes, you know, in the middle of Arkansas. It was the damndest thing. You could probably tell them where they've been and places they've made a studious effort to avoid.

Then you get down to labor attaché.

TYSON: First I was the assistant science counselor – I think we went through a bit of that on the Germany-Brazil nuclear deal. But I ended up there for nine months under Clyde McClelland and then Earl Ballinger was the administrative minister and he actually gave me a very interesting study. He gave me all the personnel records and a lot of history and the question was basically, "Which of the various institutions left over from the occupation and elsewhere were sort of under embassy authority as opposed to U.S. army Europe or the military authorities?" and you ended up with a lot of the cats and dogs – the document centers in Berlin and stuff like this. It was really pretty interesting and pretty much left me to myself. I went through a whole lot of things and I ended up giving it to him, but I think it probably in many ways was a predecessor to what later became ICASS [International Cooperative Administrative Support Services]; that the embassy was carrying a lot of stuff and not really getting a lot of recompense for it. But I did that for two months and then there were two junior officer jobs open; one was with the Bonn group, which in spite of the name, did the status of Berlin - and David Straub went to that, and I was the acting and then the assistant labor attaché. Herb Baker was there just at the beginning of my tour, and then Roger Schrader. But I also had two special projects from Dick Smyser, the political minister, and one was on the foreign workers in Germany. I did six reports on that and then the other was basically political reporting on what was in the citizen initiatives groups, which later became the Green Party.

Q: Let's talk first about the Gastarbeiters. What was your impression of how the system was

working and the future of these people; where they were from and how they were moving within German society at that time?

TYSON: At that time, there was an innate hypocrisy or something ostrich-like about the German views. First of all, with the Gastarbeiter there were differences. The Italians, which had been the first group, were EU (European Union) members, so they were going to have the right...

Q: It wasn't EU at the time though.

TYSON: It was the Common Market.

Q: Common Market, yes.

TYSON: They had the right to labor mobility. So if the Italians wanted to be in Germany, they could be in Germany and that was going to be fine. The Spanish and Portuguese had not yet acceded to it and there was going to be a transition period on labor mobility the nuances of which were already being negotiated. The Yugoslavs, interestingly enough, had a very small number, but they tended to be technicians and they had been there for a while and surprisingly weren't that much of a problem. The Greeks also were looking at future accession and much like the Spanish and Portuguese, it was when, where, and how it would go. The big monolith that everybody just couldn't really deal with, and it persists today, is Turkey. Now, in a sense, what was interesting, and I basically went around to the labor attaches in the other embassies, there was a surprising degree of candor of one foreigner talking to another foreigner about the Germans and it wasn't always pretty.

As I say, the Italians were much further along, but the others found a lot of discrimination, a certain amount of xenophobia among the Germans. I think the German trade unions were trying to organize these workers with some success, but the idea that they'd happily work for twenty years and then go back home, I think, was unrealistic from the get-go, particularly when you started looking at a second and even a third generation; you know some young Turkish woman, or boy who's been born in Kreuzberg, in Berlin, grows up there, and you know, Mommy and Daddy are going on about the beauties of the Anatolian highlands and they go back and find two squalid rooms on rocky soil and they just sort of look and figure, "I'm out of here."

There's one of those instances where I talked with the smarter Germans, and I also talked to people in the political foundations, the Ebert Stiftung, the Adenauer Stiftung, and others, about the problems and said, "You know, we've done emigration, we've done immigration. The classic novels in America are the immigrant's dilemma. We know a lot about this. Trust me. Here's what you need to do with schooling the kids and all." And in a sense, the Germans heard it, but didn't want to hear it. It was fascinating to see.

The oil crisis had already occurred and they had really shut off the recruitment of new workers. So if you were in under the wire, you had something. The other law stipulated that if you had been there for five years you could stay. So basically by 1978 the ones who were there had the right to stay. Now there were problems with their kids coming, the children having the right to work, and any number of other things. But a lot of it had been done. You got a lot of professors

and others saying, "Well the Germans can just turf two million people out." Well under their own regulations by 1978 that was really not an option.

Q: Well what about the factories? I mean, had they developed a cadre of Gastarbeiters that they really couldn't lose? It wasn't as though there were Germans queued up ready to take those jobs, weren't they? Germany's major concentration in many ways was producing quality goods.

TYSON: Well, factories, also the food service industries, some of the hotels, they concentrated in key areas. As I said with the Yugoslavs, different nationalities also tended to concentrate in different areas. But no, by this point, the Germans needed the labor and the people, it isn't always the case, the smarter ones, the more talented ones, the more verbally-gifted, were starting to move up and become more keen in organizations. So I think it's probably like immigration in the States. In the abstract, "throw them all out", but then, you know, "my guy," or "the woman on the line," or "we know her; she's so good," it's always the individual was the exception.

Q: What about your contacts with the Citizen's Initiative which blossomed into the Green Movement? What was your impression at that time?

TYSON: They were absolutely fascinating from a political viewpoint. First of all, a friend of mine, an American woman named Cynthia Whitehead, was sort of hanging out in Europe and involved in some things and doing some freelance newspaper things. I knew her because we were sort of the same age and we were blossoming out beyond the embassy set. So my first wife and I had American friends who were in Europe for one reason or another, and Cynthia was incredible in making some of the initial introductions. She had interviewed these people or had been at conferences with them and saw all this as mostly an anti-nuclear initiative, but it was more than just that. So when I needed some initial introductions, it was Cynthia's, "Yes, you really do want to meet with him," that got me the initial meetings. But these tended to be local groups that would call us about issues; the big ones were opposition to a proposed nuclear plant, but there would be other things; opposition to a road or a factory or the fact that the social services or infrastructure provided to a poorer section of town was less than it should be. And there was a really conscious viewpoint not to create a national organization. It was much more decentralized, very local, no real leadership stars, everybody's equal; let's sort of hang out and sort of coalesce and make our decisions and coordinate that way. And it frustrated a lot of your typical analysts looking at Germany. You know, here's the wiring diagram, here's who this is, here's who's that. You get some German grandmother out of upper Bavaria or something like that who's never been politically active in her life, who took on a cause and all of a sudden she's sitting at the high table when these groups meet. It was frustrating for even the German officialdom trying to get a grip on this. I think the Greens and the Citizens Initiatives knew this and would very consciously change spokesmen, change leaders. Someone would be on the dais and then they'd go away and then someone else would come, then the first one would come back. But there were different groups, and even at that point the real leaders were emerging.

I did not meet Petra Kelly in this period, but I heard her name mentioned. And there was the evolution of this and I honestly think that we did, me and the political section, some of the best initial, and probably historical, reporting on the genesis of the Green Party. I went out to Berlin and met with someone who later became a member of parliament on the Green list, but a lot of

his issues were providing more social services in a poor neighborhood in Berlin, as opposed to the anti-nuclear thing. But fascinating people. Some were incredibly politically committed, others who had just sort of gotten a burr under their saddle and suddenly found themselves in politics.

This also led to another point, going back to FSI language training. They had refused or basically said, "We're not teaching you the 'du,' the German informal, because in two years in Germany you'll never get close enough to a German to do this." Nothing could have been further from the truth. Anybody in their twenties, you're at a party together, you're drinking or something, it goes to 'du.' I mean, I used to basically say to close German friends later on in the evening that, "If I slip into 'sie' it's not an insult. I've just been taught that with certain phrases, so ignore me." With the labor unions, including being a foreign embassy representative to labor union functions, you're all part of the group, therefore you use the informal with each other. The same was true, actually, within the ranks of the SPD. So you'd go to certain labor union SPD functions and you had to know the informal German.

Q: I know, I went through the process and it's very hard, having been trained in the formal, to move to the familiar. I mean, you're gritting your teeth at having to remember this all the time.

TYSON: Well, you know, they've trained you for the court of the kaiser and there you are with a bunch of trade unionists on the Hamburg dock going, "Ah, yes, what is that verb again?"
(laughs)

Q: What was your impression of the German political situation, particularly where the parties really have real control over things? Because they have the lists and they rank people on the lists and so there isn't this sort of somebody making a name for themselves by really doing constituent service in a particular place and winning a certain amount of independence in the party.

TYSON: I think that, in many ways, is ultimately what led to the rise of the Green Party. I think the grand coalition in the '60s had precluded a lot of the elbowing and political jockeying that had happened later. I never knew these people. My friend Cynthia that I had mentioned, had discussed groups that had called themselves the "Ausserparlamentarische Opposition," the Extra Parliamentary Opposition, when they found that there were no channels within the SPD for them and others. And I think this disaffection with Germany Incorporated, and the existing political structure, is what turned a lot of people off and led them to turn to groups like the Citizen's Initiatives and eventually the Green Party. The ossified and stratified existing bureaucratic structures frustrated a lot of the younger people. It was a world-wide type of thing, with Danny the Red and others, going on. I think in many ways, the German political leadership, the older ones, were perplexed. I mean, "My God, we've come out of the ashes and given you this prosperous country. What's your problem?"

Q: Yes. Were you in the political section everywhere else kind of looking under rocks and underneath bushes and all for the Nazis, neo-Nazis? I'm not talking about real Nazis, but a rise of Nazi-like tendencies or something like this.

TYSON: The skinheads, I think, really came much later. I think there was always the question, particularly among the CSU and the Bavarians of, "Where were you in 1944?"

It was always an aspect in Germany and one of the problems was German insensitivity to how they were perceived by others: the Americans, the Dutch, the other Europeans. You know, "Oh, it's just a little unit reunion. The boys got fired up and they sang some old songs." Yes, the "Horst Wessel" will lead. The Jewish tour group or the Dutch tour group nearby did not exactly appreciate this. What a shock. Our emphasis in the consular section for anybody over the age of fifty was, "Where were you? What were you doing?"

Q: In a way that was history, but looking for a rerise of Nazi-like tendencies.

TYSON: Oh I think Dick Smyser, the political minister, was a lot smarter than that. There was always probably going to be that 2-3% fringe in Germany, but it wasn't really all that crucial at that point. I think in that era, particularly in the old line labor counselors and attaches, we were much more looking for Reds under the bed.

Q: Was there at all a feeling that any group of people there has to be at least one East German spy or somebody like that?

TYSON: Well the East Germans were certainly good, given what happened to Willi Brandt and others, I suspect that at the end of the day we'll never ever really totally know, but I would suspect that a lot of that society was fairly porous. They understood each other. I'm sure that the West had some pretty good spies in the East. I had some friends who had come over the wall, or over the border, and the demographics in Germany were changing enough so that the Germans could get native born West Germans. They were probably, at the end of the day, more reliable. They always spoke about all Germans being Germans. I had one or two friends that I think would've like to have worked for the security service "the Stasi," but they had come over as teenagers and that just was not going to happen.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover that you can think of?

TYSON: Yes. Ambassador Stoessel; wonderful man. Movie star good looks. Story was that he had actually auditioned for the movies as a young man. He'd been brought to Germany from Moscow. He was a small man, always very well turned out. There are days where he did not look up to his full potential. But, a wonderful man to work for and later became deputy secretary. Stoessel was absolutely the central casting image of what you wanted an ambassador to be and of course having come out of Moscow, knew Russia very well. It was also at that point that I remember one evening when he actually had the junior officers over, he had a very nice little collection of icons and so forth, but that was really the senior reaching out to the JOs (Junior Officers); it was the beginning of that push.

The other story from Bonn days was Joe Califano, the Secretary of Health Education and Welfare, visited. It was a big deal and I was going to be control officer for some of his people because he had a rather large delegation. Delegations were known to stupidly ignore our advice on how long it takes to get from here to there. They were always going to push it and they were

always late, which is very rude in Germany. But Califano is arriving; he's coming in from England. It was very interesting. Went out to Köln Bonn Airport, I think this was in the fall, so it's at night which means it's foggy. I'm in a leather trench coat, looking like someone from a British "B" movie and Califano's plane comes in and Al Haig's plane comes in from Brussels. They land the planes and taxi them nose to nose. Califano pops out, goes on to Haig's plane. They meet for about an hour. This is all after Watergate and they had all known each other back then. So my colleague and I go onto the little executive jet that's brought Califano in and there are some deputy assistant secretaries from HEW and one of the first ones says, "Well we wore out the people in England, we hope you can stand the pace." I just figured, "You're on my turf. Watch this. Watch this. I will run you into the ground," and that's exactly what I did.

We got them all to the hotel, and the next day we went to a meeting with the German association of doctors that dealt with health insurance matters because the issue was healthcare cost containment. They put out a very nice breakfast spread - a cold European buffet, but Califano was on a diet so neither he nor his staff was eating, so the head of the association said to me in German, "What's wrong with the food?" I said, "Nothing. He's on a diet," and so the guy proceeded to load up my plate with smoked trout and everything else which I proceeded to scarf down as he was smiling and Califano was glaring at me. I figured, "Eh, get a clue." At a break, I looked at them and said, "Eat. It's rude if you don't," so one or two of the doctors I think took a lettuce leaf or something like that.

But Califano was sort of a very feisty type and Ambassador Stoessel did a reception for him. My wife and I were walking through and he had his arm in a sling because he had injured his elbow. I came up beside him and the ambassador is right there, so he looks and in front of the ambassador said, "So what do you do here besides meet planes?" I looked at him and said, "I marry your staff," because my wife was on a year's leave of absence from HEW. That was an opening and they actually chatted and it was quite nice. So that was the Califano and Haig story.

Q: You were there during the Watergate, or had you left?

TYSON: I had left. I was in Washington during Watergate, working in EB.

Q: When did you leave Bonn?

TYSON: I left in late June of 1978.

Q: Where did you go?

TYSON: I went to become staff aide in the office of the undersecretary for security assistance, science and technology. The undersecretary was Lucy Wilson Benson and her deputy was Dr. Joseph Nye, who is now up at Harvard. The other staff aide was David Welch, who is about to become ambassador to Egypt. I came in there and what was striking about the office was that we had some of the first coffee on the seventh floor in the morning, so we had people like Marisa Lino who was a staff aide and SP [Policy Planning Staff] comedown; she was later ambassador in Albania, and Bob Gallucci who was an INR analyst at that point. So it was a period in which I got to know a lot of these people. Warren Christopher was the deputy secretary and one of his

assistants was Ned Walker who later was ambassador to Egypt and NEA [Near East Affairs Bureau] assistant secretary. So the seventh floor perspective was quite interesting.

We were doing a lot on conventional arms controls; the U.S. was trying to restrain the arms races. It was one of the Carter initiatives that basically failed. Joe Nye was very involved in a lot of nuclear nonproliferation. There was some stuff about nuclear storage on an island in the Pacific called Palmyra Island. It was an interesting time for that. One of the things that came in, happened after I was there for about a month; I went into the conference room and saw a series of safes - we had a sort of office boy in there - and I said, "What's in there?" "A lot of old files from when this office suite used to belong to Carlyle Maw, who I think was Kissinger's legal adviser." The task was basically to clean out and retire that stuff, and all that I can really say about that is I doubt that the American public will ever, ever, truly know the complete story behind Watergate and the Pentagon papers. We shredded a lot of stuff; it was other agencies' stuff. But it was stunning to see what was in there, and I'll just leave it at that.

Q: In the first place you were up with in this job from '79 to when?

TYSON: End of '79; I was there for eighteen months.

Q: You were working for Nye or Benson or?

TYSON: Lucy Benson and Nye actually. David Welch and Nye were very close. One of the special assistants was William Marsh, Bill Marsh, who later was a DCM somewhere in Europe. It's just, that you're a staff aide, you're a high-price office manager. You basically do what the principal wants. Used to go and get the classified materials in the morning.

Q: Let's talk about both Nye and Benson. What was your impression of how they operated and how effective they were? What were they after?

TYSON: Lucy Benson had been with the League of Women voters and I think a classic Schedule C appointment. I mean, she wanted to advance to a higher office at some point. A charming lady; a little bit of a tough broad in some ways, but you sort of liked her. I think she was much better in person than she was before a congressional committee because she never really explained a lot of the nuances of the Conventional Arms Transfer Restraint Policy, if I remember it correctly. She was sort of a nice enough person to work for, I think she thought that she was more highly regarded by Secretary Vance and others than she probably was, but of course remember at this point she was also the highest ranking female appointee in State Department history. Nye was, is, will be, incredibly smart. Harvard connections and nuclear nonproliferation was his issue. He was a very, very good policy animal. Clearly on his way up and it's been twenty-plus years since then and he's done very, very well. He was someone in the Democratic Party policy establishment who was going to be a player. That was clear. I think Benson had hoped for something, but of course, once Carter lost it was over for her.

Q: Did you get any feel on the Carter administration? I realize you were a staff aide, but on nuclear efforts for nonproliferation, was there anything resulting from all these efforts there that you now see more clearly?

TYSON: I think at that time they were onto a lot of the issues which have persisted: nuclear waste storage, and the whole Palmyra Island issue was to create a repository in the Pacific. That really has not been resolved. Immense concerns, even then, about Pakistan and India, which of course persisted through the years. I don't think they made any dramatic changes at that point, but they certainly were part of the progression of the broad policy issues. Those were also sort of issues that people working in PM [Bureau of Political-Military Affairs] or INR or elsewhere were involved with. So a lot of the information and knowledge about that continued within the government when the Carter administration left. Carter, of course, was trained as a nuclear engineer and had a lot of personal stake in that. On some memos concerning this (we'd get the comeback copies) the president would have noted some fairly detailed comments in the margins on arcane technical and nuclear issues. Frankly, as I've said before, does the president of the United States have time to do this?

Q: How about the Pentagon; did you get a feeling that there was a war between the Pentagon and the State Department?

TYSON: There were on the arms restraint policy, but of course, Mrs. Benson chaired the Arms Export Control Board. This is really where you saw the "tough broad" side. There were times when she just rolled over the Pentagon. In spite of Carter having been an Annapolis grad and a naval officer, there were aspects of his defense policies that were not popular in the Pentagon. On other matters we actually worked fairly closely together: arms sales to the Saudis and so forth. There were the F-15 sales that had gone on just before and then, of course the minute they got that they were going in for extra wing tanks and other things like that. So on those issues State and DOD (Department of Defense) were working fairly in close coordination in trying to get it through the Hill.

Q: You left when in '79?

TYSON: December in '79.

Q: Were you there in time to see the impact of all this of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan?

TYSON: Not so much the invasion of Afghanistan. Our office was much, much more involved with the collapse of the Shah of Iran because of all the weapon sales to Iran, particularly the issue of compromising the F-14s and the Tomcats and other things. Mrs. Benson was in telephone contact with General Heiser on that sort of thing; his trip out there to prop up the Shah. So it was really quite interesting to watch all of that unravel. And then of course the hostage situation happened in fairly short order. I'm not quite sure of the time, but...

Q: November, I think.

TYSON: Yes, I was still around for those types of things. So we were very, very concerned about Iran and we had what later became known as the "Ayatollah class of Frigates" under constructions. People forget just what a huge arms relationship we had with Iran.

Q: Well the story is that Benson and Kissinger came back from one of the later visits to the Shah and told him whatever they want, they can have. It was Iranian money, and oil money, and we'd sop it up. The Carter administration had done nothing to stop it.

TYSON: Well, there was another factor, too. Very often those sales, in spite of the export controls, made lower costs available to the Pentagon.

Q: Oh, yes. The Pentagon was always sort of pushing this. They don't really want the other people to be able to use them against us, but at the same time the cost per unit goes down.

TYSON: The one that was interesting was, I think the F-5G, which would've been an export-only model, and the Carter administration killed that, or at least it died. I think the F-14s and the Tomcats were some of the most important stuff though.

EDWARD ALEXANDER
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Berlin (1976-1979)

Edward Alexander was born in 1920 in New York city. He received a bachelor's degree form Columbia College and a master's degree from Columbia University. After working with Psychological Warfare during World War II, he joined the Voice of America. Mr. Alexander served in Budapest and Berlin. He was interviewed by Hans Tuch in 1988.

ALEXANDER: I was the Public Affairs Officer in East Berlin from 1976 to 1979. I overlapped for a month with John Sherman Cooper and then he left. And then we had a 10-month hiatus with the DCM being Chargé. That was Sol Polansky. Then David Bolen was nominated by the White House and came to East Berlin.

We felt we were under siege in East Berlin. The Hungarians are easy-going, relaxed, gentle, nice people. There were dangers there also, but nevertheless, they are a very casual, nice people to deal with and they sort of wink and they sort of will turn aside and not object too strenuously to anything. It was not that I didn't have problems there. I was tailed by the Secret Police. But we would joke with each other, the Hungarian Secret Police and I, in the streets.

In East Berlin, it was a horse of a different color. It was as different as the Hungarians are from the Germans. And not only just Germans, but East Germans, German Communists. Because in the beginning of course I could only deal with official Germans who were all party members and proud of it, and had the Parteiabzeichen always in their lapels.

I will never forget one day when I was at the Foreign Ministry and I was visiting with this official whose job was to deal with me, and I asked permission to go to the university to meet the Dean of the university and to present him with a thousand books that the Agency had sent me for their library. And he said, "I am sorry but that is just not possible." I said, "Why isn't it

possible?" He said, "Well, the university is off limits; you just can't go there. You will deal with me," he said, "and send the books here and I will see what I can do with them." I said, "The books were not meant for the Foreign Ministry, they were meant for the university." So this went back and forth. I finally said -- I've forgotten his name now -- I said, "Herr -- whatever his name was -- you know, I spent four years in Hungary and I never had this kind of difficulty in Hungary." And he said -- I will first say it in German. He said, "ALEXANDER, Du bist ein kluger Hade." ("You're a real wise one.") He said, "We know you and we know what you did in Hungary. And I just want to tell you one thing. The German Democratic Republic is not Hungary." And that was what set the standard. This was very early, very early in my time there. But it slowly did melt, little by little.

Bulgaria was always called, frequently called, maybe still is called, the most Stalinist country in East Europe, but East Germany has been called the same thing, the most Stalinist. So I don't know, it is a tie. My guess would be from what I could see, Bulgaria was really under the thumb of the Russians, partly the ethnic ties there and so forth; the East Germans didn't have to be the way they were but they were. A German Communist is the worst kind of Communist; he goes way the hell over. And these guys just unbelievable the difficulties they presented. However, with a lot of pleading and a lot of understanding and so forth, I was able to get some good things done.

But there were counter-pressures. The first thing was that they were very, very anxious to make a good impression in the United States. So we began negotiating for the Dresden art exhibit. And it was so -- it would coincide with the opening of the East Wing of the National Gallery. They wanted that so badly that they conceded certain things to me. So I was able to put on a number of things -- a tour by a string quartet to five cities; a film festival at which in Leipzig there were a thousand people in this auditorium and I wrote a speech for Ambassador Bolen who stood up and delivered this speech. And he never forgot it because that was the most East Germans that any ambassador had addressed in East Germany. And a number of other things that happened in the meantime, cultural programming, a photo exhibit, a theater seminar. This seminar was something I am most proud of because I conceived it, promoted it with the East Germans and then had to go to New York -- on the advice of USIA -- and arrange it personally. The star figure was the late Lee Strasberg, the great Actors Studio director and advocate of the Stanislavsky method. Strasberg came with some reluctance but soon was virtually irrepressible in his desire to travel and lecture throughout East Germany, which we did. The East German theater community ate it up, while the official circles drowned but let it happen.

So it was possible to do things, but everything very strict. And I was tailed all the time. And an atmosphere, sort of an oppressive atmosphere. But, in personal relations, I was able really to expand. I tried, I really tried, and they saw that I was not really up to any hanky-panky and so forth and so on. And I, of course the people that I cultivated the most, outside of the musicians, were the writers.

Stefen Heym and I became very close and he became a very good -- I hate to say -- source of information because I didn't just drain him of what was going on under the surface, but I had a very good relationship with Stefen Heym, whom I had known before -- he was one of the early people in psychological warfare when I was in the war; that is where I knew him from.

One of the things that I was also able to do was open a library in the Embassy. And also have the outside, the display panels, the USIA panels -- the showcases -- outside. At the opening of the library -- the Ambassador hadn't yet arrived and we still had a Chargé -- I invited the major writers of East Germany to come -- most of whom were dissidents, and some of whom have defected since. And they all came. That was a nice thing. I was really happy because here I had opened the library in Hungary and now I had opened one in East Berlin. However, then we had problems because I put a sign outside saying simply that the library was open such and such a time. And boy, did this create a furor. The Foreign Ministry called in the Ambassador, said this is outrageous, get rid of that. The Ambassador in his vast inexperience with East Europe called me in and said, "Why did you put that sign up?" I said, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, how was anybody going to know when the library is open?" He said, "I want that sign out." I said, "Why?" He said, "I have just been called and they told me to take it out." I said, "Mr. Ambassador, do you want the United States to toady to the East German government? They call you in and say take this out and you are going to take it out?" I said, "We can't do that. Won't you give me 10 days, two weeks anyway? But if you are going to force me to do it, I will have to do it. You are the Ambassador." Well after 10 days he forgot about it, until several months later he was called in again. And this time I was being inspected and the inspectors were there. After having been called in by the Foreign Ministry, he called me to his office and said, "I told you to take that sign out." I said, "You told me once but you didn't tell me that again. And so I just left it in." I said, "So now they're angry about it again?" He said, "I want it out by close of business today." So I went down and I said to the Inspectors, "Are you guys going to support me?"

I said, "Please, you know, there is much more here at stake than just a little sign. This concerns the integrity of USIA, of the United States government." So they said, "Let us go up and talk to him." They came down and they said, "He wants it out, it has got to go out." So it went out. Since then, I was happy to learn, there is now a bronze plaque outside. As ambassadors change, other things change, you know; now there is a bronze plaque permanently on the wall which now tells everybody the library hours. But you see, there was that kind of pressure also.

John Sherman Cooper -- if Martin Hillenbrand was a gentleman -- John Sherman Cooper was the king of gentlemen. He was the gentlest, kindest ambassador I can possibly imagine, a man, incidentally, deeply respected by the East Germans, and especially by Honecker. Once at the Leipzig fair, Sol Polansky and I drove down, and Honecker came and chatted with us. We shook hands at the American exhibit and he said, "How is Mr. Cooper?" We told him how Mr. Cooper -- now in Washington -- was and so forth. He said, "Send him my regards." That was how well they remembered him.

John Sherman Cooper became slightly ill and was hospitalized and then finally after a month left. He was a man, I remember, who could not mention the United States -- our country -- in any conversation without choking up. He was a man of such deep patriotism, absolutely astonishing. I have never seen anything like it, really.

We had a wireless file and I did distribute the wireless file to a select group of people in the government. And that was as far as I could get. In Hungary, towards the end of my time there, I was distributing a wireless file, daily press bulletin, to such an extent that one day I got a call

from a Deputy Foreign Minister who said to me, "I didn't receive my file this morning." The file was in English; it wasn't translated.

One day, I got a cable from IREX (International Research and Exchanges Board) saying that it would like to begin exchanges. The Public Affairs Officer in every country had to be deeply involved because he was the point man, really. So they came to West Berlin. I went over and drove them through the wall and we sat down to begin our negotiation. And the IREX program began then and it was fine; it is continuing still. And we began, the first real exchange of professors, which took place between Rostock University and Brown University; we had an exchange of German professors. And that thing developed. And it is going very strong now.

I had the Composers string quartet. And for the week long film festival in three cities I couldn't get any movie stars to come. They wanted that very much but I just couldn't arrange it. But there were about five different cultural programs all-told. And we also had a large choral group which toured the country.

I had good working relationship with the Agency. It was Jodie Lewinsohn who was the area director and Phil Arnold was his deputy. They visited me and they were very pleased. Jodie of course was more West Europe oriented, Phil was more East Europe oriented, having worked with us and having served in East Europe also, and Phil was especially keen on noticing who my contacts were.

A congratulatory telegram was sent me one day because while at a reception at the Soviet Embassy, my West German colleague came over to me and he said, "There is a gentleman here who wants very much to meet you and I told him that you would be happy to meet him. I hope I was right." I asked, "Who is he?" He said, "He is a member of the Central Committee." I said, "Good Heavens." So I went over. Well, he turned out to be head of the Agitation and Propaganda Department of the Central Committee, and an extremely nice man by the name of Cobert. Hans Joachim Cobert. And we had a very nice conversation. And this man looked at me and said -- and this is the first time in all my experience in the Agency, especially in East Europe that I heard an official of a hostile nation say to me, "You are the Public Affairs Officer, we know you as the PAO" Can you imagine? I mean, a member of the Central Committee saying, "You are the PAO?" So I said, "Herr Cobert, you and I have to really get to know each other better." He said, "Fine, you realize why I can't invite you to Central Committee headquarters, but perhaps we could have lunch someplace."

So I waited a few weeks and then I called him at Central Committee headquarters and I said, "Herr Cobert, surely you can bend the rules a little and I can come over." He said, "All right, why don't you come? Maybe we can eat in the canteen." So I went; there I was in this austere room with a picture of Karl Marx and Honecker. And we had a two-hour conversation. It was one of the best conversations I have ever had. A marvelously interesting person who up until very recently was still sending me books after I got here. And Phil Arnold sent me this telegram and said: "You have really penetrated there; congratulations!"

It would not have happened had not know German fluently. There is no question in the world that no matter how widespread English is throughout East Europe, that every official wants to

deal with you in his native language. We all know how fluent Gromyko was in English and yet he always spoke only in Russian, and it was only in the most private conversations that he spoke English. He never wanted to be misunderstood. It is the same with all these people. My German goes all the way back to high school and college and then during psychological warfare and I was in Germany all those years, and then in West Berlin and then in East Berlin, so my German obviously was quite good. It was never bilingual because only native-born Germans are truly bilingual, but it was S-4. You know that a lot of these people must know some English. And yet they insist on speaking to you in their native language. I was once at the Academy of Sciences in East Germany and in one of the intermissions between speeches, I saw a member of the Politburo, Kurt Hager -- a man that I would never in my normal routine work have occasion to meet. He was talking with someone and then when he was finished he was sort of looking around. I went up to him and I introduced myself. He smiled and he said, "Oh, how are you? Nice to meet you" and so forth. And we started talking in German and I said to him, "I know that you are in charge of cultural matters here in Germany and that nothing can transpire without your personal approval. I want to express the thanks of my Embassy and my government for your allowing a writer who was going to go to Iowa for the Iowa writers program, for allowing him to go." I said, "You know, it is a very fine program; it has nothing to do with the other problems that your country and my country have, so I want to thank you. And I also want to --" and I stopped. I couldn't think of the German word for something or other. And suddenly this man with whom I'm talking German, says to me, in Oxford English, he says, "Alexander, what is the word you are groping for?" And I said, "You speak English?" And he says, "Why shouldn't I? I spent the entire war in England." So there is that situation, too. However, that does not mean that language is not important. Language is terribly important. Besides, how can you read the newspapers? How can you go to the theater? How can you listen to the radio? How can you watch television? How can you understand an entire society? Absolutely essential, absolutely vital. And I don't know if we have slipped. I have read things recently that since the days of, you remember the Usher Burdick book "The Ugly American" when suddenly we had a resurgence of interest in languages and you couldn't go anyplace unless you went to FSI, and everybody needed at least one foreign language. I don't think we are as intent now as we used to be. And it is wrong; it is wrong.

SOL POLANSKY
Deputy Chief of Mission
East Berlin (1976-1979)

Ambassador Polansky was born in New Jersey and raised in New Jersey and California. He was educated at the University of California, Berkeley, and the Russian Institute, New York City. After service in the U.S. Navy, he joined the Department of State in 1952 and was commissioned Foreign Service Officer in 1957. A Russian specialist, he served in Poznan, East and West Berlin, Moscow, Vienna and Sofia, Bulgaria, where he served as United States Ambassador from 1987 to 1990. In his tours at the State Department in Washington, D.C. he dealt primarily with East Europe Affairs. Ambassador Polansky was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

Q: You were there until 1976. You seem like you were repeating yourself--right back to East Berlin from 1976 until 1979.

POLANSKY: At that time I was really interested in going back to see what was happening in that part of Germany. I think we were the last to recognize the East Germans. I really wanted to go back and see what was happening. I thought Germany was important and the East German relationship was important and so went back willingly.

Q: What was the situation there then?

POLANSKY: I think from the East German government standpoint, they were delighted to see us there as a symbol of their stability and permanence and international recognition. Before we arrived, Brandon Grove and Ambassador Cooper had worked out an arrangement for a rather impressive Chancery Building. The repair and renovation had been completed by the time I arrived. Brandon stayed about eighteen months and then I came. We had the business of finishing up the renovation and getting the Chancery building open. The East Germans were cooperative to a certain extent in making sure the building functioned. At the same time, they made sure that not too many East Germans came in easily without being identified. They were fairly cooperative in providing us with a limited number of local staff. The relationships with the Foreign Ministry were professional. The East German who was in charge of East German/US relations, Hans Martin Geyer, was an old time, long time, Communist who took a certain amount of glee in the fact that the Americans were there. It was an interesting time.

Q: What was your position there?

POLANSKY: I was DCM.

Q: Who was the Ambassador?

POLANSKY: The Ambassador first was John Sherman Cooper, the former Senator from Kentucky. He was a wonderful person. He was succeeded by David Bolen, a career Foreign Service Officer. He had one tour in West Germany, in Bonn, as an economic/commercial officer. He had some German experience, but no Eastern European or Soviet experience. We set about establishing a reporting, work, and consular schedule, and had a USIA operation that we thought was very important. The East Germans gave us a lot of trouble over access to the library. That was a continuing problem the whole time we were there.

Q: Was the country open to you?

POLANSKY: Yes, we could travel just about anywhere we wanted to and we tried to. There were no real travel restrictions that we observed and the country was small enough that you could really get around.

Q: What was in it for the United States? We finally recognized it after many years of subscribing to the Holstein Document.

POLANSKY: What was in it for us was essentially, that since just about everybody else recognized it, there was no point in not recognizing it. We maintained a fiction that East Berlin was not the capital of the GDR but was still part of occupied Berlin, so we wanted to maintain that fiction. We wanted to make sure that we understood what was going on in East Germany.

Q: What about relations with the East German government? Were you calling on people in the government and how did you find them?

POLANSKY: In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture, they were proper and correct. They didn't go out of their way to look on us as an opportunity for great increase in contacts. They wanted it, but they realized it was not going to be an easy relationship. The people on the economic side were looking for ways to increase contact with western firms for commerce. We always had an exhibit at the Leipzig Fair which they wanted us to increase. It was important from their standpoint for us to be there, but they didn't give us any incentives for trying to have a favored position.

Q: What was your impression of the political and economic strengths and weaknesses of East Germany in this period from 1976 until 1979?

POLANSKY: At the time we felt that while there was some outward presentation of stability and confidence that they had somehow created a new East German citizenship, in the sense of separateness, that was really on the surface. Apart from people in the Ministries, we really didn't get a sense that there was a separate East German citizenship or East German nation that went very deep in peoples' thinking. Economically, it certainly looked stronger than any of the other East European economies. We subscribed to the idea that as Germans, they were more efficient and productive than their East European neighbors. There was a sense that they looked down on the Russians and some of their East European allies. The stores, particularly towards the end of our stay there, were better supplied, in terms of foodstuffs and consumer goods, than elsewhere in Eastern Europe, certainly better than the Soviet Union. While there was not this great deep seeded sense of East German "nationhood", it did look more stable at that time than perhaps it was.

Q: Was there the feeling that the Carter administration was taking a new approach towards countries like East Germany?

POLANSKY: No, I don't think so substantively in terms of reaching out to East Germany. I think it was very subjective and more of our own personal assessment. David Bohlen was a black officer, one of the few blacks to achieve the rank of Ambassador at that time. He was sent to East Berlin as our Ambassador. On our part we thought that this was one way the Carter Administration was trying to demonstrate an attitude towards civil and human rights by making a deliberative effort to send a black Ambassador to East Berlin. There was the feeling, particularly after someone like Ambassador Cooper, what kind of message were the Americans trying to send us by sending a black Ambassador to us? The substance of our relationship had a Four Power aspect to it in terms of what we were doing in East Berlin and what we were doing in terms of East Germany. I don't recall that there was a conscious effort somehow to put our relations with East Germany on a par with our relations with West Germany or on a par with our

relations with the other countries in Eastern Europe. There was a feeling that if the East Germans want to have a better relationship with us, that they had damn well prove that they want it, we were not going to give anything away for nothing.

GERALD MICHAEL BACHE
Economic Counselor
Bonn (1976-1980)

Gerald Bache was born in September of 1927 in Broxville, NY. He attended Yale University and Harvard Law School and then entered the Foreign Service in 1951. His first post in Pusan, Korea was followed by several posts including Germany, the Ivory Coast, and Sweden. He was interviewed by Theresa Tull in 2004.

Q: Okay, moving along then, after the UN, where you were for almost four years, you went off to Germany?

BACHE: Yes, I went to Bonn, Germany in the summer of '76 and stayed until the summer of 1980. For the first few months, I was civil air attache, working with French and British officials on the special air regime governing air travel between Berlin and West Germany. That regime was one of the last remaining vestiges of the old occupation of Germany after World War II, but that assignment was only a temporary one.

After a couple of months as civil air attache, I became Counselor of Embassy for Economic Affairs in our Embassy in Bonn, which, as you know, is one of our bigger embassies. We have a very large economic section there and I was the number two man in that section, under a Minister for Economic Affairs and under Ambassador Walter Stoessel.

Q: Did you know, when you were assigned to Bonn, that you could become the economic counselor, or did this just evolve?

BACHE: My recollection is that I didn't know and it evolved. I am glad it happened, frankly, because it was a much more responsible position. I mean the civil aviation job was interesting, but it was pretty narrow, whereas the overall economic job I felt was much more important, because there you were dealing with one of the 'big boys' in the world. It was reporting and representation again, but on a more decisive level, because we were talking to a key ally. Our policies on many of the issues were formulated only after we had talked to the Germans, the Brits and the Japanese on these big economic issues.

As I mentioned before, the State Department defines economics broadly. A lot of my time was spent on multilateral aid, with the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation. At other times, it might be patents and copyrights or anti-trust questions, where again my legal training was useful. It might be obvious economic issues, like trade and energy policies. It was simply all the broad issues with which the U.S. and the major powers in the world have to cope. So I felt very

satisfied, from a career point of view, with that job.

We were located right in the birthplace of the composer Beethoven and I played in a string quartet there; the other three players were German. I could practice my German language and get to know non-official German people. The first violinist was a retired official of the German Economics Ministry, who had been a prisoner of war in Russia after the Second World War; the second violinist was the wife of a professor of Greek at Bonn University; and the violist was an engineer at Siemens. Again, they invited me to play in their orchestra. Thus, in Bonn, I again found a combination of cultural and professional interests; it was one of the most enjoyable posts I had.

Our daughter Vivian, our youngest child, started in sixth grade at the Bonn American School, which was run by the U.S. military school system. Between sixth and seventh grades, at her choice, we sent her to a summer camp, where she could learn some German. For seventh and eighth grades, she attended the Nicolas Cusanus Gymnasium, which was part of the local German public school system.

The gymnasium, i.e., secondary school, had a foreigners' division (Auslaenderabteilung), which she attended in the autumn of her first year. There she was given some of the terminology in math and history, so she could understand what was going on. After Christmas vacation, she was in regular classes with the German and other students and had a good experience there of the other cultures. For example, one of her best friends at Nicolas Cusanus was the daughter of a Turkish diplomat assigned to Bonn.

Q: You mentioned that the ambassador at that time was Walter Stoessel.

BACHE: Yes, Walter Stoessel was a very good leader and a generous man. He, like Holland, did 'dry runs' with the country team before press conferences to help him prepare. We helped him with a lot of his entertaining of officials and visitors. Ambassador Stoessel and his wife were delightful people to work with.

Q: As economic counselor, then, you would have been a key element of the ambassador's country team?

BACHE: Absolutely, although there was also an economic minister. The country team included, of course, the DCM, the CIA station chief, the political counselor, the public affairs counselor, etc. We also had a so-called 'legal attache' who dealt with drug enforcement questions. It was a big embassy, as you would expect in a country like Germany.

Q: How did the ambassador meet with the country team? Was it a daily thing, a couple of times a week, or once a week?

BACHE: It was usually once a week, early in the morning and it took place in a special room that was soundproofed. But, if there was some special occasion, the country team might meet more often. Most of the time, however I think it was once a week.

Q: And you felt like your contacts with him were adequate, the ambassador and DCM, that you had all the contact you needed for your work?

BACHE: Oh, yes, good strong support. I also felt that way in Abidjan and Stockholm, but both of those posts were so much smaller, while Bonn was really a big operation.

PHILIP C. BROWN
Russian Language Training, U.S. Army Russian Institute
Garmisch (1977-1978)

Mr. Brown was born in Massachusetts and raised primarily in Pennsylvania. He was educated at College of Wooster (Ohio) and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. After serving with the Voice of America, in 1965 he joined the United States Information Agency Foreign Service (USIS), where he served several assignments at its headquarters in Washington DC. His foreign posts include Dakar, Douala, Yaoundé, Paris, Vienna and Moscow, where he served twice. At these posts his assignments ranged from Assistant Branch Public Affairs Officer to Counselor for Information, Press and Cultural Affairs. Mr. Brown was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2012.

BROWN: So summer of 1977, we rented out our home, packed everything and headed off to Garmisch, Germany to the U.S. Army Russian Institute. I went ahead of the family. I took Tar; the dog that came into our lives in Algiers in 1970 was now going back across the Atlantic. My wife came along later with our children. I didn't realize at the time but this would be a life changing year. We had never lived in Europe, we had traveled in Europe but this was our first experience living in Europe. Not the typical living situation, but nevertheless, we were living in Western Europe.

It was a great year to be there with our children. They were young enough that they were still very much part of the family but old enough that we could do things together.

Let me emphasize first of all that this was an academic year. I spent a lot of time studying and in two ways, it was a much more difficult year than the year I spent in Rosslyn. For one, when you are in a tower in Rosslyn, you have no other distractions. When you are in Garmisch, Germany trying to study Russian and you look out the window and you see the mountains and the snow falling, it is very hard to keep your mind on academic work.

Secondly, I encountered a very different teaching method. The method I had experienced in FSI focused on oral communication. My colleagues in the two-year program in Garmisch -- I was in mostly with the first-year students -- had spent their previous year at Monterrey at the Army Language Institute with much more of an emphasis on the written language and what endings to put on words and passing written tests.

For much of the year, I did very poorly on those written tests simply because this was not a

method I was familiar with. When it came to speaking the language, I did by comparison much better. Not many of my colleagues there were destined for American Embassy Moscow. Many of them were going to be going into situations where they might be listening to the Russian language or other types of intelligence assignments. My preparation was on the spoken language and this is where I did better.

One Friday (the exams often came at the end of the week), I took one of these written tests and basically failed it. I did poorly. I was discouraged. That same afternoon, I went over to the ski area where there was a ski competition and I noticed at the end that a Russian skier was fumbling with her equipment and I decided I am going to risk this. I walked over and I said to her in Russian, "*Mozhno vam pamoshch?*" May I help you? Three words and without hesitation she replied, "*Da.*" Yes. She handed me her skis and I walked with her a few hundred yards down to some transportation and we chatted in Russian. I came home ecstatic. I said, "This is what it is all about. I actually used my Russian to communicate."

She didn't ask me where I had learned my Russian. She didn't ask me what endings I put on my verbs or nouns or anything of that sort. I used Russian to communicate and I was thinking back to the advice I got at FSI from Nina De La Cruz. That was pretty exciting but that went along with many moments of self doubt and discouragement.

The program there was demanding. There were lecture classes, occasionally in English but mostly in Russian. There were one-on-one arrangements they made for me. There were grammar classes. I spent a lot of time in this lovely, wonderful environment of pure academic study trying to improve my Russian.

When I said they made special arrangements for me, the head of the institute was Lieutenant Colonel Roland Lajoie, another of those persons who really had an influence on me. Roland Lajoie went on to become Major General Lajoie. He was head of the Liaison Mission in Potsdam and the On-Site Inspection Agency that monitored START agreements. He had a very distinguished career but he was for me a friend. We were very close friends with him and his family, his children. One of his daughters was a very close friend of our daughter.

In a more general sense, not having served in the military myself, this was an interesting exposure for me to be living in a military community. They all assured me it was atypical because they were all officers and many of them in military intelligence so it was not exactly a cross-section of the U.S. army. But it was a chance to meet some really wonderful people. No better way of saying it, some of my best friends, some of our best friends came out of that class.

Besides Roland Lajoie, then Major Greg Govan, who was a fellow student, went on to a distinguished career in the army. Likewise, a marine major who went on to become Colonel, George Connell. They were all involved in monitoring the US-Soviet arms control agreements and we would see them frequently in Moscow.

So it was a life changing family year -- the first time living in Europe, a rigorous academic year and interaction with the army community

Q: Are any of those people involved in dealing with the Soviets regarding arms control, are they retired?

BROWN: They are all retired.

Q: Are there any in the area?

BROWN: I believe Roland Lajoie lives in New Hampshire where his roots were. Greg Govan lives in Charlottesville, Virginia and George Connell lives in Naples, Florida. They are all good friends, although we have lost touch with Roland Lajoie. They would have a wealth of memories of their experiences. They would all go out to this spot in the Ural Mountains, Votkinsk, where Tchaikovsky was born but which was also the place the Soviets manufactured their SS-20 missiles; they were part of the monitoring team out there.

Q: While you were taking this course at Garmisch, was this about the time the Soviets introduced the SS-20?

BROWN: I believe that was later. My recollection of the SS-20 versus Pershing debate was during the 1980s when I was at the embassy in Paris. I don't recall it being an issue at that time. I would have to go back and look but there were not, as I recall, big East/West issues. I don't recall major crises.

I knew I was going to Moscow so naturally, events in Moscow or that were related to Moscow were very much on my mind. In August of that year, I had barely arrived in Garmisch, there was a fire at the embassy in Moscow. Somebody should write a book on that subject alone; fires at American Embassy Moscow. There was another during my second tour there. They were an all too frequent occurrence and they had an impact on how we did our job there.

That fire, the one I just referred to, August 26, 1977 impacted when we eventually arrived in Moscow. Certain apartments were lost. I don't know what went on behind the scenes but instead of going into Moscow in early summer, 1978, we didn't go until later on. It was something we kept wondering about, when we would be able to go. When is the apartment going to be ready? Every section had to take a hit because there were fewer apartments available.

During the year, the hope was that the whole first year class at the institute would be able to go to Moscow on an observation trip. We were all set to go in December but the visas fell through. We didn't get to go as a group but I did go later in February with a smaller group and we were there for several days with the instruction just to observe, walk around, see what life was like, get in line for Lenin's tomb, go to a concert, that type thing.

When we came back and debriefed (a good Army word), a couple of the guys complained to Roland Lajoie that the hotel wasn't good quality and that the food wasn't up to standards, something like that and he hit the roof. He said, "I didn't send you there on a tourist trip. I sent you there to observe and if everything was not comfortable, that's exactly what I wanted to do to find out." He said it much more convincingly than I just said it. It was a point very well taken.

I was also invited, instructed, to go to Moscow in April of 1978 for a visit by Secretary of State Vance. It was an opportunity for me to go before my assignment began to see how the embassy handled a secretary of state visit and particularly, the press aspect of it. I was in Moscow for four or five days dealing with the press.

One of the journalists in that Vance group was Strobe Talbott; Strobe Talbott who was involved in the Khrushchev memoirs, then had a high position in the Clinton administration and is now, I believe, head of the Brookings Institution. He was a very personable fellow and I recall having interesting conversations with Strobe Talbott as we waited for some aspect of the Vance visit to take place.

The only downside to this otherwise opportunity was that it coincided with my parents' first-ever trip to Europe and the first time that they were able to visit us overseas. We had had several visits from my wife's parents. I was in Garmisch when my parents arrived but had to leave for Moscow after a couple days. I am sure they felt very proud of me.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that this was probably the most physically active year I have had. I never felt physically in better shape than I did at the end of our year in Garmisch. We regularly took these 10 or 20 kilometer hikes that the Germans organized, called volksmarching. We did it with our children. Their reward was a medal or a pin at the end of each hike. We climbed. We took rather demanding walks up the mountains all around us.

We learned how to ski. Roland Lajoie rather wisely said, "I know you guys are all going to try skiing on your own. You are going to fall and stumble. I am going to lose time as you recover from your accidents." So he closed the institute for a week in the fall, ostensibly to repaint the library or something and we all had a chance to go up to the Zugspitze, the tallest mountain in Germany, 3,000 meters and learn how to ski.

Well, I stumbled and fell plenty of times at the beginning but skiing became and still is a wonderful part of my life. I tried rappelling one time but I was not very good at it; I'm not good at tying knots. There were a lot of opportunities. Garmisch was an R&R spot for the U.S. Army in Germany. A lot of young soldiers came to try hiking and skiing.

Q: I know when I was in the air force as an enlisted man we went to Garmisch and went to ___ to ski a little.

BROWN: They had hotels such as the General Abrams with inexpensive meals. One of my diary entries says that we went out for dinner one night and both our children came along and actually ate full meals, which they weren't doing very much of those days. It was a good family evening. It cost me \$25 but it was a good investment, I wrote! Not only were things less expensive back then but in this environment, the army environment there, things were even less expensive.

We did a lot of travel. As beautiful as Garmisch was, it was also very tempting to go out and see parts of Europe. Munich, of course, was the consulate. We'd go down there occasionally for business, use it also to go to a musical event or theater.

We went to Rothenburg, a beautiful medieval city on the Tauber River. My wife took an art class. We went to Salzburg and to Zurich and Lucerne and in Lucerne we met one of the priests, Father Luitfrid, whom we had known in Cameroon years earlier. He was now working with the blind and disabled in Switzerland.

Before my family arrived, I went to Oberammergau for the passion play. Normally it is only done every ten years -- 1970, 1980 -- but they were preparing a new version for 1980 and so in 1977, I got to see a full presentation of the passion play.

Q: Were they cleaning up the Jewish aspect?

BROWN: I believe that was part of it, yes.

Q: It had reflected a Catholic view of Jews.

BROWN: It had a rather anti-Semitic flavor, yes. My German, of course, was not good enough to detect that but we were told that was what was happening.

We went to Prague over the New Year. The PAO there had been my boss back in Africa years earlier and he invited us to come into Prague so we got permission, got the visa, drove from Garmisch through a terrific snowstorm into Prague.

We went down into Italy on USARI-organized ski trips to the Dolomites.

We went to Venice, Florence, Berchtesgarden and Vienna. It is hard now even in retrospect to imagine how we found the time for all these weekend trips but we did.

I also went a couple of times to Bonn on briefings for army types and in June, I went to Bonn for the G-7 meeting. This was one of the early G-7s and Jimmy Carter's first. I didn't think much about it at the time. I didn't know it was a G-7 meeting, I don't think. I got on the G-7 circuit later on during my years as press attaché in Paris.

There was a lot of music. You could go to the opera in Munich or to choral concerts in these churches throughout Bavaria. On a given day, there might be a wonderful performance of the Verdi Requiem in a church somewhere in Bavaria or the local oompapa bands marching through the streets of Garmisch.

And we had family visits. My wife's brother and husband and seven-year old daughter came. My parents made their first ever overseas trip to Garmisch and a few other spots and friends who knew we were there either made special visits or spun off from a trip they were taking in Europe to come see us.

So if I paint a picture of a really wonderful year that is exactly how we remember.

Q: Let's look at the job. One of the things I am told, you have a very serious defectors or whatever you want to call them from the Soviet Union giving lectures and all that. Were you

getting much of a feel for the Soviet Union that was sort of above and beyond the normal reading the newspapers?

BROWN: I don't recall that the staff were defectors. They were more likely people who ended up in Bavaria at the end of the war as displaced persons. A couple I particularly remember were Mr. and Mrs. Posdeev; they taught courses on Russian literature and Russian history.

That's, of course, how the U.S. Army Russian Institute was established after the war using refugees and displaced persons from the war. It was more a perspective that looked back on almost pre-revolutionary Russia and people who had a love affair with the pre-revolutionary Russia, its Christianity, its literature, its history.

I have the list of both the students and the faculty from that year in Garmisch. Quite a number of the professors were probably in their 60s, if not in their 70s, whose experience in Russia had been pre-war and in some cases pre-revolution. There was a few, more recently arrived younger staff. Certainly no one had any sympathy for the communist system.

I recall going down to Munich to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) which had its headquarters in Munich and to another facility down there called Westport. It was for defectors and there we had briefings that were much more the type you are talking about, recent experiences with a very anti-Soviet perspective.

A few people came out that year, either from Washington or perhaps defectors who gave lectures at the institute. But that wasn't the primary focus.

I do recall that I learned the term 'Fulda Gap', the spot in Germany where the Russians, the Soviets, would presumably attack and quite often there would be a talk for the army types that I would attend. I noted how often they described it as "when" the Soviets attacked, not "if" the Soviets attacked. That was the way the army went about its mission. It was presumed it wasn't going to be a matter of if; it was when. This is where their tank assault would take place etcetera, etcetera. I listened with some degree of bemusement but it was also a part of my learning experience.

Q: Back when I was a young vice consul in '56 to '58 in Frankfurt, one of my jobs was if the Soviets attacked I was to set up a card table in a parking lot by the housing complex and document American citizens to be evacuated. We figured out I'd probably get the card table up about the time the first Soviet tank appeared at the other end of the parking lot.

BROWN: At the same time, I would be wrong if I just suggested it was a steady diet of anti Soviet, anti-communist lectures. The major emphasis during the year was helping me prepare for the job I was going to be doing, using my Russian in conversation but also reading some of the newspapers such as Literary Gazette (LitGaz).

Q: You went to Moscow when?

BROWN: September 6, 1978. We had expected to go much earlier but as I said, we were delayed

because of the fire in 1977. Anyway, word finally came in August that we could come but that meant we needed Soviet visas. We packed and made plans to arrive on September 2 but when our passports arrived from the Soviet Embassy in Bonn, they were marked for entry beginning September 14. “Technical error,” they told the embassy in Moscow.

So on Monday, September 4, I got up at 4:30, drove to Munich, flew to Cologne and by 9, I was at the gate of the Soviet Embassy. They didn’t open until 10 but I managed to talk my way inside when an obliging consular officer called me by name and rectified the problem. I was back at the airport by 10:30, where I called my wife and asked her to re-enter us in a tennis tournament going on that afternoon in Garmisch.

Everyone was quite interested in my experience when I got back to Garmisch. In the tennis tournament, Bobbi and I were on opposite sides in the finals of the mixed doubles. Her side won. We had the next day to wrap things up and on September 6, all six of us – including the dog and the cat – flew from Munich to Frankfurt to Moscow.

E. WAYNE MERRY
Political Officer
Berlin (1977-1979)

Mr. Merry was born and raised in Oklahoma. He was educated at the Universities of Kansas and Wisconsin and Princeton University. After serving briefly at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium and in Washington, DC at the Department of the Treasury, in 1972 he joined the State Department Foreign Service. In addition to assignments on Capitol Hill, at the United Nations in New York City, and at the Departments of State and Defense in Washington, DC, Mr. Merry served abroad in Berlin, Tunis, and Moscow. A Russian language speaker, he was a specialist in Soviet Union affairs. Mr. Merry was interviewed in 2010 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Because every Marine officer has to be an infantry officer, too.

MERRY: Yes. The Marine Corps is fundamentally built around supporting the guy who pulls the trigger, no question about it. They understand their priorities. The other reason, other than knowing I wasn’t really the right person to be a Marine officer, much as I admired them, was that I had a better offer. This came from David Anderson, who I mentioned earlier in this history at USNATO and was now the director of the Office of Central European Affairs in the State Department. David remembered my interest in East Germany. I think he had also heard from George Vest, who was director of the Office of Political Military Affairs, which was the institutional interface with the Pentagon. The Commandant had spoken with Vest, I expect at the behest of my branch chief, to express appreciation for my work at Marine Corps headquarters, a classic case of the Marines taking care of their own. James Goodby, who was now deputy assistant secretary in the European bureau, also went to bat on my behalf, so this trio of outstanding officers whom I had met as a summer intern in Brussels proved decisive in getting

me the plum assignment I most wanted. I think David understood I was considering getting out of the Foreign Service, but he knew of my interest in East Berlin, and we were, just at this time, mid-1976, establishing an embassy to the German Democratic Republic. David made me an offer I was certainly incapable of refusing, which was to be assigned to the new U.S. Embassy in East Berlin.

I've always felt a deep sense of gratitude to David for that because it both gave me an assignment I had wanted even before I entered the Foreign Service and it's what kept me in the Service, no question about that. David also trusted me to be the right choice, even though my initial overseas assignment in Tunis had been less than glorious; certainly less than sterling. For whatever reason—and I do know that the Commandant and George Vest had discussed me at one point—the Bureau of European Affairs, and David Anderson in particular, decided to offer me East Berlin, and I snapped at it like a trout going after a lure. This involved first taking half a year of German training at FSI (Foreign Service Institute) under a couple of really top-notch German language instructors, particularly Margaret Plieske, who was most famous for having been the person who tried to teach John F. Kennedy how to say a few words in German.

I had excellent German language instruction, and then went out to East Berlin in the summer of 1977. This was what I had wanted since I entered the Foreign Service, so I arrived at post in a very upbeat mood. The assignment proved to be, in most respects, better than I had expected or hoped for. My aspirations were entirely justified.

The embassy was not brand new; it had been operating for almost a year. The first U.S. ambassador, former Senator John Sherman Cooper, had opened the post. He departed just before I arrived, but the post was up and operating. It had recently moved into its permanent building, a stately pile that once had been the Prussian Officer's Club. The paint was pretty much still wet, but I was not involved in the establishment of an embassy, something I always wanted to do and never did. This was the smallest U.S. embassy in Europe other than Reykjavik. I was the bottom half a two-officer Political Section. My boss, Otho Eskin, was also newly-arrived. The deputy chief of mission, Sol Polansky, was also newly-arrived, as was the ambassador, David Bolen, which meant that much of the embassy was quite new. It may seem odd the embassy turned over much of its staff only a year after it opened. That's because the people who opened the post, except Cooper, had previously been attached to the U.S. Mission in West Berlin, in what was called the Eastern Affairs Section. It happened that their tours ended with the completion of the first full year of our presence in East Berlin. This worked out very well for me because I was moving into a functioning embassy. I took over my predecessor's apartment – it was all furnished – and I inherited some of his contacts, and was in a position to start the job.

Q: You were there for how long?

MERRY: Two years, though I very much wanted to stay more.

Q: Describe what was the state of things in East Germany, particularly East Berlin, of course, when you arrived there?

MERRY: Let me be clear: my job, as the junior political officer, was to explore East Germany.

We had a certain amount of diplomatic interchange with the GDR. The Political Section did normal reporting on international issues, to which I contributed. But my job was to explore, to get out of the office, get out of the embassy, meet people and travel around East Germany—there were no travel restrictions on us at all—and learn about this country which Washington didn't know much about. Washington's perceptions of the GDR were out of a bad Cold War spy novel. As a government, we had a long history of engagement with Poland, or Czechoslovakia or Hungary or Romania, but East Germany was sort of a lacuna (lack) in the heart of Europe, and much of what Washington thought it knew about East Germany was wrong. U.S. perceptions came either through the prism of West German perceptions of East Germany—and they were sometimes wrong and always biased—or through what you might call a Sovietological interpretation of East Germany, which was also not entirely appropriate.

I tried to understand East Germany on its own terms. What kind of a society is this? What kind of a political system is this? What kind of economy is this? I looked at the place not just as the eastern wedge of a divided Germany or the western wedge of the communist bloc—both of which, of course, it was—but also as a place with its own dynamic. I had a great advantage in that I had not previously served either in West Germany or in the Soviet Union, so I did not try to understand the GDR in terms of either of those places, but on its own terms. I started fresh, which was a great advantage.

East Germany, in the late '70s, had made a lot of progress from the time of my first visit in the summer of 1971. Ulbricht and his regime were gone. Erich Honecker and his regime not only were very much in power but had a considerable record of economic progress. They had not yet slipped into that detachment from the problems of everyday life which they did by the late '80s. This was certainly not a system based on the consent of the governed, but it was a country that had, in the late '70s, a ruling elite which was, for the most part, talented, economically aware, and very interested in taking advantage of their new openness to the West in terms of diplomatic relations. Having waited three decades from the end of the Second World War to get their place in the sun, they now had it, and they wanted to exploit their acceptance as a more or less normal and permanent state. To be sure, anywhere in the world you used the word "Germany" people thought of the west and not the east, but the GDR had achieved considerably more international stature, especially in the Third World, than is generally recognized. They claimed to be the tenth largest economy in the world, which was not true, but they were in the top twenty.

East Germany as a political culture was certainly authoritarian. The GDR reflected the axiom that any country with the word "democratic" in its official name, isn't. It was, in its own way, a police state, but it was much less repressive either than Western perceptions or than most of its Eastern neighbors. I traveled in a number of the other bloc countries during the time I was in East Germany, and I can tell you the atmosphere, for example, in Prague, was dramatically worse in terms of political repression than anything you would have encountered in East Berlin or anywhere in East Germany. In Prague I was stopped by police for a document check several times because I had a beard. That never happened in the GDR. Hungary had much better food and wine than East Germany, but the political atmosphere at that time was certainly worse. Obviously a place like Romania was light years worse, and Bulgaria the same. Poland had developed the precursors to Solidarity, but Poland was always a special case. Even at that point, the GDR leadership was very worried about internal developments in Poland and the potential

for political infection, so cut off most human contacts with its closest eastern neighbor.

Within the East bloc countries, the GDR, in the late '70s and into the '80s, was curiously one of the more benign environments. That's not to say that it was a democracy or rule of law state by any stretch of the imagination, but Western perceptions of it, including perceptions in Washington, were that it was one of the worst of the bloc countries. The reality was the reverse. In terms of how average people lived, not just in economic welfare and well being, but in their latitude of activity in day-to-day life—what they could read, their ability to watch West German television, their ability to have contacts with Westerners, the openness of the society—East Germany was, in fact, second only to Poland, which then, as always, was a unique political environment. I don't count Yugoslavia, because it was not part of the bloc and was, of course, fairly open to the west. If I look at the countries of the Soviet bloc, including the Soviet Union itself, from the late '70s toward the end of the Cold War, I would say East Germany was second only to Poland in terms of its openness and what one might call the personal freedoms people enjoyed in their daily lives. Political freedoms were a very different matter, of course.

Q: When you traveled, I assume you'd go to party headquarters in towns and things like that.

MERRY: I did sometimes, but that was actually not a very prominent part of what I did.

Q: What was the reaction of having an American official bouncing around internally?

MERRY: I had a lot of surveillance. Keep in mind that the Western diplomatic presence in East Berlin was quite small and the number of diplomats who got out and engaged the local society was miniscule, half a dozen or so. It was not difficult to keep track of us. The Staatssicherheit (State Security Service), the Stasi, were with me all the time, but with immense discretion. They went to great lengths not to show themselves. I know I was under surveillance for two reasons; first, Stasi files in Berlin make that very clear. But, second, we were doing surveillance on their surveillance. The United States had a big electronic listening facility in West Berlin, at a place called Teufelsberg. On a number of occasions our people did intercepts of the walkie-talkie conversations of the Stasi people tailing me in some part of the country. I didn't have a car, so all of my travel was by train, which meant they had to tail me on foot. They couldn't just put a car behind me, as they would if I'd been driving. They had to use teams of people to tail me, and that meant they had walkie-talkie traffic, and that was something we could listen to, so there were times they were surveilling me and we were surveilling them surveilling me. It was like "Spy Versus Spy" in the old Mad Magazine. But the Stasi went to great efforts not to reveal itself, and not to interfere directly in anything I was doing. This was quite different from my experience with the KGB (Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti) (Committee for State Security) later in the Soviet Union.

Q: Why was this? Because often, with the KGB, the fact that you're being surveilled, it's not that secretive thing, but it's a means of control. In other words, "Don't do that."

MERRY: People who came to East Germany after having served first in the Soviet Union expected that. I served in East Germany before I went to the Soviet Union. The Stasi's approach to dealing with foreign diplomats was the diametric opposite of the KGB's. They were seeking

not to intimidate but to create a sense of well being, to make you think you weren't under surveillance, to make you feel secure. If you feel secure, you would get sloppy about what you said and what you left around your apartment. This worked with a number of diplomats who were astonishingly careless about surveillance. I wrote a paper on this distinction some years later, in which I speculated that the difference between Stasi and KGB surveillance methods reflected the difference between Jungian and Pavlovian schools of psychology. The KGB wanted to freak you out. The Stasi wanted you to feel safe.

Now, I knew perfectly well they were always there. I would sometimes set little traps for them to prove that, yes, they had been in my apartment; yes, they were there. I would knock books out of alignment on a shelf near the front door, only to find them straight when I returned. An ashtray would be rotated from the position I had left it. Things like that. Most of my East German friends and contacts, who had been under Stasi surveillance practically since they were weaned, were expert at spotting them. I learned a great deal about how to spot surveillance from East Germans, who were very skilled at this sort of thing.

The key point is that in two years of being very active in meeting East Germans, particularly people in the East German Lutheran church—the church, Protestant and Catholic, was the one institution in East Germany outside of the government and party monopoly—the Stasi never once overtly interfered with me. What they did do on at least two occasions was to recommend to the foreign ministry that I be declared *persona non grata*. We knew this from intercepts, that at least twice the Stasi went to the foreign ministry and said, “Throw this guy out. He’s talking to too many people.” Once, the foreign ministry called in my ambassador, complaining about me having too many “churchy” contacts; being too active in my associations with people in the GDR. Other than making that complaint at the ambassadorial level, they never did anything that would impede or interfere with me. There were no acts of sabotage against me or intimidation at all, ever. Quite the opposite of my diplomatic experience in the Soviet Union.

Q: What was the role that you were seeing, at that time, of the Lutheran church?

MERRY: The church in East Germany became very much my specialty, almost a personal hobby as well as a professional interest. I reported on it extensively, including one report that, as I recall, was 37 pages, single-spaced. I heard it arrived as something of a surprise in the State Department because most people did not know there even was an active church behind the Berlin Wall. I became interested because I got to know people in it—Lutheran pastors, mostly outside of Berlin and mostly in Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt. I soon realized two things about the church in East Germany: first, it was the only structured institution in the country that was not within the control of the party and the state. The only independent institutions were the Roman Catholic and the Evangelical Lutheran churches—their independence was unique. They alone constituted what today we would call “civil society” in the country, if you define “civil society” as that part of a society between the family and the state. In the GDR, the church was the only legitimate civil society in the country, so, therefore, very interesting. The second reason was that the more I got to know people in it, I realized that many of the most talented people of my generation in that country were involved with the church. It occurred to me that any institution outside of the state and party that could attract the best and the brightest of its country was an institution worth taking a good hard look at.

It was also the case that the Lutheran church had genuine appeal for young people. The official Free German Youth organization and other structured youth activities in schools and so forth, pretty much bored the kids out of their minds. Young people—people in their teens, in their twenties, in their thirties—who were really looking for something else often found what they were looking for was the Lutheran church. This was not necessarily something spiritual; they weren't necessarily looking for God, but they were looking for a place where they could be themselves, where they could be independent, where they could have conversations, could discuss things, could learn without the ideological and political claustrophobia of the GDR. They were looking for civil society, if you will, and found it under the sign of the Cross. If you wanted to get a sense of the dynamics of the younger part of the society, that was the place to do it.

The East German church—and I reflected this in my reporting—had a self-perception of itself as the legatee, the inheritor, of the greatest moral failure in the history of Christianity, which was the role of the church during the Third Reich, and a profound commitment not to make that mistake again. This church, unlike the church in West Germany, existed within a communist authoritarian state, but also with the heritage of a fascist authoritarian state, and almost everybody in the church had a sense that their burden was not to behave that way again. This was, I thought, a very interesting place to meet people. I'll tell you this: conversations with people in that institution were a hell of a lot more interesting than conversations in local party headquarters.

I met my closest friend in East Germany because he happened to be the pastor in the village where Friedrich Nietzsche was born and is buried – so he lived in the Nietzsche House and had the grave beside his 13th Century village church. Through him I met another pastor in Wittenberg who lived, quite literally, in the Luther House. Both of these men, and their families, lived cheek by jowl with those historical legacies while dealing day to day with the problems of their communities and societies. They saw East German society from the bottom up, with all the rough edges. They dealt with family issues, alcohol, the elderly, social alienation and even employment problems. Sometimes, even the local police would consult them about youth issues. Through these friends and others I obtained some real insight into the place. After awhile, I stopped seeking answers about the GDR, and started gradually to learn the right questions. This was one of the key lessons of two years there: that Washington's questions about other countries generally reflect Washington's biases and are the wrong questions; a key job of the Foreign Service is to learn the right questions, even if there are no answers. The only way to learn the real questions is by listening, and listening takes time and patience and human interaction. Fortunately, I had the chance over many days and evenings to listen and learn. I wonder how many people in the Foreign Service nowadays have that opportunity, how many supervisors allow junior officers that time and independence. Not many, I think.

I also knew people without church connections, sometimes people with cultural roles or university connections. One older couple were connected with the Humboldt University, and through them I acquired some insight into the early years of the GDR and why many Germans who could actually choose east or west chose the east. Most did not, of course, but the aspiration to build a true socialist Germany after the experience of the Nazi period was real for many people. Their hopes and aspirations remained intact after many disappointments, but intact. From

people like that, I found it is misleading to generalize about people in any society. I knew a few people in the small Jewish community and was the only non-German present for the reconsecration of the largest synagogue in East Berlin in 1979. That was a very moving experience, because the place was nearly empty in a part of Berlin which had once enjoyed a thriving Jewish life. Remember, East Germany was a society in the heart of Europe with myriad traditions to draw from. You could scarcely turn around in the country without encountering some aspect of German history, whether positive or negative, but the past was everywhere in people's lives. The most obvious was the recent past, the Cold War and the Nazi period, but there were many layers.

Q: On the local communist side, was there press, and the speeches and talking, pretty much the boilerplate communist stuff?

MERRY: Most of that was in Neues Deutschland, the party newspaper, and was predictable, but I read it in the same way that later I would read Pravda, which is, I learned to look for the little indications of something out of the ordinary. I learned to look through the boilerplate to find where the little snippets of interest were, which were never in the first third of the article or speech. You could ignore the first third of any speech. If there's going to be anything interesting, it would be buried deep inside. For the most part, the formal politics of the GDR were pretty damn dull. I accompanied my ambassador to meetings with several members of the politburo (Central Committee's political bureau), some of whom were intelligent men, most of whom had very interesting personal histories of resistance to the Nazis—some had lost their entire families to the Nazis. Some had been in prison for long periods of time. But they were almost entirely doctrinaire. However, something about the GDR leadership Washington didn't appreciate was that they were not cynical opportunists. Their formative years had been during the street battles between communists and Nazis of the late '20s and early '30s. The long struggle against German fascism had defined them; it had destroyed almost all of their generation and their families. These guys were true believers. When they talked about proletarian internationalism, they believed it. When they got up at a rally and sang the Internationale, they believed it. They were quite sincere, which is why, a decade later, they were so out-of-touch with younger people in their own society, for whom their own experience was simply not relevant. They became social dinosaurs.

In my experience traveling around the GDR, there was never—and I think I can say so with no exceptions—never a place I went, where as an American and American diplomat I wasn't immediately welcomed. Even in an official venue where the meeting was going to be utterly sterile in terms of content, the welcome was genuine. Americans were like people from Mars. In many instances people told me I was the first American who'd set foot in their town since the country was divided after the end of the war. The last Americans they had seen had been the U.S. Army in 1945, or occasionally groups of American Lutheran pilgrims who'd travel to East Germany to see various Luther sites. For most people, I was the first American they had ever met. Whether it was just a casual encounter on a train, whether it was a family I'd come to know in personal terms, whether it was people I knew in the church, whether it was local editors or officials or party people on whom I would pay an official call, for them, meeting with an American diplomat was something special. Unlike later in the Soviet Union, where sometimes encounters out in the provinces would be positive and sometimes they would be rather negative,

I don't think I ever had a negative personal experience traveling in the GDR.

Of course, the GDR was not such a big place. It was the size of Ohio with about 17 million people. It had a lot of very interesting historic cities: Dresden and Leipzig and Wittenberg and all the historic cities of Saxony and Thuringia and Mecklenburg and Neubrandenburg. There were lots of places to go and lots of places to try to meet people. Two years was certainly not enough. One of the advantages I had was that as I began to meet people, particularly within the church—where I developed some very strong friendships, which I am happy to say endure to this day—they all knew people elsewhere, so frequently I would have an introduction when I went someplace new.

So, instead of spending most of my time on the road in official settings, I spent most of my time on the road in peoples' kitchens. One of the things I did that came as a shock to some people in my embassy, is that I frequently overnighted in peoples' homes in East Germany. I did that over a hundred times in the two years I was in East Germany. I overnighted in somebody's home in many different places. In one February I spent a week in a village south of Leipzig where a friend was the pastor. I learned more about East Germany in that week than in anything else I did during my assignment there.

Q: Were they concerned about you spending the night? That meant three or four hours in the Stasi office in the next day. Or not?

MERRY: Sometimes. My contacts sometimes told me they had been questioned, but often they were not, especially if they were someone with other foreign contacts, as with the church in West Germany. I've seen references to me in other peoples' Stasi files, in the Stasi files of East German friends of mine. Something I had to judge—and I tried to be very conservative about this—was the extent to which my actions might compromise the well being of the people I was dealing with. Usually, the people who would invite me to stay overnight were very compromised politically already, which is to say pastors within the Lutheran church, people within the peace movement, people who already had other foreigners overnight, such as West Germans or co-religionists from other bloc countries. So I was not the first. Often enough, the invitation to me to stay was their method of thumbing their nose at the authorities. I tried to be very careful about bringing trouble to peoples' doorsteps. I would be very candid to people, that if they felt in any way uncomfortable in meeting with me, I didn't want to ever press it. This had to be their choice and a choice made with their eyes open.

In point of fact, most of the people I met in East Germany were more sophisticated on this issue than I was. These were people who had been living with the reality of their political police state system all their lives. Many had been in political trouble since adolescence, and were now sheltering within the institutional protection of the church, not just as parishioners, but as employees of the church, people who were within the structure of the church. I got to know a number of people who were not in that situation, where I restricted my contacts out of concern that it would compromise them. A number of other contacts, some rather important to me, were with people whom I knew perfectly well were semi-official, people who maintained contact with me not entirely for personal reasons but also for reporting reasons.

Q: One of the things that appears to have come out is that the Stasi files, everybody had a report on everybody else. At a certain point, I lived in Yugoslavia, and I knew we were bugged but what the hell difference did it make, except to give occupation to the buggers?

MERRY: Well, I never, both in East Germany and the Soviet Union, I never thought that it didn't make a difference. It affected my behavior patterns all the time. For example, I never took any personal mail home from the embassy. None of my financial records, none of my personal letters, ever left the safe in my office, to make it more difficult for them to build a file on me. They could come into my apartment, which they did. They could find out what kind of books I owned, what kind of records I owned, they could find out what kind of laundry detergent I used, that kind of thing. That would contribute to their obsessive file-building. But I had no desire to let that file touch other people, particularly other people back in the United States. I also was very cautious about anything I would say in any bugged facility or on the telephone. In all of my personal contacts, I'd let my East German counterparts determine the pace, the direction and the intensity of the relationship. It was their choice, and I worried a great deal about a number of them. In one case, I much later found out that a young man did suffer from it, in the tasks he was given once he was drafted. He was given a not very pleasant job in the army, and it was made clear to him it was because of his relationship with me. However, it was a couple of decades before he opened up to me about that.

Still, East Germany was not Romania. It was not even Czechoslovakia. People were not freaked out and paranoid about contact with Westerners. Chance conversations on the train or in the theater were more or less normal, not tense encounters at all. I discussed this with some other Western diplomats, particularly the West Germans, who had the only really substantial diplomatic presence in East Berlin, and with some journalists. Our experience was pretty much the same, which was that both in East Berlin and in traveling around East Germany, we were all astonished at how easy it was to do our jobs, how easy it was to meet people, how open people were, how people did not recoil from having contact with us. It was striking how open people were in this forbidden territory that, since the Wall went up, had been closed to the outside world. Many local people were starved for outside contact, to meet the kind of people they saw on West German television. God, the number of questions about America I had to answer, or try to. I had to try to explain the meaning of lyrics of rock songs I did not understand in English.

I also got to know the families of a number of people who were arrested for political activity. In fact, one of my closest friends from East Germany was arrested for political activity that had nothing to do with me; it predated my arrival. He spent about a year and a half in a political prison until he and his family were bought out by West Germany. The Bonn government purchased the freedom and immigration of political prisoners from East Germany. I'm happy to say that, to my knowledge, no one in East Germany was arrested, incarcerated, because of associations with me. I knew a number of people whose political activities did get them into legal jeopardy, but that was for doing things that were perceived by the regime as much more challenging, much more subversive, more controversial than knowing me. For example, one of my closest friends was an East German lawyer who represented political cases. He was a defense lawyer for people who were in serious political trouble with the regime. I knew him and his family very well. Eventually, he was pressured to leave, to emigrate to the West with his family. But he didn't feel the slightest hesitation about having contact with me, because the associations

he had with his clients had already burned his bridges with the regime. One evening I went to their place for his wife's birthday party, and among the crowd saw an older couple on the sofa looking very uncomfortable. The man was wearing a party lapel pin, which I thought quite odd. My friends took me in the kitchen, burst out laughing and said it was her parents, who evidently freaked out when they learned a U.S. diplomat was present. They left quite early and the atmosphere eased immediately. Odd, that my presence would be deemed normal, but her party member father would be out of place.

I met hundreds of people in East Germany and got to know a few dozen fairly well, people you would use the “du” (informal you) basis with, in German, people who I got to know not just as individuals but as families, often several generations of the families, people in whose homes I would be not just once but many times. Getting to know the kids was very rewarding, as they are always entirely genuine. Now, I always understood it was possible some of those people would, in fact, be Stasi. In most cases, I was quite confident the person was not, but I was always a little fearful as to who might be. One thing you could never do in a place like East Germany was mix your friends with each other, because if they didn't already know each other, or if they didn't know of each other through a mutual friend, you, the foreigner, could not bring them together. Your trustworthiness as an American was clear. Their trustworthiness to each other was not. So you had to compartmentalize your friends and contacts.

There's one case I should mention because it became famous in Germany after the Wall came down. A young man named Knud Wollenberger later proved to have been Stasi. He became a *cause célèbre* after unification because his wife had been very active in the opposition toward the end of the GDR, and later became a member of the German parliament. He had been informing on her during the entire time of their marriage.

Q: I remember.

MERRY: I knew Knud long before he even met Vera, his future wife. I met him when he was in his late teens, an aspiring poet and mathematician. I came to know Knud Wollenberger very well. I now know, in retrospect, that he was informing on me to the Stasi from the first time I met him. My reaction to that revelation was one of sadness for him, because this was a young man who got pulled in, as a teenager, into a situation which I think he believed he would be able to control and was not able to. He came from an interesting family; his mother was Danish. His father was a German Jewish scientist and communist who had lived in the United States during the war, had been a physicist, had come back to Germany after the war, and was in political trouble in the GDR in the Ulbricht period. His son had been born in Denmark, so he actually had a Danish passport as well as an East German passport. He could travel abroad, which his younger sisters could not. He was a very bright young person and looking for some kind of a role. First a role in science, second a role in literature, in a country where that kind of role was difficult to fashion. He compromised himself as a Stasi *inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, an unofficial coworker, of which there were many, many thousands in the GDR.

His wife, when she found out later what he had been doing, divorced him and this was evidently a very bitter experience, but I have never held any personal grudge against Knud. I feel no animosity toward him, just sadness. I was an American official and so I was fair game for Stasi

surveillance. If there had not been surveillance, I would have been astonished. To me, the surveillance had nothing to do with me personally. It was purely an official thing. It had to do with my job. I wouldn't have been in East Germany without my official status. So I don't feel any sense of resentment or anger or betrayal toward Knud. I feel sadness for him. I have found this is a difficult subject, though, to discuss with other East German friends, because they feel, even if they never knew Knud Wollenberger—most of them didn't—they felt what he did was so morally compromised that they feel resentment and anger at him. And they find it a little strange that I do not.

Q: Well, we're at some remove. One, it's family. I'm talking about if you're East German, it's family. We're in America.

MERRY: Yes.

Q: Have you ever run across the Merkel family at all?

MERRY: You mean Angela Merkel's? No, not at all.

Q: Because I know, in the Lutheran circle...

MERRY: Partly, the place in East Germany where she came from was the area...

Q: She's now the chancellor of Germany. She was younger then, of course.

MERRY: She came from a part of East Germany that I didn't visit that much, the northwestern corner. But she also had a church family background.

Q: That's why I said this. One of the things you were saying, that the people knew their place, so what the hell? Something that has become, to a certain extent, apparent, is that a good number of East Germans have become disillusioned with being a part of Germany. Part of it is that you were paid, you had your rent taken care of, medical—everything was pretty well taken care of for you, and it seemed to undermine, you might say, the drive or initiative that was much more apparent in West Germany. Did you run across this dichotomy?

MERRY: Well, as it happens, I published a 5,000-word article on this subject in the March 2010 issue of Current History, about why Eastern Germany 20 years after the fall of the Wall is still such a different place; why the identity issues in the GDR period have created such an enduring legacy. East Germany, in those days, in the '70s, was a place in which peoples' expectations were the product of the reality of the Cold War, of the division of Europe, the division of Germany, the division of Berlin, which everyone assumed was going to go on for the rest of their lives. Everybody in East Germany assumed they would live, raise their own families and then would grow old within the confines of this place that was about the size of Ohio. They would occasionally be able to travel to Prague or Budapest or the Black Sea coast, but the notion that all this Cold War *stasis* in Europe would come to a radical end within the foreseeable future, no. People didn't expect that at all.

Expectations were very limited, but therefore, they tended to focus on what was achievable within this context. People put a lot of emphasis on the quality of their lives, on their families, their near friends, their neighborhoods, and on what you might call human relationships. For example, in many parts of East Germany people still did things like the early evening promenade on the main street of the town. People did the afternoon *kaffee und kuchen* (coffee and cake) with friends, even if the coffee was bad. They found time to go into the woods to collect mushrooms, or to do things with other people, and that was very important in a society in which the ethos was “they pretend to pay us, we pretend to work.” It wasn’t that hard to find time for these kinds of personal relationships. It’s also true that people in East Germany took immense pride in the legacy of their country from earlier times, in being the land of Bach and Mendelssohn; in being the land of Goethe and Schiller, of Luther, of the great museums of Dresden and the literary heritage of Weimar and the musical traditions of Leipzig. These were terribly important to people.

Q: Had they completely pushed the Hitler time over to the West? Being a communist regime, they had no guilt?

MERRY: One of the things the GDR promulgated was a doctrine of a “GDR nationality.” This was the official response to the inevitable question, “Who are we? Well, we’re German but then there are other people who are German, too.” So the regime promulgated a “GDR nationality,” which was kind of clumsy and never really worked very well, but it said that, “We’re members of the socialist camp, we’re allies of the Soviet Union, we’re the first workers’ and peasants’ state on German soil.” I heard that phrase *ad nauseam*: “The first workers’ and peasants’ state on German soil.” Under this doctrine they assigned all of the opprobrium for the Third Reich to the Federal Republic next door, to West Germany. East German kids were told, “You are in no way the inheritor of any of the accountability, legacy or sense of guilt from that.”

People in the East German churches, both Lutheran and Catholic, rejected that idea. They said, “Look, we’re German, and we bear our share of that guilt.” I think people in the church felt that more particularly because of the compromised role of the church in the Third Reich. For example, on the anniversary of *Kristallnacht* (the Night of the Broken Glass) in 1978, which was the 40th anniversary of the destruction of many synagogues...

Q: In '38.

MERRY: There was no official commemoration at all in the GDR, but there were church-organized commemorations in every city and town of any size. I participated in those in East Berlin. They attracted large numbers of young people who held seminars, discussion groups, then went on candlelight vigils in front of ruins of the synagogue on Oranienburger Strasse. Their view was, “Yes, this is part of our history too and we have to deal with it,” and that differentiated the church from the regime and was one of the reasons why the church had credibility with young people, because it was willing to talk about this legacy. It was willing to face up to the past.

But the official line on historical responsibility has had a poisonous effect, lasting till this day, because when the Wall came down, East Germans said, “We are one people, we want to be just

German.” Then they suddenly learned that part of being German meant taking on the moral opprobrium and responsibility for all of Germany’s past. This had been a very protracted process in West Germany; something that had taken decades, two generations, in West Germany. Now people in East Germany were told practically overnight to do this. A lot of the Neo-Nazi skinhead activity in East Germany today is a reaction by young people, who had been taught in school that it had nothing to do with them, and then overnight being told it had everything to do with them.

In 1988 I was on a personal visit in Poland and I met a German-speaking tour guide in Warsaw. She was a Pole, and most of her job was taking around German school groups, West German and East German. She told me that she would always ask them at the beginning, “Do you want to visit the site of the Warsaw ghetto and these other places in Warsaw from the War?” She said the West German young people would always say, “Yes, of course. We must see these things. That’s part of why we came here.” The East Germans would always say, “No. That has nothing to do with us. We don’t want to be bored with that stuff.” I think the teaching has had a terribly poisonous long-term impact on peoples’ mentality in East Germany.

Q: What about Soviet presence in East Germany and the East German view of the Soviets while you were there? We know what the Poles felt, even at the height of the authoritarian regime. They detested the Germans, but particularly the Russians.

MERRY: In East Germany the Soviet presence was omnipresent and yet mostly out of sight. There were 22 Soviet armored and mechanized divisions in East Germany, a country, again, the size of Ohio, with comparable airpower and nuclear weapons and chemical weapons. There were Soviet bases all over the place. But you could live and travel in East Germany and only occasionally, and almost by accident, encounter the tangible Soviet presence. The Soviet troops were pretty much kept on their military reservations. They had little contact with the local population. I remember being in the city of Naumburg, an old cathedral city, which had a Soviet corps headquarters. It was a Sunday, so the Soviet officers and their families were promenading as were the German population and their families. I was the sole American there; I was with some East German friends. It was a beautiful Sunday afternoon in this lovely old cathedral city, in which two groups were promenading as if they were in alternate universes. There was zero contact between the Soviets and the East Germans that day. Absolutely none. It wasn’t that they were hostile to each other, they were just going through the pretense that the other wasn’t there.

I think behind all of the official socialist brotherhood propaganda, the average East German attitude toward the Soviets was not suffused with the kind of hostility that existed in Poland or in Hungary or in Czechoslovakia. First, the crushing of the 1953 worker uprising was a long time ago, and everybody knew it was Ulbricht that was the problem. The Soviets just did the dirty work for Ulbricht. It wasn’t so much a Soviet intervention as it was the Soviets providing the muscle to back up the East German leadership, which was quite different from what happened in Budapest or Prague. Also, of course, the East Germans were on the wrong side of the Second World War. They knew why the Soviets were there. Most East Germans, whether they liked it or disliked it, whether they accepted it or hated it, understood the fundamental reality of their lives—the country in which they lived, the condition of their broader nation, of their continent and everything that determined their existence—was the product of the Second World War and

the Cold War, things about which they had very little, if any, influence.

The presence of the Soviet forces in East Germany, which was much, much larger than the Soviet presence in Poland—which is a bigger country—or in Czechoslovakia, was conducted by the Soviet group of forces specifically to avoid problems with the local population. There were a few incidents. I remember an instance when a small number of Soviet soldiers stole a van and went racing through East Berlin to try to get to Checkpoint Charlie to defect. They got all the way to Unter den Linden before they were stopped in a gun battle with East German police and they were all killed. But for the most part, the Soviets were out of sight and when they weren't out of sight they were on good behavior.

I got to know one diplomat at the Soviet Embassy, who was assigned to be liaison with me. This was my first contact with a Soviet official and not a very encouraging one, as he was pretty much a stereotype. A waste of my time rather than a learning experience. The Soviet Embassy was huge and the Ambassador, Pyotr Abrasimov, was really a proconsul. He hated Germans, having lost a son in the War, and lost few opportunities to lord it over the GDR leadership. Honecker obviously hated him, but was stuck with him until Brezhnev died. Honecker then asked Andropov to replace him. The irony is that the GDR ruling elite really admired and even loved the Soviet Union, as they were true-believers and saw Moscow as the Mecca of socialism. The Soviets, in contrast, saw the East Germans as fundamentally more German than socialist. They understood the importance of the GDR and envied its economic achievements, but there was no love lost on the Soviet side. I saw this often enough in the eyes of Soviet officers watching GDR military ceremonies; their trigger fingers were itching. To be fair, diplomats of other countries, such as French, Poles, Danes, and others, reflected rather similar views. They all wanted the United States to keep control of “our” Germans while the Soviets did likewise in the GDR. As the French statesman Francois Mauriac said, he loved Germany so much he preferred to have two of them.

Q: Let's talk a bit about the embassy itself. How did it fit within the greater German context? We had a mission in West Berlin and an embassy in Bonn.

MERRY: The U.S. Embassy in Bonn, of course, was humongous. The U.S. Mission in West Berlin was quite large. We, as the embassy to the GDR, were smaller than some of the consulates in West Germany. We were much smaller than the consulate in Munich or the consulate in Frankfurt. Probably we were about the size of the consulate in Hamburg. We were a very modest-sized post and were regarded by some of our colleagues in the West with a certain degree of condescension and derision. There were still some who felt the United States should never have had diplomatic relations with the East Germans. The nature of the diplomatic relationship between the United States and the GDR was pretty narrow. We had a number of bilateral issues that never progressed very far, particularly claims of U.S. citizens for properties from before the war, and Jewish material claims. We did sell, at that time, a considerable amount of feed grain to East Germany, but that was a medium-term economic relationship. Broader trade was minimal.

Of the countries of the Soviet bloc, I would expect that, with the exception of Bulgaria, the actual diplomatic interchange we had was the smallest, partly because there was no active ethnic group in the U.S. with ties to the GDR. It was not like Poles or Hungarians or Romanians in the United

States, or Yugoslavs, who had contacts with the old country. The only human contact we tended to get were American Lutheran groups, who might not have any family connection with somebody in the GDR, but who visited Wittenberg and Eisenstadt and the Wartburg and places like that. So, our embassy was not very large and not terribly important, either within the German club of the State Department or within the Soviet club. We were not as important an embassy as Warsaw or Belgrade by any stretch of the imagination. That was partly because, when I was in East Berlin, the relationship was brand new. Everywhere I went was someplace new. Every report I wrote was on someplace Washington didn't know anything about. Much of what we were doing was exploring, discovering, learning, developing contacts, many of which would later prove to be extremely important during the crisis of East Germany ten years on. I'm happy to say that a number of people who were contacts of mine became very important, if not critical, embassy contacts in the late '80s, when the GDR came to its crisis and the Wall came down.

Diplomatically, the embassy was testing the limits of what we could develop, in terms of a relationship with the GDR, and that often came into conflict with the U.S. position in Berlin, because the GDR was always looking for ways to try to nickel and dime us on something concerning our Berlin rights. One of my roles in the Political Section was as sort of the keeper of the Holy Tablets on Berlin status.

Q: If one doesn't know—I mean, how far you lowered the tailgate. It was really a Holy Bible.

MERRY: I had to learn a lot of Berlin theology, but my role was actually fairly simple. It was to remind everybody in the embassy, starting with the ambassador, "We do not discuss Berlin matters with the GDR. The U.S. government discusses Berlin matters with our Soviet counterparts and nobody else." There was a very simple response, whenever the GDR tried to raise a Berlin issue, whether it was in Berlin or in Washington, the correct response was to say, "There are established relationships in which that issue is discussed and you know what those relationships are." Full stop. The one thing I had to keep reminding people over and over again is, "We do not get into a discussion on this issue." That was the basis upon which we, as an embassy, did not get into a pissing match with our counterparts in Bonn or West Berlin, because in any such conflict, we would lose. Berlin was not our responsibility, it was the responsibility of our colleagues in West Berlin and in Bonn; we stayed the hell out of it.

Q: For example, if you had traffic problems, parking problems, in front of your embassy, would you go to our mission in...

MERRY: No. The question often was, "Why is the U.S. Embassy to the German Democratic Republic in East Berlin, the Soviet sector of Berlin?" Official answer: "For administrative convenience only." On anything having to do with administration, management of the embassy, the building, apartments, parking, stuff like that, of course we dealt with the East German authorities as the people who, under broader Soviet authority, ran the eastern part of the city. But if it had to do with a Berlin status issue, or anything involving West Berlin, that's when we would stand back and say, "No, you don't talk to us about that."

Q: OK, a GI (Government Issue) ends up in East Berlin, or an American gets drunk in East

Berlin or something. Who took care of that?

MERRY: If it was an American tourist, we would. If it was a GI, we wouldn't touch it. That would be for the Mission in West Berlin. There were plenty of Americans who would visit East Berlin on day visas coming from West Berlin, to shop, or to go to the opera. Like any American citizen, if something happens, well, we've got a Consular Section. We do American citizen services. If it was anyone associated with the U.S. presence in Berlin—which is to say an American soldier, an American diplomat, or dependent, anything that had to do with the Allied status of the city—we wouldn't touch that with a barge pole. It actually made life more convenient for us, since we didn't have to get into that sort of thing.

The problem was this anomaly greatly constrained our ability, diplomatically, to develop much of a state-to-state relationship with the GDR, because Berlin was always there as a landmine. Ultimately, for both the U.S. and the GDR, our bigger and more important relationships were with West Germany and with the Soviet Union. Our relationship with the GDR was a second-order offshoot of those two broader relationships. My ambassador had, I think, some difficulty in accepting the marginal character of our diplomatic role. He wanted it to be more like the U.S. relationship with, say, Poland, but Poland is Poland. Poland is not half of a Poland. From my selfish point of view, not having a broader diplomatic relationship was fine, because it gave me more time and freedom to do what I wanted to do, which was to explore and learn about East Germany as a society, as a culture, as a place, to understand the dynamics of it. That was the narrow perspective of a second secretary pursuing his hobby at taxpayer expense. If you look at what we as an embassy could do in terms of what embassies normally do, which is the conduct of diplomatic relations and foreign affairs for your government, our relationship with the GDR was a second-order offshoot of our relationships with the Federal Republic and the Soviet Union.

Q: What did Otho Eskin do?

MERRY: Otho was my boss in the Political Section, and he was great, an ideal boss for an independent young colleague. Otho was very protective and supportive of my role as “explorer”, which many another boss might not have been. I found him a very wise and witty person whose advice I valued greatly. I consider myself blessed to have had him as my senior during those years. In his job, he had enough to do because this was a time when we were really trying—hoping, but at least trying—to get some progress on a number of issues: claims issues, trade issues, and unfortunately, I think we went all the way to the end of the GDR and never really got a hell of a lot done on any of those. But, as anybody who's been involved in diplomacy knows, just because you're not accomplishing very much doesn't mean you don't burn up a lot of time and effort in the process.

I should also mention Sol Polansky, the deputy chief of mission, who was very supportive and brought a perspective of someone who had served in Moscow, where I wanted to go. I must say that both Sol and Otho were important for me in that they shielded me and my work from our ambassador, who was rather skeptical about my establishing contacts outside the official world. He would, I think, have limited our activities to GDR officialdom and to local “authorized” people, but I managed to get away with a lot because Otho and Sol understood the importance of reaching out. I suspect they did not pass on just how active I was. I think they both remembered

life as a junior officer and appreciated that low rank has its compensations. I also got critical support from Washington in the person of James Goodby, whom I had known at USNATO and who was deputy assistant secretary in the European bureau at the time. Goodby evidently knew there were tensions within the embassy in Berlin, and he wrote to the ambassador praising some of my reporting. This made all the difference for me, as my work became “valuable” in the ambassador's eyes, in giving his post visibility in Washington. I doubt this visibility went much beyond Goodby, but kudos from his level were a godsend in giving me the freedom to get on with my job. I must admit that I had the most interesting, the most personally enjoyable, job in the embassy.

Q: I assume you went to Dresden.

MERRY: Oh, of course I did. Frequently.

Q: Did you get any reaction to what happened in Dresden during...

MERRY: Not only did I go to Dresden frequently, sometimes, in fact, I just went down for the day. I could catch a train from Ostbahnhof (East Railway Station) that would get me into Dresden 15 minutes before the museums opened, and I got another train at six o'clock that got me home at eight-thirty. So I even remember the schedule, I did it so often. In both my years, I went down for the anniversary of the bombing in mid-February, for the commemorative service and concert. I would say there wasn't any real hostility. This was a time when East Germany and Germans in general were still very quiet about trying to claim victimhood. The official East German line was that the bombing of Dresden was a war crime by the British and the Americans. When I talked to people in Dresden, they tended to take more the view that it was a great tragedy. I knew two older women who had survived the bombing, and they looked back on it as a tragedy rather than a crime. I was asked a number of times by different people, not just in Dresden, why the city had been bombed, because of all of the different conspiracy theories. I said that, by early 1945, the Allies had thousands of bombers, and hundreds of thousands of air crew, and the British and the American governments had devoted very large proportions of their total war effort to creating this destructive mechanism, so they could not just not use it. And we were running out of targets, among other things.

I would say there was a gap between the official East German government position, which was the bombing of Dresden was a war crime by the Western Allies, and the recognition most East Germans had, which was that yes, it's a terrible tragedy and we don't understand it, but look at all the destruction that our allies, the Soviets, did. One of the most interesting books published in East Germany during the time I was there—which was a very limited edition, it was hard for me to get a copy, I got it through contacts—was a very detailed two-volume inventory of the physical destruction that had taken place within the territory of the GDR during the war, and exactly when it had happened. Some was from British and American bombing, but a lot more was from fighting, and the fighting was overwhelmingly by the Soviet forces fighting their way into the Third Reich.

Both years when I went down to Dresden on the anniversary of the bombing for the commemoration, I was the only Western diplomat who did. I was not there in an official

capacity, was not a representative, just there as a person. I didn't encounter any hostility. It was a very solemn occasion in those days. There was always a concert. The first year it was Beethoven's Missa Solemnis. The second year was in the Kreuzkirche; it was Brahms's German Requiem, which could have been written for Dresden. Afterwards all the church bells in the city would ring during the period the bombs had fallen, and I would walk entirely alone through the cold streets and squares and embankments of that beautiful city. It was a very, very solemn event, the commemoration, and very moving for me.

Q: It wasn't a rabbleroising?

MERRY: No, the contrary. The kind of thing you get now, Neo-Nazis with the slogan that "Auschwitz plus Dresden equals zero," no, they never had that in those days. People in the GDR in the '70s, were—I wouldn't say resigned to their lot, but they were conscious of how narrow were the parameters of their lives. They all recognized why the map of Europe was the way it was. It was because Germany started a war and lost.

Recalling Dresden reminds me how cultural events could often be a point of entry to understanding the society. I knew a number of writers and attended openings of new plays that had a political content. Performances in cabarets or even the opera often carried a political undertone. I recall attending a production of the play Accidental Death of an Anarchist by the Italian Communist playwright Dario Fo. The play is a satire about Western societies, but the audience saw it in terms of East Germany, as a portrayal of the idiocy of officialdom in their own country; in fact, I do not think I have ever been in an audience which laughed so hard, or that I ever laughed so hard in a theater. I was with a couple of young friends, and we all saw the play as a send up of East Germany. But, because the author was a respected Italian communist, it could be produced.

Unlike the Soviet Union, where spiritual music was rarely performed in a concert environment, the GDR took great pride in supporting world-class ensembles to perform the passions and cantatas of Bach. I heard both passions in the Thomas Church in Leipzig at Easter in superb performances. East Berlin had two fine opera houses, plus lots of theater. Unlike today, there was little attempt to restage a traditional work to make it more "relevant." For example, the hyper-nationalist speech by Hans Sachs at the end of Wagner's Meistersinger was performed straight, without any gloss, though I must say it caused a bit of a stir among the audience.

In contrast, however, there is an interesting bit of history about the opera Fidelio in East Germany. This is Beethoven's only opera, about freedom, and the first half ends with the famous chorus of prisoners who sing about their dream of freedom returning. I was told the first performance in East Berlin after the Wall went up led to an actual riot in the opera house, so it was taken off the repertoire for some time. However, you cannot be a respectable German opera house and not perform Beethoven's only opera, which Hitler hated. So, they started performing it at the State Opera with the prisoners' chorus removed for some years. By the time I arrived, the production was complete – it was a very fine production, in fact, and the prisoners' chorus left much of the audience in tears – but an East German friend had told me the authorities kept a squad of riot police in back of the opera house during the performance, just in case. I was a bit skeptical of that, but during the intermission the first time I saw Fidelio in East Berlin, I went out

and looked around. It took me awhile to find them, because they were in a truck in the courtyard of a nearby building and, when I pulled open the canvas flap in back, there were a dozen riot cops in full gear. Thereafter, whenever Fidelio was on the playbill, I would drop by to check if the riot cops were present; they always were. That says a lot about the attitude of the regime toward its population and toward the uses and dangers of culture. It is also the kind of experience and knowledge you only gain by living in a place.

The cultural life of West Berlin was also, of course, open to me in all its richness. By an odd chance, I got to know the great conductor Erich Leinsdorf, when he was visiting West Berlin for some guest appearances. A mutual friend told me he wanted to visit East Berlin, so I escorted him, his wife and another friend around the east, took them to museums and to lunch – for me, very much a pleasure and privilege. Then, he invited me to be his guest at both a concert and the opera in West Berlin. It turned out he was very appreciative of the Foreign Service in general, and he later invited me to performances in Washington and New York, and to their apartment on Fifth Avenue. I was fairly overwhelmed, but delighted. This is the kind of special treat that life in the Foreign Service can bring.

Q: I am just concerned here, for people who want to go back to archives, the two interesting movies that came out, was it Listening to Others? Was that it?

MERRY: The Lives of Others.

Q: The Lives of Others, about the Stasi, and the other one was a comedy, Goodbye Lenin.

MERRY: They're both quite interesting. I have discussed both of those films with East German friends, and one of the things about The Lives of Others is that East Germans tend to say it's a very fine motion picture, it's very powerful, but it couldn't actually have happened like that. The notion of a Stasi officer being in a position where he could take mercy on one of his subjects just couldn't have happened, the officer would not have had the freedom of action. I think that's probably the truth. The films showed East Germany as it was later on, in the late '80s. I was seeing East Germany earlier when I could see the seeds, some of the buds, for what came to full flower a decade on, particularly the role of dissidents and opposition within the church, and the growing sense people had of the illegitimacy of much of their political system. But don't forget that East Germany was, by the standards of the socialist bloc, a success story economically. It might not have had the best life style, but it had the highest standard of living in the Eastern bloc.

Q: This brings up the question, in our economic section, was anybody pointing out that there's really, we talked about how successful East Germany was, but basically when it came time to take it over, we found that most of it wasn't worth a pile of dung, practically.

MERRY: That's something we'll come to in a few years, when I was on the German desk, when we had a superb economic reporting officer in East Berlin, who was informing Washington in great detail about the extent to which the East Germany economy in the mid-'80s was falling to pieces. Unfortunately only a couple of people in Washington actually bothered to read these reports, myself being one of them. But in the late '70s, East Germany as an economy was, to some degree, at its apogee. The horrible pollution hadn't become really intolerable; the

infrastructure wasn't yet falling to pieces. In the late '70s, East Germany had recovered from the war and the immediate post-war period, had emerged from the really grey tedium of the Ulbricht period, and was really not such a bad place to live. Most East Germans in the late '70s were looking back on the way things had been five, 10, 15 years earlier, and it had, in many respects, made a lot of progress, and people lived much better.

They certainly had higher standards of living than did other people in the bloc and they knew it. What they didn't have, of course, was something that was fairly fundamental, which is the ability to travel very much outside of their own country, and that was a huge inhibition. But if you looked at what was available in shops and stores, within the buying power of average people, this was not a developing country. This was a semi-developed country, and in some respects, everything is a matter of comparison. I've told an East German friend of mine, who later went to live in Britain, that in the late '70s, average restaurant food—not top quality, but average restaurant food in East Germany—may have been better than average restaurant food in England, because average restaurant food in England was so ghastly. An average café in the GDR in the late '70s was certainly a more pleasant experience than going to an average café in the UK.

Q: I'll tell you, I was with our—I can't remember—Allied or occupation troops in Germany in the early '50s, and going to a German restaurant was a delight. I went on leave to Great Britain and my God.

MERRY: My God, yes.

Q: I'm thinking this is probably a good place to stop. We'll pick this up, the next time, where are you off to?

MERRY: Well, we might talk a little bit more about East Germany.

Q: All right. Can you think of something you'd like to talk about? We'll put it here and we'll pick it up.

MERRY: I think one of the things I would say, looking back on it, is that my two years in East Germany were not the most important for me professionally. Either of my Moscow assignments were more important in terms of the substance and content of what I was doing. But my two years in East Germany, in personal terms, were probably the most important of my entire Foreign Service life.

Q: What you've described is a very good view of a country at a particular time. For an historian, I think this is probably going to be very valuable.

MERRY: What made it so important to me are the personal relationships. There is no country I have been in where I developed more and more important personal friendships than I did in East Germany, and these are personal friendships which were not just at that time, but continue now to this day. I still have some personal friendships from Russia, from Greece, but my years in East Germany, in terms of human relationships—and this would surprise most people who would think, how could you get to know people that well in East Germany? In terms of human

relationships, my two years in East Germany were probably the most important of my adult life.

ROGER SCHRADER
Labor Officer
Bonn (1977-1980)

Roger Schrader has also served in New Zealand and The United Kingdom. He was interviewed on June 18, 1991 by Herbert Weiner.

SCHRADER: This is Roger Schrader continuing. I would just like to mention, Herb, one particular experience that I had in my career as a labor officer and that was at the Embassy in Bonn from 1977 to 1980. It was my experience during that time as Labor Attaché and subsequently as Labor Counselor that the interest of the Embassy from the Ambassador on down was at best a kind of peripheral recognition that it was something that was there and someone ought to pay some kind of attention to it. My earliest recollection of arriving at the Embassy in Bonn and my first meeting with the Political Counselor was his telling me, "I really don't care what you do in the labor field. Just make sure that George Meany never calls up the Ambassador and complains about something. Other than that you can do whatever you want and whatever you think you should be doing." This to me was kind of an unusual beginning, but I think in retrospect it summed up the fact that substantively the Embassy's focus was on other issues in which they saw labor playing at best a marginal role. For example the two biggest issues that the Embassy considered significant in terms of American foreign policy interests were: number one, the installation of Pershing Two rockets into the front line states and, two, offset agreements with the Government of the Federal Republic on charges for troop costs of the American army there. And beyond these two major issues everything else was pretty marginal and subsidiary. It did not mean that there was not a recognition that these issues were intertwined also with the attitudes of the opposition party, the Social Democrats, at that time, but there was little recognition that this had a play to any great degree in the trade unions. This was in contrast incidentally to the experience that I had in Britain (and I am sure Herb has some comments along this line too), that moving there in 1980 - there the issue of cruise missiles and Pershing Two's was becoming an even greater issue than it had been in Bonn in earlier years. The attitude of the trade unions was considered very important to the Embassy in London, I suppose in large part because the trade unions were such an integral part of the Labor Party as opposed to the situation in the Federal Republic where although the majority of trade unions officials were staunch supporters of the Social Democratic Party there was no constitutional tie in between the two groups. On the contrary the German constitution stated that the trade unions were a neutral force as far as partisan politics were concerned. But in Britain it was quite different, and it was quite openly understood that important trade unions were partisans of the Labor Party, and in this particular issue with regard to the placement of cruise missiles and Pershing Two's on the continent labor political opposition was very strong, and many trade unions were taking leading roles in opposition to this policy which the Conservative Government of Margaret Thatcher was strongly supporting. So in this context the element of trade unions was an issue of major importance; and for the Embassy, it was recognized as being quite important.

J. MICHAEL SPRINGMANN
Economic/Political Officer
Stuttgart (1977-1980)

J. Michael Springmann was born in Washington, DC and attended Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. He received a master's degree from Catholic University and joined the Foreign Service in 1967. He began his career in the Department of Commerce and later served overseas in Germany, India, and Saudi Arabia. Mr. Springmann was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1994.

SPRINGMANN: In 1977, I was assigned to the Consulate General in Stuttgart. I had known Betty Neuhart who was in personnel at that time in the Office of International Marketing, and she got me the assignment. It was originally a two year assignment, and I asked for a third year extension because, as it turned out, everybody was leaving, including me, and they would have nobody for continuity in the section.

I was one of three economic officers in the section. I had absolutely no training before leaving the US. Consulate General. They originally had one officer, and then they moved it up to two. I think due to Roy Carlson's activities, and with Frank Schmelzer's help, they got a third position in there. It was basically commercial and economic work, although the emphasis from the Embassy was commercial work at the expense of economic reporting.

Walt Jenkins was the Consul General. He was there for about my first year, and then the next guy through was Bill Miller who had spent a lot of time in France, and Francophone Africa.

I must say that I was not accepted at all that well. I was sort of the guy from Commerce, and was kind of left to learn the job on his own, although I got a little bit of help from Frank Schmelzer and some of the locals.

I basically put on mini versions of trade shows. We would have something called Sprechtag, (business information days which had been running before I got there). We would invite as many German firms as we could on a given theme to a meeting with people from the commercial section at one of the German Chambers of Commerce in our consular district. And while we were there they would have meetings with one of the local staff, and one of the American commercial officers to talk about what we could do for them. We could find them American business partners, investment partners. We didn't promote reverse exports and reverse investments but if it was a case of getting somebody latched up with an American company in some fashion or other, we kind of looked the other way, and let them talk about it. And maybe give them a couple hints on who to see, and how to do it.

At this time there was a major push by German businesses to invest in the United States, partly for economic reasons. They were beginning to see themselves getting priced out of world markets unless they could produce more cheaply in the United States. There was also the fear of

galloping socialism in Germany. Baden-Wurttemberg was the stronghold of small family run companies which hated the then-Social Democratic government of Germany with a passion.

The SPD oushed such policies such as a union representative on business things Mitbestimmung (works council). Actually they worked pretty well and is one of the reasons why German companies are so efficient, I think. The German business men hated it when it was jammed down their throats. But when I was back the second time, I was told by Hans-Peter Stihl, of the tool, chain saw, lawn mower company, that he insisted that they have a works representative on the board when they set up their subsidiary in Hampton, Virginia. He told the American manager of the company that, not only would he install the council, but he would also listen to them. He said as a result of this the American plant is as efficient as anything in Germany, or anywhere else in the Stihl holdings worldwide. And this was despite the differences in national culture and the wide ethnic make up of the U.S. plant.

The major problem was the American penchant for making junk and selling it at inflated prices. I was told that German banks would lend on a written order for almost any country in the world, except for something from the United States. The Americans would agree to ship top quality merchandise, and the foreign business would end up with garbage, sometimes literally and figuratively. There was lack of quality control, and service -- main drawbacks to American exports. Plus the fact that Americans didn't really want to sell abroad.

Occasionally they would have inspection clauses put into the contract. The independent evaluator would see this and say this meets German specs, or the company's requirements, or it doesn't. Then they would get into this wrangling about who shipped what, and why they couldn't meet the quality specified.

It did not seem to have any affect on American firms. When we would deal with companies that came to us directly, we would make a big point of saying the German market demands high quality and delivery. For the most part we would deal with generally good sized companies, and only rarely did we get a small firm new to export. On occasion even those companies would ship shoddy goods, but I can't give you specific examples. The smaller the firm in general, the bigger the problem.

The German competitors did not cause any difficulty, trying to put obstacles in the way of having American firms do it, using political, or social, or economic means to block American goods -- at least on this first tour. But by my second time around I was told by one of the locals who dealt with automotive products that in his opinion the German auto manufacturers, principally Daimler Benz, had great influence with the south German economy, and the south German government, particularly in Baden Wuerttemberg, Daimler's headquarters. He claimed that they would put up more restrictions there to American automobiles being sold, than any other part of the country. Certainly, you seldom saw an American car (unless it belonged to a GI), although there were any number of French or Italian vehicles on the street. I could never get the Consul General to let me look into this. He was more opposed to stirring up the waters and possibly offending the Germans than in doing his job.

The trade pattern was basically what it is now, with Germans exporting to the U.S. --

transportation goods, cars, airplanes, things like that, high tech electronics, sophisticated machine tools, and very little consumer goods, except for novelty items like bumper stickers, and stuff like that.

My typical day would usually start with slugging my way through the cable traffic that came through, and the letters that came through. Occasionally I would go out and interview people for reports, and work with the local staff in setting up the next Sprechtag.

I did not get involved directly with many trade complaints. They split the trade complaints between the tourist that gets screwed, and the actual business complaint. The tourist goes to the consular section, and the business goes to the economic-commercial section. We didn't really have that many. There were generally just a handful, I don't think there were half a dozen in my five years in Germany that I knew of.

I found the German equivalent to American Chambers of Commerce, and other organizations for industry to be very good. They were very effective, very knowledgeable, and very hard working and outgoing, and very much interested in international cooperation.

I found that the Foreign Service nationals were really the heart and soul of the whole operation. That is a story in itself. When I was there you had pretty much the old guard still in control in the Consulate. These were people who were hired right at the end of the war, and gradually died or retired in the 70s and 80s. In the section were Carl Tietz, who retired when I was there in the late 70s, and Waltraut Enzmann, who left the day I joined the Foreign Service (September 1986). I had just missed another long serving woman who had retired right before I got there. Well Frank Schmelzer told the story of Carl Tietz. He had asked for something on Monday which he thought would take Tietz most of the week to do, and the project was on his desk either that afternoon or first thing the next morning. It took Frank a while to grasp what had been done because he couldn't relate it to the speed with which it had been accomplished. He had thought Tietz had given him something else, rather than completing the project lightning-fast and in perfect order. Enzmann was the same way although the junior secretaries, who had been there a couple of years, said that Enzmann wasn't as good as her predecessor. And as I went through, some of them would die, and retire, and it bothered a lot of the Americans, at least the ones who were concerned about doing their job properly. (Others couldn't handle efficient, confident, self-assured staff and exulted in each departure because they had an opportunity to hire a compliant, complaisant Third-Country National instead.) It was beginning to bother me, and I was talking about what was going to happen in five years when these people would all eventually die or retire. I came back in time to see what had happened. And was not pleased.

I came back between 1989 and 1991. In some ways, the change in local staff and the attitude of the Foreign Service was foreshadowed during my last two years in Stuttgart (1978-79) on the first tour. They had hired a Pakistani, who along with his brother was married to a German national. Supposedly, he had been put on at the Consulate to work in the mail room and tote heavy pouches. The communicator was a woman with emphysema, and could not exert herself. But, he kept pushing to move onward and upward because he had studied commercial and business subjects in all these trade schools in Pakistan and in Germany. Somehow, despite Frank Schmelzer's claimed intense opposition, the Pakistani was eventually put into the commercial

section -- on a "trial basis". Frank didn't talk about it then, but now he says that the deal was forced down his throat by Walt Jenkins, the Consul General. As I learned from later experience in India, the Pakistani was a good example of a fairly capable local from the Subcontinent, but in comparison to the German FSNs, it was not unlike like hiring somebody off the street with a grade school education to do brain surgery. He couldn't do the job, was continually complaining about how he was being discriminated against by the Germans because his skin was dark. The Germans for their part were furious at having this guy forced on them by the Americans, and disrupting the work of what had been a smoothly functioning section which had been producing fantastic amounts of truly excellent work. Although there on a trial basis, the Pakistani stayed on after Frank left and the new section chief, Jack Carle came in, and kept the Pakistani. One commercial officer who departed post while I was there, apparently had briefed his successor, a guy named Fernandez, a Latin American lawyer. Upon his arrival, Fernandez immediately sided with the Pakistani and worked to keep him and advance him. Eventually two crackjack female German secretaries left because of this. They said they couldn't put up with blatant discrimination, sexual harassment, and constant interference with their work. I saw this coming, and tried to get something done, and failed, despite talking to the new Consul General repeatedly. The Pakistani was eventually fired for not coming to work for three months. In the meantime it cost us a great deal of harmony, a great deal of goodwill, and two good people.

On my second assignment, I found that the FSNs worked for only a few years before moving on. They were no longer interested in the prestige of working for diplomats, did not take pride in their work, and seemed to have little regard for each other, their clients, or the American staff. In some instances, I saw what appeared to be blatant anti-American attitudes and behavior. Certainly, I was told by some FSNs who were still there on my second tour that a number of the local staff, particularly in the Administrative Section, were anti-American.

This situation was compounded by the blunders of the FSOs. Seriously incompetent local staff was kept on (and even promoted) at the expense of hard-working Germans who dealt with Americans as equals. A Turkish girl whose attitude was "I won't work and you can't make me" was placed in charge of the Consulate's computers and a German girl who repeatedly violated travel regulations was kept while a pro-American German woman was fired (after nearly 20 years with the Consulate). Ostensibly, she had a substance abuse problem but, in reality, she questioned her supervisor's decisions. (At that time, one of the Administrative Officers in Stuttgart was such an alcoholic that he once had himself medically-evacuated -- so I was told by a CIA case officer -- for cirrhosis of the liver. He got several more assignments and was permitted to retire.)

The Germans had regional fairs that we would go to and either try to take space, or just walk about talking to local companies. There was nothing on the order of Frankfurt, or some of the big electronic shows in Munich. There were things like heating, ventilating, and air conditioning events, and they would have a wine show. They would have a camping and leisure-time activities show. Occasionally the Consulate would take a booth and do things like issuing visas on the spot to people.

As I said before, American firms showed very little interest in German markets. The best explanation was the one Waltraut Enzmann came up with, and I really think it was valid. She

talked about her travels in the U.S., meeting with local companies, going to Commerce field offices. She found that if a company was selling to five states now and figured in the next couple of years they could sell to eight states, they figured they would be doing great. They had absolutely no interest in selling to Germany where you had to deal in another language, metric specifications, letters of credit, and that kind of stuff. I think the figures still are what they were then. Twenty or so American companies do two-thirds or more of American exports.

VLADIMIR LEHOVICH
Chief Internal Political Unit; Political Section
Bonn (1977-1980)

Vladimir Lehovich was born in New York in 1939 and received his Bachelor's Degree from Harvard University 1961. He was positioned in Saigon, Brussels, Bonn and Vienna. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed Lehovich on March 25, 1997.

Q: In '77, the Carter administration came in. It was a somewhat different ball game. Where did you go?

LEHOVICH: This is a good shift. I went off to Germany in mid-1977 and stayed there until late 1980 sometime.

Q: Where did you go in Germany?

LEHOVICH: I was in Bonn. I had an absolutely wonderful series of jobs in Bonn. I was first the head of our little internal political unit. What does that mean? That means basically the folks who were supposed to deal with political parties and the parliament. There were a couple of officers, two of us, doing that. We had what we considered to be the best job in the embassy with the exception perhaps of the ambassador, but not necessarily. We had to read the newspapers in the morning instead of reading a bunch of telegrams... put our feet up on the table, look at the newspapers, figure out what we were going to do that day. The way we decided we were going to do our work is that whatever was the hot issue between America and Germany or between America and Europe was what we were going to work on. It didn't have to be a traditional political issue. It could be absolutely anything. So, we wound up working on a lot of things and an awful lot of it had to do with the hot topic of theater nuclear forces. Some of it had to do with the neutron bomb. Some of it had to do with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the boycott of the Moscow Olympics, a number of things like this - whatever was the hot issue, we would work on and work on it with the political parties and with members of the Parliament. So, it was a very good way to look at American relations with that country because it determined what we did, I think, more than anyone else in the embassy except the ambassador at that time. After that, I was the number two in the Political Section for a year. It was a very large political section that sort of ran itself. So, I continued pretty much doing the same stuff that I had before. I would say a key impression in that period was what the Carter administration looked and felt like in a major American allied capital. It was enormously frustrating.

Q: To set this up, in the first place, could you tell me what the political situation was at this particular time and who was our ambassador and then we'll go? I think this is one of these issues, the relations between Carter and Germany, not high points, but probably low points, of the Carter administration in foreign affairs.

LEHOVICH: The situation in Germany politically was a Helmut Schmidt government coalition led by Chancellor Schmidt with the minority coalition partners being the Liberals, led by Mr. Genscher. It's worth pointing out that Schmidt, I still think, is one of the most gifted post-war leaders anywhere in the world, a very intelligent, sober, dedicated individual, a brilliant man, a very good politician, and a Social Democrat who was so moderate and so gifted as an economist and as an economic thinker that one couldn't draw the line between the centrist Social Democrat and the conservative in Helmut Schmidt. He was like Harold Wilson in England, except perhaps even more so. Schmidt was remarkably comfortable with all aspects of economics. I think his heroes at that time were good American economic managers. He was also a guy who was surprisingly steeped in American political philosophy. Here is an example. I was one day at a 13-hour parliamentary session in the Bundestag, where Schmidt had to be present for most of the day. It was a session where he had to speak on and off for probably three or four hours during the day. It was done without notes. These were people who were very good at doing that.

At one point, Schmidt gets up and answers a group of people from the left part of the parliament on some issue. He says, "I want to quote what I was reading last night, which was Federalist Paper such and such." Everyone in the room knows he's talking about the Federalist Papers. Fascinating thing. This isn't on "Candid Camera." This is a discussion that nobody remembers later. The press doesn't take note of it. As far as the participants are concerned, there is no one from another country who is or isn't there. To have the Chancellor of Germany get up and extemporize about his readings in his leisure time of the Federalist Papers and give a terrific discussion of why there shouldn't be over centralization somewhere, I thought, was absolutely brilliant. He was that kind of a guy, very pro-American in a profound sense, because he thought America was the foundation of the free world and, like any German politician, was very conscious of the powerful Soviet presence in Europe at that time.

So, we had the Schmidt government. Schmidt, incidentally, was very high on Gerald Ford because Ford was a man of enormous common sense and no pretenses. Our ambassador was Walter Stoessel and was one of the premier diplomats of our time, who at various times of his career was ambassador in Poland and Russia and elsewhere, and Assistant Secretary for Europe. Stoessel was very gifted in dealing with the Germans.

That was the background against which the atmospherics took place between the Carter administration and Europe in general. In Germany, you could get as good a sense for this as anywhere else. The atmospherics began badly and got worse and worse and worse. A lot of it was remarks, a lot of it casual remarks, which would be made in Washington inconsiderately at the expense of countries which were being criticized. A lot of it was surprise issues being introduced in international forums, NATO being one example. But the biggest examples would come in dealings with the East and on security matters, which were very often life-critical matters in Europe, certainly life-critical matters in a place like Germany, which was divided and

had to have three occupying powers for its own security - three occupying powers in Berlin - and major ground and air forces of America, Britain, and France within West Germany.

Let me sketch the neutron bomb story because this was the biggest single debacle in US-German, US-European relations at that time, and I think it was a catastrophe, very badly handled by Carter personally. The neutron bomb story was this. The US had led within NATO a campaign to introduce a field weapon that would not destroy property and which, through radiation, would kill people, but the radiation effects would dissipate after a short time. Basically, a battlefield use weapon, and one that could particularly be used against a tank invasion, but which would not destroy a whole chunk of countryside and would not contaminate it with long-lasting radioactivity. The opposition to the neutron bomb was very strong in Europe and fairly strong in America. Quite understandably, in Germany, it was a very emotional issue because that's, of course, exactly where it was going to be used. It was going to be used in the Fulda Gap in the event of a tank invasion - a perfectly logical idea, though not very brilliant politically. But, a perfectly logical idea. The opposition to it was not unreasoned. There was strong opposition. It got terrifically emotional, an emotional boil-over throughout Europe. It also got fairly emotional in America. And it absolutely dominated the political landscape in Germany.

Q: If I recall, it was also sort of considered a capitalist weapon. Could you explain that?

LEHOVICH: It was called "the weapon that kills people, but not property." That type of thing. One of the first strong leading voices in Germany that spoke out against it was Egon Bahr. Egon Bahr was a mysterious and, to some, rather suspicious, senior political figure of the SPD, who was anxious to build bridges to the East and to facilitate the closest ties possible with East Germany. Bahr began the discussion in Germany by calling this neutron bomb project a "Perversion of Thinking," (literally. "Eine Perversion des Denkens"). What the perversion of thinking means, of course, is that the Americans are the guys who are thinking the perverted thoughts because they are thinking about our property and our lives, our European property and lives. That was some of the early discussion. As I say, it got more intense. The British were supporting us. The French, too, since the French on nuclear issues tend to be very tough folks. But it was basically the US carrying this subject.

The US made an almost ultimatum-like issue out of this thing with other countries in terms of getting NATO support for it. The most difficult support, key support, was German support. The debate was strongest and most emotional in Germany, for very understandable reasons. Schmidt hated this damn thing. It was ruining him. He felt it was the kind of thing that could get him out of office fairly easily, collapse a government. That's why the neuron bomb venture wasn't a brilliant political idea. But at one point Schmidt, despite his hesitations, basically said, "All right, I'll deliver this. I will deliver German support for it." He said that to the US and he said that to others. It put him in an enormously difficult situation. For months and months, he had to manage personally getting Germany politically to accept NATO approval of this weapon, which meant the weapon would go into Germany. At really great political cost, he did this. He did it because, at every step, every couple of weeks, there would be a personal message from President Carter about it, a message of concern saying, "I heard that things aren't going well" or a message saying, "We're watching what you're doing and we're very worried that agreement in Germany may fall apart on this." There were messages all the time, first-person messages, and constant pressure

coming personally the American President. We knew that because we were in the middle of this intense communication. It was getting really quite unpleasant.

Then, of course, what happened, the reason this thing was such a catastrophe, was that after it was approved by NATO and after a very bloody political battle was more or less over in Germany, Carter decided that it was an immoral weapon. He basically had one of these Pauline conversions on the thing. I'm speaking of St. Paul's epiphany. Well, Jimmy had an epiphany, too. He had a feeling that it was a bad thing which came on him very suddenly. He went and said, "No."

Q: This wasn't where he talked to his daughter?

LEHOVICH: I wish I could remember that. In any case, I can't remember a bigger catastrophe.

Q: Was this announced?

LEHOVICH: This became public. Whether there was a few hours advance warning to NATO partners or not, I don't remember. But it came within about a day, the whole thing. It was all very sudden. It didn't come within about a day after the approval of the neutron bomb in NATO, but it came pretty soon afterwards. The net result of this was that in a campaign which had gone on for months and months, was very bloody, and was marked by this almost petty personal nagging, where the President would be checking up on the Europeans and sending them messages saying, "I'm worried about what you may do tomorrow-" (We had to deliver a message once saying "I'm worried about the meeting you're having tomorrow with the party leadership. I'm worried that they may not agree on this thing. Do you know how important this is?") After months of this type of thing, suddenly, the President changes course. I think that was one of the big lows in US-European relations in the post-war period.

Q: What was the reaction in the embassy in the Political Section however you heard about this? I want to get this at the personal level.

LEHOVICH: There is a very interesting phenomenon which happens with a professional diplomat who works overseas and who is engaged in the activities of his country. That phenomenon is that we couldn't say anything. We were absolutely shocked. On the other hand, our discipline and our professionalism kept us from criticizing what had happened. I'll get into this a little later because it has to do with the change that a number of people had when they came back to America afterwards, a very sudden change. But the way it felt personally was that there was total disbelief. The first thing that I think people wanted to do who were engaged in active political contacts in Germany was to lay low. We didn't want to see anyone that day. Of course, we had to. But one didn't want to see anyone for quite a while because it was just too grotesque, the whole thing. I was going to say it was too embarrassing. That's not the right word for it. It's grotesque. We were sort of professionally denying ourselves any option to criticize the thing or to say that it stinks or is idiotic or this or that. We just didn't say anything about it. It really was one of the times that I have taken a seemingly abstract issue very personally. A number of us felt that way because we had invested so much time in this thing without thinking it was a great idea. It was just something that had to be done. With Germans like Helmut Schmidt

and the scores and scores of others, the reaction was understated, perhaps for the same reasons, and it was that Carter was finished.

Q: Was there a feeling both within the embassy and people that Carter was sort of a write-off or "We've got to be through this period" or "This man is not a serious..."

LEHOVICH: There would have been, Stu, if we hadn't been overseas. When one is overseas, one reacts differently to these things. I've had that several times now. I'll tell you what happened when I got back to the US, which was in the last year of the Carter administration. It happened to my wife; it happened to me; it happened to a number of other people who came back from overseas. We were so anxious to vote against that guy, suddenly it all came out. But first, we had to return from an overseas duty. I say that because I think the Foreign Service professional maintains a great deal of loyalty - to the point of actually clouding totally impartial judgement. Without philosophizing too much, Stu, I don't ever want someone representing America overseas who does nothing but think totally impartial thoughts. I don't want someone like that. I want a committed professional over there. To make a long story short, it was quite a catastrophe.

Q: What happened afterwards? Did you find the SPD delegates going around, and Bundestag people?

LEHOVICH: The psychology of the thing is that the folks on the center-right, who were willing to support this venture from the beginning were dismayed. But much worse were the folks from the center-left and left, who had supported it because party loyalty demanded it. They didn't like the idea, but they wound up voting for it and supporting it. No, they didn't say much about it. It was pretty obvious.

Q: At this time, I was in South Korea. There was a concern with the Carter administration. They were talking about pulling troops out of South Korea, which again would have been a disaster. Was there a concern about the seriousness of American commitment to the defense of Europe?

LEHOVICH: There was a concern about whether America understood. "America" in this case means the White House leadership, Jimmy Carter, the "Georgia Mafia", those folks. Some of this had to trickle over to the Secretary of State. There was just no way for that not to happen. It was on his watch. There was concern about whether the Carter White House understood what was going on in the world, whether they had a real appreciation of the Soviets. Don't forget that the neutron bomb was one story. What you just mentioned in Korea wasn't being lost on anyone. The notion of pulling American forces out of Korea at that time was just crazy. It was crazy! Of course, in Europe, everyone was concerned about it who worried about these things. A third item, which was part of the important background noise, was Carter's speech early on in the administration at Wake Forest. That was the one in which he warned the American people against an "inordinate fear" of communism. Now, for a President to begin his foreign policy term by warning the American people against an inordinate fear of communism is disturbing. It's disturbing today. The Russian leadership wouldn't understand it today. A lot of people didn't understand it in the mid-1970's. This was part of the background. So, Stu, the big concern was whether the Carter White House had a real mental map of the world, where there were problems, where there weren't, where there were allies. A second level of concern is how they dealt with

their friends and partners, which appeared to be pretty bad in Korea or in Europe. A third level was the role of America as world leader, particularly in the NATO alliance, but also in economic issues. We were having very selfish economic laws at this time. We were also having very strained relations with a lot of countries over human rights. We were picking a lot of issues, we were picking a lot of fights, on human rights. We were picking a lot of quarrels in Eastern Europe and with the Soviet Union at a time when there was enough of a plate of quarrels without these things. There were very big questions about the ability of the US to lead in the world. I would say it was the low point since 1945, since the death of Roosevelt. I can't think of a time after that when the US looked as dumb and incompetent for any reason in international affairs as during the Carter administration. It was this complex of things.

Q: At your level- Obviously, you're sitting around either at your apartment or in a bierstube or what have you, sitting down with political leaders, Bundestag members, etc. Did they ever at a certain point when you were sort of in your relaxing state, say, "What the hell is making this guy go" or something like that? Was this an undercurrent?

LEHOVICH: It was a constant undercurrent. The only thing that kept it from getting to be a dominant, constant and unbearable theme of discussion was good manners. It was just rude to sit with a nice American character over there who works for this guy and tell him again what a jerk he is because the guy looked at you with such pain the first time you told him he was a jerk. So, it was a constant undertow. It was a very embarrassing time. I don't embarrass easily overseas when I represent the U. S. and I kind of pride myself on never showing it. I didn't then, I might say, but it was mighty embarrassing. It was the low point in American leadership during my entire experience in the government.

Q: Carter had another one of his conversions in December of '79 when this benign Soviet empire all of a sudden, really quite irrationally, moved into Afghanistan.

LEHOVICH: The disturbing thing here, you're getting at the conversion part of it. Let me just elaborate on that. The embarrassing thing with the invasion of Afghanistan in December of 1979 was not that the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. That's not an embarrassment for the United States. The embarrassment was that our President was having a love affair with Leonid Brezhnev, albeit I'm glad to say, of a platonic nature. But nonetheless, it had gone to the point where the first kiss that was exchanged between the two, you may recall, was initiated by the American. We watched it. The whole world watched it, the first embrace. Brezhnev wasn't going to embrace Carter. He had been told before. He didn't make the move. The move he started to make was to shake hands. The embrace came from the American side to the embarrassment of everyone in the television age who could watch this damn thing. What I meant by "the love affair" is that Carter personalized the relationship, decided that because one could have a good time with Leonid Brezhnev at whatever social event one did, or a good conversation with him, that Brezhnev was a fine fellow, that he was steering a good policy, that he was in the American interest, that we could do business with him, and all sorts of other things. I don't mind thoughts like that as long as you don't begin to invest your patrimony in these thoughts. Then, when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, Carter took it personally. He was so shocked that he had been betrayed. Do you remember that episode? Do you remember that whole feeling of the shock of betrayal, the conversion? That was the very awkward part of it. Then the US began a campaign to work to

punish the Soviets for the invasion of Afghanistan.

Q: Keep it at the German level.

LEHOVICH: I'm going to get there in a minute because the campaign to punish the Soviets for Afghanistan couldn't involve real things, physical, or even too many economic things. There weren't that many economic sanctions one could do. There wasn't anything physical one could do. One could be angry. One could bitch. One could cancel the Moscow Olympics. That became one of the great ideas. I must say, that was a wonderful idea. That was what brings it to Germany because there were several big East-West issues in the period I was there. Neutron bomb was one. The theater nuclear forces issues was one that was beginning to brew at about this time. The Moscow Olympics was one. Canceling the Olympics in Moscow was an absolutely brilliant idea. It doesn't cost anything. History will not long remember it. And the Russians took it as absolutely the worst thing in the world. It was like being put in the corner in front of the whole world, which, of course, it was. They began an incredible campaign of all the horrors that would befall countries that would join in the boycott. They used a lot of psy war on the West Germans.

Q: When you say "psy war," you mean psychological warfare.

LEHOVICH: Psychological warfare and diplomatic threats, and agents of influence that they had running around all over Germany warning parts of the German spectrum of opinion about the bad things that would happen to relations if the Germans joined the boycott. This was a case where Schmidt again basically agreed to deliver this one politically and did against most of the wishes of his party, although interestingly enough, the far left of the Social Democratic Party at that time decided that the right thing to do was to boycott the Moscow Olympics. I remember, to my astonishment, being asked by one of the far left deputies to visit him at his office. I had no idea why. I thought maybe he wanted to go to America or do something like that. I came to visit him. He was very intense. He said that he thought the appropriate thing to do was to boycott the Moscow Olympics and he wanted me to know that there were a small but probably growing number of people in the Social Democratic Party who thought that way and who were willing to work with us, willing to work basically with the US on that. That was one of the issues that came in the wake of the invasion of Afghanistan.

The other thing that the invasion of Afghanistan did is that it gave all sorts of arms control and disarmament issues a big breather, a big breather in the sense that for a while, at least, nobody wanted to pursue conventional arms control in Europe. It didn't sound interesting after a thing like this. As you recall, the strategic talks continued as if the thing had never happened. The SALT talks continued as if this had never happened. The invasion of Afghanistan pulled NATO together a little bit and gave the far left a bad time, I would say, all over Europe, gave the far left a bad time in Germany. It made it a little easier to be a conservative or a centrist.

Q: Where did the far left in Germany stand? Were they admirers of the Soviet Union or were they running their own course?

LEHOVICH: Germany has a surprisingly centrist political spectrum. The conservatives, the Christian Democrats and Christian Socialists, are not really very far right. The Social Democrats

are a pretty moderate group of socialists and leftists so that the far left in Germany was never anything resembling the far left in some of the other parts of Europe.

Q: I was thinking, the British far left Labor government.

LEHOVICH: No comparison. Here is the point. While the British Labor government was sitting doing nothing except hating the world and scowling at others for decades and decades, the German socialists were running the country very successfully with very wise economic policies and are perfectly capable of running the government right now if they took over. The wonderful thing in Germany is that both of the major political streams are capable of running the country. It made it very easy from an American point of view to do business with these people.

One of the issues, incidentally (This is getting back to one of the quirks of the Carter years.), one of the real dumb things that happened in the Carter years is that some of the Democrats, including the young "Georgia Mafia" crowd that had come to Washington with Carter, decided that in Europe, the socialists were their kind of people, as opposed to centrists or conservatives or the Christian movements. This was a big mistake because this overlooks the whole fact that America can do business with any of these people. It has to. I never really felt a similar move at that time from the Republicans, but I remember folks who came over at that time from the Democratic Party, who were in Germany trying out for size up how to build a bilateral relationship with the Social Democrats. The Clinton White House has been doing some of that as well, for example, in England. I would say that's very short-sighted now, but in the '70's to do that kind of thing in Germany was just extraordinarily short-sighted. And it's still right now as well, especially since we have Helmut Kohl going into his 4th term.

Q: What about the issue of intermediate missiles - the Pershing vs. the SS20? Was that an issue at that time?

LEHOVICH: That was an issue which was heating up at that time and continued.

Q: Could you explain what the issue was?

LEHOVICH: The issue was that NATO in response to a Soviet buildup in medium range weapons had agreed, was in the process of agreeing, to deploy Pershing intermediate range missiles which would be an added force aimed essentially at the Soviet Union. The Soviets really started to wage psychological warfare and rattle sabers. They made an issue out of this which was one of the several big issues that they've ever made. Earlier, they had a big issue about Germany joining NATO; they had a big issue about the Berlin airlift. They've made a certain number of these "the world will end if you do this type of thing" threats and this was one of them. As with the others, what the Soviets opposed was finally done and the world didn't end. But there was an awful lot of anxiety over this. It became a neuralgic issue which again dominated bilateral relations with a whole host of countries in Europe - it certainly did in Germany.

At the American embassy, we were investing a major amount of time on this thing, mainly with the Social Democrats. The Social Democrats on defense were a pretty sophisticated group. The

Defense Minister for a good deal of this time was Georg Leber, a Social Democrat who had the most total and the most emotional interest in keeping NATO as strong as possible for obvious reasons shared by almost all of the German political spectrums. That's why it was such a pleasure to work there. We had, on an issue like this, strong support at the top of the government, the Chancellor, strong support from the politician who was in charge of the Defense Ministry and support from a number of others. But it was a very difficult issue. It's an issue where, in a country like Germany, the American embassy got involved in working with individual politicians, with political groups, with basically sending signals and messages to them, showing up at various sessions and lobbying. No hands-off attitude on an issue like that, nor should there be.

Q: Did you find that your British or French colleagues were doing the same?

LEHOVICH: They certainly were. The British colleagues were working very intensely on it. The French were obviously in favor of it. They had to take a slightly more distant position on it, but were certainly in favor of it. It was a major alliance issue. German support, I think, was pretty strong from the beginning even though it was very controversial in Germany. But it was never a sure thing because, as with the neutron bomb and as with a bunch of other things in the defense and strategic area, when this thing actually happens, it winds up happening in Germany to a very large degree. There were other countries, too, that would host the GLCMs and Pershing Missiles, but Germany would be pivotal..

Q: Germany was the designated battleground.

LEHOVICH: It was the designated battleground.

Q: What about relations with East Germany? What was the status during this '77 to '80 period?

LEHOVICH: Ostpolitik was quiet but was continuing. It wasn't as high profile an issue as it had been under Willy Brandt. One thing that was going on then was the buying out of Germans from East Germany. They were literally bought out for a price tag that was something like \$40,000 a person at that time. That was big money. It was government money. There was a channel that was working on this which was largely a channel between the two Germanies. Parts of this channel the US would get involved in. I was not working on that myself, but some good friends were. There were a lot of spy affairs, always had been. When I was there, there were probably two or three major spy scandals, but that's not news.

Q: What about Berlin?

LEHOVICH: What's interesting about looking back on Berlin at that time was the degree to which American, British, and French forces in Berlin were a popular issue. Let me be specific about this. Basically, those three forces had almost a blank check from the German government for reimbursing out of pocket expenses and other expenses involved in keeping their forces stationed in Berlin. That was one of the parts of the budget that was almost never debated. Everybody liked it. It was a big amount of money. I can't remember exactly how much it was, but it was treated as a very small price to pay for first-class protection by three great powers, by

three nuclear powers. Our forces in Berlin, all three of the occupying forces in West Berlin, were very well-regarded and were viewed as excellent things, a very popular venture. I think that's what I'd like to raise. It's interesting because, if one looks at problems one has had with Japan or some other places, in an awful lot of our basing relationships, these were surprisingly absent in Germany during the cold war..

Q: Well, that was Berlin. We had still a large army in Germany. There were always automobile accidents and rapes.

LEHOVICH: We had 3-400,000 people in Germany at that time. Surprisingly popular enterprise -not wildly popular, but it's a consistent plus. The way you measure that is by what happens whenever there is a move to reduce forces. In the Carter administration, there was always talk about this type of possibility, and the grisly threat of reductions in Korea.

Q: Was Senator Mansfield making his pronouncements at that time?

LEHOVICH: That was a bit earlier. What happened in Germany is that you got a very strong reaction on this type of thing. You would also occasionally get it at the local level. In some of the key cities, the local relations with the Americans were extraordinarily good, as incidentally, you would find in the Philippines near a couple of the bases. It was a very popular venture.

Q: Was the Green Party at all a factor during the time you were there?

LEHOVICH: They were just beginning. They were a rather charming group at that time from a foreigner's point of view. They weren't at all charming from a German politician's point of view because they were a terrific pain in the neck, particularly to the Socialists. They were eating into their base. I had pretty nice relations with some of the younger Greens. They were not particularly concerned with the US. One of their early leaders, who was just emerging at that time, was a delightful young lady named Petra Kelly.

Q: She even came and talked at the State Department in an open forum one time.

LEHOVICH: I knew her only briefly. Later, she was known to a number of my friends and colleagues. She has died since in a double suicide with her husband, who was a former German general. Petra Kelly's father was an American lieutenant colonel, as I recall. She was just a joy to talk to, a very bright, charged up, energetic, concerned lady. I was there a little before the Green movement had become a real fixture on the political scene. It was just beginning.

RICHARD C. BARKLEY
Deputy Director, Central European Affairs
Washington, DC (1977-1979)

Ambassador Richard C. Barkley was born on December 23, 1932 in Illinois. He attended Michigan State College, where he received his BA in 1954, and Wayne

State University, where he received his MA in 1958. He served in the US Army overseas from 1955-1957 as a 1st lieutenant. His career has included positions in Finland, the Dominican Republic, Norway, South Africa, Turkey, and Germany. Ambassador Barkley was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 12, 2003.

Q: Today is July 21, 2003. We are now in the summer of 1977 and you went where?

BARCKLEY: I became the deputy director of Central European Affairs. In those days it was the office that was responsible for German affairs. That means West Germany, East Germany, and Berlin, as well as Austria and Switzerland. It was my first largely management job. From that standpoint I was very pleased to get it.

Q: You were doing that from '77 to when?

BARCKLEY: To '79.

Q: Well now was there any dispute about why East Germany should be included in with West Germany because East Germany was part of the Soviet Bloc?

BARCKLEY: Well it goes back to a bit of the whole burden of our relationship with Germany, not particularly during the time of Willy Brandt. The FRG. had posited this idea that one German nation and two German states. Well obviously to hive off the eastern part of Germany and attach it to eastern Europe would have been unacceptable to the West German. I suspect that had a lot to do with it and quite clearly language demands had a lot to do with it too. In any event, from the time actually that we recognized East Germany, that was 1974, but even before that, I don't recall that it was East Germany but it was the Soviet sector of Germany. It had always been in that office as far as I am aware of.

Q: What were the issues? Well let's take West Germany then East Germany, and then your other things. Let's do West Germany. Were there any major issues?

BARCKLEY: Oh, well this was during the time of the chancellorship of Helmut Schmidt. Our President was Jimmy Carter. It became quite clear fairly early on that Mr. Schmidt did not have unbounded admiration from Mr. Carter. There were a lot of personal tensions. As you recall, the Carter administration was marked by a number of things. One of course was its concern about human rights. I think that you can say that although that had always been subsumed under American policy lines, it was writ large by President Carter. Human rights, in my judgment, had many different forms. Human rights of course, in eastern Europe was basically the crushing aspects of totalitarian governments, the communist governments. Human rights in Africa was often more a question of racial quality. South Africa was viewed as white supremacy over the downtrodden Africans, a sort of colonialism. And in South America it almost always was a matter of trying to restrain the Juntas in their exploitation of their own people. So it took a number of different forms. But where it ran sort of crosswise with the Germans is that they were very actively negotiating to get particularly ethnic Germans out of Eastern Europe, and they thought that President Carter's undifferentiating approach hazarded these efforts.

But what became clearly the defining moment for my two years in that office and far beyond was the speech that was given by Chancellor Schmidt to the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) in London in which he pointed out the Soviet displacements of the SS-20 missiles in Eastern Europe were decoupling, and that there should be an immediate response from the American administration. As you recall, the theory at that time was there had to be comparative kinds of weaponry at all levels in order to tie Europe and the United States into a seamless position whereby the Soviets could divide us. Well, the emplacement of the SS-20 put at hazard all of western Europe, but it did not put at hazard the United States. The initial response from the Carter Administration, particularly Mr. Brzezinski, was that the central systems should be able to cover that front. He apparently did not view that as decoupling; whereas, Helmut Schmidt who was quite a foreign policy and defense expert viewed it 180 degrees in the other direction. That was a very powerful speech he gave. He warned the American administration they were playing with fire with the security of western Europe. That fact basically dominated most of the things we did for the following two years. The seemed to have been actually a growing sentiment or maybe an initial sentiment that continued to grow in large parts of the American administration that Helmut Schmidt was absolutely correct. So we had to devise some way to counteract the Soviet initiative, and indeed we did. That led to the emplacement of Pershing missiles in Germany and shorter range cruise missiles in Italy. It was an issue that led to great friction also within the German political system where the left, which had been developing leftist ideas that the Soviets were ill understood, and that you could negotiate with them. The problems were very strong within Schmidt's own party which was the Social Democratic Party, which always had a sympathetic attitude toward what was going on in eastern Europe.

Q: Did you find, I mean obviously it wasn't at your level, but were you a participant in sort of the people who were concerned with German-American affairs sort of sitting around thinking how do we deal with the fact that Carter and Schmidt hate each other, I mean can't stand each other?

BARKLEY: Well obviously as you say that was far beyond anything that we could control, but you always engage, the embassies are always engaged, in damage control or trying to play down the personal viewpoints, etc. There were no particular issues except that Helmut Schmidt was known to have very strong views and he expressed those views in private. Of course they didn't stay private very long. And it was also quite clear when the obligatory visit between the Germans and the Americans took place. I think one of the real problems was that members of the Carter administration looked at that kind of personal dislike as a lack of solidity and therefore loyalty within the alliance. There were tensions that came out of that. I mean I can't say at all that this was unmanageable. It wasn't unmanageable. Obviously the interests of both countries were so much greater than any kind of personal proclivity. That we were able to control.

Q: Was there any feeling of dealing with the German embassy here in Washington or something. Everybody's trying to make things work even though at the top level...

BARKLEY: Well absolutely. That is what embassies do, they try to rub the burrs of these problems. Of course the German embassy in Washington was very actively trying to point out that American interests and German interests coincided on almost every front, and that they were

loyal allies and had been for many years and would be into the future.

Q: How about with East Germany? How were things working there?

BARKLEY: Well we had established relations with East Germany in 1974. They were spending a lot of time just getting themselves settled in Washington, which was not always easy. They had some things that they wanted to buy, and most of the areas were either restricted or zoned and they couldn't buy them. We were not particularly helpful. Our relations were never particularly good with East Germany up until the end. So there was never much sympathy for being helpful to them. They were fully aware that any kind of presence in the United States was probably not going to dramatically affect their position. Nonetheless, for the East Germans, to be recognized by the greatest power in the western world if not in the world, was a moment of considerable prestige for them. So they were very pleased to be here. It was one of those cases where whenever there was an embassy function, I was probably the highest ranking guy that would attend. Clearly I wasn't a very high ranking fellow in the general scheme of things. At the same time it was not a country without some significant economic structure. It turned out to be not quite as powerful then as we thought it was. And they did curry a great number of American businessmen. One of the most successful was David Rockefeller. Exactly what was on his mind I do not know, but I do know that one of the ongoing problems that we had is David Rockefeller in his talks with Cyrus Vance convinced Vance to meet with the East German foreign minister. They met at the United Nations. We were very much against that, and quite shocked that the agreement was made at the highest levels without the knowledge of the desk or the Department.

Q: Well David Rockefeller was a powerful financier wasn't he?

BARKLEY: Well not only a powerful financier but for the East Germans he was also a symbol. What greater symbol of the American capitalist system in action is there than the Rockefeller family? The last thing we wanted to do was to endorse an East German viewpoint that if you can get to the industrialist or the capitalists, the political system will follow. Well it happily turned out that the meeting between the East German Foreign Minister Oskar Fischer and Secretary Vance was a fiasco.

Q: What happened?

BARKLEY: Well there were just no points of communication. The East Germans were not in a position to do anything except to get some prestige out of the actual fact of the meeting. They had nothing to offer. The hope was that within the Eastern European bloc there would be some wiggle room that one could look at as possible independent tendencies. If you were going to get it anywhere, you certainly were not going to get it out of East Germany.

Q: In East Germany how were we seeing things at that time vis a vis human rights and all that? Were they just being beastly?

BARKLEY: Well they were being as beastly as they had to be. I mean the Wall had been there for a long period of time as a glaring example of the division between East and West. And indeed they still had the automatic shooting apparatuses and the guards that manned that border.

It was an inhumane and rather brutalizing kind of system. At the same time they were well aware of the shortcomings in their economy, particularly. They went through a period of time, I think they called it *Erneuerung* which means basically a renewal of their economic situation. It was a restructuring of part of their economy. One of the problems of an economy like that is the government allocates resources, and they don't allocate resources very well. They tried to do certain things and had some minimal success. It was considered to be quite a significant restructuring as far as eastern European models went. But our relationship was never very good. I think Honecker always somehow kept in the back of his mind that his greatest triumph was to be received by the major western powers. It was over ten years before he was properly received by the West Germans, but he always dreamed of sometime being received in Washington, which of course was not likely to happen.

Q: What about you had Austria and Switzerland?

BARKLEY: Well they were basically minor players. It was mostly hand holding in those areas. Switzerland always was an economic powerhouse. Often the Treasury Department had particular interests there because it is a safe haven for a lot of illicit money. The Austrians were of course, working hard to assure everybody that although they were neutral, their western moorings were in place. Those were not troubled relationships. Inevitably however the bureau has the responsibility of taking care of its ambassadors. Those are two embassies that almost inevitably get U.S. political appointees as ambassadors. In this case the two political appointees had some personal controversy attached.

Q: Who were the political appointees and what was attached?

BARKLEY: Milton Wolf was in Austria. A businessman from Cincinnati, Marvin Warner, was in Switzerland. Wolf was actually quite a good ambassador.

Q: We got pretty much involved in the exchange of the Soviet Union?

BARKLEY: Well there was a little bit of that. He was basically you know, a very correct and dignified gentleman who represented us I thought, very well there. That is the Wolf I was talking about.

Q: How did, did you have problems with out ambassador to Switzerland?

BARKLEY: There were some problems. He was like many people. He was a self made man and probably didn't appreciate the fine points of diplomatic behavior. He was single. He had a large active social life. I mean there were points that I think were certainly not very egregious, but were points of irritation for the Swiss government.

Q: Did you get complaints from the Swiss?

BARKLEY: Yes.

Q: What do you do, just pass it along to the White House?

BARKLEY: Well I mean the normal thing is you apprise your deputy assistant secretary and the assistant secretary as to what is going on. They take whatever measures are necessary. I think the White House probably knew about them.

Q: This of course, it is always very hard to remove an ambassador once you have put him in.

BARKLEY: Well I don't think that ever reached that point. It is a little bit like Henry Kissinger's statement about the infighting among professors. The infighting is so great because the stakes are so low. Well when you have got a country like Switzerland and Austria in which our relations are really quite good, the little things tend to matter a little bit more than they should.

J. D. BINDENAGEL
Economic Officer
Bremen (1977-1979)

Germany Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1980-1983)

Political Officer
Bonn (1983-1986)

Born and raised in South Dakota, Ambassador Bindenagle attended the University of South Dakota and the University of Illinois and entered the Foreign Service in 1975. He served in Korea and held several posts in Germany. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: And in '77 you went whither?

BINDENAGEL: It's an interesting story and an important story about the Foreign Service and how assignments are made. I was assigned to The Hague. En route to my assignment and before leaving Korea, I learned to my dismay that my position in The Hague had been upgraded and someone else had been assigned to it, so I was unassigned. By then I had learned that in Foreign Service you had not only your performance to worry about, and how you deal about it, but also how you deal with people. The DCM's secretary Roz Fishman at the time wrote a letter to her former boss, David Anderson who was office director for Central Europe in the Department. In that letter she mentioned that I was a good young officer, or something to that effect, and that he should take a look at me. David needed someone to fill a position. I became his candidate and was assigned to Bremen.

Q: I was his first boss.

BINDENAGEL: David was a great boss to me. At the time, David was faced with closing the Consulate General in Bremen and he didn't want to close it. He had a vacancy in Bremen. There

were three officers and a vacancy had appeared. The central system was not planning to fill it as a way of slowly cutting down and closing the consulate. David, having heard from his former secretary Roz that I was unassigned, had me assigned to Bremen. Some where between my departure from Korea, my home leave and arriving in Washington I was assigned to Bremen, much to my delight. I was sent to FSI, the Foreign Service Institute, for 12 weeks of German, and then on to Bremen. [There was of course more to the story. I learned subsequently that Larry Eagleburger, who was assistant secretary for European affairs at the time, had arranged a meeting with Secretary Henry Kissinger for German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, whose law firm was in Bremen. Genscher made an impassioned plea directly to Kissinger to keep the consulate in Bremen open. Kissinger yelled at Eagleburger for setting him up to make a decision on Bremen. Eagleburger, who was a close friend of David Anderson, did just that and the consulate was saved from the axe.]

Q: You were in Bremen from 1977-79. What was your job in Bremen?

BINDENAGEL: I was one of three FSOs; I was the Economics Officer. We had the Consul General, Irv Schiffman, and a consular officer, first Doug Hunter and then Joyce O'Keefe.

Q: Can you describe Bremen in those days?

BINDENAGEL: Bremen was a small consulate with two important historical and political connections with the U.S. First, for the citizens, the Bremer, American occupation after World War II kept the independence of the city-state of Bremen. We prevented Bremen from being joined to Lower Saxony, which was part of the British Occupation Zone. We needed a ocean port to supply our troops in the South, and we chose was Bremerhaven the port of Bremen, which was separated by a little bit of the Lower Saxony. Second, Bremen was important for U.S. interests, particularly as we implemented the Master Restationing Plan in the 1970s when we decided to build an Army base at Gerlstedt, and deploy an Army unit there. Strategically, this deployment was a part of the "master restationing plan" which would deny the Soviets a route of entry into Germany. Alexander Haig told me a couple a years ago that he had met a KGB officer after the fall of The Berlin Wall, who explained the Soviet assassination attempt on him as the Supreme Allied Commander, I believe. The Soviets wanted to remove him as the strategic thinker that had blocked their invasion access across the North German Plain. They didn't want this plan or such thinking to continue. Whether it's true or not, the point is that Bremen had a very strategic and historical connection to the United States. We also had economic connections with Bremen's cotton exchange as well as its tobacco exchange.

The tobacco market was very interesting. When the Indonesians gained independence from Dutch after the Second World War, they moved their sale of tobacco from the Netherlands to Bremen. All Dutch tobacconists had to travel to Bremen to buy their Dutch East Indies tobacco. Making the Dutch travel to Germany, who the Dutch blamed for the Second World War, was the most humiliating act the Indonesians could impose on the Dutch. And tobacco, of course, has its own political connection to the U.S. Ninety percent of the American tobacco is grown in North Carolina and the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee today always played an important role, Senator Jesse Helms, who also intervened with the State Department to keep the consulate open. Consequently, tobacco was important to me in the whether to close the post or

not. My job was to supervise two very effective German Foreign Service National Employees, Peter Berben and Chrystal Wagner, who prepared the reporting for Germany on cotton and tobacco.

Q: Was there any concern at that time about promoting, assisting, tobacco?

BINDENAGEL: None.

Q: We are looking today at tobacco as a major export but we feel very uncomfortable about it.

BINDENAGEL: No, we were very much market oriented and how to get Virginia and Burley tobaccos into German cigarettes and to expand the market. There were important cigarette manufacturers in Bremen and in Hamburg, BAT (British American Tobacco) and Reemtsma for instance. We traveled to Hamburg, the other German port city, to prepare the tobacco reports. Tobacco was a very active and very important industry for us at that time.

Q: There had been a hiatus, the Vietnam war was over by this time. How were Americans viewed would you say in Bremen, was there a difference between what you saw as an Army officer?

BINDENAGEL: Certainly. First of all we were only three or four Americans in this city about the size of Washington, DC, 600,000 people or so. The consulate was very much a part of Bremen's social life and its politics. In addition, we had a small contingent in the city of NASA employees. The space project that the US government was working with the German government on was the palette to carry the space lab, which was being constructed in Bremen. So we had National Aeronautical Space Agency, six or seven official Americans in the "Development Ring North" (Enwicklungsringnord) of Daimler- Benz corporation in Bremen. And in fact our NASA colleagues also played an important role in the community with visits by congressmen like Dan Pasqua, by diplomats and by scientists from the Montgomery, Alabama space center. One of those visits I hosted a group of American and German scientists for a reception at the Consul General's residence between the departure of CG Schiffman and the arrival of his successor, Ralph Graner. It was absolutely fascinating to hear the stories of the Americans, who were German scientists at Peenemunde with Werner von Braun during World War II. They had developed the V-2 rocket, which became the basis for the U.S. Delta rocket program. Most Americans experience was centered on the U.S. military presence as in my own in Bavaria, when I was with the Third Infantry Division. In Bremen we never had a large military presence, and we diplomats gave the Germans a different view of America, a rather normal group of Americans.

Q: Bremen is part of what State?

BINDENAGEL: It's the city-state.

Q: City-state itself. It was SPD?

BINDENAGEL: It was run by the social democrats for many years. The mayor was Hans Koschnik for 12-15 years. He was a conservative social democrat and the kind of social democrat as Helmut Schmidt. The politics at the time were absolutely fascinating. We had the

Social Democrats with the large majority, the F.D.P., a small liberal party, and then you had a Christian Democratic Union party of about 30%. The social make-up of the city reflected basically the make up of the political parties. The largest group was the Protestants, the smallest group were Catholic. Socially, it was interesting for us. We met an American citizen, although he was really a German, Gustav Rasch. Mr. Rasch had been in tobacco business, his father's tobacco business. He was in the U.S. in 1938, learning the tobacco business, when he was interviewed about the contemporary Chancellor and the time, Mr. Hitler. Not speaking English very well, he was asked what he thought of "Mr. Hitler." And hearing the colloquial American English for a non-committal statement "He's a good SOB [son of a bitch]." He described Hitler as an SOB. Not long thereafter, he got a letter from his father in Bremen saying "Gestapo has visited us, you shouldn't come home at this time." His comment apparently was published at the local American newspaper and then in *The New York Times*. The Gestapo had read it, interviewed his father and Gustav stayed in the U.S. When the war broke out, he was interned in Indiana as an enemy alien and then drafted into the U.S. Army. He became an American citizen en route to the Pacific Theater. He was taken off the troop ship at San Francisco harbor with several others, sworn-in as a citizen and returned to the troop ship which then proceeded to the Pacific war. At the end of the war he was sent to Germany in the occupation and negotiated his way back to Bremen. In the late 1970s, he introduced us to his circle of friends; he was very nice to us. Although he had children that were somewhat younger than we were, he included us as "family" and part of his circle. Our circle expanded with the addition of the flour mill manufacturer and some other people in the community. We found ourselves wondering why we were so welcomed into this city of Bremen, at least into this group. The mystery was solved when we found out that they and we were all Catholic. No one had said a word about religion; it was simply a reflection of the social life in the country.

Q: Germany at that time, I don't know how it is today, there was much more of a division one doesn't think about very much, as an American about this Catholic/Protestant division. I remember my wife was addressing Catholic girl-scouts and there were Protestant girl-scouts in the same little town, and all that. Did you find religious differences an important factor?

BINDENAGEL: Religion was very much an important factor but not so religious. It was a social factor. In fact, German society is organized in circles of organizations, whether they are clubs, the Catholic church group, the Protestant church group, soccer teams, business clubs, bankers groups, and most other hobbies and sports. The society is structured that way. History and religion have shaped social networks built around their churches. Today attendance at church is rare, but religion still is the basis of the society's structure. We didn't even realize our inclusion was based on a religious connection because it was almost entirely social. We were invited to go biking, ice skating, hiking along the canals. We enjoyed dinner parties, birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions with our friends, who were also Catholic. The Protestants did the same, again politically organized around the social democrats, they didn't talk about being Protestant, they talked about being Social Democrats.

Q: One of the big issues during the Jimmy Carter administration, Helmut Schmidt was the Chancellor at that point. These two didn't get along very well, and it was particularly over the so-called neutron bomb. Did that play any part in what you all were doing, did you get any reverberations from that?

BINDENAGEL: Absolutely.

Q: Could you explain what the issue was?

BINDENAGEL: We come back into Germany after a three-year absence and the political debate had changed from U.S. troop deployments to nuclear issues – rockets and bombs. Jimmy Carter had proposed a bomb that would destroy people but leave buildings intact, the so-called “neutron bomb.” He proposed to counter deployments from the Soviet Union, the so-called SS-20 missile, and Helmut Schmidt had given a speech in 1977 to the IISS, asking that the U.S. do something to counter the Soviet threat. Jimmy Carter’s response was to deploy the neutron bomb. The reaction in Germany was so negative because it was appalling to think that you could kill the people but not destroy the buildings. Helmut Schmidt backed off his very subtle request and Jimmy Carter then withdrew the idea of having the neutron bomb. Carter’s turnabout of course got a visceral reaction against the U.S. We were weak and could not defend Germany. Consequently, we had a very serious debate about our steadfastness in the face of the Soviet threat of the SS-20. The issue also hit a personal level when Schmidt went to visit President Carter. President Carter was a very active early morning riser, who wanted to be constantly on the go, and invited Helmut Schmidt to an early morning breakfast. Well, Helmut Schmidt is what Germans call a “Morgenmuffel;” he was cranky, cantankerous in the morning. Since it was a President of the U.S. inviting him, he came, but he was not in a good mood. As a result of this morning meeting, their relationship never worked, at least from my point of view. Of course, there were other things that overcame their individual differences but it was always tension. That tension played out in the neutron bomb with neither side really being certain of the other.

You could even argue that Helmut Schmidt’s push for European Monetary System (EMS), which was announced in Bremen in 1978 at a European Community Summit, demonstrated a European independence. President Carter’s comments about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the consequent U.S. military build-up, frame the uncertain relationship between the two leaders. The Carter administration in 1979/80, before leaving the office, increased the defense budget in recognition of the Soviet threat after the invasion of Afghanistan, but by then the nature of the relationship with Germans was sour, at least from what we could see there in Bremen.

Politically, this played out in Bremen, our little corner of Germany, the Green Party seized the opportunity to offered by the debate over anti-nuclear sentiment, including anti-neutron bomb and anti-nuclear energy issue. The Greens took the fear of meltdown and nuclear waste and damage to the environment along with the fear of a nuclear war and won tremendous political support. Dr. Petra Kelly, whom I knew well, was a German who had studied at American University, became a leading spokesperson for the movement. She was an abandoned child adopted by an American GI. Kelly participated in the anti-Vietnam War movement in the U.S., which greatly affected her views on war and the United States. You had Otto Schily, who had a very different background, coming from and SPD family in the Ruhr area of Germany, anti-Nazi, very anti-authoritarian movement. He later became Justice Minister in the Schröder SPD-Green Government in 1998. Rudy Dutschke, who was one of the ‘68 revolutionaries in Germany, and who had been shot by police in a Berlin demonstration at the end of the 1960s also appeared in Bremen. All these and many other personalities converged in an election in September of 1979 in

Bremen, where the Greens for the first time were elected to a State Parliament. That threw German domestic politics into a political upheaval. I remember going with our political reporter that evening at the parliament, when the results were coming in, and taking to Petra Kelly and Otto Schily. She introduced me to Rudy Dutschke. We saw a tremendous amount of anti-war, pro-Communist feeling in that anti-democratic party being elected into the democratic political system in Germany on the Central Front. The Greens appearance on the political scene became a very unsettling development in German-American relations. It was for me delight to write three of four cables that talked about this new arrival to the political scene, to give some political reporting into the Department. It was a surprise for a small consulate to be in the thick of things, and it was a very exciting development for me.

Q: Looking at the Green Party, which today is a respectable party but at this time was not very respectable...

BINDENAGEL: Absolutely.

Q: Were you and other people in the consulate beginning to take a look at this party on the ground and see that it was different than it was being portrayed in the U.S., less Soviet control and all that?

BINDENAGEL: There were several political groups in the Greens coalition. This new movement was noticed not only in our Consulate, but also in Frankfurt and several other places. In our case in Bremen a "Citizens Initiative" was created to prevent the building of the Hellman House which was a building right on the ramparts around the historic site. These citizens' initiatives were grassroots democratic individuals that we sought out and reported on their activities. As for the Petra Kellys and Otto Schilys, we were very uncertain where they would go and how they would move. As for Rudy Dutschke, we were concerned about his association with the Greens and his activities, which we thought were anti-authoritarian, anti-democratic. The Green movement was very hard for us to sort out and to determine what direction the Greens would go.

I spent most of my time, then and later, with Petra Kelly, and in the group that developed around her and Otto Schily. They had an internal conflict whether they would really fight against the democratic system or fight against individual issues, like the construction of the Brockdorf nuclear power plant, which they protested after I left Bremen. The German police and Grenzschutz, border patrol, used helicopters to combat them at Brockdorf. That police action made a very dramatic scene that heightened the confrontation. The German government didn't know how to deal with this new force, which was willing to do things like sit on the railroad tracks and try to divert trains to and the construction of the nuclear waste site at Gorleben. They were willing to chain themselves to trees. They had popular support but they were a very mixed bag of individuals with different backgrounds and commitments.

Q: Did you find, the German government has always had a reputation, whatever government it is, of being rather heavy-handed dealing with things? Was there any truism to this or not?

BINDENAGEL: One of the things that you develop after a long period of time in a country is

experience and understanding of peoples' reaction to all sorts of situations. You mentioned the split between the Catholics and the Protestants. Of course, the Thirty Years War was a worst case conflict where the population of Germany was reduced by 40 percent. That war had tremendous effect on German thought throughout time. Even Hegelian dialectic, I would argue informally here that such thinking - taking one extreme position on one side and another extreme view on the other leading to confrontation and ending in a synthesis of views - is very much a German intellectual process which probably came from the Thirty Years War. Consequently, Germans' extreme reactions could be explained. When the German Government was confronted with something like the Greens, their first reaction was extreme.

There is a tendency to react harshly and very forcefully with the idea that the other side will do the same and there will be a clash. And then the issue becomes one of finding the synthesis from the clash. Whether you find a synthesis or only confrontation is an open question. Of course, we focus on confrontation as a German reaction or even as a trademark of German negotiation. Americans focus in the first instance on consensus trying to build consensus and keep harmony. And only when consensus and harmony breaks down do we move to confrontation and to unconditional surrender. I personally have so often engaged in this debate about how to interpret German reactions and how to react to their reactions. This human dynamic is a constant theme in our relations.

Q: Did you find, speaking of this, in a German education... I know that the French have the way of looking at things which, to the American, the American is more likely to try to make order out of chaos, whereas the French think that somebody deliberately made the chaos and what's behind it or something like that. There is a different way of looking at things. Did you find that German education turned out a different type of thought process with the people you were dealing with, how they looked at situations, than you as an American would?

BINDENAGEL: Yes. Germany's historical experience was chaotic. The discontinuities of their history make it difficult to create the stability we enjoy in the United States. As a result there is a focus in education, business and government in rule making. If you can only have the right rule and everybody follow suit, social peace will follow. Social peace and order in the work place become highest priorities. The problem is of course when you don't have discontinuities and disruptions. After long periods of continuity and social peace, you have a lot of rules; you have today rules on rules on rules. This encrustment of rules spawns rigidities and the society is unable to break out of its rules, even when it must in order to progress. And that is the political situation in Germany today. That rigid rule enforcement was the basis of the protests in an otherwise socially peaceful country when the Greens made their political debut. Everyone feared a new discontinuity that would threaten the entire fabric of society. And since the Greens came from the university experience of relative freedom from rules, they refused to be traditional. The rest of society was trying to impose order on the chaos but the Greens didn't. The Greens refused to be a traditional political party, in fact they refused even to take the name "party" and called themselves a Green Movement, the Greens. The Greens did not fit the mold and it was very hard for an educated or informed public to deal with this new political force in Germany.

Q: How about as Economic Officer, did you find that we played much of a role or was it quite diminished compared to what it would be in Korea, because of, obviously trade lines had been

established since 1820s or something like that, and I would think there wouldn't be much need for somebody to get in between this?

BINDENAGEL: That's absolutely correct. The old trading patterns were well established. What I found was a personal example of economic relations between the U.S. and Germany. We discovered to our delight that one of my wife's ancestors actually had come from Bremen and immigrated into the U.S. in the 1850s. Herman Theophilus Plate was a prime example of trading ties; he was the Bremen Consul to Philadelphia, 1856-61. Of course a consul at that time was really a businessman, and his business was trading cotton and tobacco, which in 1856 in Philadelphia was a good deal. By 1861, however, he had a problem when the Union blockaded the Confederate States and cut off his supply of cotton and tobacco. He had other interests as well. In 1859, when oil was discovered at Titusville, Pennsylvania, he along with a Bremen merchant, Mr. Schuette, exported some of this black oil to Bremen. It was one of the first oil shipments from the U.S. to Bremen. To our dismay we learned that he discontinued his oil export business, thinking that, as the family history says, that it would never replace whale oil in lamps. Meanwhile Herr Schuette went on to work with Mr. Rockefeller, but that's a different story.

There were discontinuities in trade as well. Quite naturally they were interrupted by the two world wars, but afterwards, as with our friend Gustav Rasch, these old connections reasserted themselves. It is clear that a young second-tour Foreign Service Officer in Bremen, could not create great strides in our relationship or bring much value added to tobacco and cotton trade, but I could learn about Germany. For me the real value of being in the consulate, a small place where contact with all sorts of Germans, cotton and tobacco merchants or the flour miller. You could actually connect to the politicians in the city and they were interested in including you in events. We had a few official visitors like Congressmen Pasqua who came to the science center working on the space shuttle. We spent a lot of time with the space scientists working on the space lab pallet which was then shipped to the U.S. We had a different kind of experience, but value added compared to Korea, we were not as active.

Q: What was your feeling at that time, obviously this was going to change over time, but had the Germans worked themselves out of World War II at this time or was this still... I mean trying not to be too assertive on the international scene, was this at all...?

BINDENAGEL: No, we were in Würzburg, Germany, when the Federal Republic, West Germany became 25 years old. My 25th birthday coincided with their 25th anniversary discussions. The debates begun in 1974 continued during our time in Bremen. The Germans had very serious discussions about how they had come through the first 25 years, how much they had yet to do, how to deal with the Third Reich history, whether to end the ban on all Nazi symbols and other topics. There was a discussion about neo-Nazis and how disruptive they were. The Germans in 1978 were still very much working through their own history and had not come to the terms with the Hitler regime. The division of the country was also a constant question, the threat of the Soviet Union was certainly constant.

In our encounters with the space community we had a special insight into the debate. During a Marshall Space Center visit with half a dozen scientists from the U.S. who were actually German scientists who had been picked up from Peenemunde, the V-2 rocket base, at the end of the war.

I hosted a reception for them, which turned out to be a tremendously fun evening. They regaled us with stories about their experiences in Peenemunde inventing the V2 rocket. They related the trials and successes of the V-2; how they had succeeded in launching it. They then exchanged stories about their work on the Delta Program and the other space programs of the U.S. For me it was a strange bridge between two worlds here were the same people in now in responsible U.S. positions, who had personal World War II experiences in the rockets that Hitler had used against the Allies. One generation was not enough to heal the wounds of the Second World War. Divided Germany in 1978 was not a finished product.

Q: What about, you are close to the Netherlands. Particularly after the WWII there was not a warm and cozy relationship between the Dutch and Germans, particularly on the side of the Dutch. Obviously they were still the same generation that had been taken over by the Germans. Was that still a problem, did you see that where you were?

BINDENAGEL: There were virtually no relations from Bremen towards Dutch. The only one that was active was tobacco. We kept close contact with Gustav Rasch and he took us to the Dutch tobacco market in Bremen. In so far as that is an example, the Dutch did not like coming to Bremen to buy and sell the tobacco. There were basically no relations. On the other hand the social life, which connects that part of Friesland in Germany with Friesland in the Netherlands, was a link. We had a very harsh winter in 1978 and for the first time in several years they flooded the fields. We went out with some friends, Gustav and some other friends to go ice-skating. Normally you could go ice-skating on the canals, but they flooded the fields and you could skate, as they used to be able to do, from Bremen all the way into to the Netherlands and back on wooden ice-skates with a metal blade that would strap onto your shoes, called "Hollander" in Germany. So, in some sense there was a connection at some time with the Netherlands, but it was not so political.

Q: What about the shipping business? One traditional job of a consulate is to deal with shipping and American seamen. But our shipping had fallen off out, what about that?

BINDENAGEL: We had a very few cases, but we did have a few and as the back-up Consular Officer, I had a few encounters with sailors. We had several cases where we signed sailors off ships, and a couple of disciplinary cases where the Captains of the ship would bring them in and pay them off in our presence. We also took depositions, not many, but enough to get that flavor that there was still a role for the consulate. Interesting consular issues that I dealt there with were things like young Germans whose parents, normally a mother, who was a German and the father was an American. They wanted American citizenship.

Around that time in 1977 there was apparently a case in the U.S. where an American had joined the Israeli Army and therefore lost his citizenship, He fought in U.S. Court to retain it and was successful. Young Germans who were also young American citizens had to fulfill their Bundeswehr service and consequently swear their allegiance to the German Army. They didn't want to lose their citizenship and under this new ruling could keep their American passports. We had several of them coming in and said "I don't want to lose my American citizenship." We also had American teachers who in the late '60s and early '70s couldn't get jobs in the U.S. and came to Germany. They, too, were required to swear allegiance to Germany in order to teach. As they

reached five years and were eligible for tenure, they had to decide whether to stay in Germany. Because each year they had signed allegiance to the German federal state as part of their contract, that act brought into question their American citizenship. We had several of those cases where we had to deal with the American's decisions about their lives and how they related to the U.S.

Q: The laws were relaxing all the time. This was the period when the courts made it almost impossible unless you wanted to lose your citizenship.

BINDENAGEL: Right, we were in that transition when faced with such cases. The German law allowed for citizenship to pass through the husband only and not the wife, so they were very often caught in personal crises. It was all a good learning experience and was very interesting. We had a few repatriation cases for destitute Americans as well.

Q: Do you feel any, the hand of the control of the Embassy much?

BINDENAGEL: No. We had Ambassador Stoessel visit us; he set a very friendly embassy-consulate connection. Frank Meehan, the DCM, came. I remember Dick Smyser, the Political Counselor, came several times. Perhaps they were interested in us but more likely I assume they were curious about the Greens. Those visits were very friendly and very interesting, but for the most part the Embassy left us alone. We had more competition with Chuck Kiselyak in Hamburg. When the Longshoreman's strike broke out in Bremen, the first in a hundred years, we sent out the first cable and we had competition from Chuck who said: "But really, all the shipping is in Hamburg." Nevertheless, we were allowed to report on the Longshoremen strike and I was able to do important reporting. Bremen was very congenial, very fun.

Q: It sounds like an excellent place to sort of get a feel for both the country and the job?

BINDENAGEL: Absolutely. It was certainly not high pressure, but there was ability to develop and explore things and to really get to know how you relate to the Foreign Service and to political, economic and consular issues. And it was broad enough, from cotton, tobacco, space science, the Longshoremen's strike, to the Greens political movement. There were plenty of things to do and yet time to absorb them and understand how they related to foreign policy.

Q: I thought we might stop at this point, because it's easier to stop here, because you were leaving Bremen in 1979 and you were going back to German Desk, where you served until 1983. So we'll pick it up there.

Today is February 27, 1998. J.D., you were on the German desk when to when?

BINDENAGEL: I was a desk officer from the summer of 1980 to the summer of 1983.

Q: Where did the German desk, could you describe how big it was, how it was organized and what you were doing?

BINDENAGEL: The German desk has a delightful history. I understand that it was really organized by Eleanore Dulles, as Office of German Affairs. It had an esteemed group of directors who guided German policy through all the post-war period. The Office included the Federal Republic of Germany, (West Germany), the German Democratic Republic of Germany (East Germany), Berlin, Austria and Switzerland. It was the center of policy for the German-speaking countries of Central Europe. I really focused on our policy towards Germany, East/West Germany, issues dealing with the whole range of political issues, domestic political issues, and economic issues. And it also had a separate desk for Berlin because Berlin had a special status and was treated neither as a part of the GDR nor a part of the Federal Republic.

Q: Why was it treated that way? Was it to avoid legal complications or was it because of the facts of the matter?

BINDENAGEL: It was a legal issue. We developed a very extensive legal regime around our rights and responsibilities as victorious powers of World War II for Berlin and Germany as a whole. Those responsibilities included the joint Four Powers “occupation” of Berlin, and the residual rights for Germany as a whole, of course devolving much responsibility to the two Germanies. But in Berlin that joint occupation still remained, at least technically, operational. That limited sovereignty for the Germanies left the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, France and the U.S. sharing decision making over Berlin and as unification came later, we were to exercise the residual rights and responsibilities for Germany as a whole.

Q: What was your particular slice of this pie?

BINDENAGEL: I was one of three Desk Officers on the German Desk, and my slice included German domestic politics and economics. I must say economics was one aspect that was very political at that time. I recall two incidents that describe the role of an economics officer at the desk at that time, and political significance of it. The first was when President Reagan named Dr. Arthur Burns, the former Chairman of the Federal Reserve, to be Ambassador to Germany. He came to the State Department and met with the Office of Central European Affairs. As I introduced myself as the desk officer for economics, Arthur Burns, also an esteemed professor of economics, creator of the Council of Economic Advisors as well as former Federal Reserve Chairman, looked at me and smiled, and said, “Economics? The State Department?” and then knowingly shook his head in disbelief. Nevertheless, we came to win him over to the important role the State Department plays in the “political” economics. For instance, the issues that dominated the German-American relationship focused on the German economy and the unemployment at that time.

Germany’s commitment to social peace was deep. After World War I and the German Revolution of 1918 as well as after World War II, unemployment led to violent riots. In 1918 severe unemployment actually lead to a revolution, consequently, the Germans were prepared to go to great lengths to maintain social peace, with spending programs, job programs, to provide for peace at the expense a more capitalist, laissez-faire economics. We in the U.S. view economics in a much more detached way of promoting prosperity rather than from the violent politics that lead to revolution. However, in 1982 the German unemployment figures reached about the million, and the Social Democrats under Helmut Schmidt were politically threatened.

The SPD response was to propose a jobs program. However, their political coalition government partners, the liberal thinking, capitalist-oriented Free Democrats, prominently led by the Economics Minister, Otto Graf Lambsdorf, opposed this SPD-proposed social program.

In the U.S. the economic debate had focused on Ronald Reagan's supply-side economic policy, which in German the longest word that I was able to use at the time; it was "Angebotsorientierte Wirtschaftspolitik" when translated directly from "supply-side economics." Otto Graf Lambsdorf proposed such a policy as an alternative to the SPD plan. In the spring the Social Democrats were unable to pass their jobs program in the Bundestag, over the opposition of their coalition partners, the Free Democrats. However, when they sought to fund it through the budget process in June, their partner's opposition foiled them. By September, Economics Minister Lambsdorf presented a paper on supply-side economics prepared by Economics Ministry State Secretary, Mr. Tietmeyer, who later became the President of the Bundesbank. Chancellor Schmidt was unable to block Lambsdorf or to convince him to remain in the coalition. The Free Democrats left the coalition on October 1, 1982 bringing to an end the Helmut Schmidt government. The Free Democrats then under Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, with Economics Minister Otto Graf Lambsdorf, joined in coalition with the Christian Democratic Union to elect Helmut Kohl as the Chancellor in October of 1982.

I was in Bonn at the time. The State Department sent us desk officers to visit our countries and "consult." The intense debate over economics was my excuse to travel and get a better understanding for the events that were unfolding. I met with the political parties, the political foundations and of course the Auswärtiges Amt. I had an appointment in the Foreign Office with Wolfgang Ischinger, who had just returned to Germany from his assignment in Washington, where I had met him. He was in Foreign Minister Genscher's office. As I arrived in the Foreign Office on October 1, everyone was gathered around the television watching the Foreign Minister announce the withdrawal of the F.D.P. from the governing coalition. Of course the F.D.P. ministers all had to resign and the Foreign Office was abuzz with dire predictions of their individual fates. Wolfgang was totally preoccupied, but I was delighted to share this moment with them. Chancellor Schmidt became German Foreign Minister for the three weeks it took to form the new Kohl-Genscher coalition.

My trip was cut short a few days later during my consultations in Berlin when I was called by the Operations Center and patched through to George Washington University hospital to learn of my son, Carl's, premature birth. I raced home to see him and his mother; he survived.

Q: As of now, 1998, Helmut Kohl is still the Chancellor.

BINDENAGEL: Helmut Kohl is still the Chancellor, he is running again this September of 1998 for an unprecedented sixth term. He has exceeded the term of office of Konrad Adenauer and is approaching the term of office of Otto Bismarck.

Q: Was there any change in our approach to Germany as seen through your work, when Reagan administration came in, in January 1981?

BINDENAGEL: Absolutely, there was a very good relationship with West Germans, we had

almost no relationship with the Communist East Germans by design. Up until 1974 we had no official relations what so ever with East Germany. We established diplomatic relations with the German Democratic Republic in 1974, but that relationship never developed much. On the other hand, our relationship with West Germany was very close. We worked very closely in NATO and all international fora. When Ronald Reagan took office there was the conflict over economic policies and there were differences with Helmut Schmidt on dealing with the Soviet Union.

Most of our policy differences can be captured in the debate surrounding the West European decision to build a gas pipeline from the Yamal peninsula in Siberia to Western Europe. Under the Carter Administration in the Fall of 1980, we had concerns about the impact of the pipeline on natural gas prices. I drafted a briefing memo for Deputy Secretary Christopher's meeting with Deutsche Bank spokesman Wilhelm Christians, which was very hard hitting. In fact, in 1986, years later, I met him at a reception in Moscow and since this meeting was contentious, I asked him about it. He recalled vividly the encounter, which presaged what the Reagan Administration would later do for different reasons.

This gas pipeline project was viewed from the incoming Reagan Administration was that the pipeline was inappropriate financial support for the Soviets (and paralleled the debate in arms control). We argued that the pipeline would become an export income earner for the Soviet Union, and would help them build their military power and at the same time create a dangerous dependence on Soviet gas by the West Europeans that could significantly change the political dynamics in Western Europe against the United States. We staunchly opposed the pipeline, however, were unable to find a quick common solution, or even a common approach to this issue with the Western Europeans, particularly with the Germans.

In the spring of 1981, shortly after Ronald Reagan had taken the office, we began intense discussions with the Europeans, which eventually led to our determination, for foreign policy reasons, to impose sanctions against European companies which continued to trade with the Soviet Union. That decision also affected American companies like General Electric which supplied gas turbines that would run the gas pipelines, it affected Caterpillar that would supply the pipeline equipment. Most damaging to our business relations was its affect on West European companies. The reaction was fierce and centered on the extra-territorial application of U.S. law. As a result Europeans sought additional contract protection from such action or rejected contracts from American companies. The effect of the law continues to date with the question of Iran-Libya Sanctions Act and with extra-territorial application of U.S. law in Iran and its oil exports.

Q: How did this play in Germany?

BINDENAGEL: The policy debate was a genuine disagreement about how to approach the Soviet Union, a divergence from our policy of detente that the Germans supported. The Reagan policy was seen as moving to what the Germans feverishly sought to avoid, a confrontational approach. The Russians had deployed missiles, SS20 missiles, which were intermediate-range nuclear missiles capable of reaching Europe, but not the U.S. That threat changed the political-military situation and was a Soviet effort to decouple the U.S. from Europe. The U.S. was not threatened and theoretically could let the Europeans protect themselves. The wedge policy

pursued by the Soviets did wreak havoc on our relations. Our policy was to confront these moves by the Soviet Union and not to help them economically. The Europeans, particularly the Germans, moved to engage, to seek detente, to seek compromise, to work with the Soviet Union, there was a growing tension in our relationship. As a desk officer I was in the middle of these policy debates, especially between the positions taken by Assistant Secretaries Richard Perle, DoD, and Rick Burt, State.

As important as the pipeline issue was to the German-American relationship and to the tensions it caused, crucial decisions were not economic. They were still the cold war security issues; the decisions to counter the SS20 deployments. Helmut Schmidt, in a 1977 IISS speech, had asked during the Carter Administration to take note of threatening Soviet missile deployments. The U.S. decision to deploy the Neutron Bomb and President Carter's subsequent decision to not deploy became a contentious debate about German confidence in American steadfastness in defending Europe and was the backdrop for the Pershing Missile deployment as a response to Soviet SS-20 missile deployments during Reagan Administration. In the end we were steadfast and in 1983 we deployed Pershing Missiles in Germany.

Q: From the vantage point of the German Affairs Office, how was the Pershing Missile Deployment, which was the counter missile for the SS20, seen? Was it seen as something that Germans would go along with or was it seen as something that might would break them away from general agreement with us?

BINDENAGEL: We had long arguments about the military effectiveness of these missiles and their effect on detente. We had endless arguments about where war would be fought, if the Soviet Union and the U.S. had weapons that would reach Western Europe but not each other's homeland. Frankly, our concern was whether the Germans in particular, and other Europeans, would allow us to deploy even if we developed a missile to respond to the SS-20.

Q: Did you find that our attitude towards the Germans was more, I'm not sure it is the right word for it, more complacent, that the Germans would be with us, as opposed to the French who seem to be wanting to stick a burr under our saddle all the time? Did you find that it was hard, and I'm talking about you in the Bureau, it was hard to make the powers of be in the rest of our policy apparatus that Germany weren't somebody who could be taken for granted?

BINDENAGEL: I recall two or three activities at that time that illustrate what you are asking. One was a meeting with the head of the Deutsche Bank, Wilhelm Christians, who came in to see Deputy Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, at the end of the Carter Administration. As I noted earlier, we were talking about this project of gas pipelines and what effect it would have on energy prices and energy dependence. I had prepared the briefing memo for this very tough exchange between the two principals and was quite taken with the tone of the exchange. The atmosphere of mutual trust that I had seen among Americans and Germans in Bremen, which was warm, reassuring, reinforcing dedicated to common goals seemed to change to one of seemingly unreconcilable differences in policy and national interest.

Germany's national interest was to meet its need for energy and to reduce its dependence on Middle East oil. After the oil shock of 1973 with its rationing and driving-free Sundays in

Germany, the German federal government had tried to expand their nuclear energy sector, which created significant domestic political problems. They tried to expand the use of coal and other fossil fuels, but were trying not to overdo coal burning, because of environmental concerns. There was an intense and growing German policy debate around the energy issue and we had supported reducing dependence on Middle East Oil and on fossil fuels. The Wilhelms-Christopher conversation had focused on the energy debate, in particular on not forcing increases in natural gas prices by creating more demand for Soviet gas. Their talk was not on the U.S. fear of increasing German dependence on the Soviet Union.

In the Reagan years we took a more confrontational approach toward our European friends, leaving behind the more conciliatory approach. Consequently, there was increasing tension in German-American relations. The debate shifted to an anti-Soviet effort as we moved to the question how to deal with the Soviet Union in the early days of the Reagan Administration. Larry Eagleburger was Assistant Secretary for Europe and Alexander Haig was the Secretary. Both were very sympathetic with our efforts to work out a common policy with the Europeans, but found themselves confronted in the inter-agency debate with a policy of sanctions to stop the Europeans from developing Soviet gas. The centerpiece of the debate became the Germans plan to build a natural gas pipeline from the Yamal peninsula in Russia to Western Europe. The Reagan Administration did not want the Soviets to earn hard currency from the sales of natural gas with which to fund its military machine nor to create Western European dependence on Soviet gas and was determined to stop the pipeline.

The German desk was caught in the middle and argued that the Western European dependence on Soviet gas was not a threat. An economically strong Ally in West Germany was a key pillar in our defense. We simply disagreed about the West European view that the money the Soviets earned from gas sales would keep their military strong. The West Europeans argued that the Soviets needed the money to keep their economy going and their people satisfied. The political analysis to back by the Administration's point of view overrode the political analysis in the State Department. The Administration threatened the West Europeans with foreign policy economic sanctions against their companies if they proceeded with the sales of Mannesmann pipe, pipelaying equipment and gas turbines. Secretary Haig argued against sanctions saying they would erode the support for the U.S. among our allies. He lost the battle, sanctions were imposed, and he ended up being fired. From where I sat, I would say that his stand on the pipeline and against sanctions pitted him against the anti-Soviet forces in our government and was a significant contributing factor in his dismissal.

There were sideline debates as well. Our fundamental concern with Berlin's vulnerability as we remembered our responsibilities for Berlin and led us to demand that the Germans create an underground reserve of natural gas for West Berlin to avoid threats of a Soviet gas-cutoff for the Western sectors of the city. In addition, I was asked to travel to Peoria, Illinois, on a State Department outreach program. Peoria is the home of Caterpillar tractors, the maker of pipelaying equipment such as that used for the Yamal pipeline. After sanctions were imposed Komatsu pipelayers replaced Caterpillar and the Peorians were hopping mad at the State Department for imposing sanctions. I met with Caterpillar and with the local Illinois press to explain our position, but doubt that I convinced any of those who had lost their jobs that we were on the right side of the Cold War. They saw the sanctions as a failure and the replacement of their pipelayers

as a terribly costly policy to their interests. The greater good is a hard sell.

Q: Well, Haig had been NATO Commander, and understood the issues there as opposed to the early Reagan Administration which was a bunch of people sort of posturing, who really didn't have that much knowledge of foreign relations. Or am I simplifying?

BINDENAGEL: No, I think you have captured the conflict between the traditional practical approach of Henry Cabot Lodge versus Wilsonian idealism. The Reagan Administration came in with a view, with an ideal view of the world, Alexander Haig came in with a very practical view and we were caught between the two views. Obviously, those of us working in the trenches, or on the German desk, were oriented more toward the practical Alexander Haig approach. We asked: how do we work sanctions, how do we work it with the Europeans, how do we find a common interest to seek out options for Secretary that were possible? The example of the controversy over the construction of a gas pipeline from the Yamal peninsula in Russia to Western Europe was an key debate for us. For the last two decades this incident has shaped my own thinking on conflict resolution even when we approach the same goals. Conflict or cooperation with the Germans and the rest of the Europeans is a mixed bag of successes and failures.

Q: How did we view, from your perspective the GDR, East Germany at that time, economically, politically?

BINDENAGEL: If the Soviet Union was the evil empire, the German Democratic Republic was for many in the Reagan Administration the heart of the evil empire. East Germany was a "closed society" and was very foreign to us, it was the worst of the worst, they were constantly harassing us and that made life difficult; we were ideologically opposed to almost all that they were doing. It was a very cold and difficult relationship. We had just a few bilateral issues. From my vantage point on the German desk - we had a special desk officer for East Germany, Bruce Clark - the GDR was a plague on our house. On the economic side there was the Leipzig Fair each year and that Fair was the extent of our relationship; American companies attended, tried to make sales and had a presence and then departed to return the following year.

Q: What was our impression of the East German economy at that time?

BINDENAGEL: The East German economy had the reputation, not necessarily based on analysis, but the reputation of being the best in the Soviet Bloc. It functioned; it produced things; and it provided a certain standard of living, which in East Germany, seemed to be higher than in the rest of the Soviet Union.

Q: I know the East German reputation sort of got built up as being somehow that, no matter, Germans are Germans, and they are really efficient and they can do things. And yet, after the amalgamation of East Germany into West Germany it's almost as all they had to junk everything in East Germany and start all over again. Do you think we were over-evaluating the ability of East Germany to produce?

BINDENAGEL: Yes, we were over-evaluating, but in defense of those who tried to figure out

what a “closed society” was doing, there were intangibles that we couldn’t measure. First of all there were no public statistics, all the East German information was contained in secret East German documents. We had to rely on what we could observe, what we could see and to judge based on the products that were exported. GDR products were clearly inferior but prices were lower. In any case, they did sell and they sold a lot. They had a few areas where they were actually technically and even technologically advanced. Even if some observers ridiculed Erich Honecker’s touting GDR advances like the “world’s largest microchip,” the GDR had some successes. I wouldn’t say they were world competitive, but they were advanced for the Soviet Bloc.

On a later assignment in the mid-1990s I met one of the engineers who had reverse-engineered an IBM 386 computer. He was very proud of that achievement that made the GDR the major supplier of computer chips to the Soviet Bloc. Of course, they were constantly behind the West. However, I would later find out what really mattered to the real success of the GDR was its ability to do what we called during my time in the U.S. Army: “field expediency.” They could make things work that shouldn’t have worked with just a little ingenuity and friends to help find parts. When unification came that field expediency; that is, the personal network of contacts, the use of products, the ingenuity that it took to make the economy function disappeared. For analysts trying to determine what happened, there was little or no tangible evidence that it ever existed. So our “Western” analysis seemed totally wrong after unification. Well, we weren’t totally wrong, but there was no evidence that there was anything there that would support our position that the East German economy was functioning. In fact, traditional western analysis concluded that the East German economy did not and could not work. Nevertheless, they did make and sell products. We came up with the theory to explain what happened and decided that the GDR could last only so long as it could draw on the capital and the plant equipment that existed from the last century to the 1930s. When that capital was totally exhausted, the GDR would collapse, and they were close such a collapse by the end of the 1980s. Economic collapse, however, did not necessarily mean the political demise of the East Germany, after all the Soviet Union lasted seven decades by use of military force and internal terror.

Q: What about the East German influence abroad? I mean one is always hearing about East Germans being..., one of the great exports was police expertise in the places like Lybia and other places, they seemed to be as you say the “heart of the evil empire,” they seem to be able to export this ability to control populace and all. Was this a concern of ours?

BINDENAGEL: East German sales of instruments of internal repression were a concern. We of course had our own controls on police equipment exports. Exporting instruments of communist and totalitarian state had always been a problem and actually confronted us in several places, in Africa in particular, with East German security types. But export license requests didn’t play much of the role for the Desk because GDR didn’t play much of the role except a little bit in trade. Berlin issues - the Four Power rights and responsibilities for Berlin and Germany as a whole - dominated what the U.S.-GDR bilateral relationship because they ran the sector checkpoints in Berlin for the Soviets. On the other side of checkpoint Charlie they had their own checkpoint, they harassed people, they required a minimum daily currency exchange; they didn’t let certain people in, they didn’t let certain people out. That was the focus of our relationship with the GDR in the context of our responsibilities to protect the city of Berlin.

Q: Who was the head of the Central European Affairs at that time?

BINDENAGEL: At that time Tom Niles, and then after Tom left to replace Eagleburger as assistant secretary, John Kornblum became country director.

Q: Did Niles and Kornblum have... Was Germany high up on their affairs or did they seem to be focused elsewhere?

BINDENAGEL: Germany and Russia dominated everything they did. The office had one officer who did Austria and Switzerland combined, one doing Berlin, one doing East Germany. But really all the focus and attention that the two directors spent was on the Federal Republic.

Q: What was the evaluation of Kohl that you can recall before he actually became the Chancellor?

BINDENAGEL: Chancellor Kohl had always been underestimated and we shared that view. Before he was elected he was a regional minister president, who had run and not succeeded in becoming a candidate for chancellor. Franz Joseph Strauss had run in 1980, but was defeated by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. In contrast, Schmidt was a towering figure for us and by contrast the later Chancellor Kohl seemed to be a regional provincial governor. Helmut Schmidt was a strategic thinker, economist, former Finance Minister, and internationalist. The contrast between the two gentlemen was tremendous.

Q: The dislike between Helmut Schmidt and Jimmy Carter, particularly as the neutron bomb was part of what set this off. Schmidt didn't trust Carter and thought that Carter as an undependable person. Was Schmidt around when Reagan came in? Reagan of course not being the greatest intellect in the world, and Schmidt being sort of world class intellectual, how did that work from your perspective?

BINDENAGEL: The contrast is remarkable. President Carter and Chancellor Schmidt were never personally close. They had different lifestyles, they had different approaches to policy and their personal chemistry never worked well. Schmidt criticized Carter for making commitments and then not living up to them, which for Germans is almost a sacred principle. Pacta Sunt Cervanta – a deal is a deal – is part of their culture and political life, it's as close to being sacred as you can be. Reagan was elected in November 1980; Helmut Schmidt came to Washington shortly thereafter, ostensibly to meet with President Carter. A private meeting with Reagan for Schmidt was made at Blair House. The meeting was private; there was no press. President-elect Reagan and Schmidt exchanged views, treated each other with respect, and began a very positive, cordial relationship at the beginning of the Reagan presidency. The key question for Helmut Schmidt, and the question for Ronald Reagan, was dealing with the intermediate range nuclear missile threat posed by the Soviet Union. How to approach the Soviets, how to deal with the same neutron bomb issue that torpedoed the Carter-Schmidt relationship, how to counter the SS20 intermediate range nuclear missiles aimed at Germany, or quite simply how do you deal with the Soviet threat? And while I can't make the connection directly because I didn't see it, the outcome was a common commitment: "We must respond." As the policy conflicts between us

however arose, a distance began to grow between the two leaders over the pursuit of confrontational or cooperative approaches to the Soviets.

By the spring of 1981 when President Reagan named his Ambassador, Reagan looked for someone who had a very close relationship with Helmut Schmidt. Dr. Arthur Burns, who knew Helmut Schmidt as German Finance Minister, was very close to Schmidt personally. There was in my view a concerted effort by the Reagan Administration to reach out to Helmut Schmidt, to the Germans, to make sure that that relationship worked because it was pivotal in the own efforts in Reagan's policy toward the Soviet Union. The Reagan-Schmidt partnership lasted over a year. As summer 1982 passed, Helmut Schmidt was increasingly under pressure and then in September, 1982 he lost his standing in the Social Democrats. I attended the SPD convention in Cologne when Schmidt and his handful of supporters were isolated by Willy Brandt, Herbert Wehner and their supporters, dissidents in the Social Democratic Party, who were opposed to the deployments of Pershing Missiles to counter the Soviet SS-20s. That internal SPD fight over missile deployments and another effort by his own Economics Minister, Otto Graf Lambsdorf, a leader of the Free Democrats (FDP) to force a supply-side economic policy "Angebotsorientierte Wirtschaftspolitik" on the SPD ended the SPD-FDP coalition in October.

When Chancellor Kohl took office that warm relationship between the Ambassador Burns and Helmut Schmidt was an obstacle to Burns' relations with the new Chancellor. In fact, while there was tremendous amount of respect for Burns by Kohl, Kohl kept a distance to our esteemed Ambassador for some time, as they worked through Kohl's resentment of the warm Burns-Schmidt relationship. By 1983 in the summer, when I left the desk for assignment in Germany, Arthur Burns had become close to Helmut Kohl in policy terms, in terms of respect and in terms of access, but not personally.

Q: Did you get a feel for Reagan and Kohl?

BINDENAGEL: Reagan and Kohl hit it off very nicely, very well. They both had a sense of history, they both had a sense of destiny, knew here they wanted to go. In summer of 1983, two years into the Reagan Administration, the debate over the deployment of the Pershing Missiles had taken off, that had been very important to their personal relationship and to the politics. President Reagan was determined to respond to the Soviet Union and deploy the intermediate-range nuclear Pershing missiles in Mutlangen. However, the political situation in Germany had changed dramatically, the Greens had been elected in 1979 to the Bremen Burschenschaft, the Parliament in Bremen. They moved to tremendous protest against the atomic energy and the atomic weapons, and they combined the forces of hundreds of thousands throughout the country.

The switch to Kohl was almost seamless in terms of U.S.-German relations. After Chancellor Kohl was elected by the Parliament in October 1982, he had to stand for an election. However, Genscher's FDP, his new coalition partner, had switched from the Social Democrats to Christian Democrats and their ratings in the polls went down to two percent. An early election threatened them with political extinction, if they failed to reach the five-percent hurdle to get into the Bundestag. Consequently, Kohl moved elections from October to March 1983. From October to March there was a lot of uncertainty of whether the Chancellor could be elected, how he would do it. I witnessed the election at the ZDF television studio in Washington as Chancellor Kohl

was elected and the Free Democrats made the five-percent minimum to get into the Parliament and the coalition was launched.

Then, as soon as Kohl was elected, Pershing Missile deployment, which had split the SPD in 1982 and undermined Chancellor Schmidt, faced Kohl. The U.S.-German debate focused immediately on the issue: "To deploy or to not deploy." In the summer of 1983, I came to Germany as a Political Officer reporting on domestic politics and was to follow the demonstrations against nuclear power and the domestic debate on Pershing missiles. I attended all party conventions and the German decision to deploy would determine the course of the Cold War. Deployment became, in the fall of 1983, the policy issue that dominated all of us; it wasn't certain that Chancellor Kohl could actually make the decision to deploy and bring his party and the free Democrats to vote in order to deploy these missiles in face of Social Democratic opposition led by Willy Brandt.

In the fall there was a huge demonstration on the campus of University of Bonn, 300,000 or more demonstrators came and I joined them. Willy Brandt spoke to the multitude and opposed U.S. Pershing deployments as too provocative of the Soviets. There was a tremendous tension in the country as the SPD joined the Greens in opposition to our missiles. In addition, there were constant anti-nuclear demonstrations against spent fuel storage in Gorleben, in Lower Saxony, the site promised to store nuclear waste, permanently and safely. There had been demonstrations against nuclear power plants in which the border police, in a military-like action with helicopters and armored personnel carriers, moved against the demonstrators at Brockdorf in 1981. The tremendous buildup of street power and growing uncertainty of whether the Green Movement, led by people I had met while posted in Bremen - Petra Kelly, Otto Schily, Rudi Dutschke - combined with Social Democrats, who were now in opposition, could block the Kohl government Pershing Deployments.

Q: You came to Bonn in 1983 and you were there until when?

BINDENAGEL: Until 1986.

Q: What was your job?

BINDENAGEL: I was in the internal political unit reporting on domestic politics.

Q: Who was our Ambassador?

BINDENAGEL: Our Ambassador was Arthur Burns, appointed by Reagan in 1981. He stayed on until 1985 and then Rick Burt came. He had been Assistant Secretary who came out as Ambassador in 1985. So the last year was with Rick Burt.

Q: How did Burns operate within the Embassy?

BINDENAGEL: Bill Woessner was his Deputy Chief of Mission. Bill had been in Bonn with Ambassador Walter Stoessel and Arthur Burns asked him to stay, and in fact, he stayed total of six years to run the Embassy. Arthur Burns spent a lot of time with the German senior

politicians. He gave three or four major speeches a year. He maintained close contact with President Reagan through an economic advisory board that the President had. And really focused on discussion with political leadership and also with students, and his public appearances.

Q: We talked about it somewhat before from the Bremen perspective, from the Bonn perspective, you are looking at internal politics. These protests, how did you see them what was sort of dynamics and concerns about the protests? Was it just over the issue or did you see maybe another force coming out of this?

BINDENAGEL: Right. That's a very good point. There were at least two issues beyond the specifics of deployment of missiles or nuclear weapons. One was the role of the communist East Germans. Was there an outside effort to undermine West German government? Yes, that was known. However, the more troubling was the grassroots growth of citizens' initiatives that had been created and evolved into the "Greens" Movement, which had become a political force by being elected into State Parliaments. Now that movement was challenging. The movement had some democratic legitimacy, that is, it had been elected to parliament, even though it was borne of the 1968 extra-parliamentary opposition (Ausserparlamentarishes Opposition – APO). The APO movement had swept through Europe in 1968, was an anti-Vietnam War, anti-American movement, was anti-military and anti-NATO, and appeared to culminate into a grassroots German peace and pacifist movement that would have tremendous detrimental effect on German democracy and Germany's relations with the United States. We thought this grass-roots movement could certainly adversely effect attitudes in the German body politic undermine more than just the deployment of the Pershing missiles, particularly since its members were adamantly opposed to NATO; they even called for a dissolution of NATO. Dissolution of NATO is in fact still in the Green Party's platform today in 1998. These were fundamental issues. My job was to find out just who these people were and whether we could work with them. I met them often – former General Gerd Bastian, Petra Kelly, Otto Schily, and Joschka Fischer. I kept track of their policy thinking and tried to understand how they were motivated, why they were so opposed to our policies. We reported on the goals of these organizations and on the people. In fact, they were sincere in their personal commitment to doing away with all things nuclear, whether their opposition to nuclear power plants or nuclear medicine or nuclear whatever, nuclear missiles in particular. There was a sense that none of the major political parties cared about the environment, cared about the basis of life, were only working for material goods. So you had a philosophical, ideological and anti-democratic mix that found strong grass-roots support.

Q: I would imagine that at this time, and we were sort of reaching again a major confrontation with the Reagan Administration, the things were happening in Afghanistan and all, that there must have been a great concern on our part that the Germans might be getting soft and if they got soft that the whole thing would collapse on our side.

BINDENAGEL: Exactly. We had seen the Carter Administration in 1979 begin to change American views of the Soviet threat with the invasion of Afghanistan. Carter proposed an increase in U.S. defense budget and the Reagan Administration came in with a strong ideological, confrontational approach. The suggestion that the Germans were going soft, that the Germans would not be able to stand up to these kinds of confrontation we would pursue was a

basic tenet of our approach. There was of course, from the German perspective, reinforced by Carter's decisions on the Neutron Bomb, that historically, and even in recent personal experience by German policy makers, a question whether the U.S. would keep its word. The French constantly played on this theme of American unreliability. The French kept repeating that the Americans would leave Europe at some point and you couldn't count on them forever. Of course, historically we didn't confront the Russians and stop the building of the Berlin wall in 1961. That had a very important impact on Willy Brandt's thinking about the limits of American willingness to intervene in Europe. We had the neutron bomb decision, which we have discussed. So there was enough uncertainty whether the U.S. would stick to its decisions to give the argument credibility. In other words, both sides were not certain how steadfast either would be in the face of a serious confrontation. That's why all of the attention was focused then on the German decision to deploy or not deploy the Pershing missiles.

Q: How did this play out?

BINDENAGEL: After the major Bonn anti-Pershing demonstration in the fall of 1983, President Mitterrand came to the Bundestag and gave a speech in favor of deployment. That was a very important signal for the Chancellor to say that the French were with him. That Mitterrand speech emboldened Kohl to meet this internal challenge by the demonstrators and pursue the deployments. The vote in the Bundestag on the night of November 23, 1983 was dramatic. I went to the Bundestag, but to get there I had to go through three police perimeters to get past what's called the *Bannmeile*, literally the banned zone or prohibited zone for demonstrations. The police had three of these interlocking fences that were set up normally to control crowds at demonstrations. I moved through the demonstrators to get into the Bundestag for this debate and the vote without incident. As the debate moved to an emotional pitch, the Chancellor made his arguments and in the end the vote passed. With our embassy trusted political reporter, Richard Volk, we got word to Washington and there was a tremendous sigh of relief in Washington that the Germans indeed decided to deploy the missiles. It was the defining moment for the Chancellor of Germany, not only for his relationship with President Reagan but also with Mitterrand and the French, and his own population. Kohl was justifiably proud that that the vote was the turning point for his own stature in his own country. It also signaled that the arms race would move to confrontation, a confrontation that would end the Cold War.

Q: What was our analysis that you were getting, where you were, about the French who usually were the odd man out, were strong on this?

BINDENAGEL: We were concerned that the French attitude would make them soft on Russians as anyone else. There was a rather tense debate between the Germans and the French at that time. The French had their own nuclear tactical weapons, which were capable of reaching Germany, but not the Warsaw Pact countries. The Germans were very uncomfortable with this idea. They needed to sort out their relationship with the French. Germany as a non-nuclear power was never comfortable even in the highest leadership positions with using or discussing or engaging in nuclear war scenarios since the war would be played out in Germany. They needed strong French support to convince them the U.S. would stay with them. For the French, we understood that they too did not want the Germans moving closer to the East, away from that relationship with the French themselves.

Q: Well, Germans acting as a buffer for the French and it allowed the French to have a lot more room for free wheeling and suddenly to discover that your buffer might be doing little free wheeling itself, it just makes one nervous.

BINDENAGEL: If you just take the historical example, the French have delighted in letting the Germans fight among themselves in German territory over the last couple hundred years. In the Thirty Years War, the French played a very important role in supporting the both sides in that conflict, but especially the Protestants, and prolonged the conflict for their own national interest. In the contemporary context, the Germans were very aware of the French need for Germany to be the buffer against the Warsaw Pact, to be the frontline state, a description they used themselves. Nevertheless, German steadfastness in NATO was the very key element in the French support for West Germany; that is, divided but with West Germany in NATO. But that French support didn't mean the anti-deployment demonstrations in West Germany ended. Quite the opposite happened. They intensified as the actual deployments came in Mutlangen, Baden-Wuerttemberg, a small military installation, was inundated with demonstrators. Human chains linked hands of protestors for hundreds of miles throughout the country and were taking place repeatedly. The American television movie "The Day After," depicting the world after the nuclear exchange, was shown in the U.S. and was then translated into German. For the Germans, it was a depiction of Germany the day after and was very upsetting, very emotional and contributed to a very tense period.

Q: As it seems to do in England, there were some demonstrators on, I don't know, some green something, there seem to be sort of professional demonstrators, people who enjoyed demonstrations. Often either young people it or middle aged women for whom this was seen to be the way of life almost. Did you see a development of this type of person?

BINDENAGEL: Certainly there were holdovers from the '68 revolution, as they liked to describe it, who protested as a sort of profession. There were Easter marches, there were gatherings and other parts of the movement that sustained the effort to keep the protests alive. There were, I wouldn't say middle aged, rather the older population, senior citizens who had experienced World War II, who were very present and very insistent that we in particularly in the Reagan years we were creating conditions for war. Those who experienced World War II thought that we wanted to play out the Third World War in Germany and that the Reagan Administration was too confrontational and dangerous. These attitudes played well in the Social Democratic Party, in the senior citizens' group and the '68 group. When these started to come together then you had also the younger element of society that joined the Green Party. The Greens political movement evolved into a political party, although they refused to call themselves a party and tried to called themselves a movement. The Greens were elected into Bundestag, a group but not a caucus represented in the Bundestag. Frankly after all I had seen, we were fortunate that they had a legitimate political way to exert political influence on decisions.

Q: How did you find these protest groups, as a political officer, talking to various people in these movements, both in the Green Party, Green Movement and outside of, but the protest movement?

BINDENAGEL: For the most part, there were a few exceptions, but for the most part they were extremely friendly to the U.S. They had very good feelings about the people of the U.S. They liked what we were trying to do, they liked to visit, and they enjoyed our lifestyle, however they had very specific objections to our policies. The pacifists did not want the military used as an element of policy. From their point of view they felt, they had a motto, “Nie wieder Krieg vom Deutschen Boden.” This was translated as, “Never again shall wars emanate from German soil.” That motto is a very arrogant saying that means, if we Germans don’t start a war there won’t be any. And you Americans are forcing us into making war by demanding we station all your military people here, putting new missiles on our soil and creating the conditions for war and that’s very dangerous. Joschka Fischer, for instance, grew up in Wiesbaden and used to tell me that he simply considered that American soldiers, even those deployed in Germany, as a part of the landscape. They belonged there, they were perfectly welcome there, he just didn’t like to use them in war. So the Greens did not have a clear, acceptable picture of our role in Germany, but that also had very mixed views on Americans. There were a few communists, who were adamantly opposed to Americans, didn’t want to have anything to do with us, but they were very much a minority.

Q: Was there in this group, and variations thereof, an understanding of the Soviet Union and the Soviet system in the German Democratic Republic and all, and understanding that maybe this could be an either/or type of situation?

BINDENAGEL: Their views of the Soviet Union and the GDR were romantic. The Greens views were not based at all on realism or in terms of personal experience of what the life was like there. Many of them had visited and were treated as VIPs much better than they were treated in their own country, that is with respect and with some interest in what they were thinking, so they had a very romanticized and not very realistic view. Very few of them had gone to the GDR. Petra Kelly led a demonstration for peace in East Berlin and was arrested, but such efforts were few and not consequential in changing views in the Greens.

Q: Were any people in this group former sort of refugees from the GDR?

BINDENAGEL: Not that I recall. These people were all West Germans, they were committed West Germans. They saw West Germany as having its own identity, and they saw East Germans as having their own identity. They were different Germans.

Q: At this point looking across the spectrum, across all the parties and movements, was there much feeling towards, we got united Germany or was this something that just wasn’t there?

BINDENAGEL: Not among these people. Among the opposition, Social democrats and the Greens and other opposition groups there was not interest in pursuing a unification policy. It was the government’s officially declared policy. In the Christian Democrats there was actually anger about the lack of a strong and active U.S. position on unification. I recall 1983 coming to Germany, of meeting Hans Veen at the Adenauer Foundation and being treated to a lecture on the lack of U.S. activism on German reunification; He wanted to know why it was not at the top of our agenda. I took the comments as a plea that if we did voice our support, they could do so also. It was not, I thought, a real commitment to German reunification as an achievable policy.

There was, however, a sense particularly among more conservative elements of the society, including especially organizations from Czechoslovakia and Poland who had been former German areas, Silesia and the Sudetenland. Those organizations played an important role in the internal workings of Christian Democrats as a small but important conservative constituency dedicated to keeping this issue alive. But frankly, German unification was not on an active agenda. There was a goal, it was an important statement, but active policy was designed to do things that could be done to improve lives in GDR, which was really West German policy.

Q: Did you see, were this groups, the former Sudeten Deutsche, the Polish group and the other ones, were they sort of a wasting asset, getting older, or were they bringing their children into it?

BINDENAGEL: The leaders were people who were actually expelled. They felt very strongly and were very adamant. The generation that had made the transition was less active but the third generation was almost as active and as vehement as the first, expellees themselves. So you had this three-way mix.

Q: One of the things, of course anyone who deals with Germany can't help but doing this looking at the neo-Nazis or whatever it might be defined as, which apparently is a rather slippery definition. I mean it's anybody who acts rather totalitarian I guess. Were you looking at neo-Nazis and what were you seeing?

BINDENAGEL: Neo-Nazis in this period didn't play any significant role. They had in the 1960s, and the Nationalist Party of Germany (NPD) had also been elected to the Parliament.

Q: Nationalist Party of Germany.

BINDENAGEL: The NPD had been elected on the right and the comparison with the Greens on the left was always analyzed in the Hegelian dialectic. The West Germans had the NPD in the 1960s and now they had the Greens. The Greens were accused of being the communists as the NPD were called the fascists. The focus of domestic politics with the Greens was to try to reduce the communists' influence. The Social Democrats tried to reach out to the East Germans in a formal political relationship, the SPD-SED Dialog, that was to confront the Socialist Unity Party of the East German Communist Party with its own internal contradictions. There was a series of efforts to deal with the communists that led to accusations that the SPD was sympathetic to the communists, or what they called socialist thinking. This was not the case with the conservatives and the West German Neo-Nazis. The Neo-Nazi's played virtually no role. On the other hand, leftist terrorists played a role through political assassinations, especially the Red Army Fraction, RAF, was very active.

Q: RAF stands for?

BINDENAGEL: The Red Army Fraction, an outgrowth of Baader-Meinhoff Group, those were two individuals whose gang engaged in political terror and had grown out of the 1968 APO, extra-parliamentary opposition movement. Those terrorist acts were directed against U.S. military and killed several Americans as well as German political and industrial leaders. The

RAF assassinated prominent businessmen and prominent German political leaders throughout this period. I arrived in Germany in 1972, shortly after the RAF bombed the U.S. Officers' Club in Frankfurt, and shortly before the September 5, 1972 attack on the Israeli athletes by the Palestinians in Munich. I was in Bremen when Hans-Martin Schleyer was assassinated and had just returned to Washington when Foreign Office Political Director von Braunmuhl was shot outside his home. Many others were killed as well. The last victim of the RAF was shot in his home in April 1991. He was Mr. [Herold] Rohweder, head of the unified German Trust Agency that I had met while was selling East German industry after unification. I learned of the assassination during a Congressional Study Group on Germany Delegation meeting I attended in Germany at the time.

Q: What about how the Germans were treating their guest workers? Was that a problem?

BINDENAGEL: Guestworkers in Germany was an issue. After the labor shortages that brought them to Germany ended, the "guests," mostly Turks and Yugoslavs decided to stay and were in fact immigrants. The guestworker problem in the early 1980s grew as unemployment rose and approached a million. Politicians looked for something to encourage guestworkers to return home after one or two generations. There were some incentive programs that were set up but there was never an effort to force anyone out. The Nazi past weighed heavily on that political debate and prevented expulsion, but there was an encouragement for them to leave. The Germans stopped of course allowing new workers to immigrate. None of those efforts worked, of course, because family members would join family members and in case of Yugoslavia there was a significant population in Germany already. By the time the Yugoslav republics broke up in 1991 German immigration soared and the foreign-born German residents were eight percent of the population, the same as the United States.

Q: What about looking at the Universities at this period. Lately there's been a lot of criticism from within Germany of the university system, that it's big and doesn't produce very much.. Classes are too big, many structural problems. Were we looking at the university system and seeing what they were turning out, contrasting to how we did?

BINDENAGEL: We probably were having such a dialog, but it wasn't something that came to my attention. The universities and the political debate on university campuses were separate; they didn't occur in the same way it is occurring now. The political debate over missiles took place on university campuses, but it was not about the university. Those debates were volatile and could have led to social unrest. If you go back to German history, social peace is the basis of their social programs. It's not the safety net in our sense of the Great Depression, it is one step beyond that, social conflict in German history, including several revolution, is quite destructive. However disturbing the universities' campuses were in the 1980s, they were protests of the political agenda.

Q: Did you see the universities where traditionally, in many countries you have the faculty that is sort of Marxist or semi-Marxist, and they train each generation goes through almost their Marxist phase. I have a daughter who has done this, coming out of a New England school. But you know, then they leave and all of the sudden it's shocked them, and they become solid conservative citizens. Where there universities playing this thing then or was it different?

BINDENAGEL: Certainly college preparatory gymnasiums had these teachers, one of the extraparlimentary opposition goals was to march through the institutions and to become teachers in the high schools and universities. They were doing that. But the real revolution that took place in the universities was to have open enrollment. In the 1970s the university administrations capitulated to the APO demands, reduced entry requirements (except for numerous *clausus majors*) and basically took everybody. So you diluted the ability of the professors to reach out to students and created tremendous numbers of students. The government gave a small stipend for students to help pay for cost of living. There was no tuition and all who desired could go. And graduation rates slipped, that is time in school spread out from eight semesters to 10, to 12, 13, 14 semesters before you graduated. The quality of education began to slip. While people recognized the problem, had some debates about it, and cut the subsidies for students, real reform never really came.

Q: What about the economic system? You mentioned the economic system, but I'm really thinking about the social welfare system. In Germany, there always seemed to be so many rules and regulations about how society... if you could open shops on Saturday, and that sort of thing. Did you see this as important within the political context?

BINDENAGEL: That symbolic debate about store closing hours, the so-called "Ladenschlussgesetz," symbolized the debate about the rigidities in the German economy, the need for order, and the translation of order into rules. The high cost of labor, the high cost of fringe benefits and the unwillingness to hire new people because you couldn't fire them made for serious rigidities. The debate about the German economy, its rigidities, the options for solving structural problems has gone on for years. The "Ladenschlussgesetz," the Store Closing Law, really was the focus. This law goes back a long way, but the debate ran all the way to last year. You couldn't buy anything on Sunday. The stores had to close at 6:30 in the evening and they had to close at 1 o'clock on Saturdays. The whole concept behind that was of course that you have free weekends and you spend time with your family, and it is a family friendly operation. It also had the effect of protecting the small mom and pop stores, and driving up prices. Recently the Ladenschlussgesetz was actually changed.

If I can flash forward for a second, when I was in East Berlin in 1989 during the revolution, there was in the Bundestag Ladenschlussgesetz debate in West Germany, at the same time as the revolution in the East. So I would listen to Radio Sender Freies Berlin, the radio station Free Berlin in West Berlin giving the news report for an hour. For about two weeks I heard newscasters say something like: "There was a demonstration in East Berlin on the Alexanderplatz; the Stasi and the Volkspolizei moved in and cleared the demonstration." Then there would be a break and the next story would be: "In Bonn, the Bundestag is debating the Store Closing Hours Law to determine whether or not the stores may stay open on Thursday nights until 8 o'clock." There you have proof that the two Germanies were in two worlds. The West German world was going along fine; they were doing okay even if the economy had its rigidities. They were bumping along through the unemployment problem; they had changed the Government but not changed the system.

Q: But during this '83- '86 period, looking at this seeing the rigidity of the German system and

all, which you say is really a form of preventing a revolution more than anything, which is certainly an admirable goal, looking at it now you had enough time in Germany so you could look at it through disinterested but practical eyes and not as just an American looking at this, did you think they were probably right for their particular society to have their social rigidity?

BINDENAGEL: Yes, they were certainly willing to pay a high price for social peace. We as Americans are not willing to pay that price, but the Germans certainly had every justification to do that. The question for them was whether they needed to accept social instability. The unemployment rate in 1982 was a million people and cost Chancellor Schmidt his government and brought Helmut Kohl to power. Today the unemployment rate is over four million people. It's 12%. If unemployment has not caused social instability, then the question becomes can the Germans still afford this kind of social safety net process they have. It's a debate Germans are reluctant to take on because they have seen in the meantime the revolution in the eastern part of the country. Although they are not quite certain what happened in the revolution, they have seen the high unemployment and are probably still willing to pay their price. We are not and that will continue to be a conflict between our countries.

Q: Somebody reading this in a decade or so might find the completely reversal, but we are finding ourselves with the lowest unemployment we've had at any time and we have open up our system so can look at the German system, as you say it encourages unemployment because nobody wants to hire because they don't want to get stuck with them. And you have to pay hire rates, so it doesn't encourage the expansion of economy and opportunities. It's a hard thing to fine tune.

BINDENAGEL: And frankly, because of the German proclivity to order and rules, rules become more important than outcomes. If you follow the rules, you are safe and fair, there are costs, but the outcomes are worth it. We, on the other hand, are really concerned about the outcomes, we want to know how many new jobs we've created, what kind of new things we are producing. The Germans, they seek to insure that everybody is employed and those who are not working are taken care of. And that's quite different, contrast in a way that two worlds approach these kinds of issues.

Q: Did you see that following the debates and all within Germany that there was a surplus of regulations about things over which there was no need to be regulations?

BINDENAGEL: Absolutely. The anecdote of the day was that the neighbor either wanted to remodel his house or to build a house. The whole focus of the discussion was how many permits did you have to have to build a house. In the U.S. you need one building permit, of course under that comes plumbing and all those things, in Germany you need about 5000. You could start building something, but it would take you forever to get started and then you need to make sure that you get constant permits and so on. That was the point, the vignette the people used to say: "We can't do this any longer." But they have.

Q: A great number of young Germans go to the U.S. to get education, our universities have quite a few Germans. Did you find this was a group coming back and trying to kick things around?

BINDENAGEL: No, they came back, found excellent employment. From American universities they were well educated and could obtain good jobs, but for the most part they did not play a role of activists. That has a lot to do too with the political system. The political system is built on political parties. Parties at the very local level chose who the candidates are, the candidates are then put on the lists. You have two votes in Germany, you vote for the individual and they are maybe 50 or 60 who are directly elected to Bundestag, the rest are all voted by party slates. So you have a tremendous power over the individual who may wish to come back and put his newly found experience to work and change things. I used political parties as an example but the same thing applies for other institutions.

Q: What was your impression of the Bundestag members that you talked to?

BINDENAGEL: Because it is a parliamentary system, the Bundestag members are also the government. And they are a very dedicated group of people, and very much interested in being in the U.S. It was almost obligatory that Bundestag Member who wanted to deal with any one of the issues, whatever it was, had to come to the U.S. Whether it was science or security, they had to come and interact and determine where Germany fit vis-a-vis the U.S. We were the base line, and they would use us to judge where they were. The political parties at this point, Social Democrats were in the U.S. all the time trying to find good arguments against the deployment of weapons. When the Christian Democrats came to the U.S. in the late 1970s and early 1980s, they had been in opposition long time and came to learn about us Americans.

One of the most important events that came out of this exchange of visits was in May 1985 when President Reagan came to Germany on an official bilateral visit. His visit became known as the "Bitburg Trip." I was the site officer at the Hambacher Schloss where a group of businessmen had staged a democratic protest in 1832. I learned that Kohl raised the possibility of visiting the Bitburg cemetery to commemorate the fallen soldiers in World War II as he had with French President Mitterrand at Verdun. He apparently asked President Reagan to come to Bitburg in November 1984 while visiting him in Washington. President Reagan accepted Chancellor Kohl's request and the date was set for May 1985. We began preparation for this very important visit probably January or February 1985. I don't remember exactly when Mike Deaver came out to do a visit to various sites that Chancellor's office had proposed, but I went with him to the Bitburg cemetery on a cold, wet and snowy day. We did not stay long, nor did we notice the graves of the Waffen SS soldiers buried there. The events were planned course for Kohl's home state of Rhineland-Pfalz, and included the Bitburg military cemetery, which the Chancellor himself viewed as a very important symbol of reconciliation for World War II. He had met with French President Mitterrand at the cemetery at Verdun to help heal the wounds between those two countries for the First World War. Kohl had hung in his office his picture with Mitterrand, both stood holding hands overlooking the Verdun cemetery. It is a very moving and thoughtful picture. However, the French picture was taken 70 years after the war. In 1985 wasn't, only 40 years had passed since World War II had ended. Instead of healing, the Bitburg visit opened old wounds. Perhaps through a lack of knowledge, it was lost on the planners that unlike Verdun where French and German soldiers were buried, there was no comparable cemetery in Germany for Americans. Our wartime policy was not to bury a single American soldier on the territory of Germany. We took all the fallen soldiers and buried them in Luxembourg or Belgium or some place, but not in Germany.

Q: This was deliberate policy? I never really thought about it.

BINDENAGEL: The policy was deliberate. I first learned of the policy when in Bremen a soldier who had stayed after World War II had died, and had a headstone sent with the assistance of the consulate in Bremen. I learned that American soldiers were entitled to a headstone and that it could be sent to Germany, but there were no American cemeteries or American soldiers buried in Germany. Years of good relations with the post-war Germans had also buried our memory of that fact and obviously politicians were not aware of the policy. When we heard about the cemetery at Bitburg, we visited it and found it a very dignified cemetery. It has a little wall around it and the gravestones are flushed to the earth, which would provide a nice ceremony where you could lay a wreath at the tablet at the front. As was snowing, on the first trip with Mike Deaver, no one examined the graves, except apparently, a couple of reporters, who brushed the snow aside from one of these graves and found an "SS" marking on the grave. Once that fact became known, all good intentions were thrown aside and the trip became one of the most painful controversies we had in the German-American relationship. No American president was going to lay a wreath on the graves of the SS.

The Embassy political section was charged with determining who was buried there and what was going on. The Germans tried to reassure us that these graves were not the hated SS, but soldiers, the "Waffen SS." Robert Johnson, who was in the Bonn group that dealt with the records of the Berlin Document Center and had Nazi records, began to look through the 2000 so graves registrations to see who these individuals were and what their units were, and to report back to the White House. That the German soldiers were "Waffen SS" made no difference, they were still Nazi deathhead SS.

Q: These were basically drafted SS.

BINDENAGEL: Right, but one cannot explain the difference to the American public between Waffen SS and SS. I've been in Germany a long time, and I knew there was no way that you could differentiate. Few of the soldiers' units were in question and this was reported back to the White House. Bud McFarland was the National Security Advisor, and Bud wrote to Horst Teltschik, who was Chancellor Kohl's National Security Assistant and said: "Let's not go to Bitburg."

After Horst Teltschik received this letter, Chancellor Kohl saw what was happening and made it a serious crisis for German-American relations. The Chancellor recognized that all the goodwill he had built up with the Pershing Missile deployment and the steadfast commitment of President Reagan to Germany, was at risk if Reagan did not go to Bitburg. Kohl feared that Reagan's rebuff of a public commitment to visit Germany (and therefore Bitburg) would throw the relationship back into the turmoil and risk his chancellorship. The Chancellor then wrote to the President saying: "You must come." George Schultz was Secretary of State and was furious. In that letter Mr. Kohl had a sentence about the political domestic risk – he would no longer be chancellor – if Bitburg did not happen. Kohl himself, having been elected only in 1983 and facing elections in 18 months, threatened that Bitburg would end his career. He portrayed the feared rebuff as reneging on the commitments that the two of them had made, the steadfastness

of the relationship would fail; the Chancellor would be forced from office.

The President had to make the decision and we at the Embassy were asked to look for other appropriate places to visit such as a concentration camp. I was already assigned before that to prepare the visit to the castle at Hambach, which was a scene in 1832 of a group of Germans demonstrating for democracy. A revolutionary movement that was quickly defeated, I might add. I was asked to go look for an appropriate site in the area to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust. The city of Worms, which is a city with a thousand-year Jewish history in Germany, was an alternative for the President. I went to the thousand year-old Jewish cemetery and the synagogue and reported on the possibilities. At the same time, Bob Johnson who had done work on the Bitburg graves went up to the former concentration camp at the Bergen-Belsen. In the end President Reagan agreed to visit the Bitburg cemetery, but he also decided to visit Bergen-Belsen. So we had a compromise, but the Bitburg cemetery visit was an irritant because any compromise except for the President not going to Bitburg was not going to be satisfactory to the American public. Adding Bergen-Belsen changed the nature of the trip for the Chancellor from his hoped-for reconciliation, nevertheless. The visit ended without serious incident, but was not the glowing success Kohl had planned.

There were a few anecdotes that illustrate the kind of tension the Bitburg debate created among the advance team and the embassy's organizing party. When President Reagan was picked up in Bonn by his 150-car motorcade in Bonn to take him to a helipad, the motorcade left downtown headed for the Rhine River Bridge. However, there are two helipads in Bonn, one on each side of the Rhine River, and as the 150-car motorcade reached the center of the bridge, the police escorts stopped and turned the entire motorcade around in the middle of the bridge. The lead police car was going to the wrong helipad. Mike Deaver, as this maneuver took place, got out of this car and told George Schultz: "See the State Department can't do even a motorcade right." Schultz, I was told was steamed. The motorcade, of course, did pick up the President and he went to Bitburg. The Bitburg wreath-laying ceremony was dignified, but marred by the Waffen SS graves. Reagan went to the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp Memorial, a sad reminder of man's inhumanity to man. My event at Schloss Hambach was the last one on the trip. We had about 10,000 young people, although we only planned on 5,000 young people coming to the castle. The hillside was filled with cheering people as the President gave a very nice speech, and the sun shone radiantly on him on an absolutely gorgeous day in the Rhineland-Palatinate. Afterward, we had a conversation set up for the President to meet a small group of students, and the President went back to talk to them. He was having a very nice time with these young people, who were delighted to meet the President. Although Mike Deaver at this point was very nervous because the President was about half an hour late, Nancy Reagan, told Mike that he would just have to wait. Nancy told him that Schloss Hambach was the best event of the President's day, he was enjoying it, and King Juan Carlos who was the next on the schedule would just have to be patient. She made sure the President was able to enjoy the young Germans.

Q: How was the German press playing up the Bitburg business?

BINDENAGEL: One, as a conflict with the U.S., two, as the insensitivity of Chancellor to Nazi history, and three, as Kohl's excuse for his own history; he was criticized for his comment about his luck of the late birth - being born late so he didn't serve as a Nazi. He was attacked roundly.

A radio program spoof, of a helicopter flying around over Bergen-Belsen and a lost President, caused a great stir. There was a high tension throughout the whole visit. The press was very harsh, and I assumed, although I don't recall what happened in the U.S., I assume Bitburg was not well received here.

Q: Well, it was certainly played up at. Were there any other issues during this '83 - '86 period?

BINDENAGEL: Those are the real highlights. Ambassador Burns left in the summer of 1985, Rick Burt came in, we had many security issues such as the potential use of chemical weapons and the Strategic Defense Initiative that played a role. The conflict over chemical weapons was a key interest for Ambassador Burt, but basically the relationship was on good standing.

Q: During this, up through '86, was the "Soviet threat" essentially over? I mean Soviets were there, but were you operating under the idea that Soviets might invade at some point?

BINDENAGEL: We still believed in the Cold War and international tension was very high. If you recall, the President met in October of 1986, right after I left Germany, in Reykjavik and proposed abolishing all nuclear weapons. There was the tremendous tension. We still were confronting the Soviets around the world. SDI, the Strategic Defense Initiative, had come into the debate. That dominated a lot of what we were doing. The threat of missile attack was very real, the issue of the window of vulnerability came, the whole question could we all seal off our country from a nuclear attack. Now the nuclear threat was very much in evidence, especially as we stationed new missiles in Germany. The walk-in-the-woods debates, the arms control debates were dominant everywhere and we were deploying new missiles. It was not a happy time.

Q: Looking at it at that time, the Germans have the reputation of not being the best of neighbors, I was wondering if looking at Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and particular problems around there, have they learned sort of to keep their hands off, one might say?

BINDENAGEL: The Germans' relations with the West were okay. The real complication was the front line on the other side. Poland was constantly an issue. The eastern border of Germany was not defined, because big portions of Poland were actually Germany and you had the Soviet Oblast of Kaliningrad, which was actually Königsberg, East Prussia. The wind blowing from the East was a constant undertone of doubts whether the Germans were trustworthy and good guys, whether they still believed in the borders of 1937 or the borders of 1945. There weren't any borders in 1945 because the Polish area was still under Soviet administration technically, as was, is, Kaliningrad. There was an unresolved issue about borders, coupled with the German expellee groups from Silesia and the Sudetenland living in Germany. They played a small role in the electorate, perhaps only two percent of the electorate, but when you have a narrow election two percent is a very important part. The question of whether Germany could be trusted or not focused less on the West and almost exclusively on the Polish border. It wasn't even their border, it was the East German border, but theoretically Germany was still Germany.

Q: Was there much in the way of a relationship between West Germany and East Germany?

BINDENAGEL: There was an extensive network, a very extensive relationship was built. West

Germany even had a ministry for Inner-German Affairs. The West Germans paid for a lot of improvement of highways and infrastructure. They negotiated for the release of political prisoners, in which they bought freedom for tens of thousands of East Germans. Honecker's lawyer, Wolfgang Vogel, was an important player for both sides in that very unpleasant aspect of their relationship. They also had economic relationship. They tried to have official discussions and shortly after I left, in 1987, Honecker visited Bonn and was received as a foreign leader. He also visited his home in the Saarland, West Germany. So there was a relationship and they tried to ease the tensions of the Cold War.

Q: Were we encouraging them or were we just letting them, as far as this relationship is...?

BINDENAGEL: We were trying to restrain them occasionally. We felt that this heart of the evil empire really was the heart of the evil empire and we ought not to do too many good things for the official East Germans. We fought against increasing the vulnerability of Berlin. And their bilateral dialogue, particularly the social democratic direct dialog with the East Germany communist party was a concern to us. We were concerned, not what was happening in East Germany, but rather what effects a warm relationship might have on West German politics, especially on its role in NATO.

ELDEN B. ERICKSON
Deputy Consul General
Frankfurt (1978-1979)

Elden B. Erickson was born in Kansas in 1917. He entered the Foreign Service in 1946 and served in China, Algeria, France, Laos, Japan, Lebanon, the Netherlands, Canada, and Germany. Mr. Erickson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

ERICKSON: The I left Ottawa in 1978 and went for a relatively short tour to Frankfurt. They were changing the Foreign Service Act to allow us to work presumably until age 65. But I reached age 60, then mandatory retirement age, before the Act was changed the following year. I had expected to go for two years and return for two. But it turned out I was there only 18 months.

I was very lucky in Frankfurt. Wolf Lehmann was the Consul General and he was German born and handled all the political and military work. He told me to run the rest of the Consulate. We had all the regional offices there, so it was a big administrative job. A big banking, commercial job. I kept him informed of everything, but he really wanted me to take care of it all. So I did. That made it an interesting job.

The Germans were a bit more difficult than the Canadians for example. They were so smug in what they were doing and they were always right. Certainly we got along well, but they were very stubborn and determined. Of course they were doing so well you could hardly argue with them.

But I didn't have any major problems in my particular area of responsibility. Again, I guess because of my background I was heavily involved on the economic side. Also, we had to close because of fund restrictions our USIA office in Saarbrücken in the Saarland, so Wolf decided to make me special consul for the Saarland. So I went down one or two days every month. That was an interesting tour down there.

Our interest in the Saarland at that time were coal, steel, and exports from the industrial area there. Whereas in the beginning of my career there was always insurrection and war, at the end it was really quite pleasant and placid. We had a few minor demonstrations against the airport and the environment while I was in Frankfurt, but that was all.

The Green Party was beginning to develop, but there were only one or two persons elected at that time. I think they were at the same level or a little ahead of us on environmental issues.

So I ended my career. Dave Betts was the Consul General when I left. He was on leave at the end of December, 1979. My secretary was on leave. The security officer was on leave. So I was the only one in my whole end of the Consulate building on the 31st of December. I locked up all the file cabinets and walked out. The Marine Guard saluted me and I was never permitted back again except escorted. But we stayed on in Frankfurt until school was out because my son was a senior at the high school.

RALPH H. RUEDY
Public Relations Office, USIS
East Berlin (1977-1980)

Ralph Ruedy was born and raised in Iowa. Between receiving his bachelor's degree from Iowa State University and his master's from Duke University, he spent five years serving in the U.S. Navy in Vietnam. Mr. Ruedy joined USIA in 1974. His overseas posts include East Berlin, Dusseldorf, Bonn, and Moscow. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: You were in East Berlin from '77 until when?

RUEDY: Until '80. It was a two-year assignment and I extended for a third year so I was actually there for almost three and a half years to get into the summer cycle. I got there in January I guess it was and left in the summer of 1980.

Q: Who was the ambassador then?

RUEDY: David Bolen. Yeah, I think that was who it was; he was there the entire time that I was there. I don't think he had arrived yet when I arrived. The previous ambassador who was, oh what was the guys' name?

Q: John Sherman Cooper?

RUEDY: Exactly. John Sherman Cooper had left. He was much beloved and he was an older statesman type out of the political sphere and he had opened the embassy, had been the first ambassador and then David Bolen who was a career Foreign Service type came into it and he was there as ambassador. He hadn't served in Europe very much, I don't think at all maybe as a junior officer and most of his career I think had been in Africa and here he was in East Berlin.

Q: How were relations with East Germany when you arrived there?

RUEDY: Pretty tough. The East Germans, well it was all post-Helsinki and it was all very complicated. I think some wonderful imaginative diplomacy had gone in to the Helsinki Agreement and then the Berlin Four Power Agreement and the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin, which made a sort of diplomatic presence by the West Germans possible in East Berlin and vice versa. We couldn't do very much and we couldn't move, well we could move around freely. We had free access to move around but we were very closely watched and monitored. It was never obtrusive but it was tough, it was tough in many ways but fascinating. It was a wonderful assignment and I thought it was a great assignment.

Q: What were you doing?

RUEDY: I was the second person in a two-man press and cultural operation and initially I was much involved in moving into the new embassy. We established a little library in the new embassy. The whole question of public access was a big, big deal if the people, the East Germans, would actually be allowed to, would dare to come into the embassy. We hung up our sign and everybody was welcome but would they come? Getting the library set up, starting a program on film weeks, once a week where we invited audiences to come and, you know, chat them up. There were people from all different walks of whatever, officialdom and nonofficialdom, some people from the official sanctioned cultural community, other people that you've met and you never quite knew whether who you met was who they said they were. It was all a through the looking glass parade kind of experience. But it was a great assignment. We worked a lot with the GDR version of FSI (Foreign Service Institute). They did "studies" for the East German foreign ministry. They were very interested in getting a sense of what the Americans really thought and we would bring in American academics and some fairly high-powered folks. Bill Griffith from MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) was a guy that they listened to very closely and lots of other people too. People were interested; East Berlin was still pretty exotic for them so you know we would bring over some amazing people. We would go over to West Berlin and then I would escort them through Checkpoint Charlie and do this whole theology routine about how do you get through the checkpoint.

Q: You show the passport on the window but...

RUEDY: Exactly.

Q: But don't lower the window.

RUEDY: Exactly, there was a real; well you are familiar with the theology that developed

around that.

Q: I never served there.

RUEDY: We were the American embassy to the “German Demokratic Republik” (German Democratic Republic) not in the “German Demokratic Republik” because our building was located in the Soviet Sector of the Four Power occupied city of Berlin. So as I say we were the “Amerikanische Botschaft” (American Embassy) what did we say “bei de Deutsche Demokratische Republik” and everything that we sent out was from the American embassy to the German Democratic Republic. Stuff that they sent to us would be to the American Embassy in the German Democratic Republic because they were trying to assert their sovereignty claim to the city of East Berlin, and that got very complicated and sometimes interesting. I remember the very first art exhibit that we did. It was a modest show, actually in retrospect not so modest, it was a good, good photographer. A photographer, Paul Strand, and we did a Paul Strand exhibit in East Berlin and we worked with the GDR Ministry of Culture on this exhibit. There were some long negotiations about what museum it would be in; they were interested in showing their openness, cultural engagement with the west without really doing it in a safe way in a measured way. So anyway we got a great venue for it, the Yatis “Museem” (museum) in Berlin and they did great posters for us. But the posters said ‘with this exhibit of Paul Strand, in the “Berlinhauptstadt GDR” (Berlin capital city). That was one word as far as they were concerned “Berlinhauptstadt GDR” Berlin capital of the German Democratic republic. We, of course, insisted that Berlin, East Berlin, was the Soviet sector. So big deal if these posters go up the exhibit goes down, can’t do it under those circumstances. This was non-negotiable as far as we were concerned. They damn well should have known it was non-negotiable, this was basic, this was basic to the whole QA (question and answer) to the whole approach. We knew where their red lines were and they knew where our red lines were. Anyway if this exhibit goes up or if this poster goes up the exhibit goes down. Anyway they came up with a nice poster that said “The Museem _____ in Berlin” and it was OK as far as we were concerned so the posters went up, I have a copy of the poster at home and the exhibit was a tremendous success and it was one of the first things that we had done to engage culture with the GDR.

Q: Well how did you find, I mean, did you find that culture was a solid way to open up relations with the GDR?

RUEDY: Yes, I think so. I think we did a lot of good in retrospect. A lot of these people even people at the Institute for International Affairs or what was the “Institute for Politische _____” I forget some outfit that did more of their stuff for the communist party they were more connected to the party, they were all party obviously. It was all interconnected but some more so than others. But some of them had amazing views of the United States because they had never been to the United States. They really had no sense of what we were like as a society. I think they really saw the United States through their own very Marxist prism and were expecting at any moment a revolution would break out or whatever. So engaging them and involving them in things like the international visitors program and real exchange I think that was a good thing and a debate that we always had was can this place really exist on its own. Does the GDR have sufficient claim to sovereignty and to the loyalty of the people for whom the GDR exists as a separate and independent state. We used to talk about that in the embassy and that was the basic

question and of course that got answered later on. As it happened I was at the American embassy in Bonn serving when the wall came down and very quickly the GDR imploded and even before the wall came down in Berlin I think East Germans were voting with their feet. I think what really precipitated it all were television reports that they are sniping the barbed wire between Hungary and Austria and at that point lots of East Germans began thinking “Hmm, if they are cutting the barbed wire between Hungary and Austria I can drive through Czechoslovakia...”

Q: Well were talking about '89 or so.

RUEDY: Yes, that is right.

Q: Let's stick to...

RUEDY: Yeah, I'm getting ahead of myself. But that was the question we were asking. Would these people if they were a separate and independent German Republic be content to be citizens of the separate and independent German Democratic Republic or was this a state that exists only because of 500,000 Soviet troops and the Brezhnev Doctrine and a wall around it.

Q: Well did you get the feeling of that everybody was reporting to everybody to the Stasis and all that? I mean was this sort of the atmosphere?

RUEDY: Yes, that was pervasive and everybody thought that everybody else was informing on them and they were right. We got to know some people from the Evangelical Church, the Lutheran Church and you know going out to their house was always something and we were observed always and you never knew who these people were either. Were they Stasi plants or were they who they said they were? And yeah you always had the feeling that everything that I'm doing and everybody who I'm talking to is subject to reporting to the Stasi. Everything that I say in my apartment and everything that I say on the telephone is possibly being monitored or being listened to. But, you know, you get over that and think, what the hell, I'm here to do press and cultural work and I'm here to engage the GDR and that is what we will do. We were very busy and we did a lot of good stuff.

Q: I can see on the cultural side you can be busy but what about the press side? I mean talk about a controlled press.

RUEDY: Oh yeah, that was pretty hopeless. There it was a matter of engaging people of the press was a big, big deal as far as the East Germans were concerned. I mean Marxist theology and the press was agitprop. That is where you would address the masses, that is where you win over the masses to the appropriate class consciousness. So the people in the press were convinced communists and convinced ideologues but nevertheless we were engaging them and trying to work with them and we got involved with some of them in international visitors programs. I mean they were communists and we weren't going to change their point of view but they learned something from these trips. I think it changed their opinions somewhat. They did some good reporting as to what the Americans were really like. But trying to place anything in the press or the press giving any sort of favorable coverage to anything having to do with the United States was nonsense. Everybody knew before it happened before we got your “Neues

Deutschland” (New Germany) you knew what the editorial news treatment of any given story is going to be, that was never in question.

Q: Well I take it that there was a little different attitude that you were observing there. I've talked to people who were in Poland around this time and they used to say that they were convinced that there must have been four or five dedicated communists in the country but they weren't quite sure which ones they were.

RUEDY: I think there were more dedicated communists in East Germany. They had a different history than Poland I think and a really lot of dedicated folks in East Germany had been communists even in the 1920s. So they came from communist backgrounds that went back to the 1920s, 1930s. Some of them had gone into exile in the Soviet Union. There was a wonderful film I would love to take a look at it again, “Ich War Neunsein” (I Was Nineteen), it was done by Konrad Wolff who was the head of the GDR Academy.

Q: The title means I Was Nineteen.

RUEDY: I Was Nineteen, yeah, and he was the head of the East German Academy of Art. He was a major figure in the art world and a very talented filmmaker. His brother Mischa Wolff as he was called was the head of intelligence. He was Le Carre's guy; he was the best of the best. They were from a communist family that had gone into exile in the Soviet Union fleeing ahead of Hitler. The film, “Ich War Neunsein,” was an officer in the Red Army at the age of nineteen as a first lieutenant in the Soviet army that marched into Eastern Germany and was guilty of course of all kinds of atrocities and stuff like that. The film is really almost an apologia of this is the way it was and this is what we did and this is why we did it. It has some gruesome scenes of people shooting in the haystacks where Germans were hiding from the Soviet army and stuff like that. But I Was Nineteen and the Hitler regime that we attacked had suffered tremendously from in the Soviet Union was you know, there it was. It was just a great, great film but these are the kinds of people that I think some of the communists in East Germany drew their inspirations from.

Q: Again, jumping way ahead but today there seems to be a problem with the East Germans who also brought up that they had no connection to the Hitler regime at all, that everything nasty was done essentially by the West Germans.

RUEDY: That was very much the case. We used to laugh about that that you know it was as if the East Germans got out from under the guilt business completely. You had the impression that in all of the Third Reich these were Bavarians who came over and South Germans or whatever and took over the country and did all these terrible, horrible things. Then thanks to the Red Army they were finally kicked out with great bloodshed and mayhem obviously and they all went to West Germany and established the Federal Republic of Germany and now we communists were morally pure and we're establishing this guilt-free regime on East German soil.

Q: How about the attitude that you were picking up towards the Soviets?

RUEDY: It was very much mixed. I remember one conversation I had with the guy from this

GDR academy, this diplomatic think tank. There was a question of well doesn't the presence of half a million Soviet troops on your territory impinge on your own state sovereignty? He came up with the very logical thing of if there weren't these five hundred thousand Red Army troops on our country we wouldn't need a sovereignty at all. He was right. I think people even East Germans saw it as a necessary evil even people who were committed to the GDR regime and there were some who thought that our state wouldn't exist without the presence of these. They didn't have much contact with the GDR population. I mean you went out, and we traveled around East Germany a lot and saw the Soviet troops all over the place. You saw the tanks and we stayed in one place up north of Berlin and heard the tanks rumbling not far away at night doing their exercises. MiGs would fly low over the lakes and the military presence was everywhere. But, there wasn't much contact I think and people would chuckle about it.

Q: Well were you picking up, I mean later you were in the Soviet Union but were you picking up the feeling that gee East Germany is a dynamic industrial might? This became sort of a leitmotif that went around and when the place collapsed they realized my God they really got stuck with a mess, an economic mess. I mean was it part of your...

RUEDY: I don't know, now in retrospect. I mean it was interesting things that we thought they were going on with what was it, coal gasification, because East Germany was desperate for energy. Gas to run the tanks was a big problem for the old Third Reich folks so they kind of inherited the technology of Ververmacht and were trying to do coal gasification.

Q: You would see the cars during World War II with these monstrosities looking like boilers stuck on top of cars.

RUEDY: Yeah, so there was interest that maybe there was technology going on in coal gasification and liquefaction and various other things. People were still waiting eight years to get a lousy car. There was a lot of propaganda about the wonderful strides they were making and how things were getting better and better but when you looked around people were not living very well and it was just not a very dynamic place.

Q: Were you seeing, particularly of the intellectual elite, music and cultural things sort of a steady leakage to the west?

RUEDY: Very much so, very much so. This is all ancient history now but fifteen, twenty years ago this was a big deal that everybody in East Germany could watch West German TV and getting over to West Germany was like going to the moon. But you can get "abends kommt der klassen feind" (at night comes the class enemy) so everybody would be watching the same programs on West German television. They wouldn't talk about it the next day in the office or school because that was a bad thing if you had watched West German TV. But people were very aware of the West and very aware of western culture, western consumerism. People detracted from that a little bit -- I mean here we were building this idealistic communist society and over there they had all gone consumer crazy. But there was a great deal of envy and a great feeling that well geeze if it weren't for being stuck in this GDR we could be doing that too.

Q: We were sponsoring some trips to the United States?

RUEDY: Yeah.

Q: How did these work out?

RUEDY: Very well, we didn't have a large program; we had a couple of programs. We had IREX, which was an exchange of research scholars. The research scholars did no lecturing. It was strictly American researchers going to East Germany to the GDR and GDR researchers coming to the United States. When I was there that was a very small program and as I recall it amounted to 36 man months per year so it didn't amount to a whole lot of people. While I was there we increased it to 64. We doubled it as I recall and they would present their slate of researchers that they wanted to come to the United States and we would present our slate and we would knock off their nuclear scientists and their physicists. They were interested in access to American science and we were interested in sending over constitutional scholars and contemporary historians. They didn't want those so it was always sort of a give and take as to who would be acceptable to the program.

We got a great deal out of that program because we sent over lots of scholars who were going into archives that Americans had not had access to since 1930 and some of them were doing great work on Bach and Martin Luther because that is where the archives were. Some of the others were into much more sensitive areas talking about more contemporary issues. GDR party archives stuff like that. That was a no-no. You couldn't get into that and great resourcefulness and purpose were needed. A few of the scholars did it but it was tough. We had some really good American scholars and I was there for three years. After they would get back to the States we would remain in contact and they would send us copies of their books and their monographs. And by God by the end of three years in East Berlin I had a pretty good size shop that they had sent me and I looked at the shelf and I thought "my God these are all books that would not have been written and scholarship that would not have been done but for the existence of this IREX program."

So that was one thing that was on the academic side. No student exchange. The IREXers generally did not lecture before GDR student groups; some of the more resourceful ones developed fairly wide contacts in the GDR and the community. In fact, one guy got married to an East German economist and that was an interesting story. She had a hell of a time in getting her exit visa; but a great couple. I kept in contact with them for years and years afterward.

On the official exchange side we would invite a number of GDR folks to come to the United States under the International Visitors Program. I forget how many we would invite in the course of a year but we would invite writers, film makers, some government academics to come to the United States for generally a month and in some cases a longer period of time but generally a month. They would travel around the country and get a sense of who we were as a society. One guy I remember, he was sort of an ideology type, a friendly enough guy but a real convinced communist. He was from one of the research institutes and he came to the United States and then over the week, he spoke pretty good English. He was one of those people who were coming in to study the United States and he was amazed with the openness actually. He could travel around on his own, he didn't need an escort or interpreter so people in Washington would set up

appointments for him. Then he got a rental car one weekend and he locked his key in his rental car and what do I do now? Somebody said you have to call the police. Oh my God if I call the police and they find out that I'm an East German, what's going to happen to me? He said the policeman came over and said, "Oh locked the key in the car, well not a big deal." So the policeman got this tool out and reached in and pulled the key out. He never even checked my driver's license. If I had known that I would have asked for a better car. But he was just really impressed by the openness and the complete informality and the complete lack of this control police state. He was up in Maine and locked his key in his car and a friendly policeman comes and unlocks the car for him and sends him on his way. That just made a tremendous impression.

Another guy a good, good filmmaker, he made a great film. He had that film in the can before we sent him to Iowa City, to send him to the Iowa Writers Program for two months. The film, Solo Sunny, was about a young East German woman who felt really tied down and closed in and claustrophobic in this very small society and she really identified with modernism and rock bands and stuff like that. She wasn't all that bright, she was kind of a working class type but her great ambition was to do a solo and in Marxist terms solos aren't good but the solo became sort of a metaphor to break away from the whole destructive part of the Marxist state. Anyway a very bright guy. I don't know whatever happened to him but he was very much moved by the experiences he had. He said he grew professionally a lot by that experience and obviously for a couple of months. So we were doing that type of thing.

Q: What sort of cultural exhibits struck the most, you might say, responsive cord?

RUEDY: A lot of interest in American film and we did an American film week in three East German cities, not in Berlin. We ran into great issues which we didn't realize we would get into, copyright and copyright holders of the film very often were West German companies and very good dubbed versions of the film would exist but we couldn't get at them because they were interested in showing them on West German television or whatever. That got terribly, terribly complicated but we carried it off finally and we had some good American films, the classic American. They were interested in more contemporary stuff but we couldn't get those so these were classic American films. It was a western as I can recall and I think maybe a Mr. Smith Goes to Washington type film and Capra type of film, I forget. So anyway there was a great deal of interest in whatever film.

Literature, American literature was also a great interest to people and there again they just had no access to American literature in books and in, you would see it on television but books, a copy of an American book they all existed in German translation but they were not available in the GDR, just not available, they just were not.

Q: Was this because actually a lot of books just have no recourse...

RUEDY: No it was strictly ideological, this was literature from the West and they didn't do it. Sometimes interesting I still got it I think from a professor that I knew did a very interesting translation, a good translation, of poems of the professional poet...

Q: Robinson. Robert Lowell.

RUEDY: Yes, exactly Robert Lowell. He did a really good German translation of Robert Lowell's poetry. He did a great introduction, which saw Robert Lowell not as this great confessional poet looking into his soul in his own madness and stuff like that but really interacting with capitalist consumer society. Of course, you can read that in Lowell. There is a lot of that in Lowell and it was a very good what is it for the union dead where the rock of ages becomes a Moser safe and survives the blast and all that stuff. Well anyway he was looking at Robert Lowell from a more Marxist standpoint but it was a legitimate interesting, I think intellectual, honest way of looking at it and here it was a Robert Lowell collection but you didn't see much of that. A lot of that stuff was available in the BAD in excellent German translations but did not make their way to East Germany because all of that stuff was confiscated at the border, it could not get in.

Q: How about American music? The kids wearing jeans added much to the dismay of whom, the critics East and West?

RUEDY: They loved it, they loved American music, American jazz. We had a couple of American music groups over there. My boss who was a good, good guy a very senior Foreign Service officer, Ed Alexander, a man in his late-eighties now and I still keep in contact with him and he lives here in Bethesda. He is a specialist in music, he is a musicologist and was a music guy for RIAS, Radio in the American Sector, early in his career. So he did most of the music and stuff and me not being musical I didn't get into that much. I did more on the literature side and stuff like that.

Q: You left there in 1980, where did you go?

RUEDY: I went from Berlin in 1980, East Berlin you know we advertised as a hardship post and it really was a hardship post, it was tough in many ways. From there I went to the best assignment that I had in my Foreign Service career because they sent me to Dusseldorf as branch public affairs officer and that was my onward assignment after leaving East Berlin.

RICHARD E. THOMPSON
Diplomatic Courier
Frankfurt (1977-1982)

Mr. Johnson, a Californian, was educated at the University of Southern California, the University of Madrid, Spain and Occidental College. Joining the Department of State as a Diplomatic Courier, his career took him to diplomatic courier centers in Washington DC; Frankfurt, Germany; and Bangkok, from which he serviced US Embassies throughout the world, collecting and delivering diplomatic pouches. His later assignments in Washington were of a senior managerial nature.

Q: After Bangkok, in about 1977, you went back to Frankfurt. To do the same thing that you had

done before?

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: Any new circumstances or situation that was different than the previous time?

THOMPSON: During that period we gradually stopped having paired trips to the eastern countries. It started I believe with Yugoslavia. We started going there alone. And then for reasons of security and budgetary restraints, we stopped going on paired trips to every eastern country except to Moscow. And then finally that ended as well, but that ended later in the '80s and '90s.

Q: You continued to do all of these trips on aircraft.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: Still in Eastern Europe on Austrian Airlines.

THOMPSON: Yes, but that was a gradual change as well. As Lufthansa started to turn around shuttle flights to these various European capitals, we started using Lufthansa out of Frankfurt.

Q: And then American carriers started going to Moscow, didn't they?

THOMPSON: Yes, but not from Frankfurt. They were coming from here.

Q: Directly from New York.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: What else in this period? You were there for five years in Frankfurt.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: What else happened in that period? I remember you came to Cyprus when I was there.

THOMPSON: [laughter] No, I just continued to carry the bags. You mean what happened as far as our organization, I suppose. The trips changed from time to time depending on the airline schedules and the whims of the posts.

**SHIRLEY E. RUEDY
Wife of USIS Officer
East Berlin (1977-1980)**

Wife of Public Affairs Officer

Dusseldorf (1980-1984)

Shirley Ruedy was born in Virginia and raised in Ohio. She was educated Ohio Wesleyan and Duke Universities and at several universities abroad. Before becoming a Foreign Service Officer in 1987, Mrs. Ruedy accompanied her USIA husband on assignments in Iran and Germany. As an FSO, she served as Political Officer in Bonn and Moscow as well as in the State Department in Washington, where she dealt primarily with Soviet Union and Regional European matters. Mrs. Ruedy was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: You were in East Berlin from when to when?

RUEDY: We were in East Berlin from 1977 to 1980.

Q: That's when the Foreign Service was changing too. It was beginning to open up.

RUEDY: Yes, that's right, although she didn't have a very easy time of it. She and her husband were separated much more than my husband and I because I came in just a little bit later. She was still going through the very tough times.

Q: It wasn't a bed of roses, but it was changing.

RUEDY: It was changing. At least the idea was there, the possibility was there. So I started thinking about that.

Q: How was your German, by the way?

RUEDY: I had never studied German. When we arrived in East Berlin, the embassy was going through a lot of growing pains. They had been in a hotel, and they finally opened up the building and were starting to set up their offices. They didn't have enough housing for everybody so we went into this most dreadful apartment I can ever remember living in. It was at the corner of Lenin Allee and Ho Chi Minh Strasse. It was out beyond the stockyards. The building was full of Cubans, Yemenis, and some other Arabs. It was eighteen stories, one of these hideous Soviet things where there were two tiny little elevators that served hundreds of people; one was always broken. There were roaches everywhere. It was a horrible place. Carolyn and I arrived in January of 1977 to face this, and it was not a happy time. We didn't have a phone for a long time, we didn't have a car, and I didn't have any German. It was tough; it was a tough time; probably also some postpartum depression there. I had just left a very tearful mother who thought she was being deprived of their first and only grandchild. It was very, very tough. My husband was very excited about his work, very involved and very often in his own world. I was trying to deal with this home situation which was just dreadful. The baby was sick a lot; we had to go to the doctor; we had to drive all the way over to West Berlin. We were lucky to have that, but still it involved some logistic planning. I remember that Castro came to town. The building went nuts. We had so many Cubans there. They were throwing all kinds of things out the window. It was just crazy. There was so much drunkenness. It was hard to sleep at night; you couldn't open the windows because all these people were drinking and yelling and screaming. It was just an awful place

Q: How long were you there?

RUEDY: We were there several months, and I finally got to the point of where I was saying if this doesn't improve, if they can't find us a better place to live...Because literally everybody else was living either in the really nice part of the East Berlin or they were down on the Leipsiger Strasse which was right near Checkpoint Charlie. For some reason, we were out miles from anybody. I said if we don't get out of here I'm going. I'm just not going to do this. Finally some inspectors came through and I can't remember for sure whether they talked to me but they definitely talked to my husband, and they came out and looked at our place. We were then able to move to Leipsiger Strasse, and we were much happier people.

Q: How did you find the embassy? Was it a friendly embassy?

RUEDY: It was small, in a beautiful old building, very elegant. I got to know several people there. The Marines were great. They had Halloween parties for the kids. We did things like caroling, which drove the East police, the Volkspolizei nuts. We drove around the city and sang Christmas carols. I remember when the Chinese government decided to open up and improve relations with the U.S. the Chinese cultural attaché called my husband and invited us to dinner at the Chinese embassy. This also drove the Volkspolizei nuts. They followed us all the way there, they sat outside while we ate our meal, and then they followed us all the way home. The meal was tremendous. We were the only ones there. It was just one of those strange little diplomatic things which affect you personally in ways which you never expected.

Q: What part of the USIA action did your husband have?

RUEDY: He was cultural affairs.

Q: I would think that that would open up stuff for you, wouldn't it?

RUEDY: Yes. We had a grand time. We did all kinds of really interesting things. We went to the theater; we met all kinds of interesting writers; we had access to a writer's club. We had the most interesting invitations in the embassy.

Q: The East Germans put a hell of a lot of their money into the cultural field being good Germans. In fact, I think a lot of East Germans now are pretty unhappy that a lot of these artists were just cut loose.

RUEDY: No, that's right. If you were a certain kind of artist you had it made. Katarina Witt, the great skater, was a personal favorite I understand of Eric Honecker. She did well. If you were a dissident artist, then you didn't do so well. We had friends who were baptized Christians; they didn't do very well. We had friends who were writers who wrote one way officially but then wrote another way in their personal lives. So there was a great deal of schizophrenia, but absolutely fascinating.

Q: Were you able to put your curve professional career into anything while you were there?

RUEDY: Well, yes. One of the positive decisions I made when we were living in the old terrible apartment was to start working on German. So I got the FSI German books and tapes, and I started really seriously working on my German. I took some classes at the embassy and I continued that. By the time we left East Berlin I could get along; it was ok. What I decided to do was again I was able to teach for the University of Maryland. So I traveled to West Berlin to teach courses which interested the East German Stasi a lot because my husband and I recently requested and received our Stasi records. I don't know what they thought I was doing, but it was noted that I made frequent trips to West Berlin where I met with military people, although they were in my classes of course.

Q: East Germany had been touted as being the jewel of the Soviet bloc. Looking at it close in did you get the feeling that this was another disaster or not?

RUEDY: Definitely. I couldn't believe the kind of writing that was done about the descriptions of East Germany. My husband is an excellent German speaker and we were off in the boonies of the GDR (German Democratic Republic) every weekend. What we saw out in the countryside was appalling. There was a shortage of laundry detergent and so they couldn't wash their children's clothes and so the kids couldn't go to school. There wasn't enough salt; there were just terrible shortages of the most basic things. The place was horribly polluted. Down around Halle and such places when you drove through there in you could hardly breathe. The damage was so great. We learned that newborn babies down around Halle were sometimes taken off into other parts of the country so that they would have a chance at life, because of the terrible threat of what they called industrial croup. It was a disaster.

Q: How did you find the embassy officers? Was this sort of the unanimous opinion or were people looking at it with slightly rosier eyes?

RUEDY: No, I don't remember people being very rosy about it, definitely not.

Q: You were there when our embassy was taken over in Tehran. How was this treated in East Germany? And how were you getting reflections on events there?

RUEDY: It hit home to the embassy family in a very personal way because there was a man who I think was an economics officer in the embassy. He was allergic to cigarette smoking. The embassy was not smoke free, and he protested. He didn't like working in this environment. So he curtailed and he was sent to Tehran and became one of the hostages a few weeks after he arrived. We were very personally concerned. I did not feel any surprise whatsoever. It seemed to me what one would expect.

Q: Were any of your students part of that?

RUEDY: I often think about that. I must say, if I taught English to any of the revolutionary guards, I often think about that. I don't have any concrete evidence though.

Q: I saw on TV the other day, the Vice President of Iran who apparently was one of those

students, spoke flawless English.

RUEDY: I just don't know. It's probably possible.

Q: Did you mix and mingle much with the East Germans?

RUEDY: We knew that anyone we met had to report. That said we did have people that we thought we had friendships with. We also had "friends", a couple who showed up everywhere we went; it turns out that the couple was assigned to us, to kind of keep track of us. They were very nice people, and we had nice conversations with them. It was sort of like they knew we knew they knew sort of thing. After a while you just get used to it.

Q: This is how one survives so it's not that awful as you come to accept this. As you say, you knew your apartment was being bugged.

RUEDY: Right. We knew that anyone who came to our apartment had to report. We kind of looked out for people. We didn't put anyone, I don't think, in a dangerous situation. We were very aware of all that. As I mentioned earlier of a surprise is how easy it became to have that sense of the third person around. I remember my husband saying well I just hope they don't have a camera in the bedroom. We sort of laughed about that but then we thought, well they probably did.

Q: I spent five years in Yugoslavia and when we went to Zagreb we were given the same room that everybody else had. We used a sort of laugh and say good night in Serbian to the wall. Did you get involved in any sort of embassy activities?

RUEDY: Well, there was Inga Parker's jazzercise class and my German lessons. I was good friends with a woman named Ramsey Pavitt. She was married to Jim Pavitt who recently retired as chief of covert operations for the CIA. I didn't find out until many years later that she was also a CIA agent, and so all the time that I was shopping with her because she also had children and our daughters were good friends that again the Stasi probably thought I was somehow involved.

Q: They put out a book called Who's Who in the CIA? I remember seeing that in a bookstore in Washington and I looked in it and there was my name. I guess I fit a certain pattern or something like that. I don't think they really cared because they were trying to blacken a lot of names.

RUEDY: By that time our daughter was three, and we had a second one on the way. I was just sort of concerned about my daughter missing out on preschool and this kind of thing. There wasn't really a good place to play outside. Through the Pavitts, we found a kindergarten which was owned by the Catholic Church in East Berlin. We started sending my daughter Carolyn to this kindergarten run by this woman whose name was Sister Felicitas. She was just a saint, and she had all these little children and that's where my daughter started to learn German. About the only illegal thing that I did in my time in East Berlin was to sneak in schools supplies for them from West Berlin. We would bring in paper and scissors and all this kind of thing. They were very, very poor. They ran on love. They really had so little, but they were so kind and so gentle and so good with the children. Carolyn remembers Sister Felicitas. They had their little cots

where they took their little naps; it was all very German. But I just remember the love of these people and the odds against which they were working. There was a waiting list; a lot of people wanted to send their kids there and not to the state sponsored schools.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover there?

RUEDY: In East Berlin? Well, there was the night that all these East German soldiers, tanks and missiles suddenly appeared on the streets, a bright moonlight in the middle of the night. I woke my husband and said, "Oh, my God, there's some kind of military action is starting, you'd better call the Marines." He said, "Oh, no. They're just practicing for the big May Day parade." They were coming out of Metro stations that weren't used anymore. There was this whole army with all this equipment. I'll never forget that. In the countryside we would drive past whole towns that had been taken over by the Soviet army. Those were fascinating. It would be a whole town just of Russians, the little girls with the ribbons in their hair. On Saturdays we would see the Soviet soldiers had obviously done their own laundry; their trousers were hanging out the windows of their living quarters. I remember thinking when I saw some of these soldiers, especially some of them from the "Stans", not the white Russians but the Asiatic Russians, that these were some tough looking dudes. I began to lose some of my liberalism. I began to think these guys are serious; these are fierce fighters. I wouldn't want my son or my husband or anybody I know to have to face these guys. They were tough.

Q: You left there in 1980? Where did you go?

RUEDY: Düsseldorf.

Q: What were you doing there then?

RUEDY: My husband had been posted there as the DPAO (Deputy Public Affairs Officer) for the consulate in Düsseldorf. We arrived with two young children. We were given a very nice house in a German residential area. It was a time for me of settling in with my young children and also becoming part of the German neighborhood. That was kind of new and unique. No compound living there, we had German neighbors on either side. My oldest daughter started to go to a German kindergarten run by the German Catholic Church. We got to know some of the other families, and I had lots of opportunities to practice my German. I had to deal with the German pediatrician auf Deutsch so I learned a lot of terminology of childhood illnesses. I got very interested in the kindergarten, and I was actually elected – maybe the first American to be elected – to elternrat which is sort of like our PTA (parent teacher association). We met once a month and talked about issues auf Deutsch about the kindergarten. I remember one particular meeting that really I was in over my head in vocabulary because it was all about what children should be told about sexuality. That was pretty difficult for me. I learned a lot of vocabulary that night. That was kind of what we're about. Düsseldorf is in the British sector and so they're a lot of British installations. Right down the street from us was the British equivalent of the PX (Post Exchange). They had a movie theater, a book store. We also began to attend the old Anglican Church. It was a beautiful old building right across from the Rhine. To get there we walked through the Nordpark which in itself is an absolutely gorgeous place. We would just walk through the park and then go to the Anglican Church. There again, I was exposed to British

Anglicanism which was a new experience. I eventually started teaching there in the Volkshochschule, and I had the advanced students who were working on their literature courses so I taught Faulkner, Hemingway, and lots of classic American authors. That was fascinating too.

Q: You were there from 1980 to ...?

RUEDY: To 1984.

Q: Then you got a real dose of this. When you arrived there how would you put German American relations as seen from Düsseldorf?

RUEDY: They were very good, especially with older people. There were still people who could remember being liberated by the Americans. We lived in a neighborhood of well-to-do people. On one side was a woman who had escaped from East Germany and come to the West and become quite wealthy. She owned a major department store chain. On the other side was a man who had been in the German army but was very glad that the Americans had won. In talking with them, and also with a man from whom the consulate rented our house had been in the war, so that was kind of different, an older generation. Given my husband's work we socialized quite often with people who were interested in America or who wouldn't be seeking out the USIA or ICA, as it was called at that time. I did encounter a great deal of hostility among college and university students, some of whom were in my classes. Our whole family remembers vividly some of the Peace Marches. That was the time of the debates over intermediate nuclear forces.

Q: That was in response to the SS-20's and our putting in the Pershings.

RUEDY: That's right. For some reason, I suppose it was because of the centrality of where we were living but one morning a huge group of demonstrators gathered. I don't think it had anything to do with the fact that we lived there. I think it was just a convenient place for them together. But it was a huge group of anti-American demonstrators. Our oldest daughter who was about four or five at the time still remembers that and is still upset by it, because there were all these pictures of Americans in not very flattering ways. My daughter at that time being in kindergarten understood German, and she still remembers it as really terrifying. The idea that all these people hated Americans is something that left quite an impression. We tried to explain to her that this was just one group of Germans, and she didn't have to be afraid of Germans, but they were loud, they were noisy, they had lots of signs and they marched. It was something we all remember very well. That anti-Americanism was there too.

Q: Where was Düsseldorf on the political spectrum?

RUEDY: I think Düsseldorf has generally been an SPD (Social Democratic Party) area. The Minister-counselor for Nordrhein-Westfalen went on to become the President of Germany. It was kind of old-fashioned SPD. As I lived in Germany and after I joined the Foreign Service and became a political officer, I began to understand that there were a couple of different SPDs. There was the old-style SPD, represented by this man. They had grown up as part of the trade union movement, and represented those values. Then there was the SPD of Oskar Lafontaine from the Saarland. They were called, not just by American observers but by other politicians in

Germany, as the Chablis and cheese SPD. They were usually quite well off and, while they realized that they depended on the trade unions for their political support, they were also interested in kind of the good life. They were a different breed. I think Schroeder is part of that new SPD.

Q: Was there any evident Green movement while you were there?

RUEDY: I believe there was, but I was not really focused on that at the time. I'm trying to remember if I even saw Green posters. I don't recall.

Q: What about with your German neighbors and all. Did you find yourself getting involved in explaining the introduction of missiles into Germany in response to the SS-20?

RUEDY: Not really, because as I said, these neighbors had been through the war, and I think they understood the reason for our actions.

Q: Actually, it turned out to be the right response.

RUEDY: Exactly.

Q: The Soviets overplayed their hand. What about your students? Was this a Hochschule?

RUEDY: Yes. It was a Hochschule.

Q: Students in the Hochschule and the universities are different breed of cat in any country. How did you find them?

RUEDY: I had a variety of students. I had younger people, I had many middle-aged people who were wanting to just improve their English. I had some folks from other countries who had immigrated to Germany; I had some students from Yugoslavia. They were very interested in learning English. There was a degree of the anti-Americanism among the younger ones, and, in fact, there was kind of a mini-rebellion when I was introduced as their English teacher because I didn't speak British English. I responded by developing a course comparing British and American English and pointed out to them that, I thought this might appeal to their German concern for order in grammar, American grammar is much more conservative than British grammar and that American English is much more creative in absorbing words from other languages than is British English. That was my response to that, to try to "enlighten" these young people.

Q: Did you find that, by and large, there was an understanding of the United States and American institutions and development or was it only from the TV and the movies?

RUEDY: I would say that it's very similar to what I feel today. The young Germans were enamored with American pop culture; our music, especially jazz, rock music, this kind of thing, but they really thought that we are superficial, that we don't understand history, don't take things seriously enough, that we don't study hard enough, but then on the other hand, they were all

trying very hard to go study in the U.S. Their responses are contradictory, paradoxical and it's the same today.

Q: Did you find a certain amount of distancing yourself by the fact you were in the British Zone? Did this sort of keep you from having to deal with the normal problems of having a lot of young American soldiers sitting in a country?

RUEDY: Yes.

Q: I think I at one time actually was part of "occupying" Germany, then we changed over and I was "supporting" Germany. I was first there in 1953 or 4 as an enlisted man, you know young and carefree guys.

RUEDY: Right: Well, we didn't have so many rowdy Americans, but we had Brits. Are you familiar with Faulkner's short story The Bear. Trying to teach that to American freshmen is tough; trying to teach that to Germans is nearly impossible. Trying to explain to them what wilderness means to an American, what our relationship to nature is, of course somewhat contradictory, the whole business of the coming-of-age ritual that is implied by the shooting of wild game. That is such an American story, and it was a great challenge to teach that, but I did feel that I made some progress. I thought based on essays and things that the students sort of got it. They respected Faulkner as a writer because he was so difficult; they thought given their German prejudice against American superficiality, here was a writer who was not superficial so they respected very much those American literary classics.

Q: Did you feel for, this was when Ronald Reagan came in and it must have been sort of a shocker to the Germans?

RUEDY: That's an understatement. Talk about Americans superficiality, lack of preparation, the cowboy; they saw all these things in Reagan. Hollywood, you name it, he fit the stereotype. They just couldn't believe that this could happen to the American people. Then they assumed that the American people were a) ignorant and b) misled.

Q: Did you find any sympathy, understanding or desire for the Soviets?

RUEDY: Among the SPD, yes. I found out later that the SPD had regular consultations, at least regular meetings, with members of the SED over across the border. I guess since I'm retired I now have the freedom to say this, but when I was doing political work at Embassy Bonn, one of my jobs was to attend all the political party meetings. I found the SPD meetings to be very Soviet in the way they were controlled. I much preferred the Greens. The Greens really did practice a very radical kind of democracy. The SPD did not as far as I could see understand the real democracy; everything was prearranged, at least that was my impression. They seemed old-fashioned; they seemed part of the world that was crumbling.

Q: Did you get any feel what the people you knew thought about to East Germany, the Osties?

RUEDY: There was a great deal of pity, I would say. Of course, there were a lot of divided

families and so there were people who still made their trek and tried to get in to see their relatives, so that was still going on. The people that I talked to seemed to have this feeling that the East Germans lived on the moon, that they had become a different volk. I tried to explain, probably not very well, having lived in the East and moved to the West is that I saw so many similarities. It was indeed one volk. Düsseldorf is not Bavaria. Düsseldorf is a city of culture and finance and sophistication. I think they had a hard time. I think the Düsseldorf people I got to know had a hard time connecting culturally with East Germans, although it was my feeling that those cultural similarities ran very deep even to the kind of paperwork one had to fill out for various things that you needed from if the government. The daily rhythm of life was very similar. The Düsseldorfers weren't very receptive to what I was trying to explain.

Q: After four years, in '84, wither?

RUEDY: We went back to the United States and by that time we had added to our family. We had a third child, our son Daniel was born in Ratingen, which is a suburb of Düsseldorf. I did want to mention a couple of high points in Düsseldorf. We got to entertain members of the Utah Symphony, and for me as an English major and teacher I had the great delight of having coffee by myself with one of the greatest critics, in my mind, that our country has produced and that's Helen Vendler. So I sat down and had coffee with her which is probably every graduate student's dream. That was such a wonderful experience. We talked about all sorts of things. She was a charming and extremely bright lady.

Q: I take it that in Düsseldorf when we were able to bring and cultural presentations, they sort of gobbled them up, didn't they?

RUEDY: Yes, they did. While we were there Nordrhein-Westfalen celebrated the 300th anniversary of the first German immigrant to the United States and this was made much of. The President came, and my husband got an award for all his hard work. I think he found the mayors of the cities involved and the government officials were all very receptive. This was a big success. That took place while we were in Düsseldorf. Our time in Düsseldorf, my memories of it, the demonstrations aside, the anti-Americanism aside, are very positive. We met some very fine people there, my husband enjoyed his work he had a lot to do with the university there; it was a wonderful family time and for him professionally.

Q: Then you came back to Washington in 1984? What was up?

RUEDY: We bought a house for our now, quite large family. My husband went off to work at USIA; he was the German desk officer, was extremely busy and put in very long hours. I was trying to get us settled and trying to decide what I was going to do. Again, the idea of joining the Foreign Service emerged, and I took the various exams, and I was sworn in June of 1987.

ROBERT T. HENNEMEYER
Consul General
Munich (1978-1981)

Ambassador Robert T. Hennemeyer was born in Germany and spent part of his childhood in the United States. After serving in the U.S. Army during World War II and receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1947, he joined the Foreign Service in 1942. He served in Tanganyika and was ambassador to the Gambia. Ambassador Hennemeyer was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.

HENNEMEYER: I went as Consul General to Munich. Germany had very large consulates general in terms of responsibilities and size of post, somebody once did the arithmetic for me, and I have no reason to refute it, which said that the Consulate General in Munich, in terms of personnel, was larger than 75% of our embassies.

The responsibilities for the consuls general in Germany were very similar. The Consul General in Munich had a discrete consular district of the old kingdom of Bavaria, which in German is noted for feelings of separatism and differentness from the rest of Germany. Of course, prior to 1871, we used to have a legation in Munich. So there is a tradition of an American diplomatic presence, if you will, in Munich.

Obviously, the consul general's writ extends as far as the ambassador decides to let it, but in my time, working in Dusseldorf when the Ambassador was Martin Hillenbrand, and working in Munich where the Ambassador was Walter Stoessel -- both of them dear and old friends of mine -- I was given to understand that I was their pro consul. They told me in general terms what they wanted, and I had a free hand. This was important, because in both posts, I had a variety of representatives of other government departments that I was supposed to supervise. There was not only the usual U.S. Information Agency apparatus involved, but in the case of Munich, there was a DEA contingent, a large Commerce Department presence, a very large CIA process -- an enormous one, principally because the German equivalent of CIA is located in Munich, not in the capital. There was a Justice Department representative, an Army intelligence representative, a representative of the U.S. Chief of Forces in Heidelberg also there, not to mention a large Voice of America office housed in the Consulate, and a watching brief which I had over Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. So it was an enormous American presence, and one that required the same kind of careful care and feeding that an ambassador has to employ to keep all his representatives of other agencies pulling together.

I never had any problem with USIA, especially in Munich, because the public affairs officer was one I chose myself and brought there. But I did have a potential problem when the Commerce Department decided to maintain a separate overseas presence and to have their own commercial reporting service. One of the early suggestions made by a senior commercial officer in Bonn was that since they were now separate, the commercial officers in Munich, the three that I had, would no longer be subject to the usual consular duty roster. That is, they wouldn't have to pull weekend duty, as all other officers of the post had to do, including the USIA officers. That was solved by my responding to the commercial officer in Bonn, "Well, in that case, they wouldn't require consular titles, and I would so inform the Bavarian Government." He immediately dropped his idea. A German Land actually has many more powers than an American state. That made political contacts important. The most interesting thing going on while I was there was that

Franz Strauss, the minister of Bavaria, and the leader of the Christian Socialist Union, which was the sister party of the Christian Democratic Union, was the candidate of both those parties for election as chancellor of the republic. So much of my time there was following the election campaign and maintaining very close relations with Strauss, because what he had to say, both publicly and privately, on a variety of issues were of great interest to Washington, since there was a very real possibility that he might be the next chancellor.

I had known Strauss before when I served in Munich in 1956. I saw him from time to time over the years. First of all, he was an extraordinarily intelligent man and a real leader, a very powerful personality. The Germans have an expression to describe one who had a serious fault in that he was sometimes unpredictable. He would sometimes not be as politic as a politician should be. The famous Spiegel affair, for example, when he was Minister of Defense, when he ordered the arrest of certain editors of Spiegel magazine on the charge of publishing classified material, exceeding his authority, which resulted eventually in his departure as Minister of Defense. But he was a highly intelligent man, perhaps the only German prominent politician of that time that I knew whose only intellectual equal was Helmut Schmidt. In fact, Schmidt, when Strauss left the national Parliament and went to Munich as Minister-President, Schmidt publicly expressed his regret, saying that the Bundestag wouldn't be as interesting anymore, because they were intellectual equals in debate.

His public image was that of a bull in a china shop -- the robust, rough-and-tumble politician. His private image was of a highly intellectual, very well-read man, who had a considerable ego and was difficult sometimes to get a few words in, his conversations sometimes tended to be monologues, but a very interesting man. He was never boring. I rather liked him.

I think since we are recording this, I will say something that nobody else knows. He gave me the usual farewell when I was leaving Munich, and surprised me with a decoration, which we are not supposed to accept when we are on active duty. But I didn't know it was coming, so I couldn't ask and couldn't turn it down. After that formal farewell, I think literally the day before I was leaving, he called and asked me to have lunch with him. He wanted to talk to me. So we had lunch, just the two of us, in a restaurant. He had arranged that nobody would be seated at tables near us.

He unburdened himself about the election campaign which he had lost and about the opposition party propaganda, which portrayed him as a kind of unreconstructed Nazi. It was clear that this had hurt him deeply. He went on and on about this. I think our lunch lasted about three hours. He went on and on about this, saying, "They painted me brown," referring to the Nazi period. He said, "When everybody who knows me, knows I was always black," meaning very Catholic. It is a fact that Strauss was never a member of a Nazi organization, unlike some of those who were using that charge against him. I remember he said to me, "This was grossly unjust, and the real browns profited by painting me brown." That was the way he put it. This is not something I have told anybody. I think it perhaps sheds another light on Strauss.

MARTEN VAN HEUVEN

**Political Officer
Bonn (1978-1981)**

Marten Van Heuven was born in the Netherlands in 1932. He received his BA and LLB from Yale University and his MIA from Columbia University. His positions abroad included Berlin, Brussels, The Hague, Bonn and Geneva. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed him on January 31, 2003.

Q: In '78, what did you do?

VAN HEUVEN: My next assignment was just up the Rhine, in Bonn at the American Embassy as the deputy two in the political section. I was number two for one year and then I succeeded Dick Smyser for another two years as political counselor.

Q: *So this would be '78 to '81.*

VAN HEUVEN: Yes. And all that time, except for the last few months, my ambassador was Walter Stoessel, a prince of a man whom I came to respect enormously. In the spring of 1981, Arthur Burns succeeded Stoessel, and I accompanied him with others when he presented his credentials. I overlapped with Mr. Burns for only two months.

Q: *In Germany in '78-'81, this had to be a period of high intensity. The SS-Pershing issue must have been very strong.*

VAN HEUVEN: It was one of the most raucous of many issues that we dealt with at the time. In the end, we got the support of Chancellor Schmidt and the Social Democratic Party, under Schmidt's leadership. But it did cost him his job and it led to a new government with Kohl. I'm not saying that the issue led directly to his outcome, but since this issue roiled public opinion more than any other, there was some sort of causal relationship. Perhaps Schmidt was at the end of his domestic political tether anyway. But we did get full support from Schmidt, who was not an easy man to talk to or persuade. The German government came through on this in an important way.

Q: *Could you talk about the American-German relationship when you arrived in '78? This is the Carter period still.*

VAN HEUVEN: Going from The Hague to Bonn entailed a radical shifting of gears on my part. A little over a hundred miles is not a great distance, but the difference between the political worlds of The Hague and Bonn were vast. The optic in The Hague was narrow, somewhat inward looking. You could discuss till the cows came home the ins and outs of Dutch politics. Bonn brought me back to major issues of Europe on peace and security. From The Hague, the Soviet Union was light years away. In Bonn, the Soviet Union was almost in your living room. In Bonn, you were thinking about divided Germany, about European peace and security, and about how to deal with Soviet communism in Germany and beyond. Bonn was a wholly different setting and required a wholly different way of thinking. The American role in Germany and the American equities in Germany were comparable to the ones that I was familiar with in the

Netherlands, though on a different scale. Most of the U.S. forces in Europe were stationed in Germany. We had to worry about Berlin. We needed to keep a close eye on whether the German SPD would continue on the track of full support of the Atlantic alliance and partnership with the U.S. - although at the time partnership was not the word - or whether the latent tendency represented by certain people in the SPD to strike a deal with the East and neutralize Germany in exchange for reunification would gain the upper hand. It was not in our interest to see such an evolution. Later on, Dick Smyser and I spent a good bit of our time as political counselors watching carefully for indications that perhaps German policy might again go in a fundamentally different direction from the one that we had come to expect and rely on. Such a turn of policy was an option at the end of the war, until Adenauer made the choice between being neutral in the middle or being part of the West. That was the strategic backdrop against which virtually all our activities in Bonn, certainly mine, were taking place.

Q: The introduction of the SS20 was really designed to foster getting Germany to say "Let's stop being a target and get out of the whole thing by being neutral," wasn't it? Wasn't this where the whole SS20 pressure was put?

VAN HEUVEN: The SS20 issue brought to life again the old argument as to where Germany ought to be. We could anticipate that the Germans would do the right thing, but you could not be sure about that. So, whenever Egon Bahr, a foreign policy adviser to Brandt-

Q: He was sort of a Kissinger.

VAN HEUVEN: Well, he was Kissingerian in the sense that he was a realpolitiker and he understood how Germany might get what it wanted for itself in terms of dealing with this giant of the East, and also somehow with the Western powers, and the United States in particular. But the issue of the basic orientation of Germany was not seen in the same way by all Germans. On the side of the Christian Democrats, who were not in power at the time that I was in Bonn, there would have been little danger of Germany sliding away from the Western alliance. The combination of the Free Democrats and the Social Democrats looked reasonably sure. Certainly, with a man like Genscher from the Free Democrats as foreign minister, there seemed to be little danger of Germany going "neutral." But with people like Bahr around, you could never be sure who was whispering what into whose ear. I don't think Bahr had much influence on Schmidt. But he had a considerable influence on Brandt. Brandt was still alive. He had won a Nobel Peace Prize. These people had influence. They had their own contacts with the Soviets, the ability to make things happen. So, there were a lot of balls to keep your eye on in our embassy. Besides this and the nuclear defense issues, we were coping with the issue of the conditions under which U.S. forces were stationed in Germany. We felt that they needed better conditions, better barracks. The German barracks were better than ours. We were looking to the Germans for a large amount of the money to sustain our forces. I was personally saddled with a lot of those issues that involved difficult negotiations with the Defense Department and the German defense ministry, as well as with German politicians. Klaus von Dohnanyi, an SPD politician, had been put in charge of this whole issue by the chancellor's office. His people were not always very helpful. They needed to interface with the Bundestag. In the end, it didn't matter that much, but at the time this was a big ticket item and it was a big money ticket item.

Q: What were some of the political developments between the U.S. and Germany?

VAN HEUVEN: We faced the issue of Afghanistan. The Soviets had invaded Afghanistan. The Carter administration's reaction, among other things, was to take the United States out of the Olympics scheduled for Moscow. We campaigned to persuade our friends to do likewise. We leaned heavily on the Germans to stay out of Moscow. We also leaned heavily on virtually everybody else. We were only partially successful. But it caused a gnashing of teeth that the U.S. was politicizing the Olympics. Our stock answer was that it wasn't we who started politicizing it; if the Soviets had behaved themselves this problem would not exist. It was an unsatisfactory discussion. In the end, the American position, while I'm sure morally correct in the view of many, was not a very useful one as a matter of practical politics. It led to disappointment on the part of a great many athletes who had hoped to compete and, because of the inevitable passage of time, before the next Olympics, saw their last chance disappear.

Q: Where did the Germans fall on this? Did they go?

VAN HEUVEN: They did not. Schmidt felt that Germany had to support its American ally. This was a tough decision, because the British and French sent their athletes to Moscow.

Q: Was Germany beginning to assert itself within the European Community? Did you sense a change in Germany as far as here is this big power which has been keeping quite quiet over the years? Did you see a development there of beginning to play a bigger role on the world's stage? Those are things that we might pick up next time.

Today is March 14, 2003. We laid out a few things that you might want to comment on.

VAN HEUVEN: I've had a chance to collect my memory in a somewhat more organized fashion. First, a personal observation about coming to the job in Bonn. At that point, it was clear to me that Germany had moved a long way, from the position of a defeated power, as I saw it from my vantage point in Berlin in the mid-'60s, to a major European country that was playing a growing role inside Europe and was beginning to make itself felt. The change was personified in the personality of Chancellor Schmidt, a knowledgeable, articulate, proud, and at times acerbic man who did not tolerate fools gladly and who, though he spoke perfect English, made it a habit of speaking to his visitors in German, which caused no problem for Ambassador Stoessel or those of us who were there around him. But I recall one day where the then relatively junior Senator Biden came to call and insisted on an appointment, and Schmidt played hard to get because he was chancellor and this was just one of many senators. When Biden did get the appointment there had to be an interpreter because Schmidt used German.

Before we get into details, I want to sketch the setting for the exercise of my job as political counselor. In 1978, there had been under way, for a decade or more, a process of detente, not just between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. This rapprochement was set in motion by the American University speech of Kennedy in 1963. The governing mayor of Berlin, Willy Brandt, was also focused on improving relations. So we were at the beginning of some sort of coming together, in

spite of the division of Germany. In the decade that followed, German attempts - particularly with mostly West German initiatives - to straddle the divide and pick up contacts and start to try and repair, despite the division, the fabric of relationships were well under way. The detente process took place both on a global scale as well as an inter-German scale. Washington officially favored the inter-German discourse, but at the same time it was mistrustful that perhaps too much might be given away. The process also was not entirely transparent to us. So a considerable amount of activity and interest on our part was directed at being sure that we knew, if not all the details, then at least the main lines of what the West Germans were up to with the East Germans, and what the West Germans were up to with Moscow. This process of detente when I arrived in Bonn in '78 was actually about to run its course. It was coming to an end because of the Soviet plan to deploy SS20s, which would change the nuclear balance of power within Europe that deeply concerned Schmidt.

The Carter administration was slow in picking up this change in German attitude. The Carter administration, in fact, was somewhat bifurcated. Secretary Vance was in favor of detente and easier relations with the Soviet Union. The national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was mistrustful of the Soviet Union and he was not initially a friend of detente. He saw its downside. And his suspicions of anything that the Germans and the Russians might do were greater. These two views, existing within the administration, posed a problem for Schmidt. In the event, not getting much of a hearing in official Washington, Schmidt went public with his concerns in a speech in the middle of the Carter administration. From then on, the issue also became one for the Carter White House, namely, how to respond to this new threat by the Soviets. I might say, parenthetically, that it seemed that at the time even the Soviets had several views. Brezhnev was probably softer on Germany and on U.S. relations than Gromyko, who had been a hardliner throughout. But at that point Brezhnev was physically and in other respects close to the end of his tenure, so we were dealing with a Moscow that was speaking several voices and presenting different faces. Be that as it may, the SS20 issue was a difficult one. It brought into play the desire of those who were still interested in detente, both in Washington and in Bonn, against those who thought that this was upsetting the balance of power and needed a response. Ultimately, the NATO alliance managed with U.S. leadership and the participation of the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and Britain, to adopt a plan for the stationing of Pershings and GLCMs, which were cruise missiles with a shorter range which could put Moscow at risk. That in turn scared the Russians and that in turn led - way beyond my time in Bonn - to the deal that eliminated the Soviet threat. The SS20 issue was a difficult one for Schmidt. In the end, it produced a lot of domestic opposition to this decision on the part of his own party and the Greens, who were growing at the time. Ultimately, it was one of the reasons that led to his unseating by Helmut Kohl.

Q: Were you in Germany when the SS20s were introduced?

VAN HEUVEN: The SS20s were introduced on the other side by the Russians and they were being deployed.

Q: It was seen from our embassy in Bonn and throughout Europe as, this was a change in the whole thing. As soon as the SS20s were introduced, was this portrayed by the Soviets and others as changing the balance of power in Europe?

VAN HEUVEN: It was more of a gradual process. There is still speculation on what might have been the Soviet motives. It may have had less to do with specific policy with respect to the balance with Germany. It might have been viewed by them as just a regular weapons upgrade. It might have been seen by them as a general beefing up of the nuclear part of their forces. Whatever it was, the arrival of these weapons threatened to change the strategic balance within Europe. The global balance of power of course had already changed somewhat and everybody had got used to it. The Soviets had a major intercontinental nuclear capacity, as did we. Of course, on the ground the Soviets had huge superiority in conventional forces. Western strategy was that our nuclear forces would offset that conventional superiority and produce certain balance. But when the Soviets started introducing nuclear weapons that pretty much could cover all of Western Europe, and we did not have all that much in our arsenal in Europe to respond; it was regarded as a change in the balance. The Schmidt speech at the IISS triggered the debate on that.

Q: How about the neutron bomb episode and Carter-Schmidt on that?

VAN HEUVEN: The neutron bomb decision was another event that caused difficulties between Carter and Schmidt. The idea of the bomb had been around for a while. The wish of the U.S. Army to proceed with it became controversial after the documents that treated this subject were leaked to the press. A number of Europeans, including some Americans, also recoiled in horror at what some in Europe called "the capitalist weapon," because it killed people and did not damage things. It was regarded by a lot of people as something basically dangerous and unsettling, and so it was controversial. Schmidt put his political equities on the line to support the Carter White House in favor of the neutron bomb. So, when the President suddenly, and without warning, canceled the weapon, Schmidt felt that he had been stabbed in the back. The episode confirmed his view of Carter as an unreliable person. So, the relationship between those two deteriorated further.

There was another issue that was at play in those days. It involved the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Schmidt had had a hand in establishing CSCE. Kissinger at the time had been unenthusiastic about it. But the Carter administration acquired a quick appetite for using the human rights provisions of CSCE as something to rub the Soviet noses into. Schmidt, wishing to preserve both his equities with Moscow as well as with Washington, was more cautious in using CSCE as a bludgeon against the Russians. So there was another difference in approach between the two administrations.

All in all, the wind down of detente with Moscow was capped in December of '79, a couple of weeks after the double-track decision on the SS20s, by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Q: What was the double track?

VAN HEUVEN: The NATO decision had two elements. One was to station Pershings and the GLCMs. The other track was a promise for diplomatic negotiations, to try to negotiate a way both with respect to the SS20s and the western response to it. It was that other track, the second track, that made the deployment decision acceptable to the Europeans. The second track

provided the outcome to this entire episode. So we had the double-track decision. But then the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan drew a line under the detente with Moscow. Both Bonn and Washington took strong positions, and there was a feeling that detente had run its course.

Q: The SS20 episode seemed to have been the last gasp of the Soviet Union as far as organizing the Communist Party in Western Europe and the peacelovers and all this into trying to use this mass opinion and marches and protests to stop our responding to the SS20s. Then when the invasion of Afghanistan came, that just cut the feet out from under the peace movement. Did you see it that way?

VAN HEUVEN: Yes. I think that's a fair portrayal of what went on. I might add that in my opinion the impetus for the demonstrations in opposition to the western response to the SS20s was not driven by a hidden Soviet hand. It was a native German phenomenon. The Soviets did what they could to encourage it. But they didn't have to, since much of the anti-nuclear sentiment was already present in Germany and it was pretty strong. The Soviets saw domestic German opposition as to their advantage. At that time, there was still a bifurcated view in Moscow about this whole situation. Brezhnev was dubious; Gromyko was hardline.

So, on the SS20, on CSCE, on the neutron bomb, and then also eventually on the way to react to the Afghan invasion, there were- (end of tape) differences between the chancellery in Bonn and the Carter administration. The United States very strongly urged a lot of countries, including Germany, not to send their team to the Olympics. The Germans agreed to do that. The Germans never agreed to the whole series of economic boycotts that we proposed and carried out ourselves. In the end, Carter had little trust in Schmidt and Schmidt did not think much of Carter. So, my three years in Bonn essentially took place in a field of tension that affected the very top layers of government. The management of the specific issues that I've just been talking about took a great deal of time and attention at senior levels in the embassy. I was pretty closely involved as political counselor in all of them. I should reiterate that we operated against the backdrop of constant suspicion, particularly on the part of some NSC officials, of what the Germans were up to. Whenever Schmidt verbalized his views about Carter, they tended to be picked up by elements of the embassy and reported without varnish up the line to their backstoppers in Washington. This information would be fed straight to the NSC and the President. This did not help matters. Whatever the ambassador and we could do to put things in a better light was often a process of chasing our tails.

Q: The problem is that if you have a particularly pungent expression on the part of a chief of state, that's so sexy, that it goes right back and resonates much stronger than trying to put this into context.

VAN HEUVEN: That was exactly our problem but the guts of the problem was that there were real differences of view about the direction of policy and the way it ought to be executed.

Q: When you have two leaders who don't like each other of two allied countries, Germany and the United States, as there a certain rallying around of the Americans in our embassy in Bonn and the foreign ministry in Bonn of saying, "Let's keep these quarreling schoolboys from screwing up our relations" and working almost undercover to make sure that things didn't get

out of hand?

VAN HEUVEN: In the later part of my tenure, I had got to know well my opposite numbers in the foreign ministry and the chancellery, but also a lot of the political class, press, academia, and opinion makers. They were good acquaintances and good sources. They also saw and understood the process that was taking place. We saw our interests in the same terms. That is to say we had to stick together. We were facing problems. It was a difficult matter of deciding what the policy ought to be. But when it came to execution, it ought to be possible to work together. So we spent a fair amount of time just throwing oil on the troubled waters when we could. The role of the foreign minister, Genscher, was not exactly that of a lily. He was a very active man. He had an entire political party behind him, the Free Democrats. So he had his own political standing. He was indefatigable, always traveling and making it his business to improve relations and open doors and so forth. So, while we had other reasons to be interested in and sometimes concerned about Mr. Genscher because he had his own agenda that might not necessarily square with ours, the motivation of that agenda was different from those in the left wing of the Social Democratic Party, which basically wanted to continue the track that Willy Brandt had started in Berlin. Some Social Democrats never let go, at least in theory, of the option of a neutral Germany if unification could be purchased at that price. So, we were constantly interested in what both groups did, and kept a close eye on this situation by talking to friends, seeing politicians, talking to diplomatic colleagues, reading the press, and by talking to these individuals themselves. It's not that these were beyond our reach. My predecessor had contacts with Bahr and with Wehner and with Brandt. I had occasion to observe them all, too. I saw Genscher regularly in the company of others. From time to time, I'd see the chancellor as well, again in the company of others. I talked to their staffs a lot and I had a pretty good picture of what was going on. It was a hand in glove operation. My interlocutors in the chancellery, both diplomatic and military, were excellent contacts. That was not because of me. I think it just came with the position because they, too, saw it very much in their interest to maintain that sort of contact with an official American. I should mention one particular contact among the many with German political figures, with Richard von Weizsaecker. I picked up from my predecessor, Dick Smyser, a pattern of occasional late-afternoon meetings, often in his house in Bad Bodesberg. He was a distinguished leader and president at that time of the German Kirchentag - a sort of large Christian organization that interested itself also in political themes. We would sit in the garden and sip scotch. Von Weizsaecker went on to become mayor of Berlin and president of his country.

Q: At this time, was Genscher using the German foreign service? Were they on the same track or was he proceeding on his own and the German foreign service was being more German than Genscherites?

VAN HEUVEN: Genscher was foreign minister for such a long time that in the end it was his foreign service. If you didn't agree with Genscher, you really had no future in the German foreign service. There were other places you could go. You could get out-of-office assignments. You might be assigned, as some of them were, to the chancellery. But there were less bureaucratic devices available than we have in Washington to park officials who either didn't fit or felt they might not fit the prevailing mode. No, the foreign ministry was highly responsive to Genscher. He drove them hard. He had tough work methods. He had abominable personal work

habits: Early morning, late night, constant travel, heavy eating, a lot of smoking. I remember seeing him with Ambassador Stoessel once and reporting - this was after he had been in the hospital with heart surgery - that he looked bad. I speculated that, if he kept at the pace that I was witnessing during that particular conversation, he wouldn't last very long. I couldn't have been wrong. He was around Bonn much longer than me and he is still alive today, although he no longer plays a role.

Q: How seriously did we consider... Did the Afghan invasion by the Soviets sort of put to an end within Germany the idea of a neutral Germany on the part of the left wing of the socialists at least for the time?

VAN HEUVEN: I think the answer is no. Wehner and Bahr held a long view. They knew that the Afghan caper, bad as it was and long though it eventually lasted, would not last forever and that the German question was forever. So, I don't think that really put a dent in their overall estimate of what the geostrategic possibilities were for Germany. But, smart as they were, they did realize that the invasion set back the possibility of making quick progress on detente or on unification.

Q: Was there concern that the Afghan invasion might augur something of the same nature within Europe or were we looking for heightened signs of Soviet military activity?

VAN HEUVEN: Two things. One was that we had been watching the SS20 saga unfold, and that was seen by the West as an intentional threat and a serious one. But there was something else that was afoot at the end of my tenure, and that was the Solidarity Movement in Poland. That showed heavy Soviet hands behind a tough Polish government approach to the baby steps of Solidarity. This uncompromising attitude led us to wonder for many months whether we would be seeing in Poland a repeat of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. There wasn't a great deal we could do about it because it really depended on how the regime in Moscow saw its equities and how dangerous the Soviets would feel these developments were. But the precedent of Soviet military intervention was established, and none of us had any illusion that it could not be repeated. So, we were also living under the threat that, even as the SS20s were being introduced, Moscow would show an extremely heavy hand in Poland. For American diplomacy, anything that would happen in Poland would have created a much more acute dilemma than the Czech Republic or Czechoslovakia had been, given the domestic element of our relationship with Poland.

Q: Chicago is the second largest Polish city in the world.

VAN HEUVEN: Soviet military action in Poland in 1978 or 1979 would have roiled the strategic relationship between Washington and Moscow. Afghanistan was not regarded as a direct threat by anybody in Europe. But the evolution of Solidarity and the Soviet reaction and the play-out of the SS20 issue certainly were.

Q: On your German counterparts, all of this put together, were they seeing this as a pretty tense and crucial time?

VAN HEUVEN: The SS20 was high stakes poker both in terms of strategy as well as domestic

politics in Germany and in Europe, and it was a major challenge to American diplomacy in Europe. There were heroes such as Mike Glitman, who backed up Paul Nitze, who negotiated the end game to this and who were called upon not just to do that but also to give a persuasive public face to an extremely complex situation so as to get public support for the position.

Q: How about the CSCE? This turned out to be the opening for all sorts of things, one of the factors in the collapse of the Soviet Union. How did we see it at the time? Was this seen as one of those things, a stick with which to beat the Soviets over the head?

VAN HEUVEN: From my perspective, and that of my people in the political section in Bonn, this was one of a number of negotiations that were ongoing for a very long time. There were others. There was the whole SALT/START process that was going on at the time. There were the MBFR negotiations in Vienna, eventually heading into the Conventional Forces in Europe agreements later. There was the CSCE negotiating process that Max Kampelman was heavily involved in. These were long running shows. We monitored the cable traffic as these agreements were negotiated, and we were privy to the considerations as to how we should use the arms control system once it was in place. All of this was a very gradual process and the lead usually came from those who dealt with it directly in Washington and in the field, which often provided the lead to Washington. It was one of those things that would typically be on the agenda for any major review of all the issues with the Germans. On occasion, there might be an American from the MBFR or the OSCE delegation coming in for bilateral discussions with the Germans. Jack Dean, one of my predecessors in Bonn, and now head of our MBFR delegation, came regularly. It tended to be on the agenda of the NATO ministers every time they met. It was not something that we handled directly in Bonn. It was not our job to consider how that might be used in more global relationships but I think the sense that we had was that this was a good thing. Perhaps the German view of this was always a little bit ahead of ours.

Q: How did you see the French-German alliance? Was this a different game than our game or was it all part of a web or not?

VAN HEUVEN: The French were among the four countries that took responsibility for occupation zones in western Germany and occupation sectors in Berlin, with all the rights that went with that status in those sectors. The headquarters of the French 1st Army were in Baden-Baden. Our 5th and 7th Corps were headquartered in Heidelberg and Munich. EUCOM was in Stuttgart. The British army on the Rhine was headquartered at Munchen-Gladbach. We worked with the French both in Berlin in the allied Kommandatura and in the so-called Bonn Group in Bonn. On occasion the Four Powers together dealt with all of Germany. This happened in the German treaties of the early '70s which relaxed the regime in Berlin somewhat. Our negotiator was Kenneth Rush. Their position in Germany gave the French leverage, and they participated in all considerations of the Bonn Group. In the Bonn Group section of the political section of the embassy a couple of officers were doing nothing but Berlin. Though the French were equal participants in the Bonn Group, they did not necessarily pull equal weight. In those days, we did not think much about the Germany-France relationship because that concept had not evolved yet between those countries. Schmidt and Giscard could get along easily, and did so in English. But it was still a situation of unequals. The French occupied part of Berlin, and the French military were present in part of Germany. France had a permanent seat on the Security Council with veto

rights. Germany had none of these attributes. But at that time Germany had no pretensions yet to have a profile in terms of European policy. Germany was focused on itself, in particular on improving the situation of Germans on the other side of the iron curtain line, through a policy of *Kleine Schritte* of Brandt, a policy of “small steps.” Bonn was occupied with the potential of Soviet power to derail this entire process. Bonn was also preoccupied with the importance of keeping the United States in Europe. So Bonn was quite prepared to take the American lead on all sorts of issues in order to maximize its objectives. France provided little by way of security, guarantees, money, or openings for German policy at that time. I don’t want to belittle the French, but at that time we were not talking about a Germany-France relationship the way we do today.

Q: Berlin in this manifestation, how was it?

VAN HEUVEN: When I was in Bonn?

Q: Yes.

VAN HEUVEN: Berlin had become a very different place. The mood in the ‘60s, when we felt and acted as occupiers, had been replaced by a mood in which we Americans saw ourselves as facilitators to help the Germans in that city do what they wanted to do. The funding was German. Military security was principally provided by us. Increasingly, we exercised the powers that we legally had in a more and more restricted way. Formally speaking, things didn’t change. In reality, they did. Formally, we still controlled the Berlin police force. The reality was that we were increasingly inclined to let them make their own decisions. We did maintain the Spandau function right until the end. The German government also was not involved in the function of the quadripartite Berlin Air Safety Center, where the allies dealt with the Soviets on the flight safety of each flight to and from Berlin. Berlin was also increasingly becoming of age. It was reviving economically. It was seen as a city with a future. Young people were no longer leaving; they were coming back. It had always been the capital, but it was not the seat of government. That issue was decided years later. But Berlin as a city was coming back.

I did have occasion to go to Berlin. Of course, I went to other parts of Germany as well as part of my job. But I had special reasons for a while to go to Berlin because I fell into a job that was regarded as sensitive and so few people knew about it. It involved the prisoner exchanges. For a long time the United States had maintained a channel, both with Moscow and the East Germans, through which we were able to make deals involving the exchange of people. Some of these people were famous, like Sharansky. Many of them were nameless. The West Germans had their own fairly elaborate system of buying out people from the East. But we had our own equities. Often they were Germans who had been working for us and who ended up in custody and whom we were interested in getting back. The East Germans, of course, had occasional interest in some of their people who were in the West. So there were negotiating points that existed to facilitate this running negotiation. For two years I was the American prisoner exchange negotiating point. It required a number of visits to East Berlin and occasional meetings in West Germany.

Q: How did these things work out? You’d come up and say, “Okay, you’ve got this in your stable. We’ve got these in ours?” Was it a horse trade?

VAN HEUVEN: It depended on a lot of factors, many of them extraneous to the individuals involved. My interlocutor was an East German civilian named Wolfgang Vogel. He had no official position in East Germany. He was an attorney with a law practice. But he was a confidant of Honecker and he was allowed to do things that no other East German was allowed to do, like driving a Mercedes and going to the West whenever he wanted to and using hard currency. We knew that he spoke for the regime. Of course, Vogel knew that his American interlocutor spoke for the United States. So everybody knew exactly with whom he was dealing. But unlike a typical negotiation between states, which involves office buildings and press attention, there was none of that. This was all pretty much hidden from view. It was even hidden from view of my colleagues in the embassy.

Q: Would money be exchanged or deals made?

VAN HEUVEN: I never exchanged money. I could have been authorized or at least made a deal that would have involved the transfer of money. During my time, I don't think I had a great deal of luck getting people released. These things went up and down. But the discussions continued. Once every three or four months, or more frequently sometimes, it was not always in East Berlin. Sometimes Vogel would come west and I would meet him in the west. They had very specific interests in people and they certainly were willing to trade. It was a very carefully orchestrated dance on the part of these negotiators around some very fundamental principles of "You can give me what I want and I can give you what you want." But just how that worked out and which particular person the regime would see fit to let go, sometimes with the publicity of that person then turning up on the other side, depended very much on the political circumstances of the moment.

Q: I would think that the West German side was just riddled with agents. You might negotiate something but by the next day two more would have been picked up.

VAN HEUVEN: The discussion that I was part of was not part of the inter-German exchange process, which was mostly money one way and people the other. The West Germans were aware that we were engaged with the East Germans. But to a large degree what my predecessors and I and my successors were doing was not briefed to the Germans.

Q: While you were there the SS20s and other things were happening but Berlin was not being used as a way of ratcheting up tension?

VAN HEUVEN: No, but the geographic position of Berlin continued to make it vulnerable. We were still in the situation in which any physical move by the Soviets against Berlin would have triggered major consequences. The anticipation that this would happen was less high than it had been earlier, when Khrushchev made his threats. In the time I was posted there in the '60s, I went through some miniblockades. But the reality was that Berlin remained a hostage and a touchstone of East-West relations.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover on your Bonn time?

VAN HEUVEN: I have a couple of things that I should like to mention. One is that I spent a good deal of time with the political/military section on the issue of the conditions in which the U.S. forces lived in Germany at the time. The Germans, being systematic and relatively well funded, were providing excellent new barracks for their forces. We typically used World War II facilities that had been cobbled together and were kept together by continued cobbling. There was a constant refrain of the old saw that our mechanics were lying on their back in the mud and snow to repair the trucks and the Germans had these wonderful new facilities with clean pits, and that the living conditions in the German barracks were superior to the ones we were occupying. To a large degree, that was a reflection of the factual situation. There was considerable pressure on the part of the U.S. military to improve the quality of service to the servicemen in Germany. The embassy became the vehicle through which that concern was brought to bear on the German government at the political level and over a long period of time. For a while, I was the point man as political counselor on that offensive. We were dealing with a politician named Dohnanyi, brother of the famous conductor, who was the special negotiator of the chancellor on this matter. There were a number of exchanges between the ambassador and Dohnanyi, the foreign minister, and every politician we could get our hands on. It all had to do with getting German resources in order to improve the barracks situation for us. It was a tough issue. It was not one that got people mad at each other but it did not go very smoothly.

Another issue was that within the embassy we had, I recall, 13 different offices that were run by military personnel. That may seem like an extraordinarily large number. We had three attachés. The large Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) dealt with the defense ministry on procurement issues. There were a number of intelligence offices which interfaced with different parts of the German intelligence system. We had military running all over the place, with their agenda, their own marching orders, and their own home offices in Washington or at European headquarters. At times it was a little difficult to keep that all together. Frank Meehan, the DCM, had the brilliant idea that he would hand over this function to me and that I would coordinate all this. I was then an FSO-2, which gave me star rank. My job was to try and pull together the O-6s at the colonel or captain level. Most were personally friendly to me, but not about to shed too much of their autonomy, even when faced with a direct ambassadorial order that they accept my coordinating role. So I found myself practicing the skills of diplomacy within the walls of the embassy. I still think back to this episode with a mix of amazement and disbelief. We kicked around the idea that maybe we ought to get a one star in there and make him the head of all the military. But DOD would have none of that. The attaches came from DIA. The procurement folks came from the Pentagon. They didn't have the same bosses, so the idea of having a one star simply didn't fit the uniformed forces' notion of how to do these things. So we muddled along, continuing to deal with all of these military staffers individually as best we could. This happens in every embassy except that the number of different billets in Bonn, some of them behind sets of locked doors, were not easy to penetrate.

I finally should say a word about the Holocaust. When I got to Bonn in 1978, the Holocaust was not a subject that anyone discussed or cared to discuss. It was taboo. Most Germans were aware at our initial attempts at denazification, which we had quickly given up. Basically, Germans were content to leave things the way they were. And then came the American movie about the Holocaust.

Q: "The Holocaust." It was a TV serial. This was the first one that had really come out that had spelled things out.

VAN HEUVEN: It was for TV. It made its way onto German TV in serial form. It had a profound effect on German opinion. Not that it affected U.S.-German relations. Neither did it affect the German position in Europe. Nor did it affect where Germany stood with respect to the Soviets. But it broke a logjam in the German public psyche. It was present and had to be broken at some point, but it needed a trigger. That TV series was the trigger. On the evening after the showing of the first segment, Ruth and I had been invited by several couples as part of the process of being vetted for membership in a local Rotary Club. We found ourselves in the company of people who were older than we were. They had all been through the war as adults. That TV show was the order of conversation that evening. As I listened to everybody talk about it, what emerged was that, yes, they had known about it; no, they had no part of it, and they were, of course, opposed to it. So, in a way, it was an unsatisfactory discussion to listen to that night. But at least there was a discussion. I also remember shortly thereafter having one of my periodic lunches with an official in the chancellery, Hannes Braeutigam. He later became UN PermRep in New York and subsequently justice minister in the state of Brandenburg. Hannes was a good friend, a calm, considerate, thoughtful individual. We discussed the Holocaust show, and he cried. I don't recall any other occasion in the course of my many business lunches with diplomatic colleagues when I found myself talking to a man who was crying. But he was. This outing of the Holocaust had a deep effect. It made possible a public discussion by people of my age, between parents and children, and among children, and in schools, that was all a part of the western part of Germany coming to terms with its past.

Q: Was the feeling that this was probably a good thing or that this was going to screw up our relationships?

VAN HEUVEN: It was neither. It was a process of people all of a sudden looking at themselves and letting go of what was inside them but had remained suppressed. This was not seen in terms of how it would affect Germany's standing. What I was watching on those two occasions that I just mentioned was the emergence all of a sudden of a personal realization of something that deeply affected them. That evening with the Rotarians, there was no need for me or for Ruth to say anything. We just listened. This was not an American-German discussion. This was a German discussion. It was a discussion of Germans who had never talked to each other about this but all of whom had been through it.

Q: You left Germany when?

VAN HEUVEN: In '81 and went on home leave. I had no assignment until the first week in September, when I got a call that I was going to the Senior Seminar. That's where I spent the next year.

CHRISTOPHER E. GOLDTHWAIT
Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service

Bonn (1978-1982)

Ambassador Goldthwait was born in Georgia and raised in Illinois, New York and California. He was educated at American and Harvard Universities. Joining the Food and Agriculture Service (FAS) in the Department of Agriculture in 1973, the Ambassador served in several high level positions of the FAS in Washington, D.C. as well as in Germany and Nigeria. In 1999 he was appointed U.S. Ambassador to Chad, where he served until he retired in 2004. Ambassador Goldthwait was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.

Q: You were in Germany from when to when?

GOLDTHWAIT: From 1978-1982.

Q: Where were you assigned and what were you doing?

GOLDTHWAIT: Well the embassy in those days was in Bonn and I was the junior initially, the junior American among four American staff FAS had in country. I did a number of things. I managed a couple of trade shows each year including one in Berlin called Green Week. I also oversaw the reporting work of a couple of our German employees in the office which I thought was utterly ridiculous as they had been in the office twenty years covering the same commodities, writing the same reports year after year after year and I was supposed to edit them and improve them. But I did make small changes for English language grammar and that kind of thing. A lot of what we did was escorting American visitors around, people from various independent organizations funded by the Department of Agriculture that promote sales of specific commodities. Sometimes American business people although in Germany they didn't really need our help too much, and then there was always a heavy flow of government people that were coming over for various reasons.

Q: I'm trying to think, what were they, the American Foreign Agricultural Service doing in Germany?

GOLDTHWAIT: Basically promoting sales of American products. Germany was our second or third largest overseas market in those days. We sold a lot of corn, a lot of vegetable oil, a lot of wheat, some processed products, fruits and vegetables were just beginning and we sold a fair amount of cotton to the Germans, a couple hundred thousand bales a year, tobacco and a number of things.

Q: I mean obviously at this point you were working across the board. Who are our competitors and how did that work out from your perspective?

GOLDTHWAIT: The competitors in Germany were largely the European countries that benefited from the subsidies of the common agricultural policy. In those days, the subsidies that the Europeans gave to themselves, to their farm community were much, much higher than what we had in this country. Now, they have reduced theirs a fair amount and ours have remained more or less the same so they are in closer balance. The Europeans are still higher but not with

the disparity that existed back then. Their system of subsidies creates overproduction, if you will, in the sense that without those subsidies Europe would not produce as much as it does agriculturally so a lot of the competition was from other countries in Europe, particularly the southern countries and France.

Q: Well did you feel that particularly the French were looking over your shoulder all the time?

GOLDTHWAIT: Very much so. They in those days were the staunchest defenders of the common agricultural policy and it was a little bit amusing to watch because the Germans were also fairly staunch defenders of that policy. They benefited almost as much as the French and the Italians, not quite, but they were very subtle and they sort of geared the debate so the French and the Italians took all the hard lumps from the Americans and the Latin Americans and others who criticized these policies. But as over the past twenty years Europe has begun to reform its common agricultural policy and the Germans have been just about as reluctant to move as the others.

Q: How about trade fairs? What was the Berlin one? What were you doing there?

GOLDTHWAIT: The Berlin fair was called Green Week or "Grüne Woche" and it was different from other trade fairs in that it focused on consumer ready products and it was one of those things that had originated to support Berlin during the Cold War; it had sort of taken on a life of its own. So we weren't making a lot of sales there. We were just sort of displaying the products, getting the consumer reaction to the products. We would have maybe twenty different American companies and commodity associations that would come over and set up little booths in our exhibit and all of Berlin, like a county fair here, all the public would come in and spend the day walking around and eating themselves and drinking themselves crazy on all of these food products and all of these drinks and so forth that were being promoted.

The other trade fairs, there were two others that were very important in alternate years. One was in Munich and the other was in Cologne. They were actual trade events where people did business, and made contracts to supply the products that they were displaying over the course of the year.

Q: Did we have anything at the big Dresden Fair in East Germany?

GOLDTHWAIT: In those days we had a very small presence there. I can't even really tell you what it was because we had a separate office in East Berlin that would have handled that side of things. I honestly don't now what that participation was.

Q: Did you feel that our participation in the German trade fairs was a bit of essentially sort of a USIA type showing the flag operation more than generating trade?

GOLDTHWAIT: The Berlin fair was pretty much that way and every now and then somebody would say we really ought to stop wasting our money here but we kept on doing it for those publicity reasons. The other two, ANUGA and IKOFA, were much more worthwhile and we still participate in them. I think we still participate in Grüne Woche too but it may be political as it

once was.

Q: Were you getting much reaction from our farmers exchange programs about the German farmers and how they were doing? Because they really were heavily subsidized and I guess we were heavily subsidized but they had a much smaller territory. One has the feeling that it was almost hand-craftsmanship or something like that on their farms.

GOLDTHWAIT: Basically German farmers were trying to make themselves viable on maybe 25-50 acres and our farmers were trying to make it on maybe 3-400 acres. Now the Germans farm size particularly with the larger East German farms is probably more like 100-150 acres. There are still some small ones but ours have grown and they are probably an average farm size is probably somewhere between 800 and a thousand acres for commercial farms.

Q: Was there much and did the FAS sponsor farmer exchanges and that sort of thing?

GOLDTHWAIT: Some, not too much in Western Europe but the American Farm Bureau Federation would have exchanges with European farmers and we would occasionally sponsor a particular visit by specialized farmers to look at some aspect of U.S. farming.

Q: I assumed your German got better and better and better with this?

GOLDTHWAIT: It did, I had not really used it in what probably 14 years when I got back to Germany and the foundation that I had was what I called a while ago Kinder Deutsch. It was communication but it was fairly rough and jagged around the edges. I worked very hard on perfecting it for about the first three of the four years I was in Germany. It got to the point where when I came back I don't like to pat myself on the back but I will do it just a tiny bit, I tested out here at FSI when I returned from Germany at a 4-4. I think if I had tested the day I came back as opposed to waiting three weeks it probably would have been a 4+.

Q: To get the top, a 5-5, you really have to be born in the country.

GOLDTHWAIT: Yes, ja, ja, yes and now my German is nowhere near as good. It might be a 3-3 at best.

Q: Did you get any feel for German foreign politics?

GOLDTHWAIT: Yes, yes, I went to several of the conventions of their farm organization and listened to the speeches and wrote reports on them. I met essentially with the officials from the German ministry of agriculture because among the Americans in the office I did have the best German. I probably did more of that sort of thing than one would normally have done in one's first overseas assignment.

Q: How did foreign politics play in Germany?

GOLDTHWAIT: It played very importantly in Bavaria and a couple of the other Laender. In the industrial north it was less important. I haven't really had much chance to look at German

foreign policy since reunification but I imagine that it is also quite important in some of the eastern Laender.

Q: Particularly with the acquisition of East Germany, I mean this is the farmland, traditional farmland plus Bavaria.

GOLDTHWAIT: Yes.

Q: How were you used by the embassy?

GOLDTHWAIT: You mean other sections of the embassy?

Q: Yeah, yeah.

GOLDTHWAIT: Not a whole lot. We worked a bit with the economic section; there was an economic minister counselor who exercised a certain oversight over not only the state economic office but also the treasury attaché's office, the agricultural counselor's office, the Foreign Commercial Service office. We worked a little bit with the Foreign Commercial Service where there happened to be some activity or event that had both an agricultural and a more industrial face to it. But we were fairly independent.

Q: But did the German primary organizations get involved the way I noted in France where they all of a sudden because of some attempt to cut a subsidy or do something that they'll come to the capital and dump manure in front of the ministry and that sort of thing?

GOLDTHWAIT: Not so much. The Germans occasionally would have a little protest march of some sort just as our farmers have on quite a few occasions over the past thirty years. There was a time when they went and drove their tractors up and down the mall to protest something or other. But the French and the Italians were always much more impassioned.

Q: How did you find social life in Germany?

GOLDTHWAIT: Oh, I loved it. I got in with a group of people from various embassies and other organizations and some German folks. There was a kind of an informal club that they called the Foreigners Club and it was mainly young people. They would do things together and one thing that we would do is take the train on weekends to some other city and see a play or see some other city, Amsterdam or wherever. So I got around quite a lot.

Q: Did you feel the embassy...who was your ambassador while you were there?

GOLDTHWAIT: Most of the time I was there it was Walter Stoessel and let's see the last year he left and I am trying to remember who came in. I don't recall right off, it was a political appointee who's name I should remember because he was prominent.

Q: Did you get the feeling that the Foreign Agricultural Service was included in things or did you feel neglected? I'm talking about the embassy activities.

GOLDTHWAIT: I think we didn't feel neglected. We had plenty of interchange with other people in the embassy and socialized together and I never really felt like we were neglected. We had a very particular mission, we were probably less involved in some things that FAS offices are involved with today that involve more of the rest of the mission like exchange programs and trade negotiations. So we had a very specific mandate and carried it out largely independently and kept our State colleagues informed and I think we were fine.

Q: So in what 1980 you left?

GOLDTHWAIT: '82.

Q: '82. You spent a good solid time there.

GOLDTHWAIT: Four years. I have had a very small number of overseas assignments as a Foreign Service officer but they've all been four years or more.

PATRICK E. NIEBURG
Director of Radio in the American Sector, USIS
Berlin (1978-1984)

Patrick E. Nieburg joined USIS in 1962. He held positions in Bolivia, Brazil, Vietnam, Germany, Sweden, and Turkey. Later he was the Director of Radio in the American Sector and Director of Foreign Language Broadcasts of the Voice of America. Mr. Nieburg was interviewed by Allen Hansen in 1988.

NIEBURG: Well, let me start by my arrival on the post before going onto RIAS which is located in Berlin. I was supposed to go a day or two for consultation to the Embassy in Bonn. We flew out of Washington to Frankfurt ..and everything was rather uneventful. We changed to a local flight. Just between Frankfurt and Bonn/Cologne which is less than a 20 minute flight.

Q: Bonn and Cologne had the same airport?

NIEBURG: That is the same airport. It serves both of these cities. And on that particular 20 minute flight our flight was hijacked. We didn't quite realize it until towards the very end of the flight when a man, very innocuous looking, had entered the cockpit and brandished a gun. We were on the ground already. And there we sat on the ground and we did not know what was really happening. We sat and we sat. And suddenly we saw armored personnel carriers arriving on the tarmac and surrounding the plane which had been kept at a good distance from the airport terminal.

As it turned out nobody really knew what was going on. We sat on that tarmac for about two hours. And finally, a stewardess came back and said, well, we've been hijacked. We said, "no. It

can't be." It seemed just incredible. Everything was relatively normal except I understand in the cockpit where a man was standing with a gun threatening the pilots.

Q: And this was Lufthansa flight?

NIEBURG: That was a Lufthansa flight, a local flight, you know, just from Frankfurt to Bonn. Well, as it turned out there was a lot of activity we found out later in the tower. The minister, the German Federal Minister of the Interior, had gone into the tower and was negotiating with the hijacker. It turned out that the hijacker was an ecologist who had some queer demands. There was nothing political per se. But he wanted the Rhine River cleaned up. He wanted something done about acid rain. And he wanted publicity for his demands to save the ecology.

Well, to make a long story short, it took 4-1/2 hours--sitting. It was September and it was hot. The air conditioning had gone out. The airplane had run out of drinks. And our cat, the poor kitty, was really panting. Her tongue was hanging out and we were wondering what was happening. Finally, the police came closer, the armored carriers, and the man was taken off the airplane. Ultimately we could all get down off the plane.

Well, the PAO, Alex Klieforth, was there waiting for us. And he followed, of course, what was going on in the tower and knew it. When Polly, the children and I finally came down he said, "Nieburg, you always have a knack for entering stage center. But to make me wait four hours is unconscionable." And that was the end of that particular episode. But as you can see--from a train wreck to a hijacking--all of this is in a day's work in our kind of business.

Let me go back though to RIAS, because RIAS is a unique institution within USIA, and it takes a great deal of its budget. As a matter of fact, its annual budget runs over a million dollars which is not inconsequential if you consider what the budget constraints are.

Actually, the establishment of RIAS was a fluke. When our troops entered Berlin on July 4, 1945 one of the first things that they demanded of the Russians, who were already there was access to the local radio station--which also had served Goebbels and where Axis Sally had broadcast from--and demanded time on the transmitter. And the Russians said, nyet. And it was just one nyet too many.

So the Americans then wisely decided to establish their own radio station, not just for any kind of program of purposes, but really to communicate with the population who would be told at this particular point--garbage will be collected, rubble will be cleared, etc. These were the housekeeping chores for the Military Government.

And the way the Allies finally got RIAS started was by confiscating a number of mobile units, radio mobile units they had captured from the wehrmacht wired them and gerry rigged them together and then got on the air. One of the first people on the air was our colleague Mickey ..Boerner who used to regale Berliners with his Berlin "sign-on" "guten abend, liebe horer." . And that became a hallmark.

Well, it didn't take the military government very long before they found some quarters. They requisitioned an undamaged office building and moved into a studio and worked with the postal authorities to establish a medium wave program transmission. And RIAS has been on the air since September 1945 which makes it actually the oldest post war radio station in what is now the Federal Republic of Germany but which was then all of Germany. Its initial purpose was to communicate with the population of Berlin.

But smartly very soon the authorities--then the Military Government authorities--recognize that you can't live by bread alone and decided that Berliners need more than just official announcements, you know, an announcement of housekeeping chores.

So the first thing that was offered them was a regular hourly newscast, in German of course. It was a rip-and-tear kind of affair, from AP or UPI, or rather it was still UP then, reading the news. Mickey Boerner who got on the air would give them basically a pep talk in the form of an editorial. It wasn't much longer--and that for economic and morale reasons--that RIAS decided it ought to have a little entertainment to lift the spirits of a very ..dispirited bombed-out, devastated city. The Berlin Philharmonic, which had remained intact throughout the war and had survived it, gave its first performance on the RIAS airwaves for the Berliners.

Well, during the Berlin blockade the air lift came, RIAS served also a military purpose. It turned out that its signal was the homing beacon for the aircraft that came into resupply the city.

Q: On the Berlin airlift?

NIEBURG: On the Berlin air lift. They would hone in on the RIAS beacon and come into Tempelhof airport. Well, this went on for a long time. There was the uprising in East Germany. RIAS was often blamed for having started it. Whether they did or didn't, historians will have to decide. I question it because it didn't initiate it, but it reported it. And remember that was still before the Wall game. So literally thousands of people would come into the RIAS studios, report directly from what is now East Berlin and express their opinion and also (to a degree) broadcast what their demands or what their grievances were.

Well, RIAS stayed on and stayed on the air and became what Berliners really thought of as their radio station under American control. There were a lot of ..German employees of course. But each section initially was headed by an American officer who was responsible for the content of it, of what was being broadcast.

In 1969 during Lyndon Johnson's period when there was a general retrenchment, it was felt in Washington that we could no longer afford to run RIAS, we were going to close it down. But the German government in Bonn resisted because it felt that RIAS was such a potent force in Berlin. In fact there isn't a Minister, there isn't a President of the United States who has not said that Berlin has a triad of forces. that is the American military presence, the U.S. mission which is the diplomatic mission, and RIAS. The U.S. presence stood on those three pillars, and RIAS certainly was the most audible. So RIAS in itself became a very, very potent political factor not only in U.S. German bilateral relations, but also amongst the local population and as morale boosters.

So, when under the Lyndon Johnson Administration, the decision was taken to phase out RIAS for no other reason than budgetary considerations--the political reasons weren't even considered--the German government decided that they needed to keep it alive Part of this was economic too because RIAS was a good employer.

To make a long story short, after protracted negotiations, in 1972 RIAS became a hyphenated U.S.-Federal Republic of Germany operation in which the German government undertook to pay all operating costs and the U.S. government would basically defray all the technical costs for equipment and engineering costs. That meant all costs--incurred outside of the studio--for transmitters, land lines, and so on, was an American charge. Whereas all the rest--that was the lion share of the budget--would be defrayed by the Federal Republic of Germany through the Interior or rather Inner German Ministry.

Q: That part that comes from the U.S. government is in the USIA budget.

NIEBURG: U.S. contribution to this is in the USIA budget. We have often tried to transfer it to the State Department. Because in a sense it was the State Department, more than anybody else that insisted that the RIAS presence be maintained. But we have never succeeded and it has stayed in USIA. I should say that in terms of investment or pay out, and I would like to put this right up front, and I certainly made that calculation while I was there, there was a listening audience of 14 million people listening at least three times per week. The cost of listener, in other words, the cost of conveying a ..message to an audience was 12 cents per year, per listener. In other words, it was the most cost effective single medium to reach an audience behind the Iron Curtain.

Q: These 40 million listeners, some are --

NIEBURG: Fourteen.

Q: Fourteen.

NIEBURG: Fourteen million in East Germany. And that did not count what listeners we had in West Berlin nor the fact that because as RIAS evolved it had not only medium wave frequencies but also FM and short wave, a short wave frequency, that could be heard as far as the Baltic. Romanian Germans told us that they could listen to RIAS. So there was a tremendous audience, German-speaking audience, behind the curtain that was listening to RIAS.

And it may be interesting to note that in the organization, and this is a hangover still from the Cold War era, the managing editor also carried the title of political director. So you can see here was a very highly targeted purposeful radio.

The problem that arose over time was with the Germans paying the lion's share of the budget for the operation of RIAS. Increasingly, as you can imagine the management, certainly the daily management, went to what we call the intendant_who was the German head of RIAS and the counterpart of the American chairman. Under the ..agreement with the Germans, the Americans

retained complete sovereignty over the radio station and program content. But the daily management, the hiring and the firing, went to the German counterpart of the American chairman. So you had--and have--a hybrid organization.

While in a sense the American, so to say, could "pull the plug," that was the kind of overkill where you would say you can nuke them all the time. So this was a threat that had to be used or could be used only extremely sparingly to be credible. And that created, over time, a number of problems. My own predecessor, one of the most capable and admired chairmen of RIAS, had felt very constrained about using any kind of what you might call a substantive input. He hoped to project U.S. interests by indirection.

I had felt upon my arrival and a very thorough review over literally weeks and weeks of listening to at least those programs with political content, that we had abdicated much of our rights and our purpose. And I had to ask myself why should an American taxpayer basically pay for this? You could still make the point that in a sense RIAS projected Western values to an East European audience. But it was, in a way, so remote that we said, why pay for this out of American appropriated funds?

So when I set about, I tried to, and I did in ..effect, redefine the legal basis in relation to the management terms at RIAS. I exerted what you might call-- and I hope it doesn't sound self serving--a greater American influence on the station, including bringing the Voice of America German service more into the program elements. I wanted more focused programs without being heavy or ham-handed. I think a little bit more of Americana was needed, Americana that was somewhat disappearing as the Germans felt in control--felt that Europe was their focus.

So it was a question of redressing the balance in the program more than anything else. That, in and by itself, was a Herculean task and a very unthankful task at that because we worked basically under German law though in Berlin there is the occupation and the occupation status still applies. We worked with trade unions. There was always the question of political fallout and I personally have been attacked publicly quite strenuously in Berlin for what some felt an over bearing American influence in that particular station on certain types of programs.

It was necessary to do so in order to justify the American input into that particular radio station. And ultimately we succeeded. But that meant working with unions, working with the management. And there was ..not--and that was something that had to be recognized-- always a coincidence of interest between the Germans and the Americans.

So when you say balance, at what point do you give? At what time do you resist? It was a very subtle, very subtle and very difficult time to work because even including amongst the staff of RIAS, amongst our German colleagues, you had professional radio people, yes. But you had the whole spectrum of political opinion which was part of the emerging German democratization effort that we had implanted there but which now came back, in a way, to haunt us. An editor says, are you going to stifle freedom of speech? To what degree do you--can you--argue about editing? And this is a question which arises in the United States as well. So you have to be both subtle and have to be persuasive in your professional arguments.

Q: Pat as the U.S. government representative, American Director of RIAS, who did you report to?

NIEBURG: Well, that is really a very difficult question to answer. And I think there are two answers to it. In terms of efficiency report, the PAO in Bonn was my boss and he wrote my efficiency report. But in ..substantive matters, in a way, I reported directly to the ambassador or alternatively directly to the Director of USIA. Having said that, I must say I never really reported to anyone because nobody really cared enough unless there was some trouble. If some prominent Berliners came to Washington and would tell Director Wick RIAS had turned "red." or what kind of communist propaganda were they broadcasting, I would get a rocket from Washington saying what is wrong and usually I could satisfy them very readily. But otherwise really neither the PAO nor the ambassador, certainly not the Minister in Berlin, ever interfered with what I was doing. So in a sense these five years at RIAS were probably the best assignment I had in that I ran my own business as best as I knew how, without interference from the outside.

The only caveat I should put in there is that once a year, of course, I had to defend the budget. But even there I had little difficulty because these were nuts and bolts requests for specific types of equipment that could be documented so that that was not so difficult. I should say that one of the things that I take great pride in is that I put USIA into the satellite business while I was there. With the help of my RIAS (German) staff, I managed to procure for the U.S. government a satellite channel on ..the European satellite. And that was the first time that any outside nation was permitted to have a channel on the European satellite. Ultimately, of course, that is of transcendental importance to our communication needs, especially if you consider the footprint of a satellite and what kind of an area it can cover. And it was especially important for any kind of broadcasting operation to Eastern Europe.

Q: You said the satellite was for broadcasting or for receiving?

NIEBURG: That was a broadcast satellite. In other words, you go from a ground station to the satellite. And the satellite goes back and broadcasts directly from space, not going back through the ground station, but doing broadcasting directly from up in space.

Q: Who was able to receive that?

NIEBURG: That could be done, of course, with slight modifications to receiving sets, directly into Eastern Europe. The question is while the technology existed in terms of broadcasting transmission, at the reception side there was still some work to be done. But we had clear indication that even Eastern Europe's new receivers were in the process of being developed so that when you talk in terms of future reception that was the wave of the future.

Q: Now, the Voice of America as I understand it uses ..satellites for transmitting from Washington to relay stations, but as yet does not do direct satellite. Is that correct?

NIEBURG: That is correct. The direct satellite broadcasting is not a problem in terms of broadcasting. It is more a question of development of the receiving sets.

Q: And the political implication.

NIEBURG: And the political implication. Of course, the Eastern Europeans were always very, very adamantly opposed. They feared a direct transgression into their national sovereignty. Even our obtaining a broadcast channel, the E.E. worried about U.S. intention and the European broadcast union had some serious reservations because of the East Block protests in that regard.

I should say that while we were broadcasting in RIAS, the coverage that came from the United States was dominantly provided by the Voice of America German service. And that leads me in a sense directly into the Voice of America.

The German service of the Voice was unique in that it had only one function. It did not broadcast directly as all of the other services did. It serviced RIAS.

Q: You mean it didn't broadcast directly to Germany.

NIEBURG: It did not broadcast directly to Germany. You're quite right. But it did service RIAS and served as its U.S. news bureau. We had at least one or two RIAS staffers on the German service primarily for training and acquaintance with the United States and familiarization with our society. And we had American staffers, German speakers, who prepared the feeds from Washington to RIAS which were incorporated into the proper program elements.

Q: How many hours daily did RIAS broadcast?

NIEBURG: Well, that is a very good question. I should have addressed that at the very beginning. RIAS broadcast around the clock in AM, FM and with shortwave signals. Now, RIAS had two basic channels which were not identical. That gave us a tremendous program spread. One AM and FM channel were devoted dominantly to news and current events, whereas the other was more what you might call societal and cultural in program content.

In the short wave section we had dominantly pickups or repeats from the news and news feature programs. But it was a service that went around the clock 24 hours a day. I think there was one span of 14 minutes interruption in the middle of the night which we used for servicing our transmitting equipment.

ALBERT E. HEMSING
Director, Amerika Haus, USIS
Freiburg (1978-1983)

Albert E. Hemsing was born in 1921 in the Ruhr area near Wuppertal, Germany and emigrated to the United States at the age of two. He attended the City College of New York. He worked for the Office of War Information Film Division, and for the Marshall Plan Film Division. Mr. Hemsing's career with USIS included positions in the United Kingdom (England), India, and Germany. He was

Director of Radio Free Europe, Director of the Amerika Haus, and Assistant Director for Europe. This interview was conducted by Robert Anderson in 1989.

HEMSING: Our life in New York was fine, but I was bored without work, a failing on my part. Fortunately, Alec Klieforth called me one day. We were old friends from Berlin where he had been the RIAS director. At that time he was the Country PAO in Bonn. Alec asked whether he might propose my name to the Board of the Carl-Schurz-Haus, the German-American Institute in Freiburg, where they were looking for a new director. I unhesitatingly said yes.

Older members of the board in Freiburg, Dr. Bauer of the University, and the deputy mayor of the town, actually remembered me as the official who had come there, back in 1963, to close the Institute down. But they were happy to hire me nevertheless. Another of fate's ironies. A delightful one this time.

We arrived in Freiburg, one of the most picturesque and delightful cities in Germany, in August 1978. Freiburg is a university town of 175,000, gateway to the Black Forest, located in Southwest Germany near Basel and Colmar. My mother was born 30 kilometers to the west, on the French side of the Rhine, in Alsace. Full cycle indeed. We eventually looked up a flock of cousins there, feted with "Gugehopf" cake and the local Riesling wine.

One of the pleasures of working in Freiburg was the opportunity for direct contact with the community, and especially with the university students who were our prime audience. To the Freiburgers, Esther and I stood for "Mr. and Mrs. America" in our five years there.

A deep satisfaction was my relationship with Heinz Scheer, the Institute's long-time program director who was married to an English woman, Sheila, who taught at the university. Heinz, exactly my age, was one of the best examples of the bright young, university-trained Germans who cast their lot in with USIS soon after the war. He had a keen mind and deeply democratic instincts. The local business elders considered him a bit of a Red. He was killed by a careening drunk driver shortly after we left Freiburg.

Life in Freiburg had been extremely pleasant, and we could have stayed on and on. But as our fifth anniversary there approached, Esther and I agreed that it was time to go home. We did, in August 1983.

JACK SEYMOUR
External Political Affairs Officer
Bonn (1979-1983)

Mr. Seymour was born in the Philippines, the son of a U.S Navy family. He earned his bachelor's degree from Dartmouth University in 1962. He joined the Foreign Service in 1967 after serving in the U.S Army for three years. His career included postings in Canada, Yugoslavia, Poland, Germany, and Belgium. Mr. Seymour was interviewed by Raymond Ewing on November 20th 2003.

Q: Continuation of the Foreign Affairs oral history interview with Jack Seymour. Today is the 23rd of July, 2004. And Jack we are, I think, just finishing your assignment to the European Bureau at Washington as Yugoslav and then Polish desk officers. And you then went to Bonn to the political section, I think from 1979 to 1983. And what were your main responsibilities there?

SEYMOUR: Well I was in charge of the small external affairs unit. We had one, later, two junior officers in that section and, still later, a summer intern as well. We were part of a large political section with a two-man internal affairs unit, a Berlin affairs team called the "Bonn group" because they represented the US with the French, British, and Germans in the "Bonn Group" to manage Berlin and East German affairs. There was also a political/military unit. In my unit we followed German foreign relations with the world, or at least the political side of those relations, working with the Econ and Commercial and other sections as appropriate.

One growing aspect of this had to do with European Union affairs. When I arrived, the FRG had just finished its stint in the rotating presidency of the EU. It had required a lot of work for our political section, because the European Union was taking on or encompassing more and more of Germany's foreign policy, as the EU tried increasingly to "harmonize" the policies of its members through a mechanism known then as "political cooperation." It was done then on an intergovernmental basis outside the EU treaty framework. An example was the United Nations where the EU tried to coordinate its policies on various issues when they came to a vote.

The Department would send instructions to all the key posts to make demarches on the issues, especially during the time of the UN General Assembly meetings. EU member-states were trying to force us to deal primarily with the presidency capital, which in the six months before my arrival had been Bonn. When the presidency changed, the Germans would formally tell us to make the demarches in the succeeding capital, but they were usually happy to listen and accept "non-papers" with US views on the issues, always while stressing that they did so informally and we should make the official demarche in Paris or wherever.

Q: Because the Commission of the European communities in Brussels really wasn't very involved, it was done by the EU presidency.

SEYMOUR: Yes, for "political cooperation," as they called it, that's right. Later I learned much more about that from my assignment with USEC in Brussels.

In that connection, a special feature of Allied coordination in NATO was the fact that the EU countries through the EU political cooperation structure were increasingly shadowing the work of the experts committees in NATO on various world issues. That meant that when NATO working groups on different issues met, like as not EU working groups on the same geographic areas or functional issues had met, say, a week before to work out the EU position. If they did not actually concert their positions for the NATO meeting, they were at least rehearsing them. As a result, the EU members of NATO had close knowledge of where each other stood on the various questions. In many cases, as well, it was the same EU member-state foreign ministry officials involved in the respective committees or "working groups" meeting in EU "political cooperation" and then in the NATO working groups. Of course the EU was not taking up the

military issues, which were outside their realm, but they were dealing with the politics and economics underlying some military questions and that then played into NATO discussions. That was an interesting feature that seemed to take awhile for our security affairs people to recognize, and it began to complicate our work at NATO somewhat.

Also soon after I arrived in Bonn came the invasion of Afghanistan pretty soon after, that winter I guess.

Q: December of '79.

SEYMOUR: Then came the boycott of the Moscow Olympics, so my little section had a lot to do carrying out the lobbying work to press the Germans to join the boycott.

Q: Did the Federal Republic of Germany participate in that boycott or did they go to Moscow?

SEYMOUR: They did not go. I kept close watch on this because it absorbed so much of our time and we received instructions all the time to go and make *démarches*, even at the ambassadorial level. There was to be a meeting at some point of the German Olympic Committee in Frankfurt and we had heard that the Soviet ambassador would attend or would be talking to the committee. The Soviets were of course very anxious to persuade the Germans to send their team to the Moscow games. On the eve of that meeting, the Embassy received instructions for the ambassador, Walter Stoessel to call urgently at the highest level in the Foreign Office. Ambassador Stoessel sensed things very nicely, and his meeting, actually, with the deputy foreign minister was for me as notetaker an educational experience of how an ambassador with a subtle grasp of things can manage a discussion and get the right response to fulfill his orders in a way that's most effective with the host government to get the desired results.

The Germans were very much into so-called consensus politics, a rather pervasive concept. It was a form of cooperative decision making known as "*Mitbestimmung*" in their the labor management relations and carried over into corporate governance and their government's approach to both domestic political and foreign affairs, especially within the European context. They don't like to be out in front or at least at that time did not. They wanted to see what everybody else believed and then they would gradually arrive at their own decisions.

In this situation, they were in a difficult position because they were being press by the U.S. and also the Russians. Stoessel realized this and he put the questions to the deputy foreign minister in such a way as to get responses that would not anger Washington but also wouldn't commit the Germans to do things they could not do. For example, the instructions were for Stoessel to go to meet with the Olympic Committee in Frankfurt as well, and he knew that was not a good idea, so he got the deputy foreign minister to advise and explain how that would be counterproductive. The deputy minister advised that we should, please, back off a bit and let the Germans work at developing the right consensus on this. Without promising, the deputy foreign minister, a close diplomatic colleague of Ambassador Stoessel's, "predicted" that the German team would in the end not go to Moscow, and indeed his "prediction" proved accurate.

In the end, and it was very interesting to see, only three European countries actually boycotted

the Olympics: Norway, Turkey and Germany. Interestingly, the first two actually bordered the Soviet Union and were very sensitive about that and also anxious to preserve good ties with the U.S. The Germans perhaps felt vulnerable in similar ways, but they wanted to be quiet about it. As a result they delivered the goods, but they did not get good press for it in the US. If you asked even at the time, many people, unless they followed closely, probably thought that the British had boycotted, because Prime Minister Thatcher was vociferously condemning the Soviets over Afghanistan and calling for an Olympic boycott. But her country's team defied her and went to Moscow anyway, as did most of the other Europeans. So she got the credit for nothing, and the Germans never got any credit because they were working quietly, but their team, as the deputy foreign minister had predicted to the Ambassador, did in fact join the boycott.

At the time I thought, not to speak so much about the British, that this has been characteristic, I think, of the Germans that they don't get credit for good things that they do because they're so anxious not to be out in front and not to be public about it. This means that they're rather inept in public relations terms. Perhaps they are this way because they are still trying very hard to compensate for all of the wrongs done before.

Q: And for the reasons you mentioned before they often take awhile to make the position or make the decision and sometimes by then the attention had shifted elsewhere.

SEYMOUR: Yes. And that reminds me of a quip by a deputy assistant secretary, Bill Bode, with whom I worked when I went back to the Office of German Affairs at one point. He had a lot of experience with the FRG and but was dealing with France at the time, supervising the Office of Western European Affairs and a couple of others. I knew him pretty well because I had tried to get a position in that office. Comparing France and Germany, he once remarked that it was so exasperating dealing with the Germans because with the French you wouldn't like what their position might be but you always knew pretty much right away what it was or how bad it was. But the Germans were exasperatingly slow, moving every which way, hemming and hawing, before they finally came to a decision on what their position would be.

Another event during that time in Bonn was the hostage-taking in Tehran. That engaged us a lot. Working with the Germans on this became an important part of our portfolio throughout the time that our Embassy personnel in Tehran were held. A young officer in my section who was very good on Middle East matters carried much of the load at the working level. I guided his work, reviewed his reports, and was occasionally involved in meetings at the Foreign Office as well, but most of the load he carried. Much of it involved getting reports from the German ambassador in Tehran, who was quite active there even though the Swiss were handling US interests.

There were also high-level talks at several points. Secretary of State Warren Christopher would come and meet in Bonn with an Iranian businessman married to a German who traveled frequently to Bonn and supposedly was influential back in Tehran. Unlike most visits by a Secretary, however, these were handled very quietly. Christopher came with only a couple of aides and carried out his mission with little embassy involvement beyond the ambassador. We knew that something was going on that had to do with the Iranians and the hostage situation, but to this day, I don't know exactly what was being discussed. I'm sure Ambassador Stoessel was involved, and I believe the Germans did play a helpful role in some way. How decisive it was I

don't know, but I believe it was at least keeping open a channel of dialogue.

Q: But you really weren't involved?

SEYMOUR: I personally was not involved, nor was my boss, the political counselor. The junior officer whom I supervised kept constant contact with the German foreign office, and we reported on his discussions and what he learned. I was occasionally involved in meetings as well, but my main role was in supervising that junior officer. The main channel with Secretary Christopher was closely held; I'm not sure that even the Ambassador knew much of the substance involved, although the Secretary would stay in the residence.

I did have some interesting experiences dealing with other issues. One was El Salvador and the strife there, which was also hot at the time. I remember one time being called up by the SPD director of international affairs whom we dealt with. He had a visitor from San Salvador, a representative of the political wing of the guerrilla group there. My SPD contact wanted to get this man in to pass a message to the ambassador, Walter Stoessel. Well the ambassador wasn't going to meet with him for obvious reasons, but he did agree for me to meet him. I received the Salvadoran in my office on a Saturday morning along with the SPD man for a very interesting discussion. I can't recall the details but in general they were trying some kind of a peace plan and his object was to persuade Washington to lean on the Salvadoran government to bring them to the table. I duly reported this, but it was a non-starter.

Q: Did the State Department know about this contact before it happened and was agreeable to it?

SEYMOUR: Yes, we alerted them and reported the discussion. In a similar way, I met the foreign minister of Chad in a hotel in Bonn one time and his message was for us lean on the French who he said were supporting the "wrong" people in their civil war. We of course reported that, but, again, I do not recall that anything came of it.

Q: So Bonn was a small town in Germany but oftentimes a crossroads?

SEYMOUR: Yes, yes, it really was. And that affected our reporting and everything else. I had come from service in Eastern Europe where we tended to do long and detailed reports, who said what to whom with all the details and nuances. My first boss in Bonn, the political counselor Marten van Heuven pressed me pretty hard for brevity, but I knew the people in the Department following Eastern Europe wanted such detail. After all, I had worked in that office there. I think in retrospect it was a question at that time of having few people in Washington following Eastern Europe who wanted to parse all the nitty-gritty, whereas the volume of activity in Bonn and the many more people at all levels interested in it placed a premium on really short, high-impact reporting.

Having worked in Eastern Europe, I was very interested in Poles and Yugoslavs and the others and sought out their embassy people and the German Foreign Office officials who worked with them. I remember early on doing a detailed cable reporting economic talks the Yugoslavs had in Bonn. It combined insights from their embassy and from German officials. Marten came down

the hall waving it and saying he would let it go but he would give me “six months to get Eastern Europe out of my system.”

Well, in the ensuing six months, of course, there was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and following that, the Polish Solidarity crisis began building, during which I was sent TDY to Poland for a couple of weeks, so it was really pretty hard for me—and the Embassy, too—to get Eastern Europe “out of the system.”

And then later, some years later, I had a little bit of vindication when Marten became the NIO (National Intelligence Officer) for Europe at the National Intelligence Council. He had really good solid experience in Western Europe but not in the East, and he called me at one point early in his assignment at the NIC, when I was acting director for Eastern Europe in about 1988. He said, “Well Jack, as you know, I’m now the NIO for all of Europe and I’ve got the western part running pretty well but you know that I don’t really have experience with Eastern Europe, so I wonder if you could arrange a briefing for me to come over and meet your staff and get their views on things.” We had a little laugh over that turn of events. I like Marten a lot and have had the pleasure of working with him on many interesting issues over the ensuing years when I was at the Atlantic Council and also now at the NIC for which he has done some consulting work.

Another interesting issue in Bonn had to do with the German *Stiftungen* or political party foundations. At that time, in the early 1980s, there was a lot of interest in them, and we had quite a few visitors from Washington coming to meet with them, not to discuss policy so much but to learn how they operated overseas.

Q: The word essentially means foundation.

SEYMOUR: Yes, and each party had one named after a former party leader of note. The Konrad Adenauer Stiftung or foundation was affiliated with the CDU and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung with SPD. Then the smaller CSU, the Christian Social Union, the Bavarian wing of the CDU, had the Hans Seidel Stiftung and the FDP, Free Democratic or liberal party, had the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung. More recently, there is Heinrich Böll Stiftung for the Green Party.

They were thought of at this time as a kind of model. They had played a role in turning Portugal, helping after Salazar’s demise to keep it from going communist. Their party affiliations gave them a distance from the government even though they got money from the federal budget. So they seemed to be able to operate as non-governmental organizations, and that gave them some flexibility, which they certainly used to very good and decisive effect in Portugal. But they were operating all around the world; doing a lot, for example, in Latin America, which was hot at the time, observing elections, conducting political party training, and generally assisting the building of democratic institutions and practices there and elsewhere. Of course, they were informed by their particular party viewpoint and tended to work through like-minded people in the countries where they operated, and they had their own programs, but still there was a loose coordination with at least the general lines of FRG foreign policy, which they all supported. I understand, for example, that the Germans ambassadors in various countries would bring them together for informal chats about developments, presumably getting their views and advising them of government views.

At any rate, there was strong interest in Washington in somehow duplicating this and so there were lots of people coming through to talk with them. I think the ultimate result was the creation of the National Endowment for Democracy, which is-

Q: And the National Republican Institute, and the National Democratic Institute, and they get their funding, at least in part, through the NED, the National Endowment for Democracy.

SEYMOUR: Yes, during one of my NGO stints, I worked for the International Foundation for Election System, IFES, which worked closely with those organizations, for example, in a joint program funded by USAID.

Q: I think they were established in the early '80s during the Reagan administration and possibly even at the end of the Carter administration. As you say the idea was well along in Germany and certainly the German Stiftungen had been out ahead of what we doing at the time.

SEYMOUR: Yes, after Bonn, when I was political counselor at the US Mission to the European Communities, as it was known then, I worked with our Labor Counselor who did a lot of business for the AFL-CIO with the EU labor federations, and so I got some exposure to what our labor unions do along those lines as well.

Another development that came to prominence while I was in Bonn was the rise of Solidarity in Poland. This led to a lot of close contact with the German foreign office, the parties, and the Stiftungen and what they were doing in Poland and Eastern Europe. Most of this I did handle myself because of my experience in Eastern Europe and in the Office of EE Affairs in the Department, and also as part of our assorting of tasks in my unit.

I recall there was a lot of anxiety among the Germans about Solidarity because it was pressing so hard politically and not, as the Germans said, acting like a proper labor union. It was acting too much like a political party. Out of their concern about destabilization in Eastern Europe, the Germans were prone to press the U.S. to lean on Solidarity to make it behave, so to speak.

Q: The German Government or the unions?

SEYMOUR: The government, mainly. The unions and the party Stiftungen were pretty active in training and assisting Solidarity, ostensibly in trade union terms but often in effect, wittingly or not, strengthening the organizational capabilities of the movement qua political organization.

A big personal event for me during this period was a very short-notice TDY to Warsaw to fill in for a political officer who had been evacuated with appendicitis. It was a critical time politically, April 1981, and they wanted someone to fill in. Since I was in nearby-Bonn and had served in Warsaw and as Polish desk officer, they asked for me personally in a cable that came in on a Sunday afternoon from the Department. They said send me and so I went. And it was one of the most memorable experiences I had as a Foreign Service officer.

Q: That was in April of '81?

SEYMOUR: April of '81, and the political pressures were building to a crescendo over Solidarity and the possibility of a crackdown, disarray in the Polish United Workers (Communist) Party, concern about reaction from the Soviets, and so forth. Also at that time the Czechs were having a big party congress and Brezhnev was going. Solidarity itself was in full cry, partly to press its advantage with the Polish Communist Party so weak and partly goaded by provocations and reaction to pressure from outside, especially from East Germany.

I arrived a couple days later in Warsaw and received the broadest instructions ever from the DCM, Carroll Brown. He simply asked me to go out and meet all the people I could, people I had worked with before and others and then write up what I learned and what my impressions were. I was not to worry about reading cable traffic or attending embassy meetings or anything like that. To have such license was a political officer's heaven.

I stayed with Carroll, who with his wife was most gracious and supportive of my late comings and goings. I worked out of the political section, with strong support and encouragement from the political counselor, John Vought, spending the mornings looking up people and arranging meetings for breakfast, lunch, coffee, walks in the park, dinner, whatever. I usually returned very late at night and wrote up my notes. The next day I would write the cables, make more appointments, and go to more meetings. I ran on adrenalin and also on the enthusiasm of the people I was meeting and the confidence that came as my facility in Polish returned quickly.

A highlight of this time in Poland was a trip to Gdansk. The Embassy had not been able to send anyone there for awhile and there was word that a national meeting of Solidarity was to take place, so they sent me up there along with an Embassy officer, John Zerolis, to see what we could learn. We got an appointment with the Solidarity leadership, which turned out to be a private meeting with a deputy to Walesa, and we also met with people in their media office. In the course of our discussions they confirmed that they were having that day a meeting of the regional representatives of Solidarity from all over the country and that we could certainly attend with journalist credentials, which we did. There were 150 to 200 people in a large conference hall in a meeting chaired from a long dais by Walesa and national leaders with regional tables arranged around the hall. It was very informal and lasted all afternoon. The "press gallery" was just standing room in the back. When Walesa opened proceedings and went through the agenda, he mentioned that they had a special guest, a deputy foreign minister who would come and talk to them about the foreign policy ramifications of Solidarity's actions. This turned out to be Józef Wiejacz who had been the DCM at the Polish embassy with whom I had worked from time to time as desk officer. In fact, he had been at that farewell party for me that I mentioned.

Well, when he was ushered in with, a couple of aides and a Solidarity fellow, I was standing in the back, and he went right by me. I had an impulse to step forward and greet him that I quickly repulsed in favor of a second one, which was to slink back against the wall. Later I learned that he had spotted me there and asked his people why I was there. We had not seen each other since that farewell party in Washington when I was on my way to Bonn, so he must have been surprised to see me in Warsaw.

But the main thing is the discussion. I took notes on a small pad that I later typed up; I still have

a transcript. Wiejacz was introduced and spoke for about 20 minutes before he was interrupted and basically hooted down with pointed questions from the floor. His point had been to educate them about the sensitivities of the “brothers” and “neighbors” and to explain that there was risk for Poland in what they were doing, that they were trying for too much. He went on in this vein until they became visibly annoyed and very inattentive, talking among themselves, scraping chairs, laughing and so forth. Finally somebody from the back of the room got up, called for the floor, was recognized, and in effect told him: “Look, you, Mr. Foreign Ministry Official, have been talking at us for some while; now it's time for you to listen to us. And we'll tell you that we're not a threat to anybody, we just want a better deal here in Poland. And it's your job to tell them that. And while you're doing it ask them about the Katyn massacre and other crimes against Poland.” There were calls of “yes, yes” from the floor, and poor Mr. Wiejacz was hooted down. Then proceeded a rather hot and heavy question-and-answer session, and there were more sharp comments. This went on for maybe another hour or so and then he was sort of escorted away in disgrace. To witness all that showed me a lot about the attitudes and depth of feelings of the Solidarity rank and file.

When I got back to Bonn, I wrote a cable trying to sum all this up. It was not that long, only a page, a few paragraphs. Marten, I think, appreciated that brevity. It was titled “Solidarity at the Brink.” I tried to conjure up a metaphor that they were rushing toward a cliff and that, contrary to what the Germans I mentioned might have thought, there was no holding back, for several reasons. One was that they realized this was the opportunity of a lifetime that may not come back again soon so they had to push as far as they could. Second, there was no resistance. The party was dissolving. People were turning in their party cards; party members were angry and upset. The leadership was trying to rally them through special meetings and discussions, but the party was losing, and its leaders were at a loss. There no resistance to Solidarity's relentless pushing. The third thing was that the regime was double-dealing. They were at the negotiating table with Solidarity, ostensibly trying to work things out, to grant some of Solidarity's demands, more rights to the workers, perhaps compensation for the earlier arrests and so forth, but at the same time they were kicking them under the table because the secret service was harassing Solidarity leaders and others. They had complained about that to us when we met with them earlier that day. There was a lot of buzz about a recent incident in which one of Walesa's lieutenants, a woman, had been framed in a provocation of some kind, designed to discredit her. It was a disinformation campaign to make it appear that she had been leaking conversations and that kind of stuff. Later on, it got ugly; a priest was killed under suspicious circumstances. They played pretty rough even before martial law. So how could Solidarity trust the government when the secret service was doing this kind of thing?

Thus, it seemed to me then that there was really no way that Solidarity would itself ease up on the throttle. There was, of course, the concern about a Soviet crackdown. Many people, including in the Church expected that. They were anxious to know that somehow America would be with them if that happened. They could not believe that their army would fire upon them, hence the concern it would be the Soviets. Of course, in the event it was in fact the Polish regime and army that implemented martial law that December.

Back in Bonn, with all this running through my mind, I had a rather strange, emotional experience. When I returned, it was Palm Sunday, and we went to the little Anglican chapel

there, St. Boniface. It came to me during one of the hymn's portraying Christ's entry into Jerusalem whose refrain includes the words "ride on, ride on, in majesty; ride on, ride on to die." All of a sudden it hit me that this was the kind of situation Solidarity was in. I just choked up and couldn't get through the rest of the hymn, and it affected me for days afterward. And then of course there was the martial law. That too affected me because we picked up our son from the airport that morning—he was returning for Christmas from school in the States—and, literally, as I put the key in the front door with his bags and all, I heard the phone ringing, ran down the hall, picked it up, and it was the German foreign office saying that martial law had been declared and all these people arrested, they were forming a task force, and would I please come down and represent the embassy. This I did and that was pretty much what it was for the rest of that Christmas. So try as I might, I could not get Eastern Europe out of my system, nor could the Embassy in Bonn.

Q: It was a busy time, important time.

SEYMOUR: Yes, our involvement continued for some time, and the Germans too were quite engaged, among other things, to encourage people to send packages of food, clothing and other things to support the Poles. The German government waived postal charges, and the DCM's wife, Sheila Woessner, organized a special effort by embassy employees to take advantage of that. We all bought food and things and packed big boxes full and shipped them free to Poland.

All in all, it was a very interesting tour, lots of important things happening and interesting personalities there. Walter Stoessel was followed by another very interesting ambassador, Arthur Burns, who came with a lot of stature and a big reputation. At first, I was a little put off actually, because he was, of course, a political appointee who did not really know Germany that much. And Stoessel was such a professional and such a skillful person, a consummate diplomat. So that was kind of a downer. But it became clear, of course, and rather quickly that Arthur Burns was a man of substance and rich experience. He quipped at one point that he'd given George Schultz, the Secretary, his first job in government, bringing Schultz on to the Council of Economic Advisers when he, Burns, was chairman, in the 1950s, I believe. Burns also remarked once that he was in Bonn only as long as he had the ears of the president and the secretary of state, and also the Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt. If he felt he was losing their attention then, then he didn't need the job and would gladly go. That gave him a kind of power and serenity, I think.

Another thing I recall about his approach was when he commented once that he would telephone Schultz about something, I believe, involving German and the Soviet Union was going to telephone Schultz, and Bill Woessner shook his head, no, no, no! "You can't telephone it's too sensitive; send an EXDIS cable." Burns looked at him and said, "Look, if I send a cable it will be all over Washington in a couple of days, but if I telephone, Schultz will hear it and maybe the Soviets will hear it, too, but at least they can keep a secret!?" So Woessner was overruled. But he was really good. He went up against Burns a lot over procedural and substantive matters, both, and I think he served the Ambassador very well. They were a really good team.

Another time we were preparing the Ambassador for a hearing. He was returning for consultations and had been asked to appear before one of the committees in Congress. We prepared a big briefing book, all the sections participating in writing papers on various issues in

bilateral relations. Going through it with us one last time, he said he was happy, noting that if he couldn't answer a question directly, the answer will at least be in his book. And I piped up impertinently to say that, if not, then the desk officer, who will be there with you, could help. He looked at me and he said, "No, he won't. When I go up there, I go with my book and what's in my own head. Those other fellows, especially the military, have all their aides them whispering in their ears and what kind of an impression does that make? If I can't answer a question and it's not in this book, I will just tell them I don't know and will find out."

Q: Well, I think he had subsequent heads of the Federal Reserve who followed that. Because when you see Greenspan testifying he's usually all by himself.

SEYMOUR: Yes. So maybe he's the model there.

Another thing I remember was the way he had us prepare for his speechmaking. He set up embassy committees, in effect, composed of the country team or designees. There was one agenda to sort out the invitations for the six months or, often, the year ahead and which to accept according to the likely issues of interest—which ones he should go to, which a deputy should attend, and which we should regret.

Once we agreed on that list, he asked us to recommend what he should talk about these events, asking each section to propose three topics. These were combined and prioritized and then matched with the speaking events during the year. Then he would address the individual topics, asking us to come back with another list of the most important things he could, say, for example, about NATO, trade relations, the Middle East, and so forth. Then he would go over the list we all had submitted, and in discussion with us he would approve the final three or four points per topic. At that point, he would say, "OK, write me those speeches," about NATO, trade relations, and so on. Before, with Stoessel and in almost every other speech-writing process I experienced, we tended to go to boilerplate material, to get the latest language from Department statements and cobble it into a speech. So I found Ambassador Burns' approach very interesting and tried to let it guide my work on this sort of thing from then on.

He was quite a fine person and a good leader. When I left, and this is rather personal, I wanted to call on him in his office to say farewell and in a way to make amends in my own mind for not having thought he was going to be up to the caliber of a career ambassador. I told him some of the things I thought were really good about the way he mobilized the embassy resources and said I had learned a great deal serving with him, even though at first I had been doubtful. He accepted that quite graciously, smiling, and then he said, "No, Jack, I have appreciated what we have done together," adding, "you have an inquiring mind and that's good. Keep that up." I took that as a good lesson and good advice. But he was truly a fine guy.

One last thing. I learned this from our desk officer, Bill Gusman later. A few months into his term, when he went back to Washington for consultations, maybe in connection with those hearings I mentioned, Bill arranged a meeting with all the various admin, budget, and other people who served the Embassy and the Ambassador, because he had a tendency to pose impossible demands that were causing them grief. He wanted his own car while in Washington, for example, and he did not know why he was not entitled to first-class air fare after his first trip

to post. He clearly had been used to pretty high amenities, so Bill arranged for this meeting so they could all explain how things worked and what he was entitled to and what not. At the end of it, Bill told me, he leaned back, shook his head, smiling, and said, "Well I really appreciate you fellows coming and explaining all this to me and telling me what I'm not entitled too. I only wish you had come to tell me this before I took the job!" He was a great man with a good sense of humor and a common touch, in a way.

Q: Okay. You mentioned that Marten Van Heuven was the political counselor, I guess at the beginning of your time?

SEYMOUR: Yes, he was there for about half of my three-and-a-half year tour.

Then came Dick Barkley, and his deputy was Mark Lissfeldt, who replaced Vlad Lehovich.

Q: Okay. And the DCM pretty much throughout was Bill Woessner?

SEYMOUR: Yes, yes. He was great.

I remember once he walked by our office on his way out for the day when I was asking Sandy Lewis, my secretary, after just returning from the DCM late in the day, whether the Econ section had cleared on a cable I had shown him. She told me, not yet, and, showing her the couple of changes the DCM had made, I told her he had cleared it. Just then, we heard a voice from the hall, "Well, if the DCM has cleared it, then goddam it, send it out!"

Q: That was Bill.

SEYMOUR: That was Bill, and so we did.

Q: Okay. Well, I have to ask you if you want to say just a word about Turkey and German relations. Because I know from my experience that you had a little bit to do with Turkey.

SEYMOUR: That's right. That was very interesting. I was definitely not an expert on Turkey although I did talk with Turkish embassy officers and with the Foreign Office, because Turkey and relations with Turkey were important to the Germans, both politically and economically. There were of course many guest workers from Turkey in Germany, a good number of whom had been there for over a generation. Many Germans in the SPD, then in power, had a special tie to Turkey because they or their parents had taken refuge there during the Nazi period. There was in Turkey a military coup in September...

Q: September 1980.

SEYMOUR: You were visiting Bonn at the time, and we got a message in the morning traffic about this coup in Ankara during the night. You had appointments at the Foreign Office, and I remember accompanying you there, and of course they were very interested in what we knew about it and our own reactions. So that event really colored your visit, as I recall.

Q: It was not a total surprise but I had not known anything until perhaps you came or maybe I heard it on the radio.

SEYMOUR: You might have heard it, but I recall bringing a cable to you at that time.

Q: And pretty early in the day to get much reaction from Washington was a bit much to expect, so we kind of tried to anticipate what the reaction would be and I think I was pretty close to what turned out. We understood why the situation got to the point where something really had to happen, and we hoped the military wouldn't stay there indefinitely. And they didn't.

SEYMOUR: I think the Germans also, especially the socialists, had an aversion to military rule and were sensitive on that.

Q: They'd been very close to Bülent Ecevit, who, I think, had been prime minister recently, and his party; I think they had their connections through the Socialist International and other party institutions you mentioned. Okay, anything else we need to talk about your time in Bonn?

SEYMOUR: No, I can't think of...well, there was a NATO summit and a meeting that was a major gathering but involved the usual stuff, advance teams for planning the events, for security, and for communications. During the summit there was a surprise meeting between President Reagan and the Saudi crown prince of Saudi Arabia. It caused a lot of consternation because of the additional organizing to bring it about somewhat secretly on the margins of the summit. I was "site officer" for the Chancellery, where all the formal summit meetings took place and was quite suddenly detailed to the White House advance team to help arrange this side-meeting with the crown prince. I was told by the political counselor to go with a White House guy and do what he says. His first words to me as we settled into the car to go off to the Saudi embassy to meet with the crown prince who was staying there and work out the details were that from now on I did not work for State but for the White House.

Q: And the idea was to arrange a meeting between the president and the crown prince of Saudi Arabia?

SEYMOUR: Yes.

Q: In Bonn?

SEYMOUR: Yes.

Q: At the time that the NATO summit-

SEYMOUR: At the time of the NATO meeting, because the crown prince happened to be there at that time. I had absolutely no idea what the substance was about, but I do remember it seemed related to the events in Turkey and there was a real concern not to let the Germans know what was going on and, also, not to be upstaged by them in any way. As Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was the host of the summit and also of the crown prince, there was perhaps a feeling he might want to horn in. Of course, the idea of keeping it secret from them was a bit ludicrous and, sure

enough, when we arrived at the Saudi embassy, it was surrounded and crowded with German police providing security, so they could not help but know something was up with the Americans. Still, keeping it secret was like an obsession with the advance man I was working with. He was somehow transfixed with this mission, nothing else mattered and everybody else should get out of the way. But it worked out just fine.

Q: And you were there partly because you spoke German and knew some of the German officials?

SEYMOUR: Yes, yes, yes, that was the idea. But it was a bit difficult because I had the impression they were also trying to keep the Secretary of State, General Haig, out of things as well, and he was, of course, my ultimate boss, so it put me theoretically in a conflict-of-interest situation. It all happened so quickly, though, and I gave an account to my people at the Embassy afterwards, so there was no real problem.

Q: Okay. Anything else about Bonn?

SEYMOUR: I may think of things. It was a very interesting experience because unlike working in an Eastern European embassy or consulate, there was in Bonn a worldwide focus and one had to become acquainted with a lot of issues. There was a lot when I first got there, for example, about the UN Contact Group for Southern Africa. The Germans were part of that, because of their earlier protectorate over what became Namibia. They were very conscientious and active, and I do remember when the administration changed in early 1981, they were quite concerned that the first thing we did was institute a policy review of Africa and Southern Africa that put everything on hold. It took months and months and months for us to determine our approach, and the Germans became upset and impatient with the delay,

I also remember very much and recalled recently, watching on TV the funeral of President Reagan that the Germans' first reaction to his election was really annoying. They couldn't believe that such a candidate was even running, let alone that he would get elected. They considered him a two-bit cowboy, a B-grade actor. Now my wife's from California, and although neither of us was for Reagan, we both appreciated that California's a pretty big place with a big budget, an enormous economy, and a huge role in global trade, making it comparable to several G-7 members. Reagan had been governor for two terms there, eight years, and that was not an insignificant executive and leadership position. So I would become indignant at hearing this criticism or reading it, and whenever I had a chance to talk to people I would tell them where Reagan comes from and the significance of his work there.

Q: You talked a little bit about the party foundations that you had contact with on foreign affairs, but obviously your main responsibility was the German foreign ministry. Did you also have contact with some parliamentary people, Bundestag members?

SEYMOUR: Oh yes. We covered important foreign policy speeches in the Bundestag, often attending in person, either I or one of my two deputies, even though the internal political section had a Foreign Service National who regularly covered the Bundestag proceedings.. When there was a major speech, the equivalent of the state of the union, say, we covered the foreign policy

aspect of it. We met with Bundestag people. The internal affairs section, of course, dealt regularly with them. We focused on foreign policy issues, and would, for example, contact foreign relations committee members or staff from time to time. I remember seeking out somebody from the foreign relations committee staff, after the changeover to the Helmut Kohl government to get some idea of what the new conservative government's foreign policy would be. He surprised me with his vehemence on certain changes they intended. He said they had been in the wings for 12 years, while the socialists played down German interests, all the time wanting to know the consensus, what everybody else wanted without working to promote what the Germans wanted. I asked him how he thought that would change, and he replied that one thing would be a tougher attitude toward those who deal with East Germany: "We're not going to put up with other countries cozying up to the East Germans. We're going to start telling them, for example, that if their leaders, say from Africa, visit East Berlin and don't stop in Bonn also, then they better rethink their expectations of foreign aid from us next time around."

That was the attitude among hardliners, but I don't think it came through that much in practice. Nevertheless, Helmut Kohl was a different sort of figure from Schmidt; less intellectual, more conservative in his politics, as you would imagine, but he was very good in some ways. One was his commitment to Europe and the European Community. He was, I believe, the first chancellor who was not really an adult during World War II; he was a young boy, so he grew up in the post-war period when cooperation against the Soviet threat and European integration were the main goals.

Q: Okay. Anything else about Bonn?

SEYMOUR: Also on foreign affairs we covered think tanks and the parties, all of the party international affairs offices. We talked to them regularly just to keep them close and then also to learn their views on particular issues. Germany is a complex country and we tried to develop a composite understanding of foreign policy. I found myself in some ways preferring the CDU politics but I liked the SPD informality and the easy-going personalities there.

Q: The External affairs unit of the political section was yourself and two others, three others?

SEYMOUR: One other and then, later, a rotating junior officer and then we had some really good summer interns during the time I was there, one each summer.

RICHARD AKER
Deputy Public Affairs Officer/Director of America House
Munich (1979-1981)

Richard Aker was born in Arkansas in 1949. He graduated from University of Arkansas and then attended law school. He joined the United States Information Agency Foreign Service in 1978. His overseas assignments include Iran; Munich, Germany; Hong Kong; Durban, South Africa and Romania. Mr. Aker was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2010.

Q: Yes. So you ended up in Munich, and you were there from when to when?

AKER: I got there, as I said, in February of '79 and left there in December of '81.

Q: What were you doing there?

AKER: I was the director of the America House, which was a very nice cultural facility.

Q: Well actually it sounds fun. Was it?

AKER: It was great. It was a wonderful place to be, it was a fun job, beautiful surroundings. The city is great and the Alps were there, although I sometimes regretted having left Tehran because it was so interesting and I never really got a chance to know the country.

Q: How stood relations with the Germans in the area? This was after Vietnam. There must have been a residue of anti-Americanism.

AKER: There was some, but the problem now was not the past. The big issue now was the revival of Cold War tensions with the Russian SS-20 missiles-

Q: Yes.

AKER: -which were mobile intermediate range missiles, and our proposed response, which was to put Pershing II and Cruise missiles onto U.S. bases in Germany. This was very, very controversial in Germany and in fact rekindled a lot of the anti-American sentiment of the Vietnam era, and in some ways even more so, because, concerning Vietnam, people could get angry on a moral or political level but it didn't affect them directly. But here was a situation where many people felt that not only were their anti-war principles being disregarded but that they were being made targets. Because putting these missiles there automatically made the people living around them targets. So the revulsion against war, which had been very strong in Germany since World War II, was coupled with anger that they were being made hostages or potential victims against their will.

Q: Was the Green Party a major factor at that time?

AKER: No, but it started to be, and in late 1981 they got into their first state legislature, in Bremen, This was partially due to the anti-war, anti missile issue.

Q: Well, you know, we had a perfectly logical rationale for putting the missiles in because the Soviets did it first.

AKER: Exactly. No question about it. In fact, to some extent, we were doing it at the behest of Helmut Schmidt, who was chancellor and even today is probably considered the best chancellor Germany ever had in the post-war period-

Q: Oh yes, a very, very smart guy.

AKER: He was considerably more centrist or closer to the right than many members of his party, the Social Democrats. He put his political capital on the line to support this response to the Soviet SS-20s, which in the end ultimately ended up in his losing power a few years later.

Q: And did you feel you were in the middle of this controversy?

AKER: Yes, in the sense that there were some demonstrations, against the America House and the U.S. Consulate, and I was actually going out and doing public speaking, explaining why we needed to do this. Often they were friendly groups, older people, pro-NATO. Younger people were more likely to be opposed. So I did a lot of talking and debating in German on this issue. I became something of a specialist because I had to be.

Q: Was the past of Munich, the Hitler time and all that sort of with you all the time?

AKER: Not really, because this was already more than 30 years after the war. But I think there is no question that Germans were very haunted by this and people then in their 30s and older carried a lot of baggage because of it. They tended to be very critical of German society because they were ashamed of their parents' generation. They carried this over into their views on current politics and so were prone to be very anti-war in general and morally purist on issues like capital punishment and other things. They tended to take a very black and white view of the world in general and were certainly very critical of their own society.

Q: Did you find the Germans tended to have the attitude that there are rules and you obey them and authority is important, or was this breaking down for them?

AKER: I think that was true, although it has declined somewhat over the years. I was struck, when I was first there, by behavior that an acquaintance characterized as that of a country of self-appointed policemen. I think there was, and still is a certain element of people preaching at you. Having served in Germany many times since then, although I think that it is not as prevalent as it was.

Q: I remember, back in the '50s, my wife and I had a brand new baby and we would be taking her in a stroller down the street; then we would be stopped and the blankets would be rearranged and we'd be told we were not doing it right.

AKER: Exactly. They still do that. There is an urge to intervene, or rather interfere, in cases like that especially.

Q: It's not awful. I mean-

AKER: No, but it is disconcerting. Other people want to mind your own business.

Q: Yes, I know.

AKER: It must have been really bad 100 years ago.

Q: Did you get any feel for the student- university student body?

AKER: Yes, that was one of the groups I interacted with, probably more than anyone else because I was on the Fulbright Commission and was doing other exchange programs and going to universities to talk to students on the SS-20 issue and about American society, I had quite a few friends and acquaintances among both students and faculty members.

Q: I had the impression -- around that time I was in Naples and you have a feeling that the Italian university system was really almost doddering. The Signore Professore would appear and read yellowing notes to a huge class, and then walk away and there was not much interaction or what we would call real passing of knowledge.

AKER: Yes. This is the way it was in Germany then, and probably, as you were saying, the way it still is in continental Europe generally.

Q: Yes.

AKER: Yes, the professor comes in, reads, and leaves. People sit in these vast halls and then they have one exam at the end of the year. Here in the US, we have networks of student advisors. Our universities have a “in loco parentis” attitude.

Q: Yes.

AKER: That was not true there.

Q: My impression was that you better feed back to Herr Professor what Herr Professor said if you're asked a question, not develop it on your own. I don't know but did you get that feeling at that time?

AKER: Yes. I even found this attitude, at times, among academics that had studied in the US, who were professional American specialists.

Q: Yes. How about Germans who came to the United States on Fulbright grants and getting degrees and then going back -- were they accepted or was there a problem?

AKER: One area where there were problems was accreditation. German universities do not always give credits for courses that people took here. That was particularly a problem with certain German states. It is a federal system, and some states were less likely than others to recognize American coursework or degrees. I don't know whether people had other problems reintegrating

As an aside, I would say that most Germans who came here to study came away with a lifelong affection for this country and were ambassadors of good will for the US.

Q: Maybe this is a good place to stop. When did you leave Germany?

AKER: I left Germany at the end of 1981. I had been assigned to Hong Kong.

Q: Well when you left Iran, where did you go, did you have sort of a permanent place?

AKER: Yes. I was still a junior officer trainee, and I was assigned to Munich as the deputy public affairs officer and director of the America House. In that period Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty were still in Munich; a pretty large operation.

Q: You were there from '79 to when?

AKER: December '81.

Q: Okay, let's talk about, I mean obviously the Iranian hostage business was going on during a good part of that time; how was that for you personally, having been there, and how was it regarded within the consulate general and in Germany?

AKER: I think there was a lot of sympathy for the U.S. on the part of the German public. I remember when the hostage taking began, in the first few days in November of '79, the Catholic archbishop of Munich arranged for a special service in one of the major churches in the city, which was primarily for Germans, of course, to express solidarity and to pray for the welfare and wellbeing of the hostages. Of course over time I think the issue probably became sort of routine but initially there was a great outpouring of support.

Q: How did the consulate general strike you? I mean, the staffing?

AKER: It was quite large. All the posts in Germany had a lot of padding in those days. I think they still do in many cases. But that was a relic, of course, of the Occupation and the Cold War, when Germany was a central point. There was also a pretty large presence of the military and other agencies, scattered among the- several bases.

Q: Munich was very much almost equivalent to Switzerland with so many various nationalities running around it.

AKER: Exactly. And of course as I've mentioned Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty were there. There was also a powerful with VOA (Voice of America) relay station nearby. We were broadcasting to every Central and Eastern European country. We were not far from the border with Czechoslovakia, as it was then. So it was pretty much a sort of frontline city, not quite like Berlin but similar to Vienna in that respect.

Q: What were you doing?

AKER: Well mostly cultural programming but also going out to schools and talking to groups, mostly in German, about things like why we needed to put these missiles in Germany.

Q: Where did Bavaria fit into the sort of political equation over the missile business?

AKER: Bavaria was under then a long-serving governor, Franz Josef Strauss, who was a very formidable figure, a polarizing figure in German politics. He had been famous many years earlier, during the so-called “Spiegel” affair in the early ‘60s when he was defense minister under Adenauer and had to resign over some Watergate type of scandal. He then come back and was governor of Bavaria for decades, playing to his rural voter base, very anti-communist, very anti-social democratic. The state was and is dominated by the Christian Social Union (CSU), allied with the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) nationally but with a separate organization that only exists in Bavaria. It was very conservative, very Catholic area, in that respect pro-American but with a certain difference in that it has also a certain Gaullist kind of empathy. This is due to history, going back to the Napoleonic period. Bavaria has followed France in a lot of things, so they weren’t as solidly pro-American as the neighboring state of Baden-Württemberg, for example, where I later lived: it is also conservative, but in a more mainstream way, not as idiosyncratically as Bavarians.

Q: Being a young officer, were you given sort of the student assignment at the universities?

AKER: Yes. I went to schools, talking about American society and other topics. An issue many Germans got upset about was the death penalty in the United States. At that point, the death penalty had just been reinstated, after several years during which it was suspended by the Supreme Court. Now it was once again permitted. Each execution was covered extensively in the German media because Germany had abolished it years before and Germans had a certain sense of moral superiority on this issue.

Q: Yes.

AKER: There were many other issues too, including of course the SS-20 debate.

Q: What was your impression of the universities?

AKER: I worked a lot with the various universities, particularly the University of Munich, which is a very large university. It’s like one of the big American state universities, it probably had 30-40,000 students. It is an extremely hierarchical system where the professors rarely interact with students. There is no “in loco parentis” attitude on the part of German and European universities. It is not like here, where you have your student advisors and you are somewhat coddled. In Germany, people are left to their own devices. If you go to these big lecture halls, at least at the undergraduate level, you listen to the professor or an assistant reading the paper and then you have to show up for final exams; otherwise you are on your own. It does require more self-discipline and motivation to succeed.

Q: Was there the equivalent of American studies? I mean, you’ve taken German studies-

AKER: Yes. The German Association of American Studies was and remains one of our most important contacts and publishes papers, organizes conferences, and is very active.

Q: During your first period there was this the case?

AKER: Yes, it was already very active, organizing conferences on specific themes, for which we provided speakers, academic and otherwise. We would also co-sponsor seminars with other organizations, mostly for university students, on specialized topics such as, for example, black or feminist literature or the American Indian.

Q: Indians are big there.

AKER: Yes. It is an ongoing fascination.

Q: These tribes, of course with Old Shatterhand and all that.

AKER: Yes, Karl May.

Q: I've seen pictures of these German tribes; they get more authentic than the Native Americans in the United States.

AKER: That is absolutely true and it's one of the things that never ceases to amuse me; it was quite startling to me, this fixation with Native Americans, and the reenactments, which are similar to the Civil War reenactments here. They have Indian encampments and other things of the sort. And a lot of this apparently goes back to Karl May-

Q: Karl May, yes, who did this series of books with Old Shatterhand.

AKER: Right, Old Shatterhand and Winnetou was the name of the-

Q: Winnetou was his-

AKER: His Indian scout - like Tonto.

Q: Like Tonto, yes.

AKER: May lived near Dresden in Saxony, and had a luxurious villa which is still there; it's sort of a pilgrimage point. Every kid in the German speaking countries for the last 150 years was raised on these books.

Q: A series of books.

AKER: Lots of them. He actually wrote other books; he was very prolific and also wrote adventure books, many of them set in the Middle East.

Q: Well it's kind of like Edgar Rice Burroughs.

AKER: Yes.

Q: With “Tarzan” and then-

AKER: The Mars books-

Q: Later Mars books,

AKER: Yes, I read many of those books.

Q: Tell me again, what was your impression, at the time, of how the universities and society as a whole were dealing with the Hitler era?

AKER: For the middle-aged and young generations- not so much the generation who were veterans of that period but for younger people, those born after the war, or those who had memories of the war as children, it was difficult, most of them saw it as a very oppressive burden on their society and felt a lot of guilt.

Q: It's a very hard thing. I was told by one of our interns, a German, that at the University of Munich they have a copy of the anti-Nazi pamphlet that was thrown from balconies by students engraved on the floor -- was it the White Rose?

AKER: Yes, the White Rose. It was the action of Hans and Sophie Scholl, brother and sister.

Q: Brother and sister, yes.

AKER: They were executed. Their courageous act, of course, was constantly commemorated. The Third Reich was a major theme for the younger generation then. I would say that this is dissipating now for people under 30, but for people now in their 40s and 50s it was a tremendous weight. Many of them seemed to be in a state of denial about being German at all. They would call themselves Europeans.

Q: Yes.

AKER: And this is why many people seemed to have, I think, rather overblown- expectations for the EU (European Union) or the EC (European Commission) as it was then, because it was a sort of flight from their nationality. Of course, there were also many older people, including people who were in the war, who didn't feel guilty at all.

Q: They lost that one but-

AKER: Yes. There was, I think, a certain – not pro-Nazi -- but pro-nationalist strain in quite a few of the older generation.

Q: From the USIA point of view when you were there, I would assume this is not a theme hat we would pursue. I mean, there's no point rubbing people's nose in the thing; they had their own problems. I assume we were doing other things.

AKER: Yes. This was not at all a theme on our part. Many Germans were quick to tell you how bad they felt about it. You would see things such as, for example, a lot of people who were not Jewish at having a menorah or some other Jewish symbol in their home. I guess it was to make a point of showing their rejection of the past.

Q: Yes. I served there back in the '50s and, obviously, it was still there, quite a difficult time. Near Munich, they had a concentration camp -- it wasn't a death camp but-

AKER: Dachau. Actually one of the first times I noticed this, people having Jewish symbols in their homes, was at the house of a teacher at the Gymnasium -- high school -- in Dachau. He invited me to lunch at his home after I spoke to his class. It's a pretty little town; it used to be an artists colony in the 19th century.

I have always thought how difficult it must be, when traveling abroad, to have your address be from Dachau. Because most people had no idea it's a town; they think it was just a concentration camp.

Q: Yes. As a matter of fact, one of our interns that we had here about two years ago graduated from Dachau Gymnasium and I'd always introduce her as being s from the Munich area.

AKER: That's what I mean.

Q: You know, there are names you can't use.

AKER: Right. Of course, in Germany it's not the case, because people are aware that it's a town.

Q: Well how did you find the work there?

AKER: I thought it was a lot of fun. America House had one of the best jazz venues in Munich and jazz was extremely popular with young people. This was at a time when, in the US, you hardly heard jazz; it was mostly just pop, rock, or country. Jazz was confined to the fringe, whereas, there, we would have Chet Baker or Lionel Hampton performing. We just provided the venue and we thought it greatly served our purposes to have the America House seen as a providing this kind of talent and really attracting young people. We actually were seen as kind of a hip venue. Maybe our politics were not so great, but we had good music.

We also shared the House with the University of Munich's School of Journalism,, which was perfect for us: USIA and young journalists. Under one roof.

Q: Yes. Was the Green Party and Petra Kelly and her ilk-

AKER: Just starting.

Q: Did you feel they were at odds with us?

AKER: Yes. Of course, Petra Kelly is an interesting case because her father was American, a GI.

Q: Yes.

AKER: While I was there the Greens got into their first state legislature, in Bremen. The embassy was focused on this phenomenon, thinking that it portended a radical anti-Americanism. But, of course, it didn't. The Green Party now has settled into the German scene, but it never gets more than about 10 percent of the vote nationally. At that point, it got a lot of impetus from the protests against the missile deployment.

Q: How about the Baader-Meinhof business? Was that over?

AKER: Yes. Its heyday, when most of the spectacular thing happened, was in '77 and '78, so it was very recent. Some sporadic things continued to happen in Germany, though, for quite a while. The head of the Treuhand, the trust that handled the assets of the former East Germany after reunification and compensated people whose property there had been nationalized, was assassinated by a remnant of the Baader-Meinhof gang as late as 1993 or so. But the main action was already over by the time I was there in the late '70s.

Q: How did you feel that USIA fit into the Foreign Service establishment in Munich?

AKER: We were not co-located; we were in the America House. Except for the weekly or twice-weekly staff meetings, we had very little contact with the Consulate General where the other sections were housed. So I think that hampered us being full-fledged members of the team. I mean, co-location is important. Of course, there were advantages to not being in the consulate too. However, the consulate had a great location: it was right on the English Garden, a huge park.

Q: Oh yes.

AKER: During the summer, people would often strip completely at lunchtime. They would take off everything and you'd walk through there to have lunch at a beer garden resembling a Chinese pagoda, and you'd see people lying down or playing volleyball in the nude. It was really quite striking, coming from the U.S.

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Q: At one point the America Houses were really a key element in the German educational system, because they offered a library and much more freedom than the university library or whatever passed for a public library. How stood it when you were there?

AKER: I served in Germany on several more occasions and so I personally experienced the demise of the America Houses, including closing two, in Berlin and in Frankfurt. They are all gone now. We were already starting the process in the late '70s and early '80s; some of the houses had been turned over to the state governments; in one case to the local university, in Kiel. Some took on a new life as binational centers, with mixed boards of Germans and Americans, with financing coming mostly from the German side: from the foreign ministry, the state governments and the municipalities as well as membership contributions.

Q: Did you get any feedback from German students who went to the United States to get all or a

part of their education and who returned to Germany? In some places they might have gotten a good education but the establishment sort of isolated them. How stood it when you were there?

AKER: In Germany it very much depended on the individual state's willingness to give credit for courses taken abroad. Now there are EU-wide standards for accreditation that are more or less the same in most of the countries; but that was not the case at that time. Accreditation for studies anywhere outside Germany was not guaranteed, particularly since our system -- the way the universities are set up -- is quite different than theirs. Many people did have problems. Often they suffered a short-term professional setback by doing this because they were not following the tried and true groove.

On the other hand, with very few exceptions, people who did study in the U.S. were the best ambassadors for the United States. Almost all Germans came back with a tremendous wealth of goodwill toward the US.

Q: Were a significant number of the ones who went going to get the equivalent of a Masters of Business Administration, MBA's?

AKER: Yes, I am sure, because Germany did not excel in that area then. I think either in business administration or in the sciences, because our universities were and are among the very best in the world in terms of scientific research.

Q: Well is there anything else we should sort of cover during this period? Did you have any adventures or interesting episodes you can think of?

AKER: I think we've covered it actually quite a bit.

Q: Did you get any feel for the labor movement? Back in my era, in the '50, I was astounded, in Frankfurt, by how they shut down everything on the weekend because of the labor laws. When I went back there in the late '90s, the business district was still pretty well shut down on Saturdays and Sundays.

AKER: Germany has probably, even today, the most stringent shop closure regulations of any country in Europe. But it has loosened up dramatically, especially in the last 10 years. In larger cities, most shops are now open until 8:00, 9:00 or even later at night. But in those days it was awful. To go buy some groceries or before store closing hours at 5:30 or 6:00 PM, people would get out of work and dash to the shops. Then, from noon or 1:00 on Saturday, nothing would be open until Monday. What this resulted in -- this may have started after your initial period there -- was that service stations developed into little supermarkets because they were open all the time. The laws allowed them exceptions so you could buy things there. So every service station in Germany, probably, has a sizeable shop resulting from that period. But it was really terrible for the consumer.

Q: It was really designed to protect the small shopkeeper, really.

AKER: Yes.

Q: So they can have their nap in the afternoon and a free weekend and it had nothing to do with the customer.

AKER: Exactly. Even now, the idea that the customer is king is foreign to the German mentality, or German ways of doing things. But there has been some noticeable improvement in the last 10 years, in terms of opening hours, not necessarily in the attitude toward the customer.

ROBERT M. BEECROFT
Political Officer (Internal)
Bonn (1979-1983)

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

Q: Oh, yes. Let's, in '79 you left and we'll stop at this point and we'll put at the end where we'll pick it up. Where do you go?

BEECROFT: I go to Bonn.

Q: All right. We're off to Deutschland.

BEECROFT: Jawohl.

Q: Today is the 13th of October, 2004. Bob, 1979, you're off to Bonn.

BEECROFT: Right.

Q: All right. What were you doing, how did it come about going to Bonn and what were you up to?

BEECROFT: The DCM, Bill Woessner, and the Political Counselor, Dick Smyser –

Q: I've interviewed both of them.

BEECROFT: -- knew that I spoke German and that I'd been doing arms control. They put two and two together and asked if I wanted to come to Germany. Of course I didn't have to think

very hard about that. We left Washington '79 and were off to Bonn. Actually I went out in September with our 11-year-old son Chris, so he could start school at the beginning of the year. My wife Mette, with our 4-year-old daughter Pamela, followed after Christmas. She was helping to open the Family Liaison Office at the time. Chris and I lived in an apartment in the "Siedlung," a sort of American garden apartment complex on the Rhine, for the fall.

Q: You were in Bonn from when to when?

BEECROFT: '79 to '83, four years. I extended for a year, it was such fun. I was one of two internal political officers in the Political Section. Obviously, internal politics was something that mattered a whole lot in Germany. Todd Becker was my boss. Robert W. Becker -- now the deputy head of the OSCE Mission in Zagreb. Todd and I became good friends and have remained so ever since. In fact, we were on a panel together at Chapel Hill just about six weeks ago. Todd was there for the first year and then he went off to Greece. Eventually he became our first Consul General in Leipzig after the wall came down. My second cohort in the political internal unit was Paul Molineaux. He and I worked together for three years. That was a very interesting time because, well, first of all, Ambassador Walter Stoessel left in the summer of '80, there was a gap, as there often is in such cases, until it was clear who was going to win the U.S. presidential election. Then when Reagan came in, Arthur Burns became the Ambassador. I worked quite closely with him for three years. It was a marvelous experience. For a man who was over 80, his mind, I mean he was 80 going on 40, and he really was very interested in the young generation of Germans. In a sense he came across as the Jewish grandfather they had never had. He truly cared about young people. He reached out, he established a dialogue. This was just at the point when the Greens were coming up. I got to know Petra Kelly. I introduced the Burns and Kelly and actually set up a series of lunches between them which were quite fascinating.

Q: You were there really at a critical time. '79 was really when a new generation was coming up that didn't have both the Nazi hang-up or the American occupation hang-up. This is a new group taking a different view than before, wasn't it?

BEECROFT: Very true. The chancellor at that point was Helmut Schmidt. I covered 15 party conventions in four years -- from the Greens all the way to the CSU, from the far left to the far right. This was at a time when it looked as if the SPD, the Social Democrats, were going to be in power forever, with the FDP under Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher as their helpmate. That's the way it started out. Schmidt ran against Franz Josef Strauss in 1980, defeated him handily. It looked as if Schmidt was going to be in power for as long as he wanted to, but it was just at that point that this new generation, full of questions, full of doubts about the establishment, came along. It was similar to the protest wave that we had had in the U.S. in the late '60s, but a little bit later. I'll never forget the SPD convention of 1982 in Munich, because that was where Willy Brandt, who was pied piper for the young Social Democrats, took the party away from Schmidt. It was very dramatic. That fall, Schmidt lost the chancellorship and the CDU's Helmut Kohl became Chancellor.

That was the kind of event that I covered for four years. I went to party conventions, did a lot of reporting. After the 1980 SPD convention, Schmidt was riding high. He had had problems at that

convention that were related to the German relationship to the United States. It was at the point when the first discussions were going on about the deployment of Soviet mid-range SS-20 missiles and the proposed U.S. response, the Pershing 2 intermediate-range missile. This became a huge issue and contributed to Schmidt's downfall. Well, we sent a cable back to Washington, its title was "Cracks in the Plaster," which got a lot of attention because it went against the prevailing view that Schmidt was politically invulnerable. It had two messages: a) don't rule out Helmut Kohl, he has a future; b) the SPD is not as united and monolithic as it looks. Two years later the SPD chickens came home to roost and Kohl became chancellor.

Q: I'd like to talk a bit about how you saw during this period -- '79 to '83 the German party system, I mean it really is quite different than sort of the American system.

BEECROFT: Oh, yes.

Q: Where they have essentially if you don't belong to a party you're out and you get on a list and you don't essentially you don't owe allegiance to your constituency, you owe allegiance to your party. When you started looking at this, how did you see this, strengths and minuses in the party system and then how did it translate into the various parties?

BEECROFT: What struck me right off the bat was that the German political parties were much more oriented toward ideas than ours -- if I could put it this way, theology, a belief systems compared to American parties, which tend to be more operational and less ideological. I mean, this was before the great polarization that we now see in the United States. When you went to a convention, whether it was the SPD or the FDP or the CDU or the CSU the Greens, whoever, you went in and they loaded you down with paper. All of these tracts and theses, not just the simple platforms that American parties produce, which tend to be least-common-denominator and very general. You would get tracts and counter-tracts, and all of these things would be very heavily debated. It struck me as very German -- you've got to go through the whole intellectual exercise to come out at a place where the local party organizations would be willing to support the platform.

The German Greens are a good example of the impact of a belief system. In the '70's they were by and large a politically diffuse, agrarian organization. A Bavarian farmer was the head of the Greens at the time. But in the late '70's, the party basically reinvented itself. You can't imagine such a dramatic change in our system, really. The Greens at that point were on the verge of becoming meaningful. A good example was Joschka Fischer.

Q: Who is now the Foreign Minister.

BEECROFT: Yes. I remember Fischer when he still wore sandals and was violently anti-establishment. We sent Fischer on his first trip to the U.S. Remember the Leader Grant program?

Q: That must have caused a lot of heartburn and all that.

BEECROFT: Actually, at the State Department were fascinated by what we were doing. We also sent a young fellow who was the Chairman of the Young Socialists named Gerhard Schroeder.

Schroeder had sworn that he would never go to the U.S. as long as we were in Vietnam. I went and talked to him and I said “Well, we’re not there any more. Time to go?” And he did it. Whether you liked Schroeder’s politics or not, or Fischer’s, the fact is we picked the German leaders of the future. It’s a wonderful program and it’s a shame that we no longer put the resources into it that we used to.

Q: I don’t know if you came over on it, but I remember hearing Petra Kelly talk at the State Department.

BEECROFT: Right. Petra didn’t need our support. We never spent money on Petra, other than the lunches with Ambassador Burns. She had plenty of friends and contacts in the U.S. After all, Petra campaigned for Bobby Kennedy when she was a student at AU in ’68. She was in many ways -- at least to appearances -- half-American. She spoke American English without an accent. I also knew Gert Bastian, the retired German General who was her lover. He later killed her and then himself.

Q: Back to the parties.

BEECROFT: Yes.

Q: Did you find within the party structure, I mean you can have all your intellectual stuff, but were the guys in the back room controlling this?

BEECROFT: You know how the German system works. It’s frightfully complicated. 50% of the candidates are popularly chosen. The other 50% are elected from party lists, and those lists are very much a product of backroom deals. This is down and dirty politics at its most German. They’re selected at the Land level. The lists are made up of party favorite sons, very often people of influence who don’t have the charisma, or who aren’t good enough campaigners, to win a direct seat. So they instead get a high place on a party list and get into the Bundestag that way. Genscher, for example, was never directly elected, but it didn’t matter. In fact, at that time, and I think it’s probably still true, the Free Democrats had no directly elected deputies at all, but it didn’t matter. As long as a party gets over 5% of the national vote, then it has a claim to representation.

Q: Yes. Well, how open were the parties to you?

BEECROFT: Wide open. This was at a time when there were still vestiges of the old protectorate relationship between the U.S. and Germany. If you went to a party meeting, it was just assumed that you had a right to be there. Not only did Todd Becker and Paul Molineaux and I go to party conventions, we also went to district organization meetings at the local level. I remember getting into a huge debate once at the SPD district organization outside of Heidelberg. The local Bundestag Deputy was Gert Weisskirchen, who is now one of the most senior SPD Deputies. There were lots of university professors there, and their students. This was at the point where the debate over the deployment of the SS-20s and the Pershing-2s were at its most heated, and man, that room, it was really ugly. They welcomed me, they wanted to talk to me and they sure as hell wanted to give us me earful, and I got it.

Q: Did you, while you were there early on, was Helmut Schmidt still seething from his not very happy relationship with Jimmy Carter? Was that still playing over again even though Carter had gone?

BEECROFT: I think Schmidt felt that he had been dealt two lousy hands in a row. First of all, as you say, he did not have a good relationship with Carter. Then Ronald Reagan came along, and as you can imagine there was absolutely nothing in common between them, no meeting of the minds. I remember Reagan's first official visit to Bonn, in 1982. Reagan took an affable, "call me Ron" approach, and you could just see Schmidt thinking: do I have to? What saved the day was Ambassador Arthur Burns. Burns was a man for whom Helmut Schmidt had enormous regard. What a resume: former chair of the Fed, professor at Columbia University, son of Austrian Jewish immigrants named Burnseig. He was an inspired choice for Bonn. He and Schmidt regarded themselves and each other a worthy intellectual and academic counterparts. Burns very deftly served as the interlocutor and go-between between Schmidt and Reagan. He was a marvelous boss. He ran embassy staff meetings like a graduate seminar. The one thing that he couldn't stand was if anyone tried to bluff him. Can you imagine being the Economic Counselor in an embassy run by Arthur Burns? One day, the Econ Counselor was offering some comments about the German economic situation, and Burns looked up and said, "Mr. X" -- by the way, Burns talked a lot like W.C. Fields -- "Mr. X, you don't know what you're talking about, do you?" There's this long silence. Then Burns says, "Well, I don't know the answer either, so why don't you go and find out for both of us?" Burns let him off the hook that way, but it was also a lesson: don't try and bullshit me, it's not going to work. I must say the atmosphere and morale in that embassy were fabulous. It demonstrated what you can achieve when you put the right political appointee in the right place.

Q: What was the feeling there, well, let's talk, let's not leave the parties yet. The extreme right, where were they coming? I mean there's rights and rights. In Germany at the time, where from the American perspective where were these parties coming from?

BEECROFT: There was the credible right and the incredible right. The credible would have been personified by Franz Josef Strauss and the CSU.

Q: The Bavarians.

BEECROFT: The Bavarian wing of the Christian Democrats. They always took positions to the right of the mainstream CDU -- Christian Democratic Union, the Christian Democrats in the rest of Germany. The CSU had certain hobbyhorses that they rode very well. One of them was the Sudeten German issue. In 1980, there were a lot of Sudeten German refugees in places like Nürnberg and Bamberg, along the border with what was then Czechoslovakia, and they indulged in overheated, anti-Czech rhetoric and regularly made Prague nervous. No one dared really talk about a Sudeten crisis -- they'd had one of those in 1938, you'll recall -- but the CSU got a lot of votes by never letting the Sudeten issue go away.

Q: Sort of like the Cuban Americans in the United States.

BEECROFT: That's right. There was an irridentism that never quite vanished. It is true that these people had been expelled en masse in 1945 -46 by the Czechs, with Soviet blessing and American acquiescence. They were still there, waiting for indemnification of some sort. So the CSU was clever at things like that. It's also the wing of the Christian Democrats that is almost 100% Catholic. In the rest of Germany, the CDU is a mix of Catholics and Protestants. Not in Bavaria. The right to hang a crucifix on a schoolroom wall was a lightning rod issue in Bavaria. So the CSU was on the conservative right wing, but still inside the tent. Then there were small parties such as the NDP, the National Democratic Party, and others that were vaguely neo-Nazi, but the Bonn government, with the support of all the major parties, kept a heavy thumb on them. Concerns were much more focused on the left-wing fringe, the Baader-Meinhof people, and the Greens to some extent. At that time, there were links between the more radical Greens and some of the terrorist fringe groups.

Q: Oh, the Baader-Meinhof was in full flower at that time?

BEECROFT: You remember General Kroesen? He was commander of USAREUR – U.S. Army Europe. In 1981 his Mercedes was hit in Heidelberg by a missile. It says something for the armor on that car he was not killed, even though the missile impacted right over the gas cap. The Baader-Meinhof gang and the Red Brigades were still serious threats. The more reasonable among them were drifting off into the left wing of the Greens. Eventually, some became not only housebroken, but part of the establishment.

Q: Were we seeing it? I mean how did we see the Green party at that time?

BEECROFT: It depends on who the "we" is. Those of us in the Embassy Political Section and the Station who were covering this on a regular basis saw the Greens as a party that had a pretty good chance of being in government by 1990. That's why it was so significant that we had the blessing of both Ambassadors Walter Stoessel and Arthur Burns when we reached out to the Greens. I remember phoning Petra Kelly; it was a cold call, the first time anyone at Embassy Bonn had attempted to contact her. Guess where she was working? At the Pension Office of the European Union in Brussels! So I called her there and said, Do you ever come to Bonn and if you do, can we meet? She said, "Well, I wondered just how long it would take for somebody from the Embassy to try to get in touch with me." We had lunch together the next time she was in Bonn, and that broke the ice. It was just a shot in the dark. The embassy was supportive, and Washington was neutral and a bit curious.

Q: Did you find that with the Green party that you might say there was almost a generational thing within our embassy? The '60s kids, I assume you were one?

BEECROFT: Yes, I was a '60s kid.

Q: A '60s kid from the United States would feel a certain amount of empathy for the Greens, was there?

BEECROFT: I couldn't put it better. That's exactly right. We younger Political Officers saw, as we put it in that cable, cracks in the plaster. We saw signs that the generation that experienced

World War II was being pressed by its successors to move on. Helmut Schmidt used to talk about his military service, he was a gunner in the Second World War.

Q: He was in the Luftwaffe. I mean anti-aircraft.

BEECROFT: Schmidt was an anti-aircraft gunner in Hamburg. Helmut Kohl used to reminisce about the first time he saw chocolate; it was thrown from an American tank as it passed by. These people had grown up with experiences like that, but as you say, now we're talking about the successor generation and it was absolutely fascinating because after all, this was still Germany. The big debate going on in the early '80s, along with the question of deploying medium-range missiles, was whether there was a difference between the two German states on the one hand and the German nation on the other. The Germans love this kind of debate. The national issue had not died in Germany, and no one at that point could have predicted that it would be transformed in less than a decade. At that point, in the early 1980s, the question of "two states in one nation" was a big issue with the young people.

Q: Well, you're talking about East and West Germany.

BEECROFT: Absolutely. It seemed to everybody at that point that the GDR was going to be around for as long as any of us were alive.

Q: Was there concern at that time about somehow or another the Germans making a pact with the Soviets by united Germany meeting a neutral Germany?

BEECROFT: Not at that point. That had largely faded, well, primarily because Schmidt and the SPD had lost power. You did have a vocal pro-reunification wing of the SPD based in Berlin, centered around Willy Brandt, Egon Bahr, and Herbert Wehner. Bahr had been Brandt's right-hand man for years. He was a very clever, very smart man who had pushed hard for the pacts of the 1970s that the U.S. had finally bought into, which led to the recognition of the German Democratic Republic by the U.S., by France and by the UK. This had largely run its course by the early '80s, and as I say, when Kohl came in it just wasn't an issue anymore. Wehner was the SPD's grand old man in the Bundestag. He had spent World War II in Moscow, and was viewed with suspicion by Washington.

Q: When did the Soviets put in the SS-20s?

BEECROFT: They began shortly after Reagan came into office – 1982, I think.

Q: Well, were we looking, we being the embassy and all seeing this, I mean it was designed to make the Europeans break away from the United States because get out of the war and they might be hitting the United States, might not retaliate because they weren't threatened. Were we seeing this as really serious or was this just another one of these ploys by the Soviets?

BEECROFT: It's very hard to gauge intentions. All we could do was gauge the reality. The reality was based on warning time. If you had an SS-20 in East Germany, it could hit anywhere in Western Europe in a matter of a couple of minutes, but it couldn't reach the U.S. It didn't have

the range. So yes, Moscow's goal was to drive a wedge and be able to say to the French and the Belgians and the Dutch and the Brits, and the Germans of course, "See we now have a way of rendering you more vulnerable than the Americans are." You're right, deploying the SS-20 was an attempt to detach the Europeans from the Americans. Then there were these huge debates in the Bundestag, many of which I covered, on exactly this point. To this day, I have a poster in my basement which the CDU put out. It has a picture of a German house and says "It's better to have a Pershing II in the garden than an SS-20 coming in the roof."

Q: In Germany at the time what was the debate on, do we knuckle under to the Soviets or do we accept the Pershing II and the cruise missiles? It doesn't seem to be.

BEECROFT: No, the debate among Germans was really about how many more missiles there had to be in Germany. This was the question that was constantly being asked by the Left. How many more missiles do we need? Does this really increase our security or does it just make us more vulnerable? Western experts argued that the Soviet SS-20s were not just missiles like any others. The ones that were already there -- on both the NATO and Warsaw Pact sides -- were extremely short-range, for warfighting purposes. The intercontinental missiles -- ICBMs and SLBMs -- were not in Europe at all, but on submarines or in silos in the U.S. or Central Asia. The SS-20's and Pershing 2's filled a gap between the short-range missiles and the ICBMs. This gets to be rather technical, especially when you're talking about as brutal as nuclear missiles, but it was all about warning time. As somebody once said, the question was really how many times you wanted to be able to make the rubble bounce. This was hair-trigger stuff.

Q: Where did you find, how about the FDP? Where did they, I mean they've always been sort of the swing party and making sure the Genscher's foreign ministry.

BEECROFT: Yes, the SPD and the CDU both referred to the FDP as "the pointer on the scale." They could swing in either direction politically, depending on whom they could better coalesce with to keep a share of the power. I remember a convention in Freiburg in the fall of '82, right after Schmidt had lost control of the SPD to Brandt. Sparks flew. The FDP has always survived by being able to go into coalition with either the SPD or the CDU/CSU. At that point, Genscher wanted to make sure that whoever won, the FDP would be able to jump in that direction. Basically he wanted the convention to decide not to decide. That's eventually what happened, because the FDP did change coalition partners -- which led directly to Schmidt's political downfall -- but it took every bit of political influence Genscher had to bring that off.

Q: Was Helmut Kohl the head of the CDU?

BEECROFT: Yes.

Q: How was he viewed? I mean I'm talking about before he got in.

BEECROFT: Helmut Kohl had been viewed in Washington as a sort of ponderous country bumpkin -- a Rhinelander, from Mainz, in the area north of the French border on the west side of the Rhine. He had been the youngest everything in the history of the CDU -- the youngest county chairman, the youngest Land governor. Because Kohl was always a heavyweight (literally), and

because of his ponderous, heavily accented way of talking, he never seemed like a young man. That's why we sent our cable warning not to count Kohl out. This was at a time when a lot of people in the CDU were actually looking for a leader to succeed Kohl. Franz Josef Strauss had made his run for power in 1980, and had been humiliated by Schmidt. Kohl stepped forward, but it was never a warm, loving relationship between Kohl and much of the party base, especially the northern CDU, because Kohl was a southerner and a Catholic. The north of Germany -- Schleswig-Holstein, Bremen, Hamburg, Lower Saxony -- is Protestant. The Protestants never really warmed to him, so he had a lot of work to do to win them over, and he did it. The guy is dogged as hell -- a hard worker, determined, tireless, stubborn, maybe not with the last ounce of genius, but he would take a position and carry it come what may.

Q: Were we at this time playing any particular party or did we feel we had sort of supporters or whatever we wanted within various parties so that we didn't have to sort of tilt towards anybody?

BEECROFT: The U.S. Government watched developments in Germany very carefully in the early '80s. I can say that the Embassy generally had such good relations and such broad access across the board that for our part, we tended to be relaxed. Arthur Burns and Helmut Schmidt were extremely close. The Reagan Administration did not trust Schmidt, especially with this wrenching debate going on in the SPD about German identity and East-West German relations, which really did get foreign observers' attention, not least the French. I had good contacts at the French Embassy. We would confer quite frequently. The French were nervous -- what's happening in Germany, what's happening to the Germans? Schmidt was a logical, analytical man. Brandt was an idealist, and the SPD is a romantic party to its soul. That's why Brandt won. Anyway, all this had Washington uneasy, but not just Washington, Paris, London and Moscow too.

Q: From your contacts, how did the French feel about the missile debate? They usually try to stick it to us in anything, but I would think this would be a little more serious.

BEECROFT: The French quietly supported us on Pershing-2 deployment. They never really came out publicly. I don't know what they might have said to the Germans, but at the end of the day the French understand these things. They realized that because of the deployment of the SS-20s there was an imbalance that could be dangerous. This is the kind of thing the French get right.

Q: Were you noticing something that I sort of feel, but I have nothing to back it up, but I'm 76 years old now. I served in Germany as an enlisted man in the Air Force in the early '50s. My first post was Frankfurt and by that time I think a third of the Foreign Service was in Germany in all our consulates and all that, but as time has gone on, fewer and fewer Americans have reason to go to Germany. The German language isn't as popular anymore and if you're going on vacation, you don't go to Germany, you go to England, you go to France, you go to Italy, you go to Spain. This means that Germany you just don't, those ties, I mean was that beginning to be apparent when people or were the people still able to call on their German experience often through the military?

BEECROFT: It hadn't really hit home yet. There may have been a little fraying around the edges, but it was not something one noticed. There were still lots of PXs and big and small bases everywhere, not just big places like Ramstein or Frankfurt but in villages like Bad Aibling, little places. And of course, and all this was especially interesting when you dealt with the SPD. You dealt with some SPD Germans who were, if not anti-American, at least anti-Reagan and made no bones about it, but when you talked to some SPD mayor whose town had maybe 150 jobs that depended on that local base, suddenly he loved all of us. No, the bonds were still there, although I have to say that Reagan was a lightning rod -- just as we now hear Europeans say "Well, we're not anti-American, but we don't like George Bush" -- you heard the same kind of arguments -- "We're not anti-American, but we don't understand Reagan."

Q: Yes. When Reagan went over the first time, how did that go?

BEECROFT: Oh boy. I can remember that very well.

Q: Was that the Bitburg time?

BEECROFT: No, Bitburg happened after I left, in 1985.

Q: Okay, let's talk about when you were there.

BEECROFT: Reagan came to the Bonn Economic Summit 1982. I still have the T-shirt. Again, Arthur Burns was crucial. There were demonstrations, big ones. Harry Belafonte sang in front of 100,000 people, mainly students, in a big field not far from our house: "Lay down your neutron bomb..." Reagan was a lightning rod. He made no public appearances. He of course met with Schmidt. I was not present for that meeting; I wish I had been. There was no particular warmth or symbiosis between Schmidt and Reagan. They were just too different.

Q: What about your contacts in your dealing with universities and students and faculties because so often in these European universities the faculties almost are dominated by Marxists. It's a good philosophy to play with if you don't have to live with the consequences.

BEECROFT: Yes. I made a lot of university appearances -- Hamburg, Kiel, Bremen, Bonn, Heidelberg, Freiburg, Munich. One of the things that struck me even then, and it's a lot worse now, is that I never met a professor or student who didn't believe he or she was an expert on the United States. But very few of them had either been there or taken any courses on the U.S., because courses on American civilization weren't widely offered. The same holds true for France, by the way.

Q: They could see the movies and that certainly gave them a clear picture of life in the United States.

BEECROFT: Correct, but only to the extent that movies aren't caricatures of reality. I can remember one particular television program that had a huge impact. It was called "The Day After" and it was set in Lawrence, Kansas.

Q: Lawrence, Kansas, oh, yes, I recall.

BEECROFT: After a nuclear exchange. It had a huge impact in Germany.

Q: Jason Robards was in it.

BEECROFT: Exactly. Interestingly enough, I had just sent a couple of young SPD Bundestag deputies on Leader Grant trips to the U.S., and among the places they went, at their request, was Lawrence, Kansas. Lawrence is a university town and these were left-wing deputies, and of course they were intellectuals and so they loved Lawrence, Kansas. They were made honorary members of the local Indian tribe, and they talked with people on the campus, and came back to Germany totally in love with Lawrence, Kansas, but it started with this TV program. For that generation, the fraying around the edges really became obvious. That generation, which had come of age after the '60s, had no recollection of World War II or the immediate postwar years. For them, the United States was a caricature. They didn't understand what made us tick, but thought they did.

Q: Was Dynasty a big thing up there?

BEECROFT: Oh God yes. J.R. Dallas.

Q: Dallas, I mean.

BEECROFT: Dallas. They were obsessed with Dallas.

Q: I think if I recall Europe kind of shut down on the days that they were showing it, but to most Americans it was a nice soap opera, but nothing special.

BEECROFT: Oh, the Germans loved Dallas. Another stereotype of what the Greens would call "rapacious capitalism." But Germans were fascinated with it.

Q: Well, were there any particular, what about sort of the bottom line of the terrorist thing, was this a problem for you all?

BEECROFT: No, not really. It seems almost naïve now. Every morning we would drive our cars right through the Embassy front gate and around the circle without slowing down, past the front entrance, and park in the Embassy lot in the back of the building. There was a guy out there in a uniform, but he seldom stopped cars or intervened. These were rent-a-guards. After the attempted hit on General Kroesen there may have been some tightening up on the military side, but certainly nothing that affected the Embassy staff directly. Even on the military side, my family and I would drive south to the Alps on vacation, and we would always stop halfway the first night, at Patrick Henry Village in Heidelberg, because we liked to spend the evening in Heidelberg. There was a military guest house at Patrick Henry Village that Foreign Service people could use. You'd call in advance to reserve, and park right in front. If there was a threat, it was seen as a very specific, aimed at senior officials and economic figures. You'll remember that they attacked the president of the Bundesbank.

Q: Yes and I think a publisher, too.

BEECROFT: That's true.

Q: What about, this is a time I was in Naples around this time and this is a period when there was a lot of concern in Italy about European communism and you know, a different face, how about the KPD?

BEECROFT: The KPD, the German Communist Party, just didn't have any traction. There was no particular interest. What little interest there might have been disappeared when the Greens came along. The Greens acted as a magnet for intellectuals and the left fringe. If you went to East Germany, which I did on occasion, the SED, which was a forced coalition of communists and non-communists, held power. The KPD was just not a factor in either state.

Q: Interesting, isn't it? What about relations with East Germany when you were there?

BEECROFT: This was a point when some serious scandals began emerging. Willy Brandt's secretary turned out to be an East German spy, and Herbert Wehner, the grand old man of the SPD in the Bundestag, was revealed exposed as having trained in Moscow during World War II. Wehner had the political good sense to die at about that time, so he was never really dragged through the political mud. I do not believe to this day that Wehner was a communist, not that what I believe matters. Egon Bahr, Willy Brandt's closest advisor, was also put under the microscope. What fuelled this was a kind of fascination in the FRG with this Doppelgänger, the other Germany. You sure as heck didn't see many people going to East Germany for vacation. It was an interesting phenomenon, and no one saw a quick end to it.

Q: Were we the United States suffering the delusion then that East Germany was much more of a mighty power economically?

BEECROFT: You bet.

Q: It turned out to be, talk about a rubber crutch. It's awful.

BEECROFT: I remember people, serious people who should have known better -- Arthur Burns was not one of them -- declaring solemnly and with ill-concealed admiration that because East Germany was the 10th largest economic power in the world, in a state the size of Ohio, it showed that even the Germans could make communism work. It was trendy to remind people that Karl Marx had never considered Russia as a candidate for communism; he had viewed Germany as his candidate for communism. Then I remember going to East Berlin and looking around and saying to myself, this is the world's 10th economic power? You'd look in vain for West German-style consumer goods in the stores or something to buy to take back home. Fortunately, I like music. As you know, one of the few things the communists managed to do really well was to keep culture at a high level, if you could accept the fact that even culture would be given a Marxist tinge. I would go to the Eterna Record Store on Alexanderplatz, the heart of East Berlin, and for less than a dollar -- a couple of East German marks -- I could get the most wonderful

LPs. I still have some, recordings you couldn't find in the West, often derived from tapes taken over from the Soviet Melodiya label, but pressed on real vinyl, not cheap sandpaper plastic like the Russians did it. Recordings of Kurt Masur conducting the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, for example, well before Masur ever dreamt of becoming a political figure, after the Wall came down and he became conductor of the New York Philharmonic. Great stuff.

Once I went over to East Berlin from West Berlin, and being a diplomat I could walk unchallenged through the Wall at Checkpoint Charlie, which was always an eerie experience. My alarm clock had broken so I thought okay, let's go to the people's department store on Alexanderplatz and see what alarm clocks they have. I went up to the counter and the woman was apologetic because she obviously saw I was not from the GDR. She showed me one and said, "This is all we have." What she had was a clock in a cheap plastic case with wind-up tick-tock works, but it had an electric-powered buzzer, so you put a double-A battery in this thing and it made an infernal racket. You could hear it ticking at night, very loud. Then there would be this pop and then it would go buzz. It was amazingly bad hybrid technology. The tick-tock part broke in a year or two and I threw the clock away. I could understand why the woman was apologetic. This was the best they had in the people's capital of the GDR.

Q: I think I've done a lot of soul searching, but how we brought ourselves to feel that this GDR and the Soviet Union was a powerful state, militarily, yes, but if you can't produce civilian goods, what are you?

BEECROFT: Sure. The city of Bitterfeld was a good example. It was the big chemical-producing center of the GDR. It's going to take a century to completely clean up the polluted ground water and soil in places like Bitterfeld. We Americans are very good at worst-casing. Our intelligence people always worst-case, as do the military. There is no nuance. You get this picture of your opponents as 16 feet tall, and they knew they weren't, but their own propaganda was never going to admit that.

Q: Speaking of intelligence how well do you feel you were served by the CIA or other intelligence agencies because Germany was just covered with people I mean every other person, it stems from right after the war.

BEECROFT: All I can say is that whenever I went to large receptions, you would inevitably bump into a lot of Agency people there. After the GDR opened an embassy in Bonn they of course had an annual "National Day" reception, and our Agency friends were all over it. You knew from looking at their reporting that they were paying money for what you got for free. As a taxpayer that sort of annoyed me, but they were busy and they usually described themselves as belonging to the State Department.

Q: Yes, this is a picture I get so often at a place where we probably had too many and they were tripping over each other.

BEECROFT: Yes.

Q: It's a nice place to be.

BEECROFT: Yes, Bonn was a fine place to live. A great place for your kids to go to school and grow up. We all loved Bonn.

Q: Did the Bundestag members get over to the States fairly frequently?

BEECROFT: All the time, yes. Not only the Bundestag members, but also the Land governors, the mayors -- the mayor of Bremen, Hans Koschnick, was in Washington frequently, he spoke excellent English. In the late Carter era, a decision had been made to close down the U.S. Consulate General in Bremen, which had been rebuilt after the war. Bremen was the major port for the entry for defense supplies and materiel, and it mattered to us. Washington had argued that we didn't need that Consulate any more because we had a much larger Consulate General in Hamburg, was only 50 kilometers away. We had this purpose-built consulate general building in Bremen. You may remember the style; our consulates general in Germany were very Bauhaus-inspired, on stilts with glass walls.

Q: Yes, I was in Frankfurt.

BEECROFT: Yes, they were all on the same model. So in this case, Mayor Hans Koschnick went to Washington and pled his case for reopening the Bremen Consulate General on Capitol Hill. He knew exactly what to do. When it's about money, the Mayor of Bremen knew that you didn't go to the State Department, you went to the Hill.

Q: Hell no.

BEECROFT: That's right. He won his case and Congress instructed the Secretary to reopen the Consulate. In the meantime, the building had been taken over by some bank. If I recall correctly, Koschnick chased the bank out because he wanted the Americans back. So we assigned a new Consul General. This would have been in '82. We also got the elevator working again. That was a big problem because the elevator had been put in after the war, when everything we did in Germany was in feet and inches. Of course everything in Germany is metric, so we had to custom-build the replacement elevator. Anyway, the new Consul General came in, and within a year was diagnosed with terminal cancer. He left, and soon after passed away. Shortly thereafter, Washington closed it down again. So it was kind of a phantom rebirth for one last hurrah. Sad.

Q: Yes. Well, is there anything else we should cover on this?

BEECROFT: On Germany? Well, just that my family and I left Bonn in '83. If anybody had told me then that in six years the Wall would fall, that there would be ferment in the GDR, that East Germans would transit the border in large numbers unopposed from Hungary to Austria, and that the German Democratic Republic would be absorbed by the same Helmut Kohl who was already Chancellor in 1983, I would have said you're out of your mind.

Q: Even much closer. Did Burns see this though? Was he looking at things at a little longer view?

BEECROFT: I don't think anybody foresaw that, and I don't mean that in any way critically of Ambassador Burns. He was a prince, but no... If there was any concern, it was how, after the unpleasantness of the missile deployment debate, we could get things back on an even keel.

WALTER B. SMITH, II
Deputy Chief of Mission
East Berlin, GDR (1979-1983)

Walter B. Smith, II was born in Providence, Rhode Island in 1929. He received a bachelor's degree from Princeton University in modern European history in 1951. Shortly after graduating from Princeton, he entered the U.S. Army, where he was stationed in Germany. Mr. Smith's career in the Foreign Service included positions in Poland, the Soviet Union, Israel, and Washington, DC. Mr. Smith was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 17, 1993.

SMITH: I went to East Berlin as the DCM.

Q: *Who was the Ambassador and what was the situation?*

SMITH: David Bohlen was my Ambassador during the first year. Herbert Okun was my Ambassador for the next two and one-half years, and Roz [Rozanne] Ridgway was my Ambassador during my last half year there. I was there for four years.

Q: *We're talking about 1978-82.*

SMITH: Actually, 1979-83.

Q: *Could you give us a feel for the political situation in East Germany at that time?*

SMITH: When I arrived, Ambassador Bohlen had made some headway in trying to interest both the Executive Branch [of the U.S. Government] and American private business groups in expanding U.S. economic relations with the East Germans. For this he deserves some credit, because there had been a tendency for our government to advise American businessmen on transactions with East Germany more or less along the lines that the West Germans wanted. This enraged Ambassador Bohlen, who thought that we had our own economic interests in East Germany. Obviously, on the political front we would follow the West German lead, but there was no reason in the world to forego commercial opportunities in East Germany, only to see some West German firm come along and do the same thing six months later. He saw that happen over and over again and he fought against it. He was making considerable progress in moving the Executive Branch to favor a liberalization of our trade restrictions -- a very limited liberalization -- vis-a-vis East Germany.

As you may recall, our trade restrictions in Eastern Europe varied enormously during that period. The Poles were "good guys," the Romanians were "moderately good guys," the Hungarians came

next, and then everybody else was a "bad guy." This so-called [standard] by which we rewarded or punished the satellites, depending on their willingness to act independently of Moscow, sounded very good but did not work very well in practice. This whole strategy of trying to expand U.S. trade relations with East Germany came crashing down when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan...

Q: This was Christmas, 1979.

SMITH: That is right. And the U.S. Government put relations, not only with the Soviet Union but with all of the so-called satellites, on "hold." Again, some differentiation was at play, because we studied, we scrutinized what the various Eastern European governments said about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan during the two or three weeks after it took place. Of course, the East Germans instinctively praised the Soviets. They had learned how to do this all along. That is an interesting subject unto itself. The East Germans, as I learned while I was there, were the pariahs of the Warsaw Pact. The Soviets hated them, and the other Eastern Europeans were scared to death of them and despised them. So they had very little "wiggle space." One of the ways by which they tried to ingratiate themselves with the Soviets, to gain "wiggle space," was to praise whatever the Soviets did in the international field. So East Germany came right out in full support of the invasion of Afghanistan, and "boom" -- that was the end of any possible effort to improve trade relations.

Q: What was our analysis at the time? You were looking at the East Germans within the Eastern Bloc. Why were they so..

SMITH: They were Germans. World War II was a bitter memory for the leadership of all of the Eastern European countries. These guys [the East Germans] may have been "their" Germans, but they were still Germans. The hatred between the Slavs and the Germans is enough to make one's head spin. We in the West do not know what hatred means, in a European context.

Q: Well, were they also considered, by any chance, to be the Soviets' "enforcers?" I'm thinking of, what was it, 1968 or 1969, the [time of the invasion of] Czechoslovakia.

SMITH: The Soviets invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968. The Hungarians did, too.

Q: But were the [East] Germans seen as a kind of "stalking horse" or "bully boy" that the Soviets could use? Was there something in this or not?

SMITH: I do not think so. I think that the Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians knew that the Russians did not like the Germans any more than they did. Indeed, the Soviets would have been very hesitant to use East Germany as an instrument of Soviet policy, within the context of the Warsaw Pact. Because the Soviets themselves knew how strong the hatred of the Germans was. The fact that the East Germans had the extent of maneuverability and, in fact, influence within the Warsaw Pact that they did is a tribute to their own political finesse. It was a rough life to be East Germany within the Soviet-dominated community.

Q: How did you find it? First of all, let's talk about you and the office. How were you used by the

three Ambassadors you served under -- Bohlen, Okun, and Ridgway?

SMITH: Regarding Ambassador Bohlen, I do not know whether enough time has passed to tell you about the problems that David Bohlen had with the Embassy in East Berlin.

Q: Why don't we talk about it, because these things [are usually not really understood] for a long time.

SMITH: Well, I do not think that the man has died yet. When I got there, he and my predecessor were not on speaking terms. My predecessor, Sol Polansky, was a well-known and beloved Foreign Service officer, a long-time East European specialist. Bohlen did not know about Eastern Europe or the communist world.

Q: What was his background?

SMITH: David Bohlen, a commercial officer, entered the Foreign Service in about 1948, at which time there were, perhaps, two or three African-American Foreign Service officers. He was told, when he entered the Service -- he loved to tell the story, and I have no reason to doubt it -- that at that time, 1948, there was only one posting he could have, Liberia. He endured a lot of difficulty -- let us put it that way -- as an African-American Foreign Service officer. He came out of it doing very well. But this bitter and difficult experience had its impact on him. By the time I got to East Berlin in 1979, I am sorry to say, David Bohlen had become paranoid. Or so it seemed. There was only one other black on the American staff, a communicator. I had the impression that Bohlen quite literally concluded that every single member of the Embassy staff, except this young black woman on the communications staff, was his enemy and was out to make him look bad, to trip him up, and to disobey him.

He gave me the benefit of the doubt. I had simply made known my interest in posts that were open. Sol Polansky, my predecessor, was devoid of racial prejudice.

Q: Low key.

SMITH: A savvy, warm person. I do not mind telling you that the fact that Ambassador Bohlen apparently decided that Polansky was not on his side is a sign of how mixed up Bohlen's thinking and feelings seem to have been when I got there. He decided that I was going to be his salvation. I had been away from East European affairs for a number of years. I was not a "creature" of the Office of German Affairs -- and here Bohlen's complaint had some justification. Bohlen felt that the Department had allowed the "pro-Bonn forces" in the Foreign Service, in effect, to sit on our relationship with East Germany, instead of allowing it to go its natural way, i.e., toward the expansion of commercial relations. Bohlen's background was strictly economic and commercial affairs. I began to see things Bohlen's way, that, in effect, the West German desk in Washington was telling the Embassy in East Berlin exactly how to run its affairs. Furthermore, our West German desk in Washington was letting the West Germans tell them what to tell us. It was ridiculous.

Ambassador Bohlen decided, because I was not out of the West German Affairs mold and had

been away from East European and communist affairs for nine years while I worked on the Middle East, that I was going to be a "safe" bet for him, and it was like a drowning man looking for a life raft. He decided that he liked me. He came to call on me in the fall of 1978 at my home here in Washington -- he and his wife. My wife and I put on the best show we could for them. We did not have any help. We lived in a tiny house in the South East section of Washington, D. C., but we made a good impression on the Bohlens. I had plenty of competition [for the job], but he chose me to be his new DCM. After I got to East Berlin, I worked hard for him. I am reasonably satisfied that Bohlen did not consider me "the enemy" at any time, from his personal African-American point of view. This was one of the most interesting and sensitive assignments I ever had.

Q: Well, you were the DCM. This job involves not just your relationship with the ambassador. You're the general manager of the staff, including all the other officers. How did you handle that?

SMITH: I think it was not true that the staff was trying to trip him up. The staff just did their job. I was there as an intermediary, which Polansky was not able to be during the last months he was there. In my view, Ambassador Bohlen was foolish in revealing to the rest of the staff how worried he was about them as white men. My arrival more or less neutralized this horrendous, emotional problem which the ambassador seemed to be having. Fortunately, Bohlen trusted me sufficiently that he would seek my views before he would send a policy recommendation to Washington. I was able to help him avoid going too far in one direction or another -- not that he did not write well or that he did not make sense, but he was, indeed, new to this area.

Q: How did he act in dealing with East German officials?

SMITH: Correctly. His German was hard to understand for them. His German was not "fluent" and had mistakes. Because he spoke English with an African-American accent, he also had trouble speaking German clearly. I have found, in my experience, that the extent to which an individual speaks his or her native language with a regional accent tends to limit his ability, somehow, to learn foreign languages without getting the accent wrong. There are exceptions, but generally speaking, this is true. I found that was part of Ambassador Bohlen's problem.

The East German authorities were smart enough to know that here was Ambassador Bohlen, who had arrived at the post without the usual preconceptions, let us say, concerning U.S.-Soviet relations and, above all, U.S.-West German relations, and was willing to try, within reason, to improve U.S.-East German economic relations. This is exactly what the East Germans needed, and so they appreciated what Bohlen was trying to do. He had as cordial relations with the East German authorities as any American ambassador could have. This is not saying a great deal, considering the Cold War divide. Ambassador Bohlen left East Berlin ten months after I got there, and I was chargé d'affaires for about four months between his departure and the arrival of Ambassador Herb Okun.

Q: How was Herb Okun as an ambassador?

SMITH: Herb Okun is a maestro with relatively few personal hangups. He is quite open about

them. Okun, of course, has an ego that would barely fit in this room, but he is an extraordinarily sensitive, smart man. And he has a sense of humor. Sometimes he could have afforded to have more of a sense of humor, but after Ambassador Bohlen, Ambassador Okun was a joy, because he was a real "pro." He was, first and foremost, a political officer, and that is what you needed in East Berlin. Secondly, he was a Soviet expert, which is what you needed in East Berlin. And thirdly, he was not going to sit back and take instructions from Washington if he could help it -- instructions which, in effect, had been written in Bonn -- any more than Bohlen was. Okun was infinitely more sophisticated in how to deal with this problem.

Herb Okun is an extraordinary individual, as you know. He did a very good job in East Berlin.

Q: I take it that as we talked about relationships between the posts in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv...

SMITH: East Berlin and Bonn [laughter].

Q: Can you tell me how you saw this? You arrived new on the scene, and all of a sudden, wham! -- there you were. How would you describe the political atmosphere of the American Embassy in East Germany and the American Embassy in Bonn and the relations between these two. I think that they were not quite friendly powers.

SMITH: They really were not. As I said before, there was not much room for maneuver for those serving in East Berlin. They were certainly not friendly to the East German regime but did not see why U.S. policy toward East Germany should be written by the West Germans. Particularly when the West Germans would ask us not to do something, politically or economically, and then would turn around and do it themselves. That was the ultimate, aggravating part of it. All of this became almost hypothetical once the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. The East German regime, as I said before, came out with blatant praise for the Soviet action, and that meant the end of any possible improvement in U.S.-East German relations right there. That happened in January 1980.

The next thing that happened, which made serving in East Berlin extremely interesting all over again, but for a totally different reason, was the boiling up of the Solidarity crisis in the summer of 1980 in Poland. I do not think I am betraying U.S. security interests in saying this, but we received one alert after another between August and December 1980, instructing us to keep a substantive officer up all night because, within 24 hours, there was a good possibility that the Soviets were going to intervene militarily in Poland. We had every officer in the Embassy -- at least every junior officer -- constantly driving around [East Germany]. We did not have any military attachés in East Berlin. So consular and administrative officers -- everybody -- was busy driving along the East German-Polish border, looking for military concentrations. It was a very heady exciting time.

The reason that this made serving in East Germany interesting was that -- and I think with fairly good reason -- the U.S. intelligence community began to look upon East German statements and activities in relation to this bubbling crisis in Poland as something of a litmus test as to what the Soviets might do. Now I have no doubt whatever in my mind that [Erich] Honecker [East German president] was urging the Soviets to intervene in Poland. Honecker was not wrong. The Solidarity crisis [ostensibly] calmed down when [General] Jaruzelski became, in effect, the

military dictator of Poland. However, in fact it never really did calm down. It was the beginning of the end of the whole Soviet system. So Honecker was "right" in his advice to Moscow. But the Soviets, for other reasons, decided to hold their fire. Remember, in 1956 they had intervened in Hungary and in 1968, in Czechoslovakia. They had less reason for doing this than the situation in Poland was giving them in 1980-81. The difference was that the Soviets began to see the handwriting on the wall and figured that the day was over when they could intervene and get away with it.

Q: They [the Soviets] also didn't have really strong leadership at the time.

SMITH: That is right. Brezhnev was dying in place.

Q: And there were two other Soviet leaders, Andropov and Chernenko, who died within a year of each other.

SMITH: That is right. That was a bit later, but, furthermore, the Soviet armed forces were tied down in Afghanistan and were way over committed there. There were various reasons why the Soviets figured that they were not going to mess things up. It appears that the main reason was that the Poles had rather large armed forces, unlike the armed forces of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. That is the first point. The second point is that the Russians knew, historically, that the Poles are utter daredevils who would not hesitate to resist with force any Soviet incursion into Poland. That is why they [the Soviets] did not intervene in Poland in 1956, when they thought about it, because the Poles had perhaps 400,000 men on the ground and would not hesitate -- in fact would consider it "glorious" -- to give up their lives shooting Russians, which the Czechs and Hungarians were smart enough not to do. So the unpredictability of the Poles, the depth of their hatred for the Russians, and their adventurous -- almost comically bravado-type attitude toward war -- and the large size of their armed forces -- were all considerations.

Q: Sitting right on their [the Soviets] lines of communications. Well, how did you find dealing with the East Germans? Were you ever able to sit down and talk with some of the officials at your level -- were they real "apparatchiks" or creatures of the government?

SMITH: The officials were creatures of the government. But I arrived in East Berlin believing that the GDR [German Democratic Republic] was a monolith. I am embarrassed to tell you this, although I had plenty of company among people who had been tracking the situation in that part of the world up to that point. I believed that the regime, which was indeed one of the most sophisticated police states of all time, had all forms of dissent under control, and there was no way that I was going to have a meaningful relationship with East Germans. This was not true at all. East Germany was seething with discontent and dissent, and Honecker, who was a very competent politician, knew better than to try to stifle it. The reason why all of us, looking at the GDR from afar, thought that the East Germans had achieved police state homogeneity par excellence was that they were Germans, that Germans believe in order, and that Germans strive for proper appearances. And this enormous amount of dissent and discontent never was reported in the press -- at least very rarely.

To prevent the situation from blowing up in his face, Honecker allowed -- and made a conscious

decision to allow -- a fair amount of dissent to go on. He allowed Western diplomats to meet with physicians, artists, and movie producers. We knew all kinds of East Germans who criticized the regime at length, away from the microphones in my residence. They had analyzed why the regime was doing this or that and whether it was dumb or stupid or smart. They were totally open in their pro-Western feelings. It was a heady, exciting time, compared to my tour of duty in Poland, let alone my tour of duty in the Soviet Union. Also, the fact that I was a senior officer must have helped. I was able to have remarkably open relationships with members of a wide spectrum of East German society. If I ever entertained anybody from the Foreign Ministry, the guy would toe the [government] line right down to the last word and was an "apparatchik." No question about it. I knew many people from many walks of life. The private sector [in East Germany] -- again, something that Honecker had encouraged -- had grown by the time I got there. Something like one out of five or six shops was privately owned. Taxes for private entrepreneurs had been reduced. Some of the best doctors in East Germany were in private practice. So the East German situation presented a mixed picture.

I repeat that the reason why I was convinced that it was not going to be like that was because of certain characteristics of the German personality, as seen from afar.

Q: You must have been very aware of the fact that the East Germans provided a kind of training ground for repressive police regimes all over the world -- still in power in Libya and some other places. Did you feel that you were being set up or that -- what are they called, "honey traps?" [i.e., sexual entrapments] -- were being used, and not just against you? Were there other provocations, or were we beyond that point?

SMITH: No, there were the usual provocations. The provocations which were the most worrisome were highly sophisticated efforts on the part of "Stasi" [Secret Police] operatives to engage one or another Embassy officer by sending a very convincing defector into the Embassy. This happened about every three months. One happened just after Ambassador Okun arrived, and it was a tough one for him to decide. Okun made the decision to violate a long-standing, fundamental rule for American embassies behind the Iron Curtain. He allowed an East German couple to stay for several days in the embassy, because he concluded -- I think correctly -- that these people were genuine defectors. But we had had some very persuasive "fakes" sent to us -- to our homes as well as to the chancery. East Germans, by and large, could get into and out [of our embassy]. They certainly did not have to show ID's, as they did going in and out of the embassy in Moscow. They were usually followed around the corner, if they were on foot, by a member of the East German secret police and then required to show identification, [after they had visited the embassy].

Although East Germans could get into our embassy, God knows what happened to them when they left. As long as they did not say the wrong things within earshot of a microphone, and if they had a car waiting for them at the front gate, they could get in and out [of the Embassy] without being "caught," so to speak. So that is how it happened that we did have both "real" and "phony" defectors on our hands. Sex was used -- all of the usual little tricks. The East Germans, as you said before, were very talented in this kind of activity. Again, the East Germans, being Germans, were much more hesitant to pull these games on senior Embassy officers than they were with junior Embassy officers. There was the good old German sense of authority: that you

do not mess around with the senior people.

Q: Did you find that the Stasi, or the people who were setting these things up, were running their own game? At the same time [East Germany] was trying to establish better relations with the United States, because we were the "odd man out."

SMITH: Until Afghanistan they were hoping to improve economic relations with the United States. To this day my wife thinks that it is screamingly funny that not only the Western press but the United States and other Western governments assessed the East German economy as the only success story behind the Iron Curtain -- the fifth largest industrial nation in the world. Nonsense! The East German economy was going to hell in a hand basket at that time. My wife knew this because, being a smart, instinctively commercial person, she would go out and check factories and markets and travel all around the country -- as we could do freely, incidentally. She knew, intuitively, that the East German economy was on its last legs.

Q: It came out, really, how awful things were, at least for the general [East German] public.

SMITH: Only after reunification.

Q: You were "on watch" [in East Germany] for four years. How did we look at the East German economy at that time?

SMITH: We thought that the East Germans -- despite the Soviet system -- were making their economy work. They were growing and they had considerable research and development capability -- first class scientists. The Soviets paid the East Germans real money to do a lot of the experimentation and development for them. So that part is true -- they did have a lot of talent. But the notion that, despite having to go through certain motions, because of their Marxist system, they were able to rationalize their economy simply was not true. Frankly, I had virtually no background in economic affairs at that time and I could not judge this. I accepted the conventional wisdom within the U.S. Government that the East Germans were growing and were way ahead of the other East European countries. They just were not. They were just barely keeping it all together. They were Germans. That was why we were all fooled. They were sophisticated. They knew how to falsify their statistics in a way where Western intelligence analysts would miss it, unlike the Czechs and the Poles, who just could not carry this off. They were methodical in their deception with respect to the horrendous condition of their economy, as only the Germans can be. I think that that is part of the reason why we were all fooled.

Q: When you look at it, it really is one of the greatest intelligence failures -- and not just an intelligence failure.

SMITH: [It was also] a scholarship failure.

Q: All across the board was the lack of appreciation of how the whole Eastern Bloc was going to hell in a hand basket, economically.

SMITH: I think that we had a better sense, with respect to the other East European countries,

than we did in the case of East Germany. East Germany was the most glaring, single example of this, and I would say that the Soviet Union was the next most glaring example. Our assessment of where things stood economically in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and the Balkans was probably much closer to the mark.

Q: We didn't expect much of them. Well, it's interesting. One last thing. Was there any change when the Carter administration came into office? The next administration was under Reagan. You were in East Germany during part of that time.

SMITH: Reagan came into office...

Q: In 1981.

SMITH: That is right. Ambassador Ridgway did not come until the beginning of 1983.

Our relations with East Germany, and most countries in Eastern Europe in general, were absolutely frozen, as I said before, from the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan onwards. The U.S.-Soviet relationship became very rocky because of that Soviet action. Then the tensions rising from the Solidarity crisis in Poland made things very difficult and brittle, too.

Your question is a good one, in that President Reagan came into office with antiquated Cold War rhetoric. You would have expected him to dump ice water onto the even token relationships we had with a place like East Germany. But because of Afghanistan and Solidarity, we had already done whatever we could to "ruin" our relations with East Germany before President Reagan came into office.

Q: Today is August 12, 1993. We will continue our interview with Walter B. Smith. The last question which we didn't cover was how did Ambassador Roz Ridgway operate? You mention what a "frozen" period this was in East Germany.

SMITH: I was there with her for less than six months. She had dealt with German affairs at some point, but it was a number of years before, at that juncture. She went from the GDR to EUR [as Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs]. She had not come from EUR, if I remember correctly.

Q: She may have been in Finland.

SMITH: I think so. She was getting into touch with the issues. She took no particular initiatives during the time I was there under her.

Q: Well, in a way, you've said that it was a "frozen" period, and it takes an ambassador a while to get into the swing of things. Obviously, the East Germans weren't jumping all over to get her to do things.

SMITH: There was not much that they could do. They understood our legislative and political system well enough to realize that the "freeze," for example, on any possible increase in U.S.

trade with the GDR was really quite serious. I think that one of the reasons why Ambassador Ridgway, during those five months or so, did not start thinking out loud about possible initiatives may have been the fact that her predecessor, Ambassador Herbert Okun, had an enormously sensitive "feel" for the Washington situation, the U.S.-Soviet relationship, and the role of the GDR in our perception of things. He also understood West German relations very well. He was a hard act to follow. There was not anything important left undone when she came on the scene, and she became quickly [aware of this], as I remember it. I was chargé d'affaires a total of nine months during my tour in the GDR, but there was not any real gap between Ambassadors Okun and Ridgway -- maybe a few weeks. There was a fairly long gap between Ambassadors Bohlen and Okun -- about two and a half months.

J. RICHARD BOCK
Senate Liaison Officer
Berlin (1979-1983)

Richard Bock was born in Philadelphia and raised in Shelton, Washington. He attended the University of Washington and Princeton University and entered the Foreign Service in 1955. His career included posts in Germany, Vietnam, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, and Australia. He was interviewed in 2002 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Today is August 13, 2002. Berlin. You were in Berlin from 1979 to when?

BOCK: To 1983.

Q: That's a good solid time.

BOCK: That was a long assignment and it was assigned that way from the outset, which was very unusual. It wasn't an extension.

Q: What was the situation in Germany, East-West, and then in Berlin when you got there in '79?

BOCK: There had been a Social Democratic government in power in West Germany since the mid-'70s. Moves toward détente were initiated by Willy Brandt with his Ostpolitik. There had been a series of agreements first with Russia and then with East Germany which kind of stabilized the whole situation there. At the time I was there, Helmut Schmidt was chancellor when I arrived, although it must have been the 1980 election where the Social Democrats lost. In Berlin, you had initially also a Social Democratic government which had been in power for a long, long time. The governing mayor was Dietrich Stobbe, who was a relatively young socialist. Although the situation was relatively stable, there were a lot of issues on the table which had to do with the desire on the part of the Germans both in Bonn and in West Berlin to deal on a whole list of practical matters with the East Germans and a great caution on the part of the United States and the other two Western "occupying" powers, Britain and France, to make sure that the whole construct surrounding Berlin rights was not weakened through any of these contacts or

negotiations.

Q: When you arrived there, was there almost a Bible of what thou canst do and what thou canst not do regarding Berlin? How far tailgates can go down, all this?

BOCK: It wasn't all written down, but, yes, there was a considerable Berlin lore as to what you could and could not do. There was the whole business of going from Checkpoint Charlie and there were written procedures there to visit East Berlin. East Berlin was not East Germany and we'd bend over backwards in our official doings to make sure that the distinction was maintained. Under the Western theory, East Berlin was part of a unified city under Four Power occupation. As far as the East Germans and Soviets were concerned, it wasn't. It was the capital of East Germany. So, there was a certain amount of fiction that went on there.

Q: What was your job?

BOCK: The title was Senat liaison officer. The Senat was not a senate in terms of a legislative body but rather was the Berlin city cabinet. So, my job was liaison with the Berlin city government. This was part of the overall Three Power occupation structure in that the city government was obligated to consult the Western allies on a whole range of issues, particularly anything that had to do with their dealings with East Germany or East Berlin. This meant that we had weekly meetings – the British, French, and American liaison officers – with a high ranking official of the Berlin city government where anything they were doing was supposed to be passed by us, an opportunity for us to raise concerns or give answers to questions raised previously. When an issue like this came up, then there was a whole structure of this occupation regime where a given issue would be taken up by one or another committee among the three allies.

Q: Who was the head of our mission when you got there?

BOCK: David Anderson was minister. Later on, it was Nelson Ledsky. Formally, the head of our mission was the commanding general, who was later General Boatner. I can't remember who it was when I first arrived. But on most issues, the minister was the person who was making the decisions or in some cases referring things to Bonn or Washington.

Q: How did Anderson run the outfit?

BOCK: Anderson was an extremely engaging person who motivated people without seeming to try. He made it clear right away that he expected you to do your job and trusted you doing it. He didn't want to interfere. But anytime we had questions, he was there and that was the way he operated.

Q: He was very close to Larry Eagleburger, too.

BOCK: He was close to Eagleburger, who at that time was in Belgrade.

Q: How did we feel when you got there? Were you told, "Watch this. They're getting wobbly

being Social Democrats?" Were we concerned that the Social Democratic Ostpolitik thing had crept into the West Berlin government so we really had to kind of keep an eye on them?

BOCK: I don't think we looked at it in terms of a Social Democratic problem. To the extent that they wanted to work out ways of living with the East Germans, this was a widely held view among Germans. They were representative. There wasn't really partisan politics there. But, yes, we were made aware from the outset that there was somewhat or at least a potentially different point of view between the Western allies and the Germans in this question. In fact, there were differences among the three Western allies, too. The French were the most hard over on not letting the Germans do anything behind their backs. The British were perhaps the most accommodating and we were sort of in the middle. It wasn't true on every issue, but in general.

Q: How did we feel about the other side of the hill, other side of the wall, the Soviets and the East Germans?

BOCK: The East Germans were clearly trying to establish in the international realm their sovereignty over East Berlin. This was the big issue. There was no question where they were coming from. With a few exceptions, the Soviets tended to support that, although it came at the expense of their occupation role so they wouldn't go all the way, but for the most part. So, there wasn't any question where the East Germans were coming from. We didn't have a lot of control over what they wanted to do. It was just how they were going to be dealt with.

Q: What sort of contact did we have with the East Germans and with the Soviets?

BOCK: We had no contact with the East Germans. That is, in West Berlin, we had no contact. We had an embassy in East Berlin which through some nomenclature device that I don't remember now was to East Germany but not in East Germany or something like this. That office dealt with East Germans on a bilateral basis. But they did not get involved in any Four Power issues. I don't remember that ever becoming an issue between the two missions. With the Soviets, there were some institutional arrangements including Four Power minister meetings, Four Power commandant meetings. We had on our staff a protocol officer, one of whose duties was liaison at the working level with the Soviet embassy in East Berlin. So, with the Soviets, we had considerable dealings. I did not personally.

Q: During this period, was it a relatively tranquil period? So often on the Berlin thing, one has the feeling there were probes and people trying various things.

BOCK: It was relatively tranquil. There were no major crises. There were some incidents involving our military people who had special arrangements for visiting East Germany. I wish I had a file with me that I could go back to and look at these issues. I remember things like a hijacked Polish airliner landing in West Berlin. Probably the major issue that I worked on during my last two years there was something that I don't think I'm capable now of describing adequately. It had to do with the S-Bahn, a largely above ground intracity rail transport system which belonged to the old Reichsbahn, an East German institution. There was also a subway called the U-Bahn, which was West Berlin run. It included a brief extension in East Berlin. That was quite separate. The S-Bahn ran in both parts, East Berlin, West Berlin. The employees were

all, in effect, employees of the East German government even though many of them were West Berlin citizens. It was a very curious deal. I don't remember how this issue started. I have a feeling it had something to do with wage demands by the workers which they tried to get the West Berlin government involved in. Anyway, the West Berlin government came up with a scheme, in effect, to take control of part of the S-Bahn. We were going to have to negotiate this out. And it just raised so many issues that it had everybody just cracking their heads for years. But that was a typical Berlin issue. It's not something that made headlines anywhere. But we were always very afraid to do things that would establish a precedent that the East German government could use to diminish Western rights. That was always the bottom line.

Q: Were you and the rest of the mission watching carefully the population of West Berlin, concerned that somehow or another it might gradually through its situation lose through migration almost?

BOCK: Yes, that was a potential issue, although it was offset by the fact that West Berlin was free of the West German draft and therefore attracted a large number of young men in particular. That had implications for the political cast of the West Berlin population as well. As liaison officer, one of my ancillary duties was to be the de facto internal political reporting officer. So, I followed all the elections. I had contacts with all the political parties. There was this undercurrent of leftist radicalism in West Berlin which was stronger for the most part than in West Germany proper.

There was another issue, too, which was not a direct issue for the U.S. There was a new political party called the Alternative List, which was kind of an offshoot of the West German Greens but was separate from it and which took a very radical bent. It basically opposed Western occupation rights. It also got into extralegal activities involving immigrant rights, Turks in particular. We went through a period deciding whether we should even have any official contact with this organization and finally decided we should. To put this in context, the early '80s, this was the period when there was a big debate all over Europe about the intermediate range ballistic missiles.

Q: This was in response to the SS-20s.

BOCK: The response to the SS-20s. The American response was to place IRBMs in West Germany. The left picked this up and said we were creating tensions and so on. The SPD government wavered on it, was then replaced by a Christian Democratic government which was less wavering but also not real enthusiastic for a while. This was being played out in Berlin, too, in demonstrations and other things.

Q: How did you view the demonstrations? Did you feel these were coming from within the population or were they fostered by the East Germans?

BOCK: I don't think there was any significant East German involvement in it. There were people involved in the demonstrations who were certainly susceptible to communist propaganda, but to go beyond that and say they were being manipulated, told what to do, by Soviets or East Germans, is quite unlikely.

Q: Did most West Berliners that you dealt with really see having the Four Power, essentially Three Power, force in West Berlin as keeping them from being dominated by...

BOCK: Yes, I think this was a general view. It was felt very strongly by the older generation who had been through the erection of the Wall. Even among the younger generation, they recognized the value of the Four Power status, but they really wanted to be able to run their own place with a very minimum of interference. And they shared what tended to be a fairly general sentiment in West Germany as a whole which was a form of - passivism may be too strong a word, but accommodation. They knew war. Some of them didn't that were younger, but Germany knew war. They didn't want to have anything to do with it. Sure, some defensive measures were necessary, but the main solution to peace in Europe was to act peacefully. When this INF issue was being talked about, it was viewed in that context.

Q: Was there concern in talking to people in our mission about the possibility that West Germany might reach an accommodation with East Germany, essentially saying, "Okay, we will unite and we will take West Germany out of NATO and East Germany out of the Warsaw Pact and have a big neutralist hunk?"

BOCK: I don't think so. There were some fears in the '70s at the time of Brandt's Ostpolitik that this might lead in that direction. By the time I was there, first of all, nobody thought the Soviets realistically would allow a neutral East Germany. So, the question was whether West Germany through its interest in accommodation and easing the division between East and West not would withdraw from NATO but would take positions within NATO which made it more difficult for NATO to do what it was supposed to do.

Q: Did you have any contact with the Free University of Berlin and other schools there?

BOCK: I didn't have any regular contact with them. I had sporadic contact with a few people there. I don't know there was. There were large numbers of academic exchanges and that sort of thing going on between us and them. But in terms of... First of all, the Free University was nothing like a monolith. It tended to be a haven for some leftist people, but it was all sorts of things.

Q: So it wasn't considered one of these bastions of Marxist teaching?

BOCK: No. Well, some people may have considered it that, but in general, that would have been a gross exaggeration.

Q: Were you there during the bomb that went off in the nightclub?

BOCK: No. That was after I left.

Q: It turned out the Libyans did it.

BOCK: We had some issues with radical Arabs being arrested for one thing or another, but

certainly not that big nightclub incident.

Q: Was there concern in our mission that East German spies were everywhere?

BOCK: I don't remember that being a big deal. There was some concern because there had been issues of East Berlin and East German espionage getting very close to the West German government. Wasn't his name Gunther Guillaume?

Q: He really caused Brandt to resign.

BOCK: Yes, he was something like the chief of staff, a very high advisor. That was before we were there, of course. But that showed what they were capable of doing. That never seemed to be an issue with the West Berlin government per se. So, it was only something that was kind of a vague concern. I don't remember, for instance, any particular heightened concern about FSN employees in the mission.

Q: I imagine that the Berlin government and all was much closer to the problem, whereas Bavarian delegates wouldn't be as concerned in the central government. How about the hand of our embassy in Bonn? Did that weigh heavily?

BOCK: We worked fairly closely with them. There was the Bonn Group in which the embassy was represented at a Four Power committee which would take up so-called inter-German issues, East-West German issues which involved the West German government. So, there was always a little bit of a tricky dividing line as to what issue is something that is basically a Three Power occupation issue that we can deal with the West Berlin government on and what requires the involvement of the West German government. Those issues came up from time to time. There was not always a total meeting of the minds on this. But I don't recall that we ever considered that the embassy was being heavyhanded on it. If there was an issue, it was an issue that normally we considered to be with the West German government, not with the American embassy in Bonn. I do remember one thing and it wasn't very important – during the visit by President Reagan. I was sort of point-man for setting the thing up. One of the big issues there was the West German government, the president, that wanted to accompany him. This was a real touchy issue as to what the West German president could and could not do in West Berlin because that was a question of sovereignty and the sovereignty issue is one where we didn't quite see eye to eye. That issue had to be handled in Bonn. It couldn't be handled in Berlin. That is an example of the sort of things that would come up. I should mention just in passing that that was my heaviest involvement in my entire career with a presidential visit. What really came home to me was that within the White House the question was security versus public relations. Those of us in the field who were trying to get some bilateral political gains out of this were fighting an uphill battle. You had to on each individual issue decide whether you were going to ally yourself with the Secret Service or with the White House politicians. If you could do one or another and accomplish your objectives, that was fine. If not, you were totally out of the loop.

Q: How did the visit go?

BOCK: The visit went fine. When he was elected, he would not have been the popular choice of

the Germans. He was seen in most of Europe as a cowboy. That had abated somewhat by the time he came, which I think was 1982. But he was still a target for protests. He made one speech at the Charlottenburg Palace, outside. I remember some very detailed planning went into that as to who would be invited and where people would be positioned so as to make sure that it didn't turn out to be a really bad photo op with people screaming and holding signs. But I think the visit was a net plus. This was not his "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall" visit. That was his second visit when I was no longer there. I think Andropov was still in power. But Reagan was starting from so low in the basement that any decent visit would have helped and I think this one did.

Q: How did you find the American military?

BOCK: We had issues. Another part of my job was to be the recipient of all the complaints of the Berlin city government about military activities. And there were many. The Berlin brigade considered it necessary to keep up their skills by doing a considerable amount of training. Of course, where they trained was in the city. It was very difficult to find places that they could do this without upsetting somebody. There were constant issues over this. Allegations of finding unexploded munitions in public places, of too much noise, this, that, or the other thing. For the Berlin brigade, there was somebody who was in our mission who was effectively their liaison to the civilian side of the U.S. mission. I think there were two people in that position during the course of my time there. They were both very cooperative looking for solutions to these things. It wasn't a situation where there was real civilian-military clash of views, but it was always a little tricky to find a solution which was going to dampen the civilian opposition while allowing the military to do what it needed to do.

Q: By the time that you were there, was the thought that there would be a war started there or was this pretty well ended? There used to be a time when always in the foreign affairs field, we looked at Berlin and said, "Here's the place where if somebody screws up, you could end up with war."

BOCK: I think a number of scholars feel that the building of the Wall probably removed a lot of that risk, at the expense of a lot of other things. I don't think that was a real concern. Again, this ballistic missile issue was being picked up by the opposition, saying this was going to lead to war. But that was not a Berlin-specific problem.

Q: Were you just reporting on the Senat or were you lobbying?

BOCK: Oh, yes, we would lobby on issues of importance to us, not only talk to the chief of chancery and his deputy but to various political leaders on issues of importance. A good deal of that fell to me.

Q: What was your impression of the political class in West Berlin?

BOCK: It's a little hard to generalize. It was a mix of political hacks and then some much more farseeing people. During at least the last half, if not more than half, of the time I was there, the governing mayor was Richard von Weizsaecker, who later went on to become president of West Germany. He was an extremely impressive figure who pretty much did away with the image you

sometimes got of the German conservatives of being a little too in thrall to their past. He had a very clear and realistic picture of what the Four Power rights were about and their importance. That didn't mean we didn't have issues. We did. But he was basically coming at the broad issues of East-West relationship from a position very close to where we were.

Q: I always think of a Berliner as being like a New Yorker, being pretty aggressive, tough talking, sharp edges. Did you find this?

BOCK: Oh, yes, but not to the extent that I think of it in New York terms. I would not make that stark a comparison, I think. Of course, you had even in the Berlin political class a lot of people who were not originally Berliners. You had an awful lot of former East Germans - or people who came from what became East Germany rather. So, I wouldn't overdo that characterization.

Q: How about the Wall and repercussions? Were you getting escapes and situations and that sort of thing?

BOCK: Occasionally, not very often. The wall had been up for 20 years. Most of the logical means of escape had been used and identified, so there wasn't too much happening. I'm trying to remember, there were some escapes. I can't remember the specifics of them now. One or two of them involved Steinstuecken, a tiny little exclave, a part of West Berlin which was almost totally surrounded by East Berlin with just a little street poking through. Yes, it was still going on. The typical Berliner tried- (End of tape)

Q: When people came from the U.S. to visit, was the Wall a place people would take them to?

BOCK: Yes. It was almost always on the itinerary. There were certain viewing points where one could climb up a tower and look at the extent of the wall.

Q: How about going into East Berlin? Was this something you were more or less obligated to do fairly often?

BOCK: No, but it's something I did do off and on partly for the cultural life. They had a very good opera over there, two of them actually, and we used to take those in when we could. Occasionally I had contact with the embassy staff over there. It was always the drill of going through Checkpoint Charlie and getting briefed and they wanting to know how long you were going to be, and making sure that you understood the rules and were not subject to East German police, which was a tricky issue. You were supposed to ignore them if they tried to stop you. We also made several trips to East Germany, which was something the military in West Berlin could not do. But as diplomats we were able to do that. We could get visas. We had to make sure we didn't use the visas in East Berlin, but we went out the other way and had a different license plate on our car, lots of games we had to play. It was interesting to get out and see how backward much of it was.

Q: This is the thing. People got so used to the Soviet Union and its economic status and what it was producing that somehow East Germany seemed to look pretty fancy. And yet when the Wall came down, the West Germans took one look at this and thought, "Oh, my God." They almost

had to rip everything apart and start all over again.

BOCK: Yes, it really was a house of cards. When I was there, East Germany's gross domestic product was something like the 15th or 20th largest in the world for a relatively small country. That was all based on this elaborate relationship and planned economy and had no real basis in reality.

Q: Yes. How did you feel, having served in China and Berlin? Did you feel yourself part of the German club or the China club?

BOCK: I was a bit ambivalent about that. I had kind of one foot in each. On the one hand, I rather of liked the ability to go back and forth, but on the other hand recognized that I risked being looked at askance by one or the other for not being true blue.

WILLIAM M. WOESSNER
Deputy Chief of Mission
Bonn (1979-1985)

William Woessner was born in 1931 in Queens, New York. He attended Queens College. He later received a Fulbright Scholarship which took him to Glasgow University. He then returned to the United States and attended Northwestern University. He served in the Korean War and then entered the Foreign Service in 1956. His career took him to Germany, Austria, and London. Mr. Woessner was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: Today is January 18, 2000. Let's start in 1979 when you went out to Bonn. You were in Bonn as DCM from when to when?

WOESSNER: From May of 1979 until July of 1985.

Q: How would you describe German-American diplomatic relations in 1979?

WOESSNER: Very close of necessity. There was a deeply felt mutual dependence, much stronger on the German part than on ours, but they were essential to everything we were doing in Europe. I always used to think of it as an East-West poker game and most of the chips were in the middle of the table and getting piled higher and higher. So, the six years I was there were professionally among the most satisfying I had, not just by virtue of being DCM and charge much of that time, but there was so much going on in German-American relations.

Q: Walter Stoessel was there during most of your time?

WOESSNER: No. He was the ambassador. Frank Meehan, my old friend and former boss, was his DCM. Then Frank was getting his own embassy, so he was moving out. That is when Walter called me and asked if I'd like to be the DCM. Of course, I was delighted. Walter stayed until

shortly after the election of 1980. He was called back by Al Haig to be number two in the State Department, which was a great honor for him and a recognition of what an incredible ambassador he was. Then we had a long gap. Reagan was very slow in making ambassadorial appointments. It was not until May or June that he named Arthur Burns to come out and be ambassador. I was in charge there for about a six months stint. Arthur Burns stayed as ambassador until 1985. I was still there when he left. I was in charge and then Rick Burt was named the new ambassador, but I left before he came out. Jim Dobbins was his DCM and Jim succeeded me.

Q: Let's take the Stoessel period. How did Stoessel operate as an ambassador and use you as the DCM?

WOESSNER: Every Foreign Service officer's dream of an ambassador. No question he was the ambassador. Very knowledgeable. The quintessential diplomatist. Highly respected. But he also was a man who had achieved an awful lot in his lifetime. He had no need to prove anything to himself or to Washington. He gave me an enormous range of responsibilities and a lot of freedom to carry them out. He was very supportive. There was no question about who called the shots on the big things. But it was a very satisfying time for me.

Q: Let's talk first about the management of the embassy. It's a huge embassy with everybody_ You have the Fish and Butterfly Agency, anything you can think of.

WOESSNER: I had no idea of the extent, but I think we counted once. There were as many as 55 different Washington agencies with a senior representative there.

Q: How did you deal with that?

WOESSNER: That is part of the challenge and part of the fun. You have oversight over all these agencies. Many of them are completely autonomous and go about doing their thing without reference to the ambassador or the DCM. As long as they're not running counter to directives or doing something that might embarrass you, that was fine. But in addition to all those agencies that you had at the embassy, there were six consulates general and there was the mission in Berlin, that all important, fascinating mission post which I knew so well from my own time there. The DCM was the supervisor and did the efficiency reports on the senior officers of all these posts.

Q: Did you have any problems with these autonomous agencies?

WOESSNER: No, I would say not. The one I found most challenging, no surprise, but also most satisfying, was CIA. They had a huge operation going on in Germany. Over those six years, I had good relationships with four successive station chiefs. They were very different. When I got there, it was George Carver. There were things that happened where they were doing something out of school, but we got that cleared up and straightened out.

Q: I would think it's always a problem, particularly when you have a large operation like that. At this time, the work ethos of the CIA, particularly the young and mid-grade officers, to recruit agents. This at a certain point becomes almost counterproductive because these are people out

there trying to sign people up who maybe we shouldn't be trying to sign up. Particularly in a place like Germany where the East Germans are doing the same thing, you're both working the same field. I would think it would get both embarrassing and there would be a problem of almost traffic control.

WOESSNER: It wasn't that bad. I think I told you that in my days in Berlin, an awful lot had already dried up. Things were not so free and easy as they had been with spies and counterspies all over the place. No, the intelligence relationship was a very important one. Did CIA commit indiscretions in my time? Yes, of course they did. They had to be called on the carpet. That was hardly the rule of thumb and I never sensed an attitude of trying to get away with as much as they could. It was a fairly collaborative effort. I guess the thing that probably caused the most heartburn would be the back-channel traffic.

Q: Could you explain what this is?

WOESSNER: This is when you didn't want things to go through the State Department but get to key people in Washington. There were back channels established through CIA. The extent to which they were used for their purposes and the extent to which they were used for the ambassador's purposes sometimes could cause friction. I wouldn't want to overdramatize any of this. I was struck rather by how good the relationship was. The other thing was the relationship to the big military commands, the Air Force, the Army; they were all in Germany and headed by three or four star generals. The ambassador had a role in what they did. It's hard to convey just how fascinating and satisfying it was. Morale in the embassy was very high, a sense of being part of a team. The country team functioned very well together. Those were good years.

Q: Looking at issues, the first one that occurs to me would be the SS20 versus the Pershing missile. Do you recall that?

WOESSNER: That came a little bit later with the showdown over the deployment and the two-track decision. That really all came to a head afterwards, 1983. In 1979/80, this was the end of the Carter administration. You had things like the gas pipeline, the Germans selling to the Soviets and causing a lot of heartburn and even good friends of the U.S. like Count Lambsdorff lining up on the side of trade with the East. And also our imposition of a grain embargo.

Q: Yes, and the Olympics. This was after the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviets in December of '79.

WOESSNER: Yes. I think that whole range of issues, how one deals with the Soviet Union, the extent of the economic pressure, how much you try to coerce them through economic measures, the Germans felt we were naive and a bit misguided and they had a lot of trouble with that. In the end on the really crucial issues, they lined up with us. They didn't have much choice. But there were frictions over economic issues. I remember when I had to go and break the news about the grain embargo to the state secretary, Lautenschlager, an interesting guy, very soft-spoken, almost diffident but quite a force in the German foreign office for years. He just shook his head and said, "I fear that within a year you'll be back and will have taken this off again but the damage will have been done" meaning to our trade. That is as far as he went to voice his disappointment.

We also had issues with the Germans about the presence of our military and the extent of training activities, the popular tolerance for what we were doing, whether the timing of overflights or the extent of maneuvers. There would be a lot of sore feelings. The military was always arguing for doing everything possible and the civilians said, "Is that really necessary?" But there was that ambivalence in Germany. On the one hand, they knew we were the guarantor of their independence and security and they wanted to give us as much freedom as we needed to maintain combat readiness. On the other hand, it's a small country and densely populated and that was a huge military presence. So, those issues tended to come up again and again.

Q: We're talking about 1979-1985. Was there the feeling that the Soviet Union was a real menace or was there the feeling that they were not going to do anything?

WOESSNER: I would never go that far. There was a feeling that things had settled down. There were spheres of influence. We had indicated what we wouldn't do and what we would do or what we would defend. Berlin was a sensitive point throughout this period. But I don't think the Germans ever discounted the Soviet potential as a threat. If we were to let down our guard or if there were to be serious disunity in NATO. It never reached that kind of complacency under Schmidt and certainly not later under Kohl.

Q: In '79 when you got out there, who was the chancellor?

WOESSNER: Helmut Schmidt.

Q: Was there still a distaste on Schmidt's part for Carter?

WOESSNER: Yes, that didn't change. That characterized the whole four years. No respect, no affection. But the other thing you have to bear in mind is that Schmidt himself was coming towards the end of his useful life. George Bush had no vision? Well, Helmut Schmidt had no vision either. He was kind of going through the motions. He was respected, but there was no great affection for Schmidt in the party as there had been for Brandt in his heyday. There was a coalition government in which the strains became more and more evident that the Free Democrats were growing restive and the possibility of a switch in alliances was there even as early as the time I arrived.

Q: How did we view Genscher? I assume he was foreign minister forever.

WOESSNER: He was. He was the longest serving foreign minister in NATO. I have to confess right up front to a prejudice here. I admired Genscher enormously. I thought he was a true German patriot. He also was a great loyal friend of the West and of the United States but he recognized that there were interests that our two countries had in common and there were interests that were separate. His job as foreign minister was to advance both. He was not for the most part trusted in Washington. This seemed regardless of administration. It was a general distrust of whatever he was up to.

Q: Why was this?

WOESSNER: Because he's devious. He is very clever. He has three pillars to his foreign policy. One of course was the absolute indispensability of the Western alliance and staying close to the United States. Secondly was building up European unity. Thirdly was a very active Third World policy including foreign aid. A lot of Third World issues, especially with people like Qadhafi and things in the Middle East, the Germans were always prepared to be much more indulgent than we and they were reluctant to go along with strenuous measures when we wanted to take them. So, there was always this dual character, but I admired how well he carried it out and how he had this instinctive sense of just how far he could go in pushing Washington and when to pull back. There were people in the embassy – not the ambassador but in the Political Section – who mistrusted him and did some foolish things and had to be reined in.

Q: When you say "foolish things," can you give an idea-

WOESSNER: I mean letting it be known just how much they mistrusted Genscher. Bonn is a small town. Things used to get back to them. They would come and see me and say, "This is not smart to have one of your people going around badmouthing Genscher." I would tell him to stop. No diplomat should be doing that anyway. Part of the thing is, at all levels of the embassy, and especially among the best officers, there was a whole range of contacts with Germans right across the political spectrum in all sectors.

Q: Did you find the atmosphere there_ It's a small town and you're all sort of in bed together. But was it somewhat the way they claim Washington is inside the beltway, that you got so involved in the central government that you were losing touch with what was happening in the lander out there?

WOESSNER: Not at all. It is a cozy town and there were a lot of personal relationships that did a lot to smooth the relationship internationally. But it's a federal state and you can't lose sight of the importance of all the other capitals in Germany, publishing being in Hamburg, business interests in the Ruhr, the critical importance of Frankfurt and Berlin. After all, distances being what they were, for these Bundestag deputies to go home to their constituencies was not like flying to California. They drove down the road. It's all within a couple hours drive. So, no, I never felt that there was an inside the Beltway mentality. Small town, yes, but not that.

Q: How about the embassy's relationship with our consulates general?

WOESSNER: They were very good. The extent of the activity in these consulates general and the consular duties that had to be performed were important, but the extent of the outreach very often was a function of who the consul general was. The really good ones did a lot of political contact on their own. Munich was very sensitive because of Strauss. We had more than one consul general who had a personal relationship with Franz Josef Strauss which fed back into our own. We never tried to restrict relationships there. In Stuttgart, you had Rommel, who was a CDU maverick, but always worth cultivating. He was the mayor. Then there was Berlin. There, especially when you had a strong minister - and this dated back to the days when I was in Berlin - there was a certain reluctance on the part of the minister to take guidance from the ambassador. When you had professionals like David Anderson in Berlin and Walter Stoessel in Bonn, that

was not a problem. I'm thinking back to the days when you had somebody like Arch Calhoun in Berlin and George McGhee in Bonn. Arch didn't take any advice from George McGhee. Those were healthy tensions, let me put it that way. But even in my time – and of course it's gotten more acute since – there was a constant pressure from Washington to close down the consulates general one by one for budgetary reasons. These moves were strenuously resisted by the Germans. I remember when Duesseldorf was reduced to a one-man post and then when they wanted to close Bremen in Carter's time, a mayor of Bremen and a whole delegation went to Washington to plead. "It's been here since the 18th century. How can you take it away?" So, they relented that year and the next year they didn't give any notice. They closed it overnight and that was that. But the important ones remained Frankfurt and Munich and to a lesser extent Hamburg.

Q: Talk about Berlin. During this time, particularly after the Soviet move into Afghanistan, which came as a real shocker for everyone. We also had the hostage crisis in Iran, which caused_ We were thinking that maybe the Soviets would move and take advantage of this and move to the Persian Gulf. Were we under particular concern about the status of Berlin during this time?

WOESSNER: No. No fear that the Soviets might do something. I think we had enough confidence in our own strength and the solidarity of the alliance. Yes, the Russians might bring pressure to bear; you had to be on guard and counteract vigorously. But I never had the sense of the nervousness that perhaps characterized the '60s, that somehow this was a hostage to fortune. Though we were in Berlin, we planted the flag. We made clear we were staying there until the end of time the Russians be damned. The climate in Berlin could be affected by the broader East-West climate. That goes without saying. Things were a little bit more cordial, a little bit freer. But the basic relationship was not affected. The real change came when we'll get onto that other subject, when Brezhnev foolishly deployed SS20s-

Q: We're dealing with this earlier period. By this time, we had been concerned particularly during the latter stages of our involvement in Vietnam and beyond about the American military - too much drug use, problems of authority, troops were not well disciplined, etc. When you got there in '79, what was the feeling you were getting from our military commanders?

WOESSNER: We went through the phase of sensing that the Army wasn't what it had been, but there was a concerted effort to build things back up again. But that didn't reach its culmination until Ronald Reagan and the sense of pride in uniform. That came a bit later. But, yes, there was concern about combat readiness. The real issues in Germany other than the ones I talked about before – namely that our efforts to be combat ready interfered with the growing sense of civilian entitlement on the part of the German population_ The whole range of issues we had with Germans had to do more with the military staying, feeling happy in Germany, and the Germans went to great lengths in small towns and larger communities, wherever we had garrisons, to do things to make the GIs feel welcome. Of course, those efforts suffered from the fact that the very nature of the Army is that there is constant turnover. The Germans would no sooner get to know the base commander and they would get to know all the troops and there would be a rotation and another rotation. There were relationships formed between GIs and Germans over decades that were very important in the long-run German-American relationship. Today when Germans talk

about that era, they lament that it's missing. So, it was more of that nature than the decline in Army morale – drugs, the other things you were talking about – that was a worldwide phenomenon and wasn't peculiar to Germany.

Q: Were you noticing a generational change in Germany? The older generation had been involved in WWII. A new generation was coming up.

WOESSNER: Yes. In fact, it was a theme in embassy discussion. I think it was Alex Klieforth, our public affairs counselor, who first heard enunciated this idea of the change in generations and the need to do something about it. It lay behind the development of such things as the Congress-Bundestag program in which the German Bundestag and the Congress - but it was pushed by the Bundestag - said, "We need to invest in our young people." They set up a high school exchange program fully funded by both governments to exchange 300 teenagers from Germany and 300 from the U.S. for a one-year homestay. It was intended as total cultural immersion to forge ties in the new generation. The older generation in which all of this was self-evident was beginning to pass from the scene. The younger generation didn't have that personal contact.

To come back to the GIs for a moment, another thing that had changed was, in the '50s and the '60s, the income of an American soldier went a long way in Germany. With the great prosperity in Germany, by the time you got to the end of the '70s/beginning of the '80s, you had situations where if a GI had his family in Germany with him, his wife might have to go out and be a Putzfrau to a German family. This is a role reversal. GIs didn't have the disposable income to go into town and do things. More and more, they stayed on base not because they were less interested in knowing about Germany or having a good time but because they couldn't afford it. Again, this gave an impetus to the mayor, to all kinds of German civic organizations, to do things for the GIs, to make them feel welcome here. It was kind of fighting a tide and the tide was pushed by the discrepancy in income.

Q: There was another thing, too. As an enlisted man, I was in Darmstadt and Lunsberg. Although I enlisted, it was either that or be drafted. So, a significant number of young American males had served in Germany in the post-war period, but now we had a professional army and so we no longer had this tie.

WOESSNER: That is part of the weakening of the tie. The GIs who went in the heyday of all this said, "Gosh, the Germans are really not so bad. They're a lot like us." That was the attitude. A number of them married German girls. It was a close relationship. That was changing in the '70s and '80s. We in the embassy were very aware of it. We devoted a lot of time and resources to public diplomacy. One other thing by this period, the generation of '68 was coming into its own. It was the product of the famed "march through the institutions," a left-wing effort to infiltrate and take over the media, especially TV, the church (oddly enough), and institutions of higher education. Among young German intellectuals, self-styled intellectuals, it was fashionable to be highly critical of the U.S. Part of that came from the Vietnam experience, but it was a march through the institutions. We were beginning to see the fruits of that by the late '70s and early '80s. Those who had been the protestors of '68 now were in positions of middle management or other influence in the TV stations. It was a time that called for strong public diplomacy and we were fortunate to have Alex Klieforth. After Alex, Tom Tuch was there throughout the Burns

era. That was a marriage made in heaven.

Q: Tourism was picking up around the world. Particularly Americans were going. It's London, Paris, and Rome, maybe the south, but Germany is almost considered to be an expensive place. Was this of concern?

WOESSNER: No. We were not in the tourism business. We were involved in improving the whole range of relationships with Germany.

Q: Tourism is one part of it. When you get a group of middle Americans who were on vacation to go to Germany, they'll come back more favorably concerned with Germany.

WOESSNER: That may be. There are limits to what an embassy can do. We did have a very active public diplomacy campaign and we did push hard for things like the Congress-Bundestag program. It just made so much sense and the Germans wanted it. The same thing with visits from congressional delegations. All these junkets and boondoggles. I had been in London and know they poured out of the plane and they said, "Okay, boy, where is the money?" They wanted their per diem and they weren't there for any serious business. I dare say Paris and Rome were much the same. When they came to Bonn, you knew they had a serious purpose because there wasn't much nightlife in Bonn. The Germans were always pushing, especially the Bundestag deputies, "Why don't American congressmen come here in greater numbers?" The one event that would attract the stars from Washington would be the Wehrkunde conference in Munich every February. John Tower led the delegation in the early years. That was always a very serious exchange of views among thinkers and policy makers in the various NATO countries. But otherwise, top congressional leaders rarely came to Bonn. It was a source of concern to the Germans. The other side of the equation is that Bundestag deputies would flock to Washington. The poor German embassy here spent a disproportionate amount of its time on the care and feeding of Bundestag deputies and as often as not, they would go home very angry with the embassy because it had not been able to get them the level of high attention that they expected, setting up appointments. It was often very embarrassing. I experienced that from my time in the State Department working closely with the German embassy and I know from the other end in Bonn. Not good. Germany was just one more ally as far as the Hill was concerned. There was no effort to cultivate German parliamentarians or even give them much courtesy. There were notable exceptions such as Lee Hamilton, Richard Lugar, and others.

Q: What about commercial disputes? Were there concerns about too many Mercedes being sold in the U.S. or the flow of goods? Was this a problem?

WOESSNER: No, I can't recall that we would object to German exports to the United States.

Q: We were having problems with Japan.

WOESSNER: Yes, and the Japanese were everybody's favorite scapegoat. The Europeans could complain about that, too. So, we all dumped on the Japanese. But, no, the issues had much more to do with trade to third countries and the political implications of that and using trade as a political weapon. The Germans would resist those efforts and the Europeans in general would.

But I can't recall that we ever complained to the Germans that they were sending too much to us. There are trade issues with the EU. That is a whole chapter unto itself. What was a restriction in trade and what was a- (end of tape)

Q: You were saying that concern about the denial of agricultural markets through the EU.

WOESSNER: Right. Most of those things would be handled in Brussels. That was not a major preoccupation of the embassy. Depending on the issue, we might have to lend strength to something with a demarche or so, but the embassy's focus was very heavily on political, military, and strategic issues.

Q: Was there a concern that over a period of time the Germans? West Germany by that time had relations with East Germany, is that right?

WOESSNER: Oh, yes.

Q: That West Germany might be moving more into the neutralist camp?

WOESSNER: No, not really. That was a favorite subject that would appear now and again in some columnist's writings, but the solidarity of the Western alliance was never really called into question. There was no fear that the Germans could or would strike a deal with Moscow, exchanging trade concessions and unification for some form of neutrality.

Q: Also, looking back at the time, was the thought of Germany being unified in your lifetime thought of as a possibility?

WOESSNER: I fancied myself as being something of an expert on Germany and I KNEW that they wouldn't achieve unification in my lifetime. It was as straightforward and simple as that. I think I was still making those kind of categorical statements 12 months before the wall came down and I was out of the Foreign Service. An interesting fact about the East German-West German relationship I don't think was always fully appreciated in the West is that the GDR, East Germany, was in fact getting a free ride on the EU. It had all the advantages of membership without any of the payment. It all came through what they called "Interzonenhandel" (interzonal trade), but that was just part of an enormous subsidization of the East German economy by the West Germans. More and more and more money was poured into East Germany to alleviate the hardships of the population. There were people at the time who questioned why on earth do you want to subsidize this totalitarian regime that is so hostile? But in the end, that degree of subsidization was so heavy that it really weakened the East Germans, so when the fall came, it came hard.

Q: During this time, were we still seeing East Germany as being more of an economic powerhouse than it actually was?

WOESSNER: Yes. Our intelligence was badly at fault here. To an amazing extent, we accepted the East Germans' own claims for their economic prosperity. It always would be listed as the tenth industrial power in the world. It was all fraudulent.

Q: To what would you ascribe the whole – not just the U.S., but Great Britain, France, everybody else – how did we fall into this? It wasn't as though this was North Korea. People could get in there and see the products coming out. We could count, look, and examine.

WOESSNER: Good question. Especially when you think that we had military missions, cars, traversing the GDR all the time. They were primarily looking at military targets and things of military significance, but you're right, there is so much we should have known and didn't. But then I'm not a great believer in the value of all the intelligence we had. We never had anybody inside the Kremlin. We were never able to assess motives. We had all the external intelligence provided by the things flying around in the sky and when troops would be moved, but real hard intelligence as to motives? No.

Q: We can't do it with our own government. Was the embassy ever involved in getting into Germany being used or letting France be in front but using it for doing things for economic trade, etc., under the guise of the European Union that we felt was not to our best interests?

WOESSNER: The German-French relationship was very special but full of ambivalence. On economic issues, the French usually took the lead and usually dictated the terms. We know that was a big issue with Britain's coming into the Market. But on some things and certainly on agriculture, there was a coincidence of interest. The Germans had their own agricultural lobby that was politically very powerful. While you could count on the French to be loud and strong, on that one, the Germans lined up.

Q: I was wondering whether_ Particularly after Arthur Burns came in_ He was the economist. Did this give a different cast to the embassy?

WOESSNER: Before I do that, I have to mention my own health. I had a dramatic turn in Walter Stoessel's last year there. I had been at post one year. I came in May of '79 and this was in June of '80. Suddenly, I became very weak. It came on rather rapidly and got so bad that one morning I couldn't even lift my right hand to shave. At that point, my wife said, "Enough is enough" and she took me down to a military hospital in Frankfurt. By the time she got me there, I could not walk and even sit up. The doctor couldn't tell for sure what I had without doing some tests. But he wanted her permission to give me some hydrocortisone because he thought he knew what I had, i.e., Addison's Disease, which is the same thing that Jack Kennedy had. He said, "If I don't do something, your husband will be in an irreversible coma within 24 hours." So, there she delivered me more dead than alive to the Army hospital and I had the injection and 24 hours later was running up and down the stairs. That was the beginning. I did have Addison's Disease. It is an auto-immune disease. They fixed me up, put me on a regime of medication, and certain do's and don'ts, all with a caution that there could be further complications. Within three months there were. At the end of that summer, I was medically evacuated to Georgetown University Hospital with the second stage of what is an autoimmune disease called Schmidt's Syndrome. The second part is Hashimoto's disease in which the thyroid sets up antibodies to itself. I was slowly killing myself. I was in hospital for two weeks. Extensive tests were run. Then I got the medication for that. I came back to post but it was very scary. I've lived with that ever since because there is no cure for it; there is only treatment.

Walter Stoessel left the following January, called back as soon as the new administration took office. I was charge until June. In May, Helmut Schmidt visited Washington. He was growing increasingly impatient, angry, at the administration for not naming a new ambassador. While Schmidt was in Washington that May, Reagan announced Arthur Burns. Schmidt was delighted. He knew, liked, and admired Arthur Burns and was just thrilled that he would be coming as ambassador. I did not know Arthur Burns. At that time, he was over at AEI [American Enterprise Institute]. He was no longer with the Fed.

Q: You might explain who Arthur Burns was.

WOESSNER: He had been advisor to several presidents and also chairman of the Federal Reserve System for eight years. He had been a distinguished scholar and wrote the definitive text on the business cycle. He was a very powerful individual, highly regarded in Washington on both sides of the aisle. At that time, he was over at AEI, a conservative think tank. Arthur Burns was certainly a fiscal conservative, but on a number of social issues he was much more liberal. I was asked to go over and call on him. Fascinating experience. I could spend hours with you talking about Arthur Burns, one of the most interesting people I've ever known, somebody whom I certainly respected from the outset and then came to love. I don't want that to suggest it was an easy relationship from the get go, but the more I came to know him and his style, the more rewarding it was. He invited me to call on him at AEI and engaged me in a lengthy conversation. He speaks slowly with a high pitch, and is continually playing with a pipe that is really a prop. He asked me lots of questions and it only slowly dawned on me that this man had a deep suspicion of the State Department, if not an outright dislike for it, because of the way he had been treated or briefed or not briefed when he went out in earlier incarnations on trips to Europe. So, no great respect for the State Department and its intellect. On the other hand, a very high regard for CIA because they had taken time with him and recognized how important this man was and gave him a serious briefing. These things come back to haunt you. Finally, we were well into the second hour of this visit when he looked at me and said, "What about you, Mr. Woessner? What are you going to be doing?" I said, "I believe that depends a lot on you. An ambassador usually picks his own DCM and it's very important that the ambassador and the DCM be in tune, in sync. He said, "I was rather hoping you would agree to stay." I said, "I would be honored to stay" and that was that, the deal was cut. What happened after that was, in the end, the State Department wouldn't let me leave. As long as he was there, they were not going to break us up even if he had been willing and then I was there after he left. That's years in the future. His other question was so revealing. He said, "What happens if the administration has a policy that I'm not in agreement with?" I said, "Of course, all Foreign Service officers are expected to carry out the policies of the government and represent them faithfully. If this is a matter of conscience, and this does happen, and were you to disagree, officers have resigned their post, but if you're asking me to what extent you're just out there as a "yes man" for the administration, I don't think the President would have asked you to go if that's what he was looking for." That is the answer he was looking for. I had early evidence of that. To give you an example, he had only been at post about three months and someone from USIA came to him and said they were putting together a three day conference at the economic institute in Kiel. It would be a joint German-American undertaking and the White House wanted him to be the keynote speaker. The theme was supply side economics. This seemed a perfectly legitimate thing to ask

the ambassador to do.

Q: Of course, this was a theory of the Reagan administration.

WOESSNER: Absolutely, at least in that first year. Burns was asked by Reagan to be part of a kitchen cabinet of senior Republican economic advisors. He was flown back to the U.S. four times a year to join with these people in giving advice to the President. But here we are, in the early days, and he's asked to open this conference in Kiel. Without batting an eye, the old man looked this officer from USIA in the face and said, "You can tell the White House to get its own whore." He was in such disagreement on the supply side economics. His whole life, he had been committed to a balanced budget and had seen these spendthrift Democrats just run up huge deficits. Now finally he had a conservative Republican in the White House and he was appalled to see the budgetary policies.

Q: Which tripled the national debt.

WOESSNER: He was the first in that group that I described to you to raise an objection and he was all alone. Over a period of two years, that group more and more joined with him until a majority of them advised Reagan that this was crazy. Then he stopped calling them back to Washington. That group just disappeared. That was Arthur Burns. He took very seriously his responsibilities as an ambassador and constantly defined and re-defined what they were. I remember saying to him, "An ambassador cannot do everything. You have many strengths and you're in a very influential position here, more than most ambassadors." He had a direct line to anybody in Washington that he ever wanted. I've never seen anything like it. Important committee chairmen in the Senate, key administration figures. A phone call from Arthur Burns went right through. There was nothing about "We'll call you back." He was a perfectionist. I said, "You have to come to some decision after you've been here a while. Identify the things you most want to do, where you think you can have the greatest impact, and then to the extent you trust me, just turn the rest of it over to me. I can administer all these things and if I need something, I'll come to you." It took a while until he felt that comfortable. I remember his first press conference. The press attaché at the embassy was having a cow. Here was Arthur Burns, who was then 79. No experience in doing this kind of thing. So afraid that somehow the ambassador would embarrass himself. The press was clamoring to meet with him. So, they had the first press conference at the residence in his living room. Maybe 20-30 carefully selected journalists were invited. They sat around. It was to be strictly off the record. Arthur Burns, without reference to the press attaché, for whom he didn't have very much respect, stood up at the outset and said, "I've never done an off the record press conference and I'm not about to start now." He then answered questions as completely as he could and with utter honesty. To many of the questions he would say things like, "I'm not sure I even understand the question. But I'll get back to you." The honesty of the man swept them away. A similar thing happened in a public forum a couple of weeks later. A man from a German think tank who was very pro-American, brilliant but enamored of his own brilliance, stood up and as Germans often do, asked a long, long question that was a speech and at the end came the question. People were uneasy with the question because it had to do with arms control, arms negotiations, and very technical details. Burns simply replied that he didn't know and he'd get back to him. People were delighted with this. That was the beginning of a romance. Arthur Burns was probably the most active

ambassador that I served in public diplomacy. The speeches he gave really could be collected and were worth reading and rereading. He put an enormous amount of time and effort into his public appearances. He would fine-tune them, hone them. He had a superb command of language and a deep respect for the English language and there was never a word wasted. A lot of time and effort went into these. Frankly, it's one of the reasons that Tom Tuch stayed on as public affairs counselor after what could have been his retirement. He recognized that this was a man who really made a difference in German-American relations and the speeches were not run of the mill things; they were things we worked on. That was part of it.

The other thing was within the embassy. I do believe his first and lasting love was being a college professor, especially of very bright graduate students. The dominating issue for the four years that he was in Bonn was the arms control and the INF negotiation, the two-track decision that we would continue to deploy the weapons at the same time negotiating for their abolition. That caused a major split in Germany. We had had the change in government by the time that came up. The SPD in opposition went very heavily against these deployments. There were major demonstrations in the streets. It was 1983. But early on, while Paul Nitze was meeting Kwizinski in Geneva for negotiations, Arthur Burns said to me, "I want you to get together the best minds of the embassy and to discuss this. I want to have a seminar on what is the national interest." He called people together and just like a college professor, he started taking us through all the things that were self-evident to us, but of course weren't all that self-evident. We had to define precisely the role of diplomacy, what the national interest was, how it was defined, how you articulate it, how you advance it, etc. It was an experience for all of us. That went on for several sessions. With that as background, we went on to the arms control negotiations. We began with a one hour exposition of the missiles, their range, trajectory, the difference in the missiles and the implications for arms control, multiple warheads, all this kind of thing. Then went on to the negotiations themselves and what were the issues that were on the table. We were getting the cables out of Geneva, 20-page detailed things that would just give you a headache trying to fathom them. Of course, Paul Nitze always came through Bonn on his way to Geneva and on his way home from Geneva. So, the Germans were very much in the picture on all this. It was just daily bread in the embassy. Burns wanted to know all these things. I will never forget the day we were talking about the issue of the British and French systems. The British and French also had missiles, nowhere near the arsenal that the two superpowers had, but we were insisting that these were not on the table in Geneva and the Soviets were insisting that they had to be counted. Finally, Burns stopped and looked up at the ceiling and said, "If I were up there somewhere looking down on this, where the British and French systems are concerned, I'd say the Soviets have a point." Of course, he was absolutely right. That was Arthur Burns. He was very active, very energetic, amazing. He was a workaholic. His staff aide used to say the nice thing about weekends was that they only had two workdays as opposed to weekdays, which had five. Burns would go into the office on Saturday morning and his secretary had to be there, God bless her, his staff aide, and the chauffeur. They were on duty all day until it was time to go home. He had a full round of engagements in Bonn and outside of Bonn. He was not much for the more frivolous things, but being Arthur Burns, he got away with things that others never would. For instance, national days, the bane of our existence. You've got more than 100 national days. Arthur Burns had perfected a system for attending. He would go in the front door, shake hands with the ambassador, congratulate him, and turn around and leave. That was the extent. He never circulated. Their dinner parties were much sought after, but people would eat before they'd go

because they had Menu A and Menu B. It was always the same. Arthur Burns didn't know or care anything about wine. There were some diplomats in town who had made their reputation on the hosting of these elaborate dinners. His were very Spartan, but the intellectual meal that was served up was always first rate. Hans Dietrich Genscher had no respect for ambassadors and no time for them. Arthur Burns and the Soviet ambassador were the two exceptions. It used to drive the other ambassadors nuts, including the British and the French, because Genscher was really bad in that regard. Burns cultivated the Soviet ambassador. He was an older man. They would often have private sessions - two old men talking to one another as world statesmen. It worked well. He also had a very special relationship with Helmut Schmidt. Then came the Wende when the Free Democrats switched sides and Helmut Schmidt left office. There is this famous picture. Burns was there for Schmidt's farewell and he went up and embraced him and the two men were crying. This kind of public display of emotion and affection and the new chancellor coming in_ People were saying, "This is not smart." The first thing that Burns did, he and Mrs. Burns got together with Kohl and Hannelore and they went off by themselves and he developed a good relationship with Kohl based on mutual respect and a fair degree of intimacy. He never had that relationship with Hans Dietrich Genscher. He didn't trust him. It was a correct relationship and it was not an impediment to his working as an ambassador, but there was no love lost there.

Also an interesting footnote. He once said to me about his relationship with the White House, "You know, people think I'm close to the President. I'm not at all, but as long as they think that, that's fine." He also had a passion for detail which could drive you nuts. I can remember times when he'd ask me to do something and I would do it and he'd say, "Was I sure?" I'd say, "Of course I'm sure. I told so and so to do it." He would say, "You'd better check again and go back and see if they've really done it." I had to go back and check. Then he'd say, "You check once and you check twice. I want you to check a third time." Or the time there was a very good officer in the Economic Section and there was something he had to do. Burns instructed him and then asked me "Is that going to be alright?" I said, "Absolutely." He said, "How do you know?" I said, "I trust the man." He said, "You trust him. I have no basis for trusting him." It was that kind of maddening attention to detail. It took time before he was finally comfortable in his role as ambassador. One notable blowup was with Larry Eagleburger. Burns wanted a message to go to Eagleburger that nobody else was supposed to see. Larry had established a special channel for Burns, but as we know, even the special channels go awry. This concerned an economic financial matter, dear to Burns' heart.

Twenty-four hours after he sent it, it appeared on the front page of "The Wall Street Journal." I don't think I've ever seen Arthur Burns so angry. I had assured him that this would go directly to Larry. He got on the blower to Larry and Larry just ate humble pie. It had been through the Op Center and somebody had leaked it. It was one of those NODIS "burn before reading" things. The result of that was Larry then established a yet more private back channel. Burns was zealous in guarding secrecy. He also was zealous in preserving his prerogatives. As he would say to me, "If you let the little things go, soon the big things will slip away, too." The loyalty to him was just fanatic in the embassy, a tremendous sense of pride working for him. He was genuinely loved all over Germany.

Q: Today is February 11, 2000. You had two footnotes that you wanted to put in.

WOESSNER: One had to do with the time I was on the watch and specifically the night that the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia.

Q: August 1968.

WOESSNER: I had just taken over the watch when I got a telephone call from the UN from Bill Buffum, who was the number two up there. He said, "This is Ambassador Buffum. I'd like to speak to the Secretary." I said, "I'm sorry, the Secretary's not in the building right now. In fact, he's heading downtown to testify before the Democratic National Committee." We were getting geared up for the election. He said, "Let me talk to the Deputy Secretary." I said, "He's on vacation up in New England." He said, "Let me speak to the Executive Secretary." I said, "Actually, he's with the Secretary heading down." "Goddammit," he said to me, "Take this down." He gave me a message saying that the Warsaw Pact had invaded Czechoslovakia and that he had found out from the Spanish ambassador to the UN. Explanation? The Soviets had delivered messages to governments around the world but they had no diplomatic relations with Spain. So, they chose the UN as the forum to deliver the message. Apparently, the Soviet ambassador was just a little bit ahead of schedule. So, Buffum relayed the word to us in the State Department. That is how the news came in. Five minutes later, a CRITIC came in, the only CRITIC during my two years in the Operations Center. After that, all hell broke loose. I just thought it was interesting, a funny way to get the news.

The second one was, you had been asking about the left wing in Britain, especially in the Labour Party. I got a telephone call on the last day before the Christmas break. In Britain, especially England (not so much in Scotland), they take Christmas very seriously. They celebrate both Christmas Day and Boxing Day. My recollection is that this was a Friday, but I may be mistaken. In any event, I was still in the embassy when most people had cleared out. A phone call came through. The operator didn't know what to do with it. It was from Judith Hart. She was a well-known self-styled leftist Member of Parliament, one of those people who fancied themselves. I hate to sound cynical, but unlike McGahey and the communists, who knew who they were, with her there was a lot of posturing. She said that she and Peter Shore, who was another member of Parliament and a very prominent anti-marketeer - both of them were in the Labour Party - and the Bishop of Stepney and other similar luminaries wanted to present a petition to the embassy the next morning, Christmas morning, protesting what we were doing in North Vietnam.

Q: This was Haiphong.

WOESSNER: Right. I said, "Well, there is nobody here now." She argued that if all these important people were prepared to give up Christmas morning to come and deliver a protest, surely the embassy could receive them. I said, "I have no idea who might come to receive you, but if all else fails, I'll come. I'm pretty low on the totem pole here." I think I was first secretary. She harrumphed a little bit but settled for that. Sure enough, nobody else wanted to have anything to do with this crew. My wife was not pleased with me that I had agreed to do this. So, I went to the embassy. I was a little bit early. The police started to put up barricades and a few people were gathering. I spotted Joe Ashton, yet another Member of Parliament, but real salt of the earth, a great guy who had to curry favor with the left but was all rather cynical about it all.

So, I went over, chatted with him. We were standing there between the lines and he said, "Well, Rent a Crowd is getting ready to assemble." Then when we got close to the appointed time, he said, "I guess we should go to our respective positions and get ready for this charade." He later went to the States on an International Visitor Program, a very good experience. Sure enough, two by two, these people proceeded up the steps. I had set up a table in the lobby. The Marine guards were there. Then they presented this petition of protest. Yes, the first few were members of Parliament. Then there were some trade union leaders. Then there was the Bishop of Stepney and who knows who else. Then it started to get rather ragtag. It was a long line. They kept coming, two by two. Soon, I was getting scraps of paper and things written on the back of envelopes. It went on for more than a half hour. It began to get ludicrous. I wasn't sure how to turn this off without giving them a grievance. So, I went out and talked to Judith. I said, "We take your protest seriously and I will be sending all of this to Washington, but frankly, it will dilute your message if the things that go besides the petition from you and the first two include all these scraps of paper and things hastily written and rather poor." She saw the wisdom in that. They agreed to terminate the demonstration and went on their way. A prime example of ludicrous posturing on the part of the left.

Q: Did the Soviet Union ever suffer any demonstrations?

WOESSNER: Not that I remember, not in my years.

Now we bring it back up to the years of Arthur Burns.

Q: These were from when to when?

WOESSNER: I was in Bonn from '79-'85. Walter Stoessel was called back at the beginning of '81 to be Deputy Secretary. The ensuing interregnum irritated Helmut Schmidt no end. It was only during a Schmidt visit to Washington in May that the President announced Arthur Burns' appointment. Burns came out in June for 10 days and then was gone for the rest of the summer. He always went to his home in Vermont in the summer. He came back and really took up office in September. That was September of '81. He stayed until the beginning of '85. The year of the missile was '83. That was an exciting summer. After he left, I was again charge. I was charge frequently during the years Burns was there. I think I told you I added up more than a year and a half of time as charge. Then Rick Burt was named- (end of tape)

I had my farewell party on the Fourth of July reception. It was a grand occasion. Perfect weather. Then Jim Dobbins came. He was the new DCM and was charge until Rick Burt arrived and presented his credentials. I went back to the State Department in the summer of '85.

Q: Were there any things that you recall that we should be talk about about Arthur Burns and German? Then we'll talk about the discotheque problem and the missile crisis.

WOESSNER: I regard him as truly extraordinary and it was a privilege (and I use the word advisedly) to serve under him. I was happy, blessed, to have a number of really outstanding ambassadors during my career. I have never subscribed to the idea that somehow only career FSOs should be ambassadors. Obviously, when they have the qualifications, they should have a

fair shot at that, but there are some extraordinary people from private life that come in. I had Elliott Richardson as ambassador in London and Arthur Burns as ambassador in Germany. They were able to do things; they had access to things that career ambassadors very often could not have. I thought serving Burns was a real privilege. I would say he was universally admired and liked in Germany. You asked about his appeal to the intelligencia, the intellectuals, and so on. Like so many in Europe, they tended to have an anti-American bias on most things. Burns was never included in that. He was genuinely respected. His speaking engagements were always very well attended. His speeches and his written things got a lot of high level attention. I may have mentioned that Tom Tuch, public affairs counselor, stayed on beyond the time he could have retired for the sheer pleasure and privilege of being able to articulate things through Burns, not that Burns dealt with other people's material as his own. He really worked everything over. When he gave a speech, you worked on it and you worked on it and it was redrafted and redrafted and he honed it and was very particular about the English language and the words he used and the precise meaning. There were no unnecessary words in a Burns speech. So, for a public affairs counselor, and for all of us to participate in this kind of thing, you knew you had an impact on the public diplomacy in that country. That was very satisfying.

Q: Did we talk about the relationship with Schmidt?

WOESSNER: I think we did, the extent to which they were really close friends. There was a great mutual admiration there dating back to the days when Burns was at the Federal Reserve. Schmidt was absolutely delighted when Burns was named. There was a move in the State Department at the last minute to shift Burns somewhere else. I forget who they wanted to send to Bonn. Burns just cut that off. He wasn't interested in anything else. He was going to Germany and that was that. Burns did have instant access in Germany to anybody who counted for anything in banking or finance. He had instant access to anybody back in Washington. A phone call would be placed to Senator So and So and it was not "He'll call you back." You went right through.

Q: During this time, you were Burns' DCM. Did he have any concerns, disquiet, about both Germany and France and their social support system? As an economist, the social benefits prove to be quite a burden.

WOESSNER: It was not a dominant theme with Arthur Burns. He was far more concerned about the Reagan economic policy. No, he didn't hammer away at the Germans and the French and their social net. He did often talk about the contrast between the work ethic in Germany in the post-war period and his personal experiences of it and how that had been attenuated in many ways. But that was not a dominant theme with Arthur Burns.

Q: Given your background, were you given any reflection about what Margaret Thatcher was doing to Great Britain? Was there a compare and contrast? She seemed to be confronting the trade union problem head on.

WOESSNER: No question. She made a lasting change in British politics. You see Tony Blair today and you can see he inherited something very different from what Margaret Thatcher inherited. She was a strong personality. By and large, Arthur Burns approved of the things she

was doing in Britain. The interesting take we would get on it in Germany had less to do with the domestic changes vis à vis the unions or the social net and more to do with the role of Britain in Europe and what a very difficult partner Maggie Thatcher was. There was no love lost between Schmidt and Thatcher or Kohl and Thatcher or anybody in the top hierarchy of the German government. Maggie could be a sore trial. It was interesting when you had the Falkland War [1981]. Because of EC solidarity, publicly, the Germans supported or did not criticize what the British were doing in the Falklands, but privately there was an enormous amount of heartburn. It was hard to explain, but the Germans were simultaneously attracted and repelled by the idea of using force to achieve a political objective. Military force was something only to be held in reserve, but God forbid anybody should ever use it. When this was accompanied by a great outpouring of patriotism in Great Britain, which Maggie played to, the Germans found that incomprehensible or distasteful because Germany had had that, had had so much of it, where patriotic symbols, flags, national days, had been misused by a barbaric regime and Germany would be forever tarnished by it that there was a great neuralgia not ever to let that happen in Germany again. When Germans looked on their television screens and saw the flags flying and the crowds cheering, they winced. Then when the Argentine cruiser, the Belgrano went down with great loss of life, there was a tremendous below the surface revulsion that Britain had done this. When the British DCM was posted back to London, Sheila and I hosted a farewell dinner for him precisely in the middle of all of this. I stood up and gave a rousing toast to him and to his country and to Maggie. I realized I was not being very diplomatic. But it was something I felt emotionally. The Germans just found it hard to deal with.

Q: They didn't have a feel for this rather repugnant regime down in Argentina?

WOESSNER: No. There was no latent neo-Nazi sympathy. Nor were they were under any illusion about the Argentine government was. It was just a sentiment that surely reasonable people could find some reasonable way out of this that didn't involve a resort to armed force.

Q: Considering the history, it's just as well that this was the gut reaction.

WOESSNER: Absolutely.

Q: How about Kohl?

WOESSNER: I wondered myself with the departure of Schmidt and the public display by Arthur Burns at Schmidt's retirement ceremony, where he went up and embraced him and both men were weeping. This was all captured by the cameras and was in all the daily papers. It was never a problem. He and Mrs. Burns cultivated the new chancellor and his wife. They had private sessions with them. They actually had a very good relationship. They did not have the shared experiences or background. Kohl didn't know much about economics or finance that Burns and Schmidt used to love to talk about. But they got on well.

I think we also talked about how Burns reached out to young people. He had sessions both in Bonn and up in Berlin at his residence there, usually on a Sunday afternoon, in which groups of young people - usually each one would be of a similar political orientation - young Christian Democrats or young Social Democrats or young Greens - and he had a rapport with them. Many

of these were a young generation in rebellion against their own parents' generation, but they somehow related to the old gentleman and had very substantive discussions. They appreciated it and it was a good way for him to tap into what was going on in German society. He had a special fondness for Petra Kelly. He had a private breakfast with her on several occasions.

Q: She was one of the leading members of the Greens. I heard her talk at the State Department's Open Forum.

WOESSNER: An American GI was her father. She was one of the leading forces in the Greens in the early years. Burns thought her ideas were absolutely nutty, but he liked her and respected her. I think I mentioned that she and her boyfriend, General Bastian, both came to his memorial service here on Connecticut Avenue. It was remarkable. Later, they were a double suicide. But coming to your question about how he related to German society, he did have a knack for tapping into many different segments in society. Being old didn't hurt either. He turned 80 while he was there.

Q: Let's turn to some specifics. The disco bombing in Berlin. Were you there at that time?

WOESSNER: There was the terrorist bombing at La Belle. It was a place frequented by GIs. Our intelligence had evidence that there had been East German collaboration in this. We took it very seriously. I forget the details, but my strongest memories of it deal with my subsequent assignment in Washington.

Q: What are your memories of it from Washington?

WOESSNER: One of the last things I did before I retired (by that time, I was principal DAS in EUR), I went to East Germany, had a session with the East German foreign minister, and that was the top of our agenda. The East Germans had all kinds of things they wanted to talk about, mainly trade. But we kept after that for a long time. It was a real block to any warming of the relationship with the GDR. They were guilty as hell, no question.

Q: Were you there about the time of the Libyan bombing?

WOESSNER: The Libyans had these terrorist outrages from time to time. Libya and Qadhafi in particular was one subject on which we and Genscher were very far apart. Genscher always took the stand that it was better to keep open the dialogue and to bring pressure to bear subtly whereas we regarded this man as a hopeless outlaw and tried to get the Europeans to line up with us in everything from imposing sanctions to_

Q: Was Genscher what we would call "soft" or "wet," always trying to talk around things, or was he playing the game to put Germany in a different course than the United States or were there other factors?

WOESSNER: I wouldn't say Genscher was soft. He was very shrewd, some might say wily. Remarkably energetic and hard working. He would wear out three staff aides at a time. Constantly on the go. He had three foreign policy objectives or courses that he was following.

First and foremost was the alliance with the U.S. He was under no illusion that to achieve anything else and particularly to achieve ultimate reunification, to which he was passionately devoted, he needed the U.S. I had no reason to think he didn't believe in that. He didn't think we were always terribly wise. He wasn't the only European who had trouble with our often overbearing attitude and most seriously with our failure to engage in any meaningful consultation. We talked consultation all the time, but too often we simply remembered the Europeans as an afterthought. But for Genscher the American relationship was central to everything else. Secondly was the European relationship. He was absolutely committed to the closest ties with France and with building up a separate European unity and identity. Thirdly was the Third World in which he always pushed for more foreign aid, in which he pushed for more understanding. Perhaps that was soft by some people's views. He was not one to go along with knee jerk sanctions. He had to balance these three things simultaneously and he was very clever in doing that.

Q: There has always been this stand that the U.S. doesn't consult enough with its European allies.

WOESSNER: I would certainly subscribe to that.

Q: But at the same time, you look and when the chips were down and we were trying to do that not too long after your time – in Yugoslavia – it was an absolute mess.

WOESSNER: The consultation was a mess?

Q: I mean nothing happened. If you consult with people, everybody feels good, but_ Did you feel the Europeans were capable of joint action?

WOESSNER: Those are really two separate issues. When I say "failure to consult," there are things in which Europeans had a real stake and on which our action or failure to act would impact them and I think we owed it to them to keep them informed and, as appropriate, to consult and, where possible, to get joint action rather than just go off and do it.

You mentioned Bosnia, Yugoslavia. That was after I left. I'm not as well informed. But from everything I've read and that you've read, it seems to me the problem there was that not only the Europeans, but also even we never knew what our policy should be. That was understandable. As an informed citizen who was interested, I had a lot of trouble identifying what our real interest was and what we should do. But I would think it's fair to say the Europeans were not capable of unified action. They were going in different directions and had different objectives and were either constrained or encouraged by very different historical precedents from the Germans, who didn't want to use force, to the French, who were sympathetic to the Serbs, to the British, who probably were wanting to be closest to us. Should the United States, could the United States have taken a stronger lead? I had German friends – Ambassador Von Staden, for instance, who was ambassador to Washington and then head of the foreign office and was very highly regarded. He really wanted the United States to take the lead in a forceful way with a huge military commitment to straightening that whole mess out. I'm not sure that that was the right way to go and I'm not sure that it would have been politically salable in the United States. He had no

confidence that the Europeans could in fact get their act together. But that was after my time.

Q: You were there during the missile business, the response to the introduction of the medium range Soviet missiles, the SS20, into East getting their act together. Could you explain why this was a problem?

WOESSNER: What the Soviets had done was upset the stability that had been in place for quite a while. Left unchecked, the deployment would have given the Soviets a great, decisive, military advantage that could have led to diplomatic blackmail. Our response was the famous two-track decision in NATO. We got our NATO allies to go along with it. That is, we would negotiate for the removal of the SS20s and at the same time we would prepare to deploy weapons of our own. These were weapons that of necessity had to be deployed in the Federal Republic of Germany. You could see the nightmare there because it meant that should hostilities ever come, Germany would be wiped out in the nuclear exchange. While Schmidt was still chancellor, his government and the SPD with misgivings lined up with us in this two-track policy. But once they left office, once the Free Democrats switched sides and you had a CDU/FDP government, the SPD no longer felt constrained by the responsibilities of office. They went dramatically off course – not Schmidt personally, although he hedged a lot of his earlier positions – but the people who had the responsibility in the SPD came out against the deployment and would eviscerate a two track decision. As the deployment date got closer and closer, the political rhetoric and the climate in Germany got hotter and hotter. Finally, in the summer of 1983, in June, Vice President Bush went to Krefeld to mark the 300th anniversary of German immigration to the United States. There had been ceremonies in the U.S. and these were the counterpart ceremonies. Krefeld then became the scene of a particularly nasty demonstration where paving stones were torn up and the cavalcade was stoned and even Arthur Burns' limousine. I spent that day being rushed to the hospital with the onset of severe diabetes. My medical history weaves in and out of all these things. Those demonstrations attracted a lot of media attention in the U.S. and there was much hand wringing and the pundits were saying, "Is Germany going neutral? Is it swinging back to a Bismarckian policy of alternating between east and west?" I thought that was such rubbish. The Social Democrats, the left wing at least, had an opportunity here to gain support in certain quarters because they were freed from the responsibility of office. But that is all it was. The remarkable thing about the deployment and the German action was that despite tens of thousands of people in the streets, despite the high feelings that it aroused in certain areas, a democratically elected parliament took the necessary measures to deploy the weapons, the weapons were deployed, and people's constitutional right to demonstrate was preserved. It was a pure example of parliamentary democracy at work. This was Germany 40 years after Hitler died in the bunker. I thought it was a remarkable testimonial to the stability of German institutions. I said as much in speeches back here.

Q: What were you doing this time?

WOESSNER: Besides getting shot with insulin? It was a major theme of our public diplomacy. As we fanned out around Germany, that was one of the themes addressed. But the role of the embassy was clearly in the dialogue with the Germans, while the negotiations were going on in Geneva. The negotiations in Geneva extended over a long period. One constant was that on the way to Geneva or on the way back, Paul Nitze or whoever happened to be in charge always came

through Bonn. On that issue, the consultations were as intense as anyone could have wished for. The Germans were always completely in the picture and their input was sought and they did have a role in the negotiation of what was politically tolerable or not, what had to be done. They were rock solid. It was fun to be in the middle of that, although I can't pretend that I always understood all the minutia of those negotiations. That was really arcane. Paul Nitze was just marvelous. I loved sitting and listening to him. He even came and told me about the walk in the woods that got him taken to the woodshed. I knew Kwizinski from when he had been the Soviet DCM in Bonn. Even the SPD came to venerate Paul Nitze. He was a rather conservative figure in relations with the Soviets. I was at a dinner one time and the SPD had a huge crowd. Paul Nitze happened to be in town and they asked him to come along. They gave him a standing ovation.

Q: Were you there when there was the famous_ I think it was Bitberg? What did that mean? How did that come about?

WOESSNER: The real drama of the Bitburg controversy was here in Washington, but in the field, it started with the fact—let me back up—I want to say that there was an economic summit to be followed by a bilateral visit from the President, Ronald Reagan, but it may have been that it was just a bilateral_ I can't remember. But Kohl was still basking in the glow of the meeting with Mitterrand at Verdun, where these two men, the German giant and his French counterpart stood and clasped hands over a grave in Verdun. That had potent symbolism considering the generations of tribal warfare between the Teutons and the Gauls. For whatever reason, Helmut Kohl took it into his head that he wanted something equally symbolic and meaningful with the Americans. Frankly, this was totally unnecessary. But that was the genesis of this. He was looking for something on that order. It was finally agreed that there would be a wreath laying at a military cemetery in Germany. That was kind of the background. In the planning, I remember the head of Protocol. I think his name was Von der Schulenberg. I did not know him as well as his predecessor. He was a very fine man. He came to the embassy to make some preparatory plans. Arthur Burns and Dick Barkley, who was political counselor, and I sat with Von der Schulenberg and were going over what the itinerary might look like. There was to be a visit to a base to have a meal with the GIs. At a nearby cemetery would be this wreath-laying ceremony. I remember Dick Barkley saying, "You'll make sure that there is nothing at the cemetery that might embarrass us." Dick had long experience in Germany. I don't think that even he knew something we all learned much later, which was that every military cemetery in Germany had Waffen SS buried there. The reason had been to disperse them all over so there would be no one shrine that Neo-Nazis might flock to. Von der Schulenberg said he would certainly look into that. Then Mike Deaver came, a wonderful man. I so enjoyed working with him. He was so good as a PR expert, everything from the time of day when things would be scheduled to what the lighting would be to what the background would be. Make no mistake, a presidential visit was theater. This was going to be theater. They had picked the cemetery because there was a base nearby. We went out there in helicopters and we stressed again to Von der Schulenberg about the cemetery. We visited and all the graves were covered with snow. But one of the last things he said when we broke up was that he would go back and check on all of these things. When we piled into the helicopter, I remember saying to Mike Deaver, "The Germans will check again on all the graves." This is incredible in hindsight. One of the people in his party, one of the presidential advance team, made some joke about, "Well, suppose they find Mengele? They're going to dig

him up?” It was just a dumb, stupid joke. Deaver didn’t react to that. It was some time later that I got a telephone call from Horst Teltschek to tell me, “It’s okay to go ahead with the cemetery. There will be no problems there.” I thanked him. I had a good working relationship with Teltschek. He was the foreign policy advisor to the chancellor, a man of extraordinary gifts, very able and very dependable. That was the background. The other things for the trip were also laid on. Then “Newsweek” or “Time” came out with a story – or maybe it was on the radio or television – that there were Waffen SS buried at Bitburg. The shit hit the fan. Great eruption in Washington. A call to me. My recollection is that I tried to reach Teltschek on a Friday afternoon and was told that he had already left town and was somewhere in Bavaria for the weekend. I said, “I need to reach him.” Well, they didn’t know how to reach him. I don’t know whether that’s true or not. But he called back Sunday night. He had just gotten in and found the message. I said to him, “Horst, there is a firestorm in Washington and it’s about Bitburg and it’s precisely about the question of who is buried in those graves. You gave me an assurance on this.” He said, “Bill, I got the assurance from the highest authority.” I said, “Excuse me. Let me understand that again.” He said, “The highest authority.” Of course, he meant the chancellor. It turned out later that in effect the foreign office, the protocol people, had been pretty much sidetracked and Kohl wanted to take personal charge of this because his good friend Ronald Reagan was coming and he wanted to be sure everything was in apple pie order. I have no idea why he gave a go ahead. I have a theory that, certainly unlike Schmidt, Kohl was not sensitive to domestic politics or concerns in the United States and would not have understood what a red flag this would have been. I think also he may have believed, as many Germans did believe, that membership in the Waffen SS per se did not imply war crimes because, in fact, in the closing months of the war, many people – old men, young boys, people from the Wehrmacht – were just conscripted into the Waffen SS and so on.

Q: I was a refugee relief officer and we had to look at this back in 1955. We found the Waffen SS per se did not mean much. There were some really nasty outfits, but basically the really bad ones were the Estonian or the Yugoslav Waffen SS.

WOESSNER: There were some buried there who had been in a group that had executed American prisoners of war. Kohl had reviewed the files and satisfied himself that there were no war criminals there. Hence, he gave the go ahead on this. Well, the real drama was back in Washington, where certainly Jewish groups but not only Jewish groups protested very vehemently. Elie Wiesel at the White House in a very dramatic ceremony begged the President, “Don’t do this, Mr. President. Don’t go there. Your place is not there.” Earlier, there had been talk of visiting one of the memorials to the victims of Nazism, to a former concentration camp, extermination camp. Ronald Reagan hadn’t wanted to do that. He said at the outset that he didn’t want to rehash those kinds of things. Nonetheless, as a concession, the White House now agreed to look for such a site. But the President adamantly refused to back off Bitburg. Meanwhile, Don Regan got on the phone to Burns and said, “Can’t you persuade the chancellor to dis-invite the President?” Burns repeated to Regan what Kohl had told him, which is that these appeals were coming from various quarters to let the President off the hook and the President clearly didn’t want to be let off the hook, but never mind, it would damage him severely politically in Germany. That was the position Kohl took. Burns faithfully reflected that in the conversation with Regan. Regan was not pleased. Somehow he wanted to get the President out of this. Well, Mike Deaver came back to Bonn. I had the pleasure of going around with him again and looking

at sites that we could include in the program that would balance Bitburg. My regard for Deaver went even higher. At no point did he look for a scapegoat. At no point did he say, "Why weren't we warned? Why didn't you do that or the embassy do that?" None of that kind of stuff. There were people in the White House who were prepared_

Q: This is what they do very, very well.

WOESSNER: At one point, the head of that White House team_ They were grouching among themselves about the goddam furor in Washington and all these people making trouble and specifically referring to Jews and saying, "We don't owe them anything anyway" meaning politically. I couldn't believe my ears. An experience that was not atypical. During my years in Germany in particular – because by that time I had risen to a position where I was privy to a lot more conversations – the things that political visitors from Washington said to one another in my presence would just blow your socks off. It's as if I was a non-person. I didn't exist. I realized after a while, that's true for them. I was of no account. It didn't matter what I heard or didn't hear. There would be domestic political strategy sessions, things about, "How are we going to get her out of the White House," referring to somebody who went to- (end of tape)

Q: You were taking about getting Ronald Reagan's private secretary_

WOESSNER: Yes, she had come with him from California. She wound up marrying the head of the Sacher Hotel.

Q: She was an embarrassment there, I think.

WOESSNER: In some ways. A delightful embarrassment. I was long out of Vienna, but the idea that this Maedel, who had no class, comes and is the ambassador... I found that just choice because the Austrians are so class conscious that it was a bit of a glorious joke. She was a lovely person. I had no reason to think she wasn't as good as some of the yo-yos we sent to Vienna. That is neither here nor there.

So, Bitburg, in the end, it went off as scheduled. One of the things they did was, instead of having Kohl and Reagan lay the wreaths, there was a German Luftwaffe pilot who was badly burned during the war, a fine person-

Q: He was one of the first heads of the German air force.

WOESSNER: Right. And in a big position in NATO. Widely admired and respected. He did the honors for Kohl. Matthew Ridgeway came and did it for Reagan. The White House's version was that Ridgeway had called and asked if he could serve his commander in chief in any way. The truth is that they had called him. He and his wife stayed in our home and it was one of the treats of having an official residence that all kinds of interesting people, as well as some not very nice people, come through and you get a chance to sit with them over breakfast and talk and get to know them. He was a real class act. He did the honors for President Reagan. The trip went off. Reagan won enormous respect and gratitude in Germany from for going through with a visit that could have been such a terrible embarrassment. Kohl, on the other hand, although he didn't

suffer as much political damage as he would have if the trip had been canceled, certainly was pilloried for his inept handling of this and having put the President in that spot in the first place. That was Bitburg, fun and games.

Q: Is there anything on Germany that we should cover?

WOESSNER: We survived Bitburg, the missiles were deployed, we went on to great prosperity and an eventual unification, but that was after my time.

Q: You left there in '85. Where did you go?

ELLEN M. JOHNSON
Secretary to Deputy Chief of Mission
Bonn (1980-1982)

Ellen M. Johnson was born in New Jersey in 1934. Shortly after receiving a master's degree from the University of Colorado, she joined the State Department in 1957 as a clerk and stenographer. Ms. Johnson served in Kobe-Osaka, Warsaw, London, and Prague. She was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on April 27, 1994.

Q: You left Yugoslavia in 1979. This was a change in administration, etc. Were you tempted to stay?

JOHNSON: No, I really didn't like Belgrade as a place to live, although I enjoyed Yugoslavia and the embassy. A few months before I was due to depart I received a call from the DCM in Bonn who was losing his secretary and wanted to know if I would be interested. The DCM was Bill Woessner, who I knew from Warsaw days when he was a junior officer in the consular section when I was there. I was ready for a change from living in a communist country...two years generally was long enough at a time, unless the city had a lot to offer like was the case with Prague...and felt the combination of Germany and working for Bill Woessner in my favorite position as DCM secretary, sounded great, so I agreed.

I returned to Washington in October 1979, had home leave, took eight weeks of German language training at FSI and arrived in Bonn in April, 1980.

Q: You were there for two years.

JOHNSON: Yes. My assignment was for four years but during home leave after two years, it was discovered that I had breast cancer and I decided I didn't want to go out again. It was too bad because I regret not getting to Berlin. I was saving that trip for my second tour there.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

JOHNSON: When I went out Walter Stoessel, a career Foreign Service Officer, was the Ambassador. So we had a very professionally, well run embassy with him at the helm. Again, he was a shy man...it is amazing how many ambassadors have this shyness.

Q: Yes, I ran across one in Kyrgyzstan who was a bird watcher and liked to walk solitary in the mountains. It didn't work well there with a small beleaguered embassy.

JOHNSON: But he was very friendly as was his wife.

It was a huge embassy and most of the Americans lived in a compound called Plittersdorf. This meant there was more of an exchange among Americans than there had been in London, where you were scattered around the city (I understand today there is government housing for everyone at the embassy now in London). Being a large embassy, staff did not attend staff meetings nor were they invited to many of the big official functions. There was more social contact with senior officers than in London, however, but nothing like one would have at a smaller post. However there was so much to do in Germany, and with occasional recognition of worth, I felt the morale was high in most cases, at least under Stoessel.

Arthur Burns, a political appointee, came in after Ambassador Stoessel. He was the type of individual who would not take your word on anything that was new to him, and everything was new to him. One of the jobs of the DCM is to take care of the routine running of the embassy and either sign for the Ambassador or get his signature on papers as required. Well, Ambassador Burns had no idea what the routine diplomatic requirements were. When I typed up a diplomatic note and Bill would take it in to explain what was happening, he wanted to see the regulations requiring that it had to be done. He didn't understand diplomatic language and he wouldn't sign anything if he didn't entirely understand the situation. Much of the routine paper protocol has been going on for decades, yet he wanted to know the history behind each document, which most of us didn't know. He wouldn't accept, "Well, we have been doing it this way for years and years," as an answer to his queries. Bill soon had a complete set of Foreign Service Regulations in his office for rapid consultation and "show and tell" for Ambassador Burns.

With Stoessel, Bill signed most of the routine documents for the Ambassador, but Burns demanded to see and sign everything for himself and wanted to know "why?" However, due to the volume of paperwork and with the passing of time, Bill and other embassy officers slowly gained the confidence of Burns and were allowed to do more for him. But the first six or seven months were extremely hard on everyone. It took forever to get anything signed and away.

The Germans like Burns who was an economist and had been with the Federal Reserve System.

Q: Was he born in Germany?

JOHNSON: No, I don't think so. His parents may have been born there, but I really don't know.

Q: What was the impression of Germany at that time? Was anybody ever talking about the unification of Germany, or was that just a none subject?

JOHNSON: There would be talk about it periodically, but the German government was building huge new government buildings in Bonn giving one the impression that they felt Bonn would be the capital of Germany for a long time to come. Other governments were building new embassies in Bonn as well. So one didn't have the impression that officials felt unification would happen in the near future.

It was a relatively quiet time in Germany. The embassy was busy implementing its security update. When I arrived it was easy to get access to the embassy and the front office. By the time I left it was getting to be more and more like a fortress. This was being done not so much because of what was happening in Germany, but because of the new security regulations pertaining to terrorism that the State Department were implementing throughout the world.

Q: Did you feel that the Germans' welcome of Americans was getting a little thin? We had been around there for a long time.

JOHNSON: One was beginning to hear a little grumbling about the American military taking up too much space with their bases, keeping it from use by the Germans. In fact, some Germans were beginning to think that Plittersdorf should be turned back to the Germans and that the Americans should live on the German economy both housing and food. We still had a commissary, but a lot of us shopped weekly downtown at the wonderful German markets. In fact, the embassy was beginning to allow a few Germans to have housing on the compound. I don't remember what the criteria were, but I'm sure it was being done in answer to the growing grumbling of the man in the street. Otherwise, Americans were treated as well as the Germans treated themselves and I personally didn't have any problems...except at a market every now and then when I tried to feel an apple to see if it was bruised or not. All in all, it was very pleasant living.

THOMAS G. WESTON
Germany Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1980-1982)

Ambassador Weston was born and raised in Michigan and educated at Michigan State University and in France. Entering the Foreign Service in 1969, he was posted first in Zaire, after which he began assignments in the Bureau of European Affairs and abroad. His posts include Zaire, Germany, Belgium and Canada. Ambassador Weston was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: Well then when you took over the German desk, this is what, about '81 or so?

WESTON: No, let me think a minute, I think '80, because I did it for two years and then I did one year as the deputy director of Central European Affairs and then went to Bonn so it would have been '80.

Q: Well in '80, what were the, well by this time it was still the Carter administration.

WESTON: Brought all these changes.

Q: Were you picking up any of the consequences of the lack of warmth to put it mildly between Carter and Schmidt?

WESTON: Absolutely. On the German desk, I had been there six months or something, and we had had an official visit from Helmut Schmidt to the United States. Obviously the desk officer was deeply involved in all aspects in such a visit but the visit started out with the meeting between the president and the chancellor in which Zbig Brzezinski participated and basically lectured. Brzezinski, not the president, lectured Helmut Schmidt who was not given very kindly to being lectured to about the responsibilities of Germany for its past and in particular vis-à-vis Poland and consequently the rest of Eastern Europe and so on. So the visit did not start on a very good footing. Those were still the days where the U.S.-German relationship especially from the German perspective was the crucial relationship that Germany had; less so from the American, but still to some extent from the American perspective as well. There was plenty of evidence of the effect of personalities on the overall relationship between two major countries.

Q: Were you seen, now granted you had only one small corner of Germany when you were in Bremen, but how did you view sort of the political landscape of Germany when you got there in 1980 on the desk particularly with the Green Party developing and other things. What were you seeing?

WESTON: I think I was lucky because remember I had been three years in Bremen. That was where the initial beginnings of the Greens can be traced to Northern Germany specifically Bremen with what was then called "Burger Initutiven." These were environmental movements by citizens initially centered on opposition to nuclear power, not even nuclear weapons but nuclear power. So, I came out of having had direct experience with the beginning with the Green Party and very extensive experience with both elements of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) both what was called the "Kanalarbeitet", the old trade unionists which you would have to say Schmidt was a member plus the more ideological way. Even though I was in a very small place in Germany I think I was seen as having been very enmeshed in Germany and clearly seen in those days an up and coming member of the German Club. There was this combination of experience with all elements of the Social Democratic Party as well as the Greens who were the forces in German politics then which I think gave me a lot of credibility as the desk officer. Now where I had had far less experience was with the conservative side of the German political spectrum although I had had some because of having dealt with the politics of Lower Saxony which was CDU (Christian Democratic Union) governed. Where I had almost no experience was with the Bavarians and the CSU (Christian Social Union). Remember there was a fellow named Franz Josef Strauss, he was kind of a towering figure in German life.

Q: For a long time. During this time you were on the desk, how did we view the Green Party?

WESTON: Well, I think from how did we the United States feel?

Q: Yes, I mean the State Department.

WESTON: I think those who really watched it and were involved with it and actually talked to Greens viewed it as a kind of expression of the new, in the sense of the next generation of German politics. German politics as more assertive of specifically German interests shedding some of the restraints imposed by the German defeat in the war and so on and the Greens kind of exemplified that. Now there were complicating factors from the point of U.S. interests with the Greens. First of all, the greens really started in terms of opposition to things nuclear, initially nuclear power but obviously that included nuclear weapons which was a real problem for the United States obviously. In particular because late in that period by the time '82 rolled around we were deeply enmeshed in the so-called Dual Track decision on intermediate range nuclear weapons. This involved the deployment of large numbers of new nuclear weapons to Germany which was of course thoroughly opposed by the Greens as well as probably the majority of the German population. I think the Greens were seen as kind of a new Germany. More assertive, probably, obviously more difficult to deal with because you would be dealing with them more as with a traditional political system rather than as a defeated enemy that you still occupied their capital which we still did then. But more broadly in the State Department I would say they were viewed as a problem because of their opposition to a lot of American policies.

Q: It was Petra Kelly at that point.

WESTON: Petra Kelly and Gert Bastian both of whom killed themselves while I was in Bonn and I knew them both obviously, early founders.

Q: I can't remember but this was the time when you were dealing with Germany of the SS-20s and the response to it was it...

WESTON: You know that is the INF (Intermediate Nuclear Forces), the Dual-Track decision.

Q: What was the feeling about, I mean, it looked like the Soviets were trying to neutralize Germany by introducing the SS-20s.

WESTON: Well, or Europe more broadly. I actually myself believe that is exactly what they were trying to do. They were deploying weapons which could hit Europe but not the United States. They were trying to put a wedge between the United States and its allies in Europe, trying to decrease the credibility of the American nuclear guarantee.

Q: Were you involved at your level in working to get the Germans to accept the Pershing missiles...

WESTON: Very much so.

Q: The cruise missile, in order to as a counter to the SS-20s was the idea of...

WESTON: Absolutely, this started before I went to the desk. I started to do that actually when I was in H doing the European account which is when we were trying to get the negotiations

going, the second track of the Dual Track decision. That either we eliminated all these weapons, the SS-20s or the U.S. would deploy or NATO would deploy these weapons. So, it actually started in H with all of the period I was in the German desk and then in '83 I went to Bonn as the deputy political counselor. I did a lot of things in Bonn. I headed what we called the Security Working Group. This was the actual working group with the German government diplomatically and militarily which did the planning for the actual deployments of both P2s and ground-launch cruise missiles in Germany. At the same time, I was doing political work, if you will, with members of the Bundestag (National Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany) trying to convince them of U.S. sincerity in trying to reach a negotiated solution to this problem. I told them that the only way we would reach a negotiated solution was by making clear we would carry through with the deployment which was very much opposed in Germany. Ultimately, the strategy was successful, of course, but I was involved in both the deployment part of it and the negotiations part. Not the negotiations directly but basically the diplomacy associated with convincing Germans that we were sincere in our wish for a diplomatic solution. From the time I was in H through all the time I was on the German desk and then in Bonn itself.

Q: Well, when did Kohl come in?

WESTON: Let's see, I'd have to look up the actual year that that happened. I would say it was when I was in Bonn so I want to say '84.

Q: But anyway, so Schmidt was there during the...

WESTON: Yeah, this was Schmidt most of the time, well not most of the time but when I was on the desk.

Q: On the German desk?

WESTON: Right, right.

Q: Where was Schmidt falling on this, he had been burned by Carter on the neutron...

WESTON: Neutron weapon.

Q: Bomb as it is so called, where Carter got him to commit himself and then Carter withdrew the support. I don't think Schmidt never forgot that.

WESTON: Helmut Schmidt was a very smart and principled man. I think he really did believe that the reason for these Russian deployments was to cast doubt if you will on the American nuclear guarantee which was what in fact kept Germany protected and kept West Berlin viable. Schmidt of course was supportive of the Dual Track decision because of this belief but faced a terrible time in his own party the SPD (Social Democratic Party) and a terrible time obviously with the emerging Greens although this was long before there was any thought of the SPD-Green coalitions, the current government there.

It was also at about this time in the '80s when I first met the current Chancellor of Germany. I

was on the desk when he was the head of the young socialists, the youth branch of the army, Schroeder, Gerhard Schroeder, became the minister president in Lower Saxony in Hanover, first SPD government there in a long time.

Q: How about looking at Germany, were you studying or looking at a generational change because it seems like the Germans more than almost any other country the university always turns out sort of radicals who agitate and then they sort of disappear after a while.

WESTON: I don't know but remember I came from a really radical university in the United States and went to school in a place in Paris where the universities could be pretty radical as well, so I'm not sure I'd go along with your characterization that Germans were...

Q: How did we find, I mean, were we looking at the next generation?

WESTON: This was the time when there was a generational change among the German political elite if you will and among German voters from the defeated post war, almost subservient, generation – subservient to a larger whole, to a new generation which did not believe it was responsible for the Third Reich, or the war, or the Holocaust or anything else and hence logically and I believe rightly in terms of long term German and U.S. interest was a generation which was much more assertive as to specifically German interest. I think that was the generational change, not so much young and old or left/right or anything else but from the post war generation political elites and voters to a post war occupation kind of mentality.

Q: Well this brings up a theme of, I kind of noticed I mean, I was born in 1928 and I served after World War II in Germany for a while. I don't think we were occupying at that point but anyway, but...

WESTON: Well, we had continuing rights and responsibilities for Germany as a whole which is another word for occupation and we technically continued to occupy Berlin.

Q: Yes, but I mean so many men of my generation served in Germany in the military. I mean, we had German wives, and then all of a sudden, not all of a sudden, but as we became a more professional army and we were no longer putting the troops in such mass numbers and all for the normal American Germany sort of fell off the map. If you were going to Europe you went to France, Italy Spain or Britain and you sure didn't go to Germany. The German language is not very popular in schools anymore.

WESTON: If you look at the statistics we continued to have an exceptionally large turnover of American troops in Germany who continued to marry German wives and everything else and a lot of them continued to be there. If you look at the statistics whether of tourism, exchange students, or whatever they continue to remain very high for Germany compared to France or any other European country, so, I'm not sure that I see Germany falling off the map. I'm not sure that German was ever that popular a language to study in the United States after World War I let alone World War II. When I grew up it was certainly not offered in high schools or anything like that. I think what may have happened instead was there was so much attention focused on the East-West relationship be they issues of security deterrent or be they issues of détente, and they

were both issues all of the time, there were always those two prongs in the East-West relationship more broadly Germany inevitably was a complicating factor. Germany remained divided even though you had Ost Politik and all kinds of things going on. You still had almost at war with one another the traditional need to defend Germany and Berlin as a key element of the overall East-West relationship and between the United States and the Soviet Union, containment, if you will, with the other strain of we've got to solve East-West problems through arms control, through increasing contacts, CSCE (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe) type mechanisms and so on and so forth. Germany was always a complicating factor.

Q: Well now...

WESTON: Not because of German politics in particular but because of history and Germany being divided and Berlin still being occupied and yeah, the key thing "Deutschland liegt wo es liegt" (Germany is where it is).

Q: While you were on the German desk how stood Berlin? You know most people looking at foreign affairs felt that World War III is going to start and probably Berlin was where it could easily begin. Had the Berlin issue more or less been solved by the time you got there?

WESTON: Well, remember by the time I was there you did have the Quadripartite Agreement which had certainly regularized the situation with Berlin in terms of access to Berlin. It was a period where we were doing a lot better in the joint management of Berlin with the Soviet Union. That being said, Berlin as potential trigger to something far greater and worse remained. I can remember at least two specific incidents when I was on the desk. One was a Soviet tank officer who, it turned out, had a nervous breakdown, whatever it was, but drove a tank through Checkpoint Charlie into West Berlin, a tank, a Soviet tank. You see a Soviet tank coming across Checkpoint Charlie and a Quadripartite Agreement notwithstanding this is the sort of thing which could easily trigger, you've got all kinds of planning on how you deal with someone crossing especially with a tank. It could have easily led to a very violent confrontation in Berlin itself. In that particular instance cooler heads prevailed, the tank stopped not very far from it and the guy got out and it became clear that this was a very disoriented individual. This was not the first tank of many crossing in Berlin into the American sector, in fact. But, back in Washington when the first thing came in that this had happened, I mean the immediate reaction was "is this the start of something else".

Q: The hackles went up.

WESTON: Yes, is this the start of World War III. I mean that is where Berlin still was. Another time we had an incident of what turned out to be a bad misunderstanding but it was in the air corridor. It was a private corporate jet leaving Berlin. Something went wrong and the Soviet controller, you know we did joint control air space under the Quadripartite Agreement, and he notified some Soviet fighters which went up demanding that the plane land in the GDR. Decisions had to be taken what to advise the pilot to do. Once again is this the start of pressuring tactics in violation of the Quadripartite Agreement to restrict air access to Berlin in this particular case but the immediate reaction, until you got the facts, you know, okay, there may have been a screw up in passing the information about the flight to the Soviet controller so that he could

notify that this was an authorized flight. The immediate reaction was “is this a tactic to restrict aviation”. Both indicate that until very late in the game Berlin, despite the Quadripartite Agreement, was still always seen as a potential trigger.

Q: Well, did you find there was sort of a hard core of Berlin experts, the Berlin Group or something?

WESTON: Absolutely, and I am one of them.

Q: I've talked to people over the years and they were particularly nervous when the Kennedy Administration came in because they were talking about maybe we can make deals or something like that. They felt that any give in Berlin would only weaken our position.

WESTON: There are a group of such experts, I am one of them. The more you got immersed in Berlinery and the actual occupation of Berlin, in which I got immersed in more ways than you'll imagine, which I'm sure we will get into when we get into Bonn. An almost theological approach to anything dealing with Berlin. It became for those of us really immersed in Berlinery we just had a belief in all of these procedures and policies which grew up around Berlin, it was almost sacred.

Q: The thing that comes across is tailgates of trucks, how far you would go to tailgate or something like that. I mean the whole feeling was any give...

WESTON: I passed it on to my kids. I can remember going up to Berlin with my family. By then we had two kids and my youngest daughter was perhaps two or three years old. We were going over to the Pergamon, which is the large art museum which has the collection of antiquities in East Berlin. So I, of course, had a diplomatic passport, a member of the occupying force. By law with all my family, so we had complete access to the whole city. We were going through Checkpoint Charlie and so I was telling my kids how you do this is you hold your passport up to the window so that the VOPO (Volks Politzei) (People's Police) can see your picture but that's all you do, you don't smile at them you don't do anything, you show it and then you put it away and then we proceed. So, even my little kid, three years old was subjected to this kind of Berlinery type of thinking and it lasts, it becomes part of you. We were in the senior seminar, this was '89. The wall had come down so obviously the reason for Berlinery was long past. There were military officers in the senior seminar. We got to Berlin, this was '89 still, so unification had not taken place, Berlin was technically still occupied and I can remember thinking I've got to insist that the military officers in the senior seminar, when we went to East Berlin, did not wear their uniforms. You know, it being a big issue, it was that Berlinery from the past that was a real issue.

Q: Well, two things I would like to talk about before we move to Bonn which we will do next time.

WESTON: Yes.

Q: One, when the Reagan administration came in did you find a change politically in the United

States from Carter. German-wise did you see a change or was there a concern before it was happening?

WESTON: Remember that there were some personality problems associated with the Carter Administration and Germany, some of which we have talked about. When the Reagan Administration came in I think there were some other problems which came about. It was quite clear that the kind of political philosophies under girding the Reagan Administration were very different than the prevailing political philosophies in not only Germany but most of Europe. By political philosophies I mean related to domestic affairs as much as foreign affairs. They were very much different and thought to be out of step with at least moderate European political thinking. There were also at least perceived differences on what was then the key question of the day which was East-West relations. The Reagan administration being perceived as taking a much harsher line or being much more on the confrontational side of the spectrum rather than the Ost Politik détente side of the spectrum in dealing with the Soviet Union, that was the perception certainly.

Q: What about central Europe. Where you get Central Europe you get the whole, you moved up one notch in your last year.

WESTON: To become deputy director.

Q: And so you have...

WESTON: The German desk was still most of central Europe. That was 90 percent of the work obviously but technically then I was in the staff line for Austria and Switzerland with two other German speaking countries in Europe as well as the Berlin desk which was technically separate from the Federal Republic desk, which is what I had headed as was the GDR desk. So, in essence I was doing Federal Republic affairs still, which was 90 percent of it, but Austria and Switzerland, and GDR Berlin much more as well.

Q: Did you have any problems with; let me look in your portfolio, the American ambassadors in Switzerland and Austria?

WESTON: Yes, indeed.

Q: These are traditionally political appointees... and they all seem to be a problem.

WESTON: And they were.

Q: And they all seem to be a problem.

WESTON: And they were.

Q: What sort of issues did you have?

WESTON: The ambassador in Switzerland was a woman named Faith Whittlesey who came out

of Pennsylvanian republican politics but the problems were more, I mean I have been around European affairs a lot and around a lot of political ambassadors obviously, some of whom were good. For instance when I was in Bonn the political ambassador was a fellow named Arthur Burns, who was absolutely terrific. One of the best ambassadors we have ever had to Germany but some of these others like this Faith Whittlesey was not necessarily interested in diplomacy with Switzerland. She was interested in other things. There were a great number of what I would call management problems related to her and the necessity she felt for having some associates put into positions which were traditionally foreign service positions in Switzerland, consul general in Zurich, the DCM. She wanted political appointees in those positions and there were some complicating social factors also involved there, so it was a very difficult management time.

In Austria the ambassador became while I was the deputy director, Helene von Damm who had been Ronald Reagan's, the President's, secretary for many years and was a woman who had come from Austria as a refugee sometime before and was returning as the American ambassador. Once again there were all kinds of issues of a management nature. She, well, of her personal nature I guess, rather than management, but they become management problems in the relationship because she was with her husband there but she took up with the head of the Sacher Hotel and eventually married him and then he killed himself. Anyway, it was a very messy period with both Austria and Switzerland, but these are not unusual stories if you had asked me about Denmark or Norway I could come up with some as well.

Q: How did you find, I would think this would be the sort of thing you would sit down with the director general of the foreign service or something and say "what the hell are we going to do about this?"

WESTON: I mean it wasn't me sitting down with the director general but basically you know it was the assistant secretary or deputy assistant secretary.

Q: Then it would be they who would sit down and talk.

WESTON: Yes, absolutely, especially when you were dealing with someone like the ambassador in Austria who was very close to the president. The one I was talking about in Switzerland was a bit different. This was basically a fundraiser type appointment. It moved up pretty rapidly and it basically became an issue which was irresolvable in terms of the ambassadors involved. It became a question of how do you protect the post, and how do you carry out your business with these countries. From the point of view of the desk, there is the deputy director; the carrying out the business of the countries was pretty easy. You basically did it through their embassies here where they had professional diplomats so that was fine. The protection of the post and the people at the post was much more difficult issue, especially DCMs (Deputy Chief of Missions), heads of sections, things like that.

Q: Did you feel, I mean, could you work within the personnel field? The real problem of course is that if in some ways the DCMs refusal of a fraction or something like that and an ambassador whom we consider to be both incompetent and vindictive or something or some other personality quirk, is there a way of protecting your people by putting something into the efficiency report or saying don't pay any attention to this?

WESTON: In my experience, and I'm drawing from a whole 35 years in the foreign service, it is very difficult to do. These sorts of ambassadorial, in particular ambassadorial differences with political ambassadors when they go wrong and they frequently do in particular if you have a responsible DCM who is really looking after the post and American interests. Frequently it is very hard to avoid career damage to those people, very difficult. There are some mechanism where you can try to do it and they are related not so much to inserting something in the personnel file as to trying to, frequently these folks get curtailed or are curtailed but the most you can do for them is to make sure they get a good ongoing assignment. I think it is the most effective thing that you can do. But, in my experience it has caused a great deal of damage to the foreign service and to a lot of very good individuals over the years.

Q: Okay, we will pick this up the next time and we will be talking about when you went to Bonn in what...

WESTON: '83.

Q: We will pick this up in 1983 when you are off to Bonn.

WESTON: Okay.

Q: Great.

ISABEL CUMMING
Secretary to Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Bonn (1980-1984)

Isabel Cumming was raised in Boston, Massachusetts. She joined USIS in 1957 and served in Iran, Korea, Sweden, Poland, Italy, Japan, Yugoslavia, Germany, and Washington, DC. Ms. Cumming was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1990.

CUMMING: I think after Ambassador Arthur Burns looked his staff over, he decided that Tom Tuch was just about one of his number one men and so from then on Tom worked very closely with the Ambassador.

If he didn't write all his speeches, he certainly wrote three-fourths of them and many, many times he would have another officer write a speech if it was on economics or a subject that was not Tom's bailiwick per se. But Tom always got it to look it over. We worked very, very closely with the Ambassador's office.

His close relationship rubbed off on the rest of the USIA staff. The information section our press attaché -- Walter Kohl and Harry Radday -- was probably a lot busier than what he cared to be and, of course, we -- our office -- our library would do a lot of research work for the

Ambassador-- he traveled a great deal, but he was into that country like you couldn't believe. He knew just everything about that country.

Our press relationships were absolutely marvelous. Well, of course, Tom is German-born (and Walter Kohl and Harry Radday speak German). He worked in Germany and he knew so many people in Germany and his language was, of course -- that was his number one language. Also, our press attaché's German was quite good and -- yes, we were very close with the press and the press was -- relied on us a great deal. Of course, we got into Worldnet program while I was there. That is where it started as far as I am concerned and we did a lot with that.

The German stations used Worldnet because we got involved in that quite heavily. Wick, of course, came out a number of times to visit us --he was with his four security officers and his bullet proof vest -- maybe he had a bullet-proof raincoat too, but he for sure, when he was wearing a suit you could tell he was wearing something underneath it.

The German operation was a very active operation of course. We had a big, big student program there. We had a very active cultural office and our information office. We had a beautiful library, but it was moved from the second floor up to the floor that we were on -- up to the fourth floor, and how many people came into the Embassy to use our library. I am sure not very many.

But in those days, toward -- we were so security conscious and by that time -- we were so security conscious, you couldn't get into the Embassy.

I remember coming to that Embassy as a visitor and they wouldn't let me in. The Marines just slammed that sliding door in my face. By that time security got to be a real problem, so I don't think our library was the most accessible thing except for probably research and anything that we would get it in writing or we could do for them.

We had an office in Stuttgart , in Berlin and several other places. We had a big office in Berlin because we had our PAO conference up there. And Frankfurt, and there was another one down in Bavaria -- Munich. And Hamburg -- we had a big office in Hamburg. So we had quite a few and they were all very active branches.

We had Americans in all of the Amerika Houser. It wasn't like in Italy where we didn't have Americans in all our places. We had Americans in every single one of them and very, very active posts. Almost small mini-head offices.

RALPH H. RUEDY
Branch of Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Dusseldorf (1980-1984)

Ralph Ruedy was born and raised in Iowa. Between receiving his bachelor's degree from Iowa State University and his master's from Duke University, he spent five years serving in the U.S. Navy in Vietnam. Mr. Ruedy joined USIA in

1974. His overseas posts include East Berlin, Dusseldorf, Bonn, and Moscow. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

RUEDY: I went from Berlin in 1980, East Berlin you know we advertised as a hardship post and it really was a hardship post, it was tough in many ways. From there I went to the best assignment that I had in my Foreign Service career because they sent me to Dusseldorf as branch public affairs officer and that was my onward assignment after leaving East Berlin.

Q: OK. Today is the 28th of April of 2005. You were in Dusseldorf in 1980 until when?

RUEDY: From 1980 to 1984, for four years and it was a terrific assignment and an interesting four years in the Federal Republic.

Q: What were our interests there and could you mention who the consul general was then in Dusseldorf and what you were doing.

RUEDY: Yeah, the consul general when I first got there was Tom Turqman, I believe, and then later on David Edminster. Terrific people to work with and as branch public affairs officer I had a small staff. I had four Germans who worked for me, excellent people, really good people; a couple of them had master's degrees from American universities and all that kind of thing. My boss was down at the embassy in Bonn comfortably far away and I was responsible for public diplomacy, public affairs activities in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, which is the most populous area of Germany, the big Rhine-Ruhr complex. Dusseldorf, the capital, but also I spent a good deal of time in places like Essen, in Dortmund and Muenster and Krefeld and throughout that big, big region, so it was an interesting beat to cover at the time.

Q: In 1980 how stood relations with West Germany?

RUEDY: It was an interesting period, the four years that I spent there because I arrived in Dusseldorf not long after, well let's see, the 1980 election. Reagan was elected President. I think there was a great cultural gap between the Reagan appeal to the American public and the concerns that Europeans, certainly Germans, had about Reagan and we were entering a very difficult period. The Soviets had invaded Afghanistan, there was all kinds of stirrings and stuff like that beginning in Poland and Eastern Europe. The big front burner issue was the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) "Double Beschluss," the Dual-Track Decision which had been made under the government of Helmut Schmidt and SPD (Social Democratic Party) government. The Germans, in particular the Europeans in general, during an earlier era had been very concerned about the American commitment to western Europe and to NATO. They were especially concerned of the stationing of Soviet SS20 missiles which were capable of hitting western Europe but not capable of hitting the United States. So there was all of this and it sounds terribly arcane now and it was but a good deal of discussion about decoupling security interests of the United States and those of the western European NATO allies. As a result a decision had been made to answer the Soviet stationing of the SS20s with stationing of medium range ballistic missiles by the United States...

Q: The Pershing.

RUEDY: ...in Europe. The Pershing, exactly. There were actually two as I recall, there were cruise missiles which were going to be stationed in Italy, I believe, and in Germany and perhaps in another country as well.

Q: The Netherlands I think got into it.

RUEDY: Yes, you are right. These were the cruise missiles but the things that were really of concern to people were the Pershing IIs and the P2s were going to go only into Germany so it put Germany square in the center of that whole discussion. The P2s that were talked about were capable of hitting the Soviet Union within five minutes or ten minutes of liftoff from bases in Germany and there was great, great, great opposition suddenly to the stationing of the Pershing missiles in Germany. The peace movement was well underway and it was a rather turbulent period in terms of German-American relations.

Not long after I got there the SPD was going through a great deal of sorting out. I don't remember exactly when this occurred but it seems to me that it was in the spring or summer perhaps of 1981, the Schmidt government collapsed essentially because the left wing of the SPD was no longer supported and of course this is where it gets a little complicated. The FDP (Free Democratic Party) coalition collapsed. Governments were built during that period of time in post-war Germany, not so much by election victories on the part of the SPD or on the part of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union), it was more a matter of the FDP switching coalition partners and suddenly because of all of the turbulence within the SPD Schmidt stepped down and that whole era, the Schmidt-Brandt era was gone. A CDU government took over, a coalition government under Helmut Kohl. So the whole political complexion in Germany changed quite dramatically and then as I say there was a great deal of turbulence in connection with implementation of the dual-track decision, that's the decision to go ahead to station or not to station P2 missiles in Germany.

Q: Well now this was sort of in many ways the last ploy of the Soviet Union, this idea of putting the SS20s was the idea that this might split Germany essentially or Europe off from the United States.

RUEDY: Yes it was. That was definitely true and we saw it played out. For me it was a particularly interesting vantage point. I was an entrenched guy, branch public affairs officer in Dusseldorf so I was not a ranking person in the corridors of Bonn. But North Rhine-Westphalia was really the center of SPD power and moderate SPD power. The state accounted for about a third, more than a third, of the Federal Republic's total population and this was the mainstay of the SPD in Germany. This was labor union territory. This was the Ruhr, this was Essen, and Dortmund and the big, big newspapers, moderate newspapers, but left leaning left of center newspapers in the heartland of SPD territory. So it was interesting to get to know local political officials and newspaper editors and others and to get a sense of how they really came down on all of these issues. I was astonished that as a low ranking or you know fairly new officer in the consulate general in Dusseldorf I would have access to big deal newspaper editors. The Westfälische Allgemeine Zeitung (Westphalia Peoples Newspaper) is the largest circulation by far in Germany and I knew the editor personally and he came to my house. This had nothing to do

with me personally. It had to do with their concern about the connection with the United States and the alliance and all that kind of stuff, so it was interesting to see all of that play out.

Q: I mean you had a couple of things going for you but a couple of balls in play. One was Reagan, obviously the Germans knew him as a cowboys movie star...

RUEDY: Exactly.

Q: Which is always scary but you know and coming from the pretty far right of the American political spectrum and then on top of that you have the introduction of nuclear weapons which might attract unwanted attention from the Soviets nuclear weapons. How did you play with this?

RUEDY: The Reagan business obviously scared the Germans to death. This was somebody outside of their political framework and they had a hard time figuring out Reagan and Reagan's appeal to the American public. I remember one of the very first programs that I did in Dusseldorf after arriving there as BPAO (Branch Public Affairs Officer). It was not long after the election, it must have been in late November and I had Richard Scammon, who was a well known American public opinion pollster, at my house in Dusseldorf. I invited some of the big deal editors and they came. Scam and I remember talking to them about how Reagan fit into the American political culture and how during the election the democrats had tried to pull the bad guy mask, the ogre mask down on Reagan and it just didn't fit because here you had this very amiable character. I think it really helped put the Reagan presidency into a political context for these very sharp and smart and shrewd and quite senior German analysts. I remember a couple of them afterwards told me, "Oh yes, this is good, this was something that was informative for me." It was that kind of thing of trying to bring the realities of American political culture to the Germans and to some extent vice-versa as well and also to keep the focus on the whole reason for the "double beschluss", for the dual-track decision. Then I think in an overarching way the importance of solidarity in the alliance and the importance of shared values between the Germans, the western Europeans and the United States and how it was important to keep that connection.

Fairly soon after I had got to Dusseldorf some people from Krefeld called the consul general and asked to get together for lunch because they had this wonderful idea. It was really something that came to dominate the four years that I spent in Dusseldorf and it was a wonderful event. They had the idea of making Krefeld the focal point for a major celebration. This was local boosterism, they were interested in raising the profile of Krefeld and putting Krefeld on the map. To make Krefeld a center of attention for a 300th anniversary of German emigration to the United States. The first Germans had emigrated from Krefeld to William Penn's Pennsylvania in 1683. The first Germans I think set sail from Krefeld going down the Rhine to what is Antwerp or whatever, or Rotterdam and then across the Atlantic at the invitation of William Penn to settle in Pennsylvania -- Germantown which is now part of Philadelphia. Those were the first Pennsylvania Dutch, the first Pennsylvania Germans and as we discovered became the very first of the ethnic group of the German emigrants to the United States which were the largest ethnic component to go to the United States and emigration continued obviously lots and lots in the 19th century after 1848 and all of that stuff.

Q: You had a rather famous consul there too in Krefeld, Bret Harte.

RUEDY: Yes, yes, Bret Harte was the consul in Krefeld when it was part of Prussia because Krefeld after the Napoleonic wars had become part of Prussia and it was a textile center and I wound up spending lots and lots of time in Krefeld.

Q: For some reason I did some work on Bret Harte and I think buttons were a big deal.

RUEDY: Yes, he has a couple of good short stories. Krefeld was the center of the textile industry and he's got a couple of short stories, which draw on his experience in Krefeld, which was not all together positive. He didn't like Prussian recommendations all that much. Edinburgh, I think.

Q: Edinburgh or Glasgow, one or the other.

RUEDY: He was a good deal happier in Scotland but the period in Krefeld was interesting and some of the buildings that were described in his short stories are recognizable buildings in Krefeld. Anyway, I got to spend lots of time in Krefeld over the next number of years. There was lots and lots of stuff that took place in connection with the tri-centennial of German emigration to the United States. The climax came at a big deal "festock" they called it in German in Krefeld in I believe it was in June of 1983. It all got to be a big deal. Helmut Kohl was there and then Vice President George Bush was there to represent the United States. There was much speech making and also lots and lots of demonstrators and demonstrations and things got quite bouncy and violence. The motorcade was stoned and it was a big headline in the Washington Post. This all occurred on a Sunday in Germany and, of course, it was in time to make the Sunday newspapers in the United States so it became quite a bouncy, bouncy event.

The entire tri-centennial thing I think got to be a big deal because of the state of German-American relations at the time and American concern about the peace movement and about how things were developing in Germany and about opposition to the dual-track decision. It was that whole constellation of things that got Helmut Kohl to Krefeld and that got George Bush to Krefeld and made this whole thing into such a big, big deal. That thing, I believe it was June of 1983, was the culminating event but during the lead up there was lots and lots of activity. I was involved very much in that. I gave a couple of speeches before the city chambers of commerce and the trade groups and we really worked hard to bring this to the attention of the people in Bonn to get it on to the embassy scope as an event that ought to be supported and it kind of brewed right along. It got to be a major event.

Q: How did various elements in the United States respond to this? I'm thinking of towns and states and the State Department?

RUEDY: The State Department had a great deal of interest. There was some interest on the part of folks in Philadelphia, and so we tried very much to engage the United States side as well. Of course, here in the U.S. it's a much bigger country with lots of stuff going on. I think in Germany there was not disappointment, I think that is putting it too strongly but you know a feeling that this is a big deal here in Germany why isn't it a big deal in the United States. But, there was a fair amount of publicity in the United States in connection with the tri-centennial. The State Department and the German embassy certainly made an effort to make this into a big deal. Not

far from the Washington Monument now right along Constitution Avenue (between 15th and 17th Streets) is a lovely little green area and if you look carefully you will see little signs that say the German-American Friendship Garden 1683-1983 celebrating 300 years of German emigration to the United States.

So there were some articles, there were some TV programs, it didn't get lost but it wasn't nearly as big a deal in the United States as it was in Germany. I think in Germany people were very much aware that this was going on, that we had 300 years of German emigration to the United States. The German emigrants constituted the largest, single ethnic group of European migrants, from any country to the U.S. and German contributions to America and blah, blah, blah, it went on and on.

I did a couple of articles for papers, and for magazines and gave a couple of speeches, which I think were pretty good actually. I did quite a bit of research because it was a topic that interested me so I'm obviously a part of that. There was a personal connection as well, very much a personal connection since my own ethnic background is German-American. But the first German families that departed from Krefeld were actually kicked out, of course, and they weren't Krefelders. Krefeld is very Catholic, it's the Catholic Rhineland so Krefeld is very Catholic but these families were actually from further up stream from the Rhine and they were actually German Anabaptists, Mennonites. They had a tough time of it. There was obviously a religious affinity, a theological affinity with these people and with the Quakers and William Penn who's really all part of the same religious movement.

Q: Sort of [inaudible]

RUEDY: Exactly, that's exactly right. So these people were kicked out of the area where they were in in the south, wound up in Krefeld and from Krefeld moved on then down the Rhine to the ports and at William Penn's invitation over to Pennsylvania. They became the first Pennsylvania Dutch, and Amish and Mennonites and what have you. Of course, ultimately the group that I grew up in in the Amana colonies in Iowa were part of the same general religious movement.

Q: You mentioned the stoning of the Vice President but was this effort in '83 to cement ties and all, was that seen as a target by left wing wings and others or was it happening on its own?

RUEDY: I think it was seen as a target to some extent. I mean there were lots of demonstrations going on, the peace movement. I remember outside of our house in Dusseldorf was a sort of a traffic circle and that led on into the Dusseldorf fair grounds. Not because my house was there, but because of the traffic circle and the traffic flow I remember we had big, big groups of demonstrators who gathered at that traffic circle and then marched on down to downtown Dusseldorf. There was not a problem in Dusseldorf but in some areas some of these demonstrations became quite violent and there was lots of concern about the peace movement and the peace movement getting out of hand. There were certainly folks who were encouraging that. I think more radical elements and I think a lot of Germans were deeply, deeply concerned. They felt the Pershing IIs go in and we have war. There was a great deal of fear about what would happen as a result of the Pershing IIs. Then, of course, when you had statements from the

United States like 'there are more important things than peace' or whatever and some of these statements were made offhand and in the context of the speech or in the context of the American political debate or in the context of what Reagan was trying to do, they perhaps made sense. But, when they were reported in "Der Spiegel" (The Mirror newspaper) or "Stern" or some of the more sensationalist German newspapers they just drove people nuts. People thought the Americans are going to cause this war and we here in Germany are going to be the ones who are going to get blown up. There were people that really felt that way. They were convinced that the P2s go in and the balloon goes up.

Q: You were dealing with I imagine by the time you got there in the early '80s there must have had some difficult cadre with German leaders and with just plain Germans who had been to the United States and all. Was that a good thing or not?

RUEDY: It was a very, very good thing. I have heard analysis of the public diplomacy and how important it was to the implementation of the Dual Track decision, the "Double Beschluss." There was a great deal of discussion of the merits of countering the Soviet stationing of the SS20s with the Pershing IIs and how eventually people became convinced of this because the arguments were so overwhelming and so convincing and I think basically that wasn't it at all. I think what brought the German public around, and I think there remained lots of skepticism on the side of the German public at large not just the radicals but also the broad center of the German public, was a gradual conviction that the relationship with the United States and the solidarity of the NATO alliance was something terribly, terribly, important. That needed to be maintained and although they didn't necessarily like or agree with the stationing of Pershing 20s this now was on track and somehow it had to move forward and be carried out. They couldn't very well draw back from that or change that because the risk of that would have been greater than the risk of implementation. I think there we really drew upon the fact that there were so many Germans with first hand experience in the United States who knew us as a society who felt a solidarity with us, who felt deep in their bones I think a conviction that the German-American relationship was fundamentally important to the security of Germany that they weren't going to let something like the "Double Beschluss" get in the way.

I experienced that in talking to some of these chief editors. These were sort of New York Times type guys. They had newspapers with, forget the circulation, but hundreds of thousands and they were the newspapers that SPD politicians in Germany in Bonn would turn to in the morning because that is where their constituency was. The "Neue Rhine Zeitung" (The New Rhine Newspaper) and the "Westfälische Allgemeine Zeitung" (The Westfälische Newspaper) and some of these other big Rhine-Ruhr papers. Talking to them they would tell you, "Man that year at Stanford as a young man and it changed my life. The relationship with the United States. I know America as a country and all that stuff." So I think during this period we were very much benefiting from lots and lots of work that had gone on for a generation.

I think in that sense the whole notion of the 1983 celebration of German emigration to the United States was right on as well. I think it put the emphasis on the long term, the relationship, the cultural relationship, everything else between Germany and the United States. So as I say it got away from the issues of the moment no matter how important they were to the overarching issues that were permanent in the relationship and I think from that standpoint it was a good, good

thing.

Q: Did you have, did you play any role or is this how it came about during exchanges with the American universities?

RUEDY: Yeah, I played some role in that. The PAO (Public Affairs Officer) who was in Germany at the time was a guy who I admire tremendously; he was really great Tom Tuch. This was all kind of a piece. I mean it fit right in to the tri-centennial and Tom was my big, big boss in Germany so first of all to convince him and the other people in the embassy that this event in Krefeld was something that deserved people's attention. He really picked up on this and you know the whole successor generation became a buzzword for us and he inaugurated I think you know he really worked on the then ambassador to Germany.

Q: Who was that?

RUEDY: Arthur Burns and Burns was a huge figure. I didn't know him personally but what a personality, what an individual. They made a big effort to increase youth exchange. The congress bundestag youth exchange was inaugurated, was launched bringing an exchange in high school students. There was much emphasis on increased numbers of international visitors and especially involved in young people, academics and young journalists and things like the IV (international visitors) program. We were working on that very, very hard. At the macro level at the embassy in Bonn people like Tom Tuch were really behind it and pushing it. It all kind of tied in with the whole tri-centennial effort, etc., etc. so it was an interesting time.

Q: Were you able to reach places like New Braunfels? There are a lot of German communities all over the place.

RUEDY: You know we had a guy from New Braunfels, a professor who came over a number of times and got him to give lectures and interviews. There were all kinds of strange tie-ins because he found a German musical production in sort of the tradition of the German cabaret at the time that had been staged in Texas by German emigrants. So, there were lots and lots of connections and then Chicago and little towns across the Midwest and so on, it got to be a big deal, it was gratifying. It would have been my last New Years in Krefeld, in Germany. In every German city they do a Neue Yaaren Fund (a New Years reception). This is a very solemn and important occasion where all of the city fathers gather together and the mayor gives a nice speech and they give awards and stuff like that. In New Year's 1984 I got the Stadtziegal of the city of Krefeld, the city seal, and a nice speech. Of course it was not for me, it really wasn't for me personally. This is not false modesty; it's the truth. It was this idea that they had felt the support of the United States and the support of the embassy and the support of everybody, the support of the consulate early on in carrying through this event which turned out to be I think a tremendous success. It was a nice event and then it turned out to be potentially so difficult. I think it woke up people to the concern that maybe this whole business is getting out of hand. Maybe we really ought to step back from the whole hysteria of the moment and look at the eternal, look at the basics. We don't need headlines in the American press about how the American vice president is being stoned in the German city. We don't need stuff about the violence of the peace movements. There seemed to be maybe a stepping back from the brink that occurred sometime

that spring. Maybe some of the publicity around the Krefeld event that was only part of it but it had something to do with that. I had the impression that gradually the air was being let out of the balloon and people were coming back down to earth and here we are and what do we do and maybe we could have done it differently and decided differently two years ago but here we are in July of 1983 and what do we do next. Of course the dual track decision was carried out and you had the proposal for the zero solution and eventually negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union and all kinds of stuff, so it worked out. But, it was a bouncy period. I think, 1981, 1982 it was a bouncy period for German-American relations.

Q: Was the Green Movement going or how did it translate into your area?

RUEDY: Yeah, very much so. The Greens were the left wing fringe and I think the SPD was terribly concerned about the Greens, and it was true, the Greens taking votes away from the SPD and Petra Kelly was around. Petra Kelly came to the event in Krefeld, as did all of the other German political dignitaries of both parties. The Greens were behind a lot of the peace movement stuff and the left wing of the SPD sort of coalesced. There was a lot of concern about the Green Party, whether they would become a permanent fixture on the political landscape in Germany, what the raise of the Green Party would do to what had been an arrangement between the CDU, the SPD and the FDP and whether they would surpass the five percent and get into the German Bundestag and become a future coalition partner. Of course, all of that eventually transpired but no, that was all going on at that time.

Q: What about sort of the Baader-Meinhof type thing? Were they going on this terrorist type thing or had that pretty well petered out?

RUEDY: That had pretty well petered out. There was still some of that going on I think, but I don't recall it having the immediacy that it had in the previous period.

Q: What about was there a significant communist party in there?

RUEDY: No, not really. There was a good deal of concern I think about communist influence on the political left in Germany but I never felt that communism at...SPD union types and they were more center SPD and I think were concerned as well about what was happening to the left wing of the SPD. These were the SPD centrists and this was the Schmidt SPD and they were concerned about the left wing of the SPD kind of fracturing off and moving toward the Greens and dropping the SPD by a few percentage points. Some of those people we would talk and they would say, "Yeah. I mean these guys from the south the SPD leaders they can posture because they don't have to win elections they know they never will. They don't have to govern because they know they never will, so they can make all kinds of statements but we here are out to win elections and we need to appeal to the center and we need to appeal to voters and we are not into posturing, we are into governing." So it was a very different SPD perspective from the ones that you got in other regions of Germany.

Q: I suspect particularly where they were that they were probably, please correct me if I am wrong, less interest in the GDR; I mean unification or anything else. You know they didn't even have a lot of sympathy with them or not.

RUEDY: No, not a hell of a lot of sympathy for the GDR certainly. People were certainly interested in the GDR. They were very interested in my experience in the GDR because here I had lived in East Berlin for three years. So people were very, very interested in talking to me and hearing from me about that because there was practically no contact between the GDR and the West Germans.

I remember a book that appeared at the time, "Die Andere Planet" (The Other Planet), and this was the GDR because people simply didn't know anything about it. People were very interested, it was the other Germany but it was all very distant and very abstract.

Q: Were you called upon to make speeches about your experiences?

RUEDY: Yes, I did. One of the things that I was supposed to be doing as a BPO was to go around and meet with groups of USOs, the young socialists and the Greens and the young CDU types. Some of these experiences were very interesting and I always was courteously received. People asked tough questions but people were interested as only Germans are and getting into a "gespracht" (spoken), in always wanting to talk, discuss and I was amazed instead of disappearing for the weekends like Americans do the Germans would go to political conclaves. So I would be invited to come up to Muenster to speak at this political conclave on when, Sunday afternoon. This happened a lot and I enjoyed it. It was fun and interesting to get to know people and to sort of get a sense of where they were coming from or what their concerns were.

But the point that you made earlier about sympathy for communists no, not at all. I didn't get any sense of that. I think the concern was the equidistant that they saw the Soviet Union as an adversary on one side but they saw the United States on the other side and in the super power rivalry German interests getting lost and Germans themselves being put in danger. There was one unforgettable Spiegel cover that I remember seeing; I think I saved it as a matter of fact which showed the very somber looking German citizen with one eye blinded by the hammer and cycle and the other eye blinded by the red, white and blue and putting Germans very much in the middle. Germans were in the cross hairs and the super power rivalry between the Soviet Union and this dangerously radical new Reagan administration being played out over the interests of the Germans.

Q: Did you sense...at one time in Germany people like myself, I served as an enlisted man in the armed forces in Germany and so many people, I mean Foreign Service, I also served in Frankfurt in Germany. One time we had a third of the Foreign Service in Germany and so many Americans had relatives who were in the armed forces going to Germany so it was very much a focal point. The normal American if he is going to go to Europe, Germany is about fifth or sixth on the list, I mean its the UK, France, Italy and Spain. Was there a sense of the American public wasn't paying that much attention to Germany?

RUEDY: I think Europeans in general, maybe Germans in particular, are always concerned that Americans don't know enough about Europe and don't know enough about Germany. That was the question that I ran into a lot and there you would say, "Well, the United States is a big, huge country and we are very focused on events within the United States and no we don't know as

much about Europe as we should. We don't know enough about Germany as we ought to but an American in the United States will read a lot less, we'll hear a lot less about Germany than a German in Germany will read about and hear about the United States." I remember a good anecdote I'm fond of quoting this. A good friend of mine was press attaché at the American embassy in Bonn, a good, good guy. He was in Bonn during the period that I was up in Dusseldorf and he was a solid citizen always somebody good to go to for advice about how things really were. He said, "You know I'm press attaché here at the American embassy in Bonn and I imagine my colleague, my counterpart the Germany press attaché in Washington reading through his New York Times and Washington Post and seeing absolutely nothing about Germany and the ambassador going after him and saying, "Here you are press attaché and we've got nothing from Germany, we've got no news about Germany at all, what's wrong, what aren't you doing your job. Get out there and get busy." Then he said, "Here I am at the American embassy in Bonn and I read my "Frankfurter Allgemeine" (major Frankfurt newspaper) and I read my "Westfälische Allgemeine Zeitung" (major Westfalia newspaper) and I don't see anything about the United States on page one and I wipe my brow and I think, 'thank God I've made it through another day.'"

But that was pretty much the story.

Q: Well did you get any feel, you had mentioned a term "the successor generation", did you get any feel that Germany was in a real transition stage. In other words the people from the Hitler time, I mean this is old news pretty much.

RUEDY: I think it was very true that things were changing in Germany -- the people with the immediate post-war experience and working with the United States, a strong cultural affinity for things American. That was passing from the scene, had past from the scene. A new generation was moving in and the new generation, of course, felt differently about the United States than their predecessors had. That was all part of this whole 'successor generation' initiative getting young Germans reconnected with the U.S. That was 1984 we are talking about. Since that time practically another generation has passed so I can imagine now the situation in Germany is again very, very different. The cold war has ended, the basis for the relationship is much different.

Q: But of course in Germany, I mean there was this huge monster hanging around the Germans neck, the albatross or whatever you want to say about World War II...

RUEDY: Yes.

Q: And what it had done. This is a terrible inhibitor and you know just getting rid of that would give them much more freedom to be themselves.

RUEDY: Absolutely and it was interesting for me. My German is pretty good. You would get to talking with people and would hear just amazing, amazing stories of what people had experienced and what they had endured during World War II in the immediate post-war period and the relationship they had then with the Americans. At first there was a good deal of trepidation and fear and uncertainty but how they had begun working with the Americans and it must have been an amazing, amazing period. A couple people that I had gotten to know had

actually experienced their introduction to America as prisoners of war and had come to the U.S. as POWs (prisoner of war) and experienced the U.S.

Q: In Mississippi and Arkansas...

RUEDY: Exactly, exactly. Maybe I related this story the last time. I forget, but it's a great story. A guy that I got to know was a good economist. He said that he was captured in North Africa and had thought that the war would be over soon and he would be going back as a hero to the fatherland. He got to the United States, to New York and traveled across this vast country where no bomb had ever fallen and he knew that none would and he said it was just an amazing experience. He recounted the kindness that he found from the United States, the informality and I think he went back to Germany after the war committed to working with Americans on the basis of that experience, rather amazing.

Q: As we were going there I would think that in your particular area in a way you were somewhat blessed by not having an awful lot of American troops there.

RUEDY: That's true and I was very much aware of that. I think my experience in Germany as a branch public affairs officer was very different from my colleagues in places like Munich or Stuttgart and Frankfurt because there were very, very few Americans in North Rhine-Westphalia. It was the British occupation zone initially. There was a British garrison in Dusseldorf not far from where we lived as a matter of fact and units of the British army of the Rhine that were stationed further west in Patterborn and air force bases on the other side of the Rhine but very little overt American presence. Businessmen a number of them and folks like that but no American troop presence.

Q: Did the embassy, did you get, is this a new ambassador and all down there?

RUEDY: Occasionally, yes, we occasionally did and my boss the public affairs officer would come up once in a while and we would try to bring in heavy duty speakers like the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) ambassador at the time was W. Tapley Bennett who was extraordinarily good in speaking and meeting with groups. So, to bring in somebody like Tapley Bennett, American ambassador to NATO and get him together with a group of six or eight chief editors or foreign policy guys from the universities and maybe some political types from the North Rhine-Westphalia governments, SPD types from the North Rhine-Westphalia government was always very, very useful. So we did get a fair amount of that stuff but nothing really super VIP (very important person) or anything like that.

Q: After you left there in '84...

RUEDY: Yes, that is correct.

HANS N. TUCH
Public Affairs Officer, USIS

Bonn (1980-1985)

Hans N. Tuch came to the United States from Germany in 1938 as a 14-year-old. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II, gaining enough active combat points to be discharged early. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas in 1947 and a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Mr. Tuch's career with USIS included positions in Germany, Washington, DC, Russia, Bulgaria, and Brazil. Mr. Tuch was interviewed on August 4, 1989 by G. Lewis Schmidt.

TUCK: I came back to Germany in 1980. On that occasion I was the PAO for the Federal Republic. I spent 1980 to 1985, until I retired, in Bonn as my last post. This whole reevaluation of our relationship, not so much governmental relationship but the relationship between our two societies, between our two peoples, especially between our two young peoples, became a preoccupation for us. I would say, that this started already with my predecessor.

Q: Are you speaking now of your predecessor in 1980, or your predecessor in 1967?

TUCH: I'm speaking of my predecessor in 1980, Alec Klieforth, who had been the PAO in Bonn from 1975 until 1980, and a very close friend of mine. When I came to Bonn in 1980, we felt that we had to reevaluate what we were doing in Germany in order to try to correct a problem that had arisen; namely, the drifting apart of our two societies, especially among what we came to call the "successor generations."

The Germans felt the same way. There were many Germans who had the same views, and we talked with them at all levels; the political level, members of the Bundestag, the academic level, people in the universities and the high schools, on the governmental level. We both felt that we needed to correct this drifting apart of our two societies, and we consulted with one another extensively on how we were going to go about doing it. Both sides felt that one of the ways that we should attempt to do it is by having a much greater concentration of our efforts directed to the youth. On the German part, the youth in the United States; on our part, the youth in Germany. Since I was in Germany, my preoccupation was, obviously, with German youth. We came to realize that we should start not at the university level, but already at the high school level. One, because it was in the high schools that the young people were being radicalized by their teachers. Secondly, that in the German democratic society, political views, attitudes, prejudices were formed on the part of young people before they entered the universities, while they were still in high schools. So we felt that we should concentrate our efforts and direct them to German high school students. We had to persuade the Agency in Washington initially on this, because dealing with population elements below the university level was somewhat new. Youth programs had the reputation of what they call "kiddies exchanges." But we were able to do this, with the help incidentally of a number of members in the Congress who were interested in having youth exchanges take place. There were particularly people like Senator Lugar of Indiana and Congressman Dante Fascell, and others, who helped us persuade Charlie Wick and the USIA administration that we should devote resources to a much greater extent to youth exchanges. We were, of course, speaking of the industrialized world--this did not apply to the developing world where our program had to be concentrated at a higher age level, certainly university level, and

not at the high school level--but in western Europe and, specifically in this case, in Germany, we felt that it should be done on a high school level.

Q: Was this the source of the legislation which now provides additional funds and legal structure for handling the high school level youth exchanges?

TUCH: Yes, it was. I must say, that once the director, Charlie Wick, who initially was not at all interested in exchanges, academic or otherwise, came to be persuaded that this was something that would put a feather in the President's cap, he not only supported it but spearheaded what became known as the President's international youth exchange initiative. The President's initiative was put forward at the Versailles Summit. He--meaning Charlie Wick--became a real supporter of it, and helped us get it started. But we could not have done it, frankly, without prominent members of Congress. Initially, it was a budget of \$2.5 million on the American side and \$2.5 million on the German side, which was pushed through the Congress here and the Bundestag in Bonn, to start a German/ American Congress/Bundestag teenage exchange program; whereby, each member of the Congress and each member of the Bundestag had the opportunity to nominate or to sponsor one teenager to spend a year in the other country, living with a host family, going to high school, becoming integrated into the community. We felt strongly, and I think experience has borne us out, that such an experience of total immersion of one year in another society at that age, would be an experience of a lifetime, and it would permanently affect the attitude of these young people towards the other country. Not that they would be uncritical, but whatever attitude, whatever criticism they had would be based on fact, on their experience, and not on the hearsay of what some high school teacher told them.

Q: Who may not have been in the States at all.

TUCH: Right. So this became a priority of our program at a time when we were having basic generational difficulties in our relationship, especially during the three-year period 1981 to '84 when we had the question of the deployment of intermediate range nuclear missiles, INF in Germany. We had the peace movement to contend with, we had a great deal of opposition especially among the young people in Germany to the deployment of additional nuclear missiles in Germany. We had to deal with this particular problem. But that was a short-term problem which one had to deal with and cope with. The short-term problem, in our view, could be solved only if we paid attention to the long-term issue of the relationship between our two societies. For that reason we concentrated on some of these new long-term initiatives. Also, there were a lot of young Germans who could not go to the United States on the exchange program so we also felt that we should work...

Q: For financial or political reasons?

TUCH: Well, I mean, you can accommodate only a small number of people and, therefore, most young Germans would not have an actual experience in the United States. So the second step we took was to intensify our efforts vis-a-vis the high schools themselves to give high school teachers who were not radicalized the opportunity, the resources, the facilities to teach about the United States in a more realistic, we hoped, objective way. One of our programs in this area was

to create pedagogical resource centers for high school teachers with materials about the United States.

Q: You mean within Germany?

TUCH: Within Germany. We started a publication, it was called The American Studies Newsletter, which was directed to the 20,000 German teachers who taught American studies or English in German high schools. The demand for this came from the German teachers. They said they needed this because they didn't know where they could find and obtain good materials about America to use in their teaching. So we started publishing this newsletter.

Q: USIS did this.

TUCH: USIS Bonn did that independently of Washington, but with the help and approval of Washington. It is a quarterly that is still going today, and is in my opinion, very effective. We also intensified our relationship, changed our relationship with the German Association of American Studies, which was an association of German university professors who were teaching American studies, primarily, at the time, American literature. We helped them reorient themselves towards concentrating more on American studies as a discipline that included, besides literature and language, American history, American political science, American economics. We also persuaded them, worked with them, to include in their membership not just university faculty members, but also high school teachers, so that the high school teachers could benefit from that organization as much as the university professors could. In other words, our concentration became one of trying to reach the younger generation of Germans at an earlier age and much more intensively than we had been able to do for the previous 20 years, and thereby to cement the relationship, to rebuild the bridge, so to speak, or to surmount the gap that had been created.

Q: I know that Youth for Understanding has a lot of support from Germany itself. Did USIS have any role in orienting the German government, or the German academic circles toward the cooperation with the YFU on this side, or did that take part completely outside the confines of USIA?

TUCH: It was a cooperative effort because the Germans were just as interested as we were in this project. They recognized this need also, and they became equal supporters in this youth exchange program, which is managed by Youth for Understanding with the help also of AFS and Experiment in International Living. It was a joint effort and jointly financed by the two governments, although organizations like Youth for Understanding had already carried out a German/American teenage exchange program privately, and still do. But this Congress-Bundestag program was an effort on the part of our two governments.

Q: This was funded through channels other than USIA.

TUCH: The Congress-Bundestag exchange?

Q: I mean the exchange involving the YFU.

TUCH: That had been carried out entirely privately until the Congress-Bundestag exchange program was established. It had been carried out with private funding.

Q: Now the Congress-Bundestag program does operate through YGU.

TUCH: The Congress-Bundestag program yes. YFU, AFS International, Experiment in International Living, plus the Carl Duisberg Society, which is a German exchange institution, are sort of the agents of our two governments in carrying out this youth exchange program.

Q: I see. Do you have anything else that you want to say about your last five years in Germany? I presume you carried on still the traditional Amerika Hauser program.

TUCH: We had our six Amerika Hauser, and also our four German-American Institutes, which were in effect binational centers.

Q: Which are not, I presume, Amerika Hauser.

TUCH: Yes. They were converted in the '50s already, when we could no longer maintain so many Amerika Hauser, into German-American Institutes. I always felt that these institutes gave us good value for our investment. We usually paid the salary of the director and maintained the library and the programming in these centers; whereas the Germans, whether it was a local institution, the city, the state or federal German Government or a combination of these institutions, would pay for the rents and the utilities and the local staff salaries. Our investment was approximately 40%, the German investment in these institutions was about 60%, but I always felt that we were getting 80% value for our 40% investment and, therefore, it was good.

Q: Were these institutes in Germany in some part self-sustaining, like the binational centers, say, in Latin America? That they developed programs, particularly English teaching but some other programs also, for which they charged certain fees and, therefore, were able to, outside even the German Government's contribution, were able to finance some of their own activities.

TUCH: That's correct, they were. They, however, required and appreciated our assistance and they remained really American institutions by virtue of the fact that the director was an American. This has changed in the last four years. Budgetary restrictions have forced a reduction of our support to these binational centers, these German-American institutes. They are still running but no longer with as much American input as they had until about 5 years ago. But the Amerika Hauser still exist. Our program of lectures using American participants is very large. The academic exchange program, the Fulbright program, is still the largest in the world. It's, I think, a \$5 million program, in which the Germans participate as more than equal partners. In the late 1960s, American budgetary restrictions forced us to reduce our support of the German-American academic exchange program. The Germans felt so strongly about this program that they decided to make up the difference in what we no longer could contribute. So until the early '80s, the ratio was that the Germans contributed 75% to the budget of the Fulbright program, and we 25%. Over the last five or six years, we have been able to bring it again almost to half and half, but the Germans are, at a minimum, very equal partners in this program.

MARK C. LISSFELT
Political Officer
Bonn (1980-1983)

Deputy to Minister
Berlin (1983-1986)

Mark C. Lissfelt was born in Pennsylvania in 1932. He received his BA from Haverford College and his MALD from Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1959. He served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1954 to 1956. His foreign posts included London, Tel Aviv, Bamako, Brussels, Bonn, Berlin and Paris. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 22, 1998

Q: ...War College years, you're off to Bonn. You say you knew that assignment was coming down the line for a little bit. You had a chance to prepare for it. You knew what you were getting into. You knew the people there.

LISSFELT: Yes, fortunately, and I had a chance to avail myself of some of FSI's language reinforcement for the better part of a month, right after I left the War College. Graduation, as I recall, was in June. Both my wife and I were at FSI for more than four weeks, might have been even as long as two months, refreshing and bringing up to speed a little bit our German. And then we were off, arriving late summer, in 1980. By then our oldest daughter had gone off to William and Mary and the second daughter was going to William and Mary, too, one year after the eldest. So, we were off to Bonn with our two youngest daughters and that same Irish setter.

Q: I thought you said it was a corgi.

LISSFELT: Well, the first one was a corgi, from London days and then to Bamako. We've always had dogs in the Foreign Service. We violated two pieces of advice that were given our new class when we came in in the A100 course: (1) don't have children and (b) don't have pets; in the Foreign Service, it's too complicated. We've always had pets and we had four daughters, and there you are. It is complicating, but so is life. Anyway, we arrived in Bonn, welcomed by Marten Van Heuven, chief of the Political Section, and moved into one of the embassy houses, fortunately in Plittersdorf, along the Rhine River. The U.S. community was built when the German government moved on short notice from Frankfurt to Bonn to be nearer to Konrad Adenauer's home, which was just across the river from where we lived. We settled in there to, again, a wonderful establishment, although Ambassador Walter Stoessel was really on his way out.

And we had the elections, of course, in the fall of 1980, which brought Ronald Reagan and George Shultz to the fore, Shultz after Haig as Secretary of State. We had no idea who was going to be his ambassador to succeed Stoessel when he left. I was the deputy head of a large Political Section. There must have been 13 officers in that section. We had a two-man foreign division;

we had a two-person internal politics; we had a three-person (including the person from the Defense Department) political and military affairs section, plus a section of two plus a lawyer - three people - doing nothing but things relating to Berlin, the so-called "Bonn Group." We ran the U.S. government policies in Berlin, and I, as the deputy political counselor, was the main supervisor of all of these people.

Q: The counselor was Marten Van Heuven?

LISSFELT: Yes, when I first arrived.

Q: He was a Germanophile and a Europeanist.

LISSFELT: Yes, he had taken over. He'd started as a deputy, Dutch-born, and spoke very good German, I think, which was very closely related to his native Dutch. I think it helped a lot. He was a solid guy and very supportive, very good friend, as was Ruth, his wife, who was running the Consular Section.

Q: Who is now the consul general in Milan.

LISSFELT: Milan, right. We also had a labor attaché there, Bob Senser, who, I must say for the first time in my Foreign Service career because his work was so good and so interesting, got me reading labor officer reports. As his supervisor, I reviewed his product, which was so good. I will never forget what a good officer he was, in spite of the fact that he was supported by a secretary, a native German, a woman, who was little bit erratic. For example, she would type Bob's work, he would sign them and authorize them, and she would promptly file them all carefully, including the originals. And he wondered after a while why he was getting no responses to any of his requests, and he discovered in the file that this fabled secretary of his was filing everything, and nothing he did, letters or cables, left the embassy in Bonn. An amusing sidelight.

We were very preoccupied in this period with political-military affairs. It was the time of missiles when the Russians were introducing missiles, and we were trying to get the alliance to counter with similar missiles, short-range missiles, in Europe. Also we were trying to get the German government to pick up more and more of the responsibility (That, after all, was ours.) for paying the costs of billeting our forces in Germany. They paid a lot, but the neglect that the U.S. government was visiting on its armed forces over the waning years of Jimmy Carter's presidency was clearly visible in Germany. I remember visiting with Larry Eagleburger when he came out. We went down to one of my old haunts in Hanau, where I'd been in the Army. We visited a motor pool. And it made the worst junk shop that you would see anywhere outside of any American city look good. It was disgraceful. It was out of doors, sort of under a tent, and these guys were pleading for money for spare parts and so forth. This penury culminated in instructions to Walt Stoessel. It was called the "Stoessel démarche." He was instructed to approach the German defense minister with a great request for much more contribution from the Germans to the financing of refurbishing and upgrading the condition of U.S. billets, of motor vehicles, and you name it - basic stuff which the U.S. was not taking care of. I think the Germans really finessed that. We never got an answer to the famous Stoessel démarche.

Q: The German leadership at that time-

LISSFELT: It was led by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, a Social Democrat. His favorite U.S. president was Jerry Ford, it was said, because Jerry tended to listen to him. Schmidt was a great preacher.

Q: He was an academic fellow, in that case.

LISSFELT: Well, he was actually a financier. After years as mayor of Hamburg, then Defense Minister, he had been the finance minister. Interestingly, as a financier and as an international economist, he'd gotten to Arthur Burns in his capacity chairman of [the] Council of Economic Advisors under Eisenhower and subsequently as head of the Federal Reserve under Nixon for eight years. Well, lo and behold, who is sent as U.S. ambassador to Bonn after almost a year-long gap to replace Walter Stoessel but Arthur Burns, almost 80 years of age.

Q: But with his age was he able to function?

LISSFELT: He was effective. Burns arrived with this wonderful wife of his, who led poetry readings and so forth, and, a man almost 80, he needed his rest and so forth, but he was a man of energy, extremely smart and very shrewd. A conversation with Arthur Burns, we always used to say, was like eating an artichoke. You peeled one leaf off at a time. Anything you said to him led to a question in return, and then your answer to that led to yet another question. He peeled everything back to basics, the result of which was that smart people quickly learned: do not open your trap [mouth] to Arthur Burns until you know exactly what you're talking about, the origins, and can answer an infinite amount of questions. This practice made large Friday staff meetings very quiet sessions, with the exception of a couple of fools. Forty-four people from U.S. government agencies - we had some 25 or 30 U.S. government agencies represented in Bonn - met once a week with Arthur Burns when he became the ambassador. He would always let Bill Woessner, his DCM, run the meetings, but everybody knew to keep their mouths shut unless they really had something to say, except one guy: the deputy head of the economic section, of all persons, who had the temerity even to disagree with Arthur Burns and to argue with him in front of 40-some colleagues, who all felt that they were witnessing a hanging - which, in fact, they were. He was the only guy removed from the staff by the ambassador. I think he was responsible - the Economic Section was responsible, anyway - for sending in a cable which had Burns name at the bottom of it, as all cables did, on the business cycle in Germany, which made some observations and drew some conclusions. Burns read the comeback copy of this cable later, seeing it for the first time, and was infuriated. It turns out that he was probably the world's expert on business cycles - Ph.D. thesis and so forth. Well, they sent a cable immediately to the Department, which is a sure way to get the first one read, disowning the cable, saying ignore it, it was a simple mistake.

Q: How could somebody have been that stupid? What a dumb thing to do!

LISSFELT: Well, people didn't know a lot about him at first. Quickly they began to learn. Now to be so stupid as not to know when to shut up and have such bad judgment as to argue with him on a point of economics and correct him, it didn't take you long to learn that that was not

prudent, especially since he was more often right than wrong, particularly in the area of economics.

During the period of Burns' breaking in, I had the burden of being the acting head of the Political Section because Marten Van Heuven left for some reason six months after my arrival (Those events are not connected!). Bill Woessner, the DCM, held the political counselor job for Dick Barkley, his former deputy in the Department in the Central European office. Barkley I knew; he was a friend. Anyway I was blessed to be the acting counselor for these six months awaiting Barkley's arrival, when Arthur Burns was just new and just settling in. I think, fortunately, for some reason, Burns and I seemed to hit it off. I tried every once in a while to be a little bit humorous, which he liked. He appreciated me, I think. He wanted to have a lively staff meeting, and he, more often than not, would be chuckling. Maybe he was laughing at me as a damn fool, but he did like that and, in fact, he even acceded to the idea that my wife come on the payroll to help his wife, running their residence. This arrangement, I believe, was the DCM's wife's suggestion in desperation, because Burns' wife was in need of help. It turned out she didn't want help; knew what she wanted. So, my wife's association in the role of her helper was short-lived

Before I forget it, the funniest event there in the Burns era, two funny events. I'll recite one related to a dinner that he had with this then Soviet ambassador, I think was Semyonov, (Soviet negotiator in the SALT talks, with Alex Johnson), at Burns's house. I was at the dinner - a dinner of maybe 15 or 17 people around a large table - and Mrs. Helen Burns had made sure that the ambassador and his entourage from the embassy were shown around the residence and saw her husband's paintings that they had there, for Burns liked to paint, by the way (He painted very geometric things.).

Q: *Abstract? Modern?*

LISSFELT: Yes, abstract, and just sort of geometric patterns they had, in lots of them. But he had other kinds of paintings with lights over them for illumination. And this fascinated Semyonov, how well displayed they were. Well, Helen, in her sweet, innocent way, promptly suggested in front of everybody that the embassy electrician was at the disposal of the Russian ambassador to have him come to the Soviet embassy and wire up all his paintings with lights overhead. Everyone at the table, including the Russians, you know, were all sort of laughing at that. It was a wonderful exhibit of her charming innocence. An American electrician wiring the Soviet embassy!

The other incident related to Burns, who hosted most of the cabinet ministers at lunch at the embassy. He had a little ambassador's dining room built on the top floor of that old embassy building just for this purpose, and one day a charming, lovely female German minister, whose name escapes me now, came. And it was a terrible day in winter - rainy, cold - and I went down with Burns to meet her when she arrived, introduced them, and the two of them went upstairs to have lunch. She got out of the car - and you have to know German to appreciate this, I suppose - and she spoke pretty good English, and in fluent English she said, "Oh, Mr. Ambassador, what shitty weather we're having today!" The Germans have the expression *Scheisswetter*, which they use, as a perfectly acceptable phrase, like the French use *merde* [damn] often, but this was their first encounter. And I thought this is going to be the end of a beautiful relationship. He was in

total shock. Anyway, they went on to be good friends.

Another person that he did meet and size up way ahead of the rest of us was Helmut Kohl, who was still a leader of the CDU, not yet by any means, the Chancellor. He went off to lunch with him and came back, after having gotten briefing papers from us that this is a "stalwart in the CDU," a "pedestrian type," "never going to go anywhere." And he came back, and he assembled us and said, "I want to tell you gentlemen, *that* is a man of substance of whom we're going to hear much." And of course, in a matter of a year or two later, there was the *Wende*, 'turning' out the Socialist SPD government and Helmut Kohl became and stayed Chancellor for 16 years. I'll never forget that insight of Arthur Burns.

I would go with him, by the way, during this period when I was the acting political counselor, on his calls on Helmut Schmidt. They were something to witness. Sometimes on a Sunday afternoon, they would just get together and talk about lots of economics, and so forth, but he'd take me along as notetaker. Burns got addicted to this idea of having a written record. As it turned out, he rather liked it. And I can remember sitting with Helmut Schmidt, who didn't welcome my presence at all, sitting at a table like this square card table, and me sitting over there frantically taking notes on this conversation while Burns called him Helmut and he called him Mr. Ambassador - but they were old friends - you know, and he really objected. He said, "I object to that man sitting there. I don't want this conversation to end up in the files of the Department of State." And Burns reached over and patted him on the arm and said, "Helmut, never you mind." And he turned to me, and he said, "Mr. Lissfelt is my responsibility. I assure you whatever he does will be handled with great discretion." To me he said, "You continue doing what you're doing." But I sat there feeling about as welcome as I don't know what at the party. Helmut Schmidt, whom years later I met in Paris at a celebration, sat at dinner with him right across the dinner table at the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the *International Herald Tribune*, looked at me, and he remembered me, and I reminded him that I used to see him with Arthur Burns, and he didn't say one word to me through that dinner. Very painful.

Q: That's a great story. The relations with Germany were pretty close in those years, but that was the time of the star fighters or some political-military difficulties?

LISSFELT: Oh, there were all sorts of things. You know, we were trying to install a whole helicopter unit along the Rhine. It was causing a huge brouhaha in domestic politics there. The main thing was the balancing to the Russian short-range missile effort, which was argued for years and years, but there were all sorts of things other than the financial things and the political-military, but by and large, relations were excellent. I mean, we talked to each other very candidly and they had still an amazing deference to the American government. The American ambassador was still a kind of a proconsul, flying up to Berlin, where he had a house, and in Berlin he *was* a proconsul. We were still sovereign, along with the French and the British, as you may recall, in Berlin during the occupation years. But by and large, things worked well. I mean, the most intimate kind of exchanges all the way down through the Political Section and the economic section with everybody, an openness that was equal certainly to anything we had with any other nations on the face of the earth. They had their points of view, and you never went to them with any hope, for example, of urging them to take on immigration from among the boat people leaving Vietnam, which we did around the world at a certain period. They were not a nation of

immigrants, to put it mildly, except those of German origin. If you went to them selling German so-called Volga-Germans (there was quite a population living along the Volga River in Russia) they would be receptive and open to that. These people could come and become citizens the day after. They didn't want any Vietnamese there. The Vietnam War they didn't approve of.

Q: When that would be, the Gastarbeiter, the guest-workers, hadn't yet arrived, or were there Turkish?

LISSFELT: Well, actually, there were plenty of Turks there, and the problem hadn't become as acute as it did on the question of citizenship simply because their children were still fairly young, but with the maturity of these children, who lived in Germany and spoke native German, it became more and more a problem. And there were hundreds of thousands of them, and this was a very acute problem up in Berlin, where a lot of them were. Again, the problems were workable for the Germans, and there was an openness, and an access, that was really extraordinary. Hans-Dietrich Genscher was the foreign minister, the leader of the liberal party, the balancing party in this coalition, who one day in 1982 decided he'd had enough of the Socialists and flipped, split, and that's what brought Helmut Kohl in, a new alliance with the party that had been allied with the Socialists for years.

Q: You were, of course, in the midst of the cold war. Was the concept of unification - it was unthinkable.

LISSFELT: Lip service was always paid to the American "basic policy." I mean, we used to say it *ad nauseam*: eventual, peaceful reunification of Germany is one of our policy goals, in our long-term interests, at the right moment in history, sort of thing - nobody for a moment foreseeing what was to happen in 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Q: Well, having consolidated in Bonn, then you moved two years later to be a proconsul.

LISSFELT: *Vice* proconsul. I'm always a "vice;" always a bridesmaid, never a bride, it seems, in my career. One day talking to Dick Barkley, who was then the political counselor--he'd arrived, and we, of course, had great relations, good friend, always admired Dick, and I was inquiring about paying a visit to Berlin in the winter, just going on leave up there--and suddenly Dick sat me down and said, "How would you like to be assigned to Berlin? They're looking for a new deputy to the minister there." It still was a divided city. We had a minister at the U.S. mission in the West, and we had in the East an ambassador, later Dick Barkley, by the way. I became Arthur Burns's candidate to go up there and be Nelson Ledsky's deputy, a very unusual extension of my time in Germany which then was already three years long.

Nelson was a friend, I just think one of the real characters in the Foreign Service, the world of Nelson, and he was certainly an old German hand and knew German and the Germans. He's a very spontaneous and sometimes disruptive character, and he had his share of enemies. And he had a way of speaking his mind - and to Arthur Burns and anybody else who'd listen, the governor-mayor of Berlin included. Burns didn't know him that well, and he did know me, and I

had the impression - in fact, I was told - that I was Burns's candidate to go up there because he wanted me - not to keep an eye on Nelson--but just he wanted to have somebody up there whom he knew first-hand.

Q: The idea of keeping an eye on Nelson, of toning him down, is almost an impossibility.

LISSFELT: An impossible task, and it shouldn't be done. People like that are to be rewarded in situations like that. So suddenly in the summer of 1983, we got on our way to what was unheard of, another three years' service in Germany. Nobody could believe that this was happening to anybody - choice assignments and we knew it. We went to Berlin for three very happy years, two under Nelson and then one under John Kornblum, his successor. All the accumulated rules, precedents, and regulations that had grown up over the years of Berlin occupation were enough to drive you crazy. I helped to supervise the place on Nelson's behalf, but Nelson was very involved in everything important certainly. Very cordial to me, very supportive of me. He had his share of fights with his secretary and other people, but I must say, not to mention the U.S. military, Nelson was one of my best supporters, and I'm just very fond of the guy, a real character.

The only time I really had to do something against his wishes was at the explicit direction of Burns. Nelson had left on home leave and I was in charge of the mission, and before Nelson had gone, he had a big problem with the people who were trying to sell personal computers and modernizing the State Department and getting it on line. And Nelson in his wisdom saw the threat in this business. You put these computers at everybody's desk, and whether you like it or not, people will be chattering back and forth and you, in charge, rapidly lose control over the policy of the institution that you're responsible for. And he refused to help them, and he was very rude to the technicians from the Department and sent them packing. Well, they went back to Bonn, and of course then he went on home leave, and then came a one-line instructions to me, Burns to Lissfelt, "You will see to and facilitate the prompt installation in Berlin of the link" (It was an experimental link. Bonn was one of the first embassies and this link to a subordinate, if you will, related post was an experiment.) "as soon as possible." Which, of course, I did.

Q: The 80-year-old political ambassador pushing the FSOs of the Department into the information age.

LISSFELT: Well, he certainly did, as far as Berlin was concerned, because it existed in Bonn already to the tune of considerable construction of pipes and other infrastructure and so forth to lay it in. And it worked very well in the sections where people had it, and Bonn had had a good experience and thought it was wise to join Berlin to the network. But Nelson didn't, and I still think Nelson was very right in what he saw the implications of this were, but you can't stop progress.

Q: One always thinks of Berlin in those years as the Le Carré spy capital. There must have been an element of intrigue.

LISSFELT: Well, there was, but a lot of our concerns related to the military intelligence activities, which used to drive the CIA intelligence people round the bend. Many of the spies

caught and exchanged for the top Russian spies that we had our hands on were in fact amateurish agents of the U.S. military who had been swept up by the intelligence apparatus of the East. They would collect these people and exchange them for some really terribly professional Russian spies that we had swept up over the years. This was incidentally a while there later on, when Rick Burke became the ambassador, we had the exchange of Nathan Sharansky, famously, over the Glienicke Bridge. Sharansky is now a minister in the Israeli government, at the recent Wye Plantation peace process negotiations, of all things.

Q: And you were somehow there at Checkpoint Charlie when the exchanges were made?

LISSFELT: They were never made there; they were always made over the Glienicke Bridge. That's where Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot who went down, was exchanged for a Russian spy named Abel. That was before our time. This was a connecting and transfer point in a part of Berlin where the bridge was divided in half, half in the West, half in the East.

Q: Could you as the deputy keep track of all of this? Did you feel that you were socially cut in? It's pretty compartmentalized stuff that is going on there.

LISSFELT: I don't think I knew the half of it, frankly. They had all these so-called "stovepipe" operations, down to Heidelberg, where the headquarters of the U.S. Army in Europe was, and that's who the U.S. commandant, who was the top man in Berlin, a two-star Army general, worked for. And these were constant potential points of friction. My first years there were with General James Botler, a commandant. He took Nelson with a grain of salt, was a very practical guy with a Harvard master's degree, a very sophisticated gentleman who knew what his job was and knew the limits and when not to try and play soldier-diplomat. He was succeeded by a general who was there most of the time we were there who seemed to have just the opposite view. He was then succeeded by a general who went over to the East and drank *Bruderschaft*, as they say, with the communist mayor in East Berlin. Dick Barkley, who was ambassador, was outraged. He always said this general violated all of the norms of the U.S. policy toward Berlin. But the days of spy intrigue and so forth were slightly on the wane. Frankly, what I knew about them was almost nothing. It wasn't in my job description and I wasn't in the chain of command for that kind of thing at all. I think Nelson knew a lot more than I did, but only probably back in the Department did they know much more.

Q: I've only known Nelson in the Greek context, but he's so informal and garrulous and extraverted, it's hard for me to think of him with the reserved Germans in more formality. How did he come across?

LISSFELT: Well, he had his detractors, but he also had many admirers. They kind of liked him. A German politician called him a real *Mensch* to me one day, and they said they just like him because he's such a spontaneous guy. But he also had his detractors. He was nothing loath to demand of the Germans: pay for this, pay for that in Berlin, it was their obligation, we were the sovereigns, and they damn well were going to do it. And he carried in some very disagreeable *démarches* to the man who's still the governing mayor of Berlin, Eberhard Diepgen.

Q: How was it with the other sovereign powers?

LISSFELT: A constant sort of a struggle. I got along very well at my level with the British, and I got along very well with the French because I could speak some French, and they just loved to have an American who could speak their language and they invited us when they didn't invite other Americans. I think they were so fed up with my counterpart, their political advisor - my role, my title, was "political advisor," although I was deputy minister. They had a fellow who, poor man, I think went around the bend, literally, and was forbidden by the French commandant to leave the compound up there. I think that helped enhance my status with them. I was fairly normal and spoke their language, and besides, we liked them. But, you know, they all had their agenda. The French were holding out there as a last vestige of part of their empire, and, for example, they had the Germans paying for the costs of training their recruits, whom they sent to Berlin, and the Germans uniformed them and armed them and paid for their training and sent them back, send another batch up. It was the French brigade, but at German expense.

The British were very cool and very colonial, you can well imagine, and not led by people who knew the language at all - i.e., their commandant. But everybody used to love the British parades, the French parties, and what did they like about us? Neither the parade nor the party. We did go to a lot of parades; there was a lot of showing the flag. We went to the East any time we wanted to, but we carried special passes to go through the Wall. The military always had to be in uniform, by the way. Berlin was fascinating and, of course, it was still divided, and we used to say to anybody, "If you want to understand the Cold War or postwar history, come to Berlin and stay a day and go to the Wall, look over and walk around, and you'll understand what it's all about, that it's not make-believe."

Q: Back on the German years, before we leave them, what was the difference in the texture of life and work between Bonn and Berlin in those years? How did you compare the two experiences?

LISSFELT: The best description of life and working in Bonn that I received before I went out there was, "You are about to go to live and work in a small Midwestern American town in the 1950's." And Bonn, Bad Godesberg and Plittersdorf were certainly that. It was not the center of events, although it's where the capital was, and still is to this day, although it's moving to Berlin. Berlin was very much on the front line. You went there, either if you went by land through Russian controlled routes or you went by air, through the air corridors established by the postwar agreements, never above 10,000 feet. You had the sense of going to an island, an isolated place. And when you were there, although Berlin was a huge city, you were inside a wall, and you didn't go very far. If you went to other places in Eastern Europe, you had to go out through the wall and go through checkpoints and get special permits. And you were constantly aware of a Russian presence.

Q: Any final thoughts before we leave Germany?

LISSFELT: No, except fondest memories of the place and of the people. It was one of the finest embassies and missions that I've ever been associated with, only equaled by Paris, which we'll get to later, at the end of my overseas career. But fine staff, good leadership, working on very important issues, and a most hospitable environment.

Q: When you say that in Berlin you were at the front lines, was there one thing, one flash or pressure time that you remember that kind of captures the tensions of being way out there in Berlin that you think back on, the kind of thing that was going on in that Europe?

LISSFELT: Well, funnily, the most dramatic thing was in the spring of '86 in the terrorist bombing of the La Belle Disco. This, as you may recall, was a terrorist act. Somebody put a bomb under a bench on the side of one of the favorite hangouts for GI's with the clear intent to kill as many as possible, an event which has been traced back to Mr. Qadhafi and to a lot of Syrian involvement. Going to that place a few hours later the same day it occurred with Ambassador Rick Burt, and seeing this place largely cleaned up... Fortunately, in that whole thing only two people eventually died, but it was terribly dramatic. One GI had been hurt and one Turkish girl, but the whole command was upset and the whole U.S. government. As you well know, this prompted the air raid on Qadhafi, trying to get Qadhafi and his family later in the year.

Q: Did you, by the way, think Qadhafi? What were your assumptions when this happened?

LISSFELT: No, we didn't think Qadhafi. We didn't know what to think. We didn't think Russians, though. We thought Middle Eastern terrorism, somehow. And the Qadhafi connection only became clear in time with this chain of people who had been involved in bringing the explosives in and planning the event. It's just a miracle that more people weren't killed. It was a small room with a low ceiling full of 200 GIs and their girlfriends dancing. And the effect in the room was horrendous in terms of the compacting of the noise. People's eardrums were burst; those were a lot of its most serious injuries. It's a miracle that there were so few real injured and only eventually two deaths. One guy died eventually, but he was in the hospital quite some time. Very dramatic, and it hurt the whole community.

Another extremely dramatic thing up there was when the Military Liaison Mission (which ran out of Berlin these intelligence missions with the British and the French into and throughout East Germany) had one of their members apprehended and shot in the field, Major Nicholson, later promoted to colonel. He and his unit were a part of the Berlin family. And that was really an explosive thing, and it was really a gross action. We knew all the details from the commandant, Colonel Roland LaJoie, who's since retired as a two-star, major general, in the U.S. Army.

Q: But wasn't it the case that some of those probes were a little bit "cowboys"? They tended to play chicken with the East German Volks police?

LISSFELT: Well, they resented such allegations. That came up in conversations with the people who carried them out, and they really would come at you if you used the word *cowboy*. They didn't consider themselves cowboys; they were risky operations, which they went as far as they could inside East Germany. They went up to sheds to open them up to see if there were tanks in them. And that's what happened on this occasion. Nicholson was apprehended when he was checking out a shed to see if there were tanks hidden away in the shed, and a Soviet sentry, a young recruit, who had been off in the woods relieving himself, came back and, in a panic, saw this MLM car and Nicholson shot him, fired warning shots, I gather, and then shot him. It was just so dramatic and the Soviets handled it badly. They were rude and they accused the man of

being where he shouldn't have been. He had every right to be there. There were zones that they could go in. But it was scary. It was provocative. That was one of the most important military intelligence operations carried out from Berlin over the years. Running around all over and finding out all sorts of information about units, size and so forth, by sorting through the trash and the latrines and you name it, from where the Soviets had been out on exercises and with the East Germans. They were looking for any "early warning" signs of preparations of an attack from the East. But they were often involved in incidents, rammings, things like that. It was very perilous, and when you read about it in the newspapers, back here, it must have been a pretty scary event.

BRUCE W. CLARK
East Germany Desk Officer
Washington DC (1980-1983)

Political Advisor
East Germany (1983-1987)

Bruce W. Clark was born in Los Angeles, California in 1941. He attended Claremont Men's College from 1958 to 1959 before transferring to Stanford University, where he received his BA in 1962. He also served in the U.S. Army Reserve before joining the Foreign Service in 1966. His career has included positions in countries such as Germany, Vietnam, Belgium, and Saudi Arabia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 4, 2002.

Q: Okay, let's see. That would be from about 1979 to...

CLARK: Well, no, maybe it was in 1980 that I moved over to EUR/CE. It handled Austria, Switzerland and Germany. I was the East German desk officer.

Q: How did we view East Germany at this point?

CLARK: I don't think we ever thought it was going to fade away as it did. We thought they were a bunch of hard-nosed communists, but people you could work with a little bit on small issues. But you had to be very careful. We thought they were the smartest of the East European countries, and the hardest to deal with and the most inflexible.

Q: Did we foresee any real change in that area?

CLARK: No. We didn't foresee it. I mean everyone always said that if the Soviets would relax their presence and influence in East Germany things might change, but we never thought the Soviets would do that.

Q: Were you back in Washington in '79?

CLARK: Yes.

Q: The Soviet move into Afghanistan must have changed things.

CLARK: Oh, yes.

Q: It showed that the Soviets were basically an aggressive power, not a defensive power, at least in our estimate.

CLARK: Right. Personally, I thought we went a little bit crazy on the Soviet adventure in Afghanistan as if all of South Asia and the Middle East was going to fall or something.

Q: Big arrows pointing down towards the Persian Gulf and all that.

CLARK: Exactly. But, yes, that really made the Soviet Union the Number One live threat. It got a little overdone, but look what it's achieved years later. (Laughter) They're out and now we are in Afghanistan.

Q: Who was the head of EUR/CE?

CLARK: John Kornblum, and then Tom Niles.

Q: How did you find them?

CLARK: I liked Kornblum a lot. A brilliant officer. Of course he's done almost nothing except German affairs and NATO affairs his entire career. He's retired now, but I think he's brilliant. I've heard, though, that as ambassador to Germany people didn't like him as much. I really liked working for him though.

Q: Were we concerned at the time when you were doing this that somehow or another the Soviets might offer some sort of deal to unite Germany and that Germany would haul out of NATO?

CLARK: Yes, I think we were. I think there was always a concern that if the Soviets could somehow offer the right combination of things the Germans would decrease their support or commitment or something to NATO or somehow become less cooperative.

Q: Did you get any feel for the German cadre within the State Department - the people who dealt with Germany? Were they a special breed of FSO, do you think?

CLARK: When I was there, there was a joke that John Kornblum had people lined up for the next two generations. Yes, I think there was a special sort of German group, a special group that Kornblum had picked for assignments way down the line. He was very good at identifying people, bringing them into German affairs, and arranging their assignments long in advance. Yes, I think there was a German Mafia, so to speak - one I think that the State Department went to some trouble to dismantle afterwards.

Q: Did you find yourself part of that?

CLARK: Maybe, but I was not, and never considered myself to be, a German experts. I'm talking about the officers who were almost fluent in German and had already served there a couple of times. I wasn't quite that level. When I spoke with other people, they'd say, "Oh, you're one of Kornblum's," but I'd say that I wasn't that interested in spending the rest of my career in Germany.

Q: Yes. You mentioned your wife, had you gotten married at this point?

CLARK: No, I met her when I was assigned to East Germany. After serving on the German desk, my next assignment was to East Berlin.

Q: Who was the Minister?

CLARK: Now we're talking about our Embassy in East Berlin. So it's an ambassador. When I got there it was Rozanne Ridgeway. Herbert Okun may have been there for a short while after I arrived, but for most of my tour Ridgeway was Ambassador. Then Frank Meehan replaced her at the end.

Q: You went to East Germany following your tour on the German desk?

CLARK: Yes, I went to East Germany about '83.

Q: What job did you have there?

CLARK: I was Political Advisor. And my wife-to-be was my deputy, on-the-books so to speak.. She was actually the head of station. We met there and married several years after.

Q: Well now, what was the situation then? You were there from '83 to when?

CLARK: '87.

Q: Boy, that's a long time. What was the situation in East Germany at that time, when you arrived?

CLARK: A lot attention was focused on the church, because the Evangelical church was the main alternative, shall we say, to the government. There was a lot of pressure from young East Germans for the GDR to loosen up. The East Germans were, of course, following very carefully what was going on in Hungary and Poland and this made the regime very nervous. Honecker and his group were struggling to prevent that from spreading to East Germany. But as far as I know, we were unaware of how much Honecker was on the outs with the Russians, and how unsettling the East Germans leaders found what was going on in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev.

Q: You were there when Gorbachev came in?

CLARK: Yes. And I think we tended to downplay reports that Honecker didn't get along with

Gorbachev and vice versa. But we were proven wrong. (Laughter) The reports were accurate. I think we just couldn't believe that the Soviet Union would do anything to destabilize the hard line communist government of East Germany given its strategic importance and location.

Q: One thing, how did you find dealing with the East Germany government?

CLARK: Well from my standpoint, very correct and proper. Very formal. The fellows I had contact with at the Foreign Ministry were all polite and very correct. We entertained each other and so forth, but you never made a lot of progress. They never deviated from the policy line or indicated any change was possible. They'd listen to what you said and make notes, but there was no indication that it was going to change anything. I remember that, while I was there, the LaBelle disco in West Berlin was bombed by Libyan agents. Our ambassador, Frank Meehan, went over to the Foreign Ministry to ask the GDR to take action against the Libyan embassy in East Berlin. The officials told him that they had no idea what he was talking about, and if his accusations were true it was just shocking. We just said, "Oh, come on." But that's the way it went. They must have known what was going on with the Libyans, since they bugged everybody, but they wouldn't admit anything to us or show that they took any action in response to our complaint.

Q: And I take it that there was no way of sort of breaking down the barriers.

CLARK: Not really, not with the government people. The East Germans were finding it a little easier to travel to the United States for conferences and so forth, but everything hinged on the Soviet Union and how much support it gave to Honecker. When it started to withdraw its support, things started to move fast, especially when Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia started to wobble.

Q: But this is after you left, was it after?

CLARK: Yes. Most of that happened after I left, but the SED had already begun to meet with West German government and party figures, especially SPD leaders, and Gorbachev had called for reform and democratization in the Soviet Union.

Q: But what was happening, had things started to develop and loosen or change?

CLARK: Well, I think even when I was there that the GDR had started to allow East Germans for the first time to go to Hungary without a huge hassle, which later was to lead to going to Hungary and not coming back. And the Hungarians began to allow their citizens to travel a lot more freely. East Germans watched this and wanted to know why they couldn't do it too. This caused a lot of stress for the GDR regime.

Q: You found that sort of up and down the line the East Germans were disciplined. I mean they were following strictly the party line. Was anybody saying 'My god, I hope things will change.'?

CLARK: No official would ever show any weakening. Members of the Evangelical Church thought that things were moving slowly toward liberalization and that in time - ten years or so -

there might be some change for the better. But no official ever indicated or hinted any variation from the party line.

Q: Was somebody watching the East German influence abroad? Because so many countries had such as in Libya and other places where the East Germans sort of trained the police force.

CLARK: I'm sure we were watching GDR activities abroad very carefully, but that was probably done most by our intelligence agencies. But then, yes, there was concern because the East Germans were training the Libyan police force and so forth. East Germans had a hand in a lot of things we disapproved of in the Third World.

Q: Did you travel around much?

CLARK: Yes. We traveled around all the time.

Q: Any problems?

CLARK: No. You were usually tailed. You had your usual sort of amusing things happen when you did travel. Cars would suddenly appear out of nowhere and follow you, or you would stop by the side of the road to eat lunch and suddenly out of nowhere a whole bunch of people would appear and sit down close by. But I was never harassed or anything and my wife-to-be didn't really have any specific incidents. They apparently thought I was the chief of station. For some reason, when the STASI documents were later made public, it looked like the East Germans had not figured out who was who in the Embassy. I thought this was amazing because we had East Germans working in the Embassy on the first floor, which was the unclassified area.

Q: Maybe they were too clever by half.

CLARK: Maybe.

Q: Were we able to get a handle on the East German economy? Because half the time, as I recall, we were saying that East Germany was the most advanced of the bloc countries, had a pretty good economy, and produced things of acceptable quality. Yet when it finally merged with West Germany, most of the stuff turned out by the GDR turned out to be pretty poor and the economy was terribly inefficient.

CLARK: I don't think we had a good handle on the real state of the GDR economy. Part of the problem was, at least while I was there, that our economic counselor tended to believe what he saw or read or was told. The general impression was that the East German economy was probably the most advanced and best organized, etc., in Eastern Europe. And the reality, we learned, was that it wasn't. I mean people basically weren't going to their jobs or were working two to three hours a day and taking the rest of the day off to shop. We were never aware of that as far as I know. When we visited factories, I guess, they organized a Potemkin Village-type operation. I think our economic reporting from East Germany was way off.

Q: Were you able to have any contact with East Germans? Significant contacts?

CLARK: No. I wasn't, at least not outside church officials. Most of our non-official contacts were with church people. The USIA person, Cynthia Miller, had very good contacts in the cultural world. But if you went out and around, we were easily identified as American, and once you identified yourself as an American, East Germans were pleasant but understandably guarded and cautious because the STASI had informers everywhere.

Q: What about sort the intellectual side, the artists and writers and such? Often this is an area where one can develop safer contacts?

CLARK: Well, in fact, Cynthia Miller, the head of USIA and her staff had a lot of such contacts, and I think she got a lot of information that she didn't share with us. As apolitical counselor, I always thought that was too bad. I think such information should have all been pooled in order to get a better idea of what people thought.

Q: Well, this raises a question which is very pertinent today because we're talking about terrorist attacks on the United States and the role of the CIA and the National Security Agency and the FBI. It seems that they really weren't sharing information. I've often thought that in some of our embassies, not everybody has to do their own thing in isolation like the CIA, yet USIA and the consular section, which often have their own highly useful don't seem to get together and share information.

CLARK: That's right. I think that was one of the biggest flaws when I was in East Germany. The territorial imperative was too strong, especially when other agencies were involved. There was too much of this "I got this information and I'm not going to send it to State. It's going to go through my channel, etc." And stuff that goes through USIA channels may it never get to State. So a lot of stuff gets lost that way. It would have been much better for everyone to pool their information.

Q: Did you have any contact with our mission in West Berlin?

CLARK: Yes. We'd go over there twice a month or so for lunches or meetings. I didn't talk to the top level officials at the Mission; Ridgeway and her DCM did that and had much more frequent contact with the top officials at the Mission. Nelson Ledsky was over in West Berlin and I think they met frequently. But they were almost two different worlds at this point. Once we had our own embassy in East Berlin, there were turf questions about who should report what if it concerned the GDR or East Berlin but came from West Berlin sources. Neither post wanted the other post reporting or commenting on what it considered its business.

Q: Did this preclude the almost obligatory trips to East Berlin from West Berlin?

CLARK: No. But there was less need for those trips. People serving in West Berlin would come over to East Berlin, but mainly for pleasure or tourism, not information gathering. However, travel to East Berlin was encouraged in order to maintain the Allied right of access.

Q: It used to be that Allied staffs in West Berlin traveled to East Berlin to make a statement

about the Allies' right to travel into East Berlin as one of the "occupying powers."

CLARK: That's right. The Allied missions in West Berlin didn't want to give up that right, so they did come the traditional way through Checkpoint Charlie, taking care to observe the complicated rules about where they could enter, with whom they could talk, what documents they could show, and so forth. But they didn't come over to East Berlin to get a feel for the political or economic situation or such; that was left to the embassy.

Q: When you traveled to Leipzig, for example, did you have to get permission or could you just take off?

CLARK: No, you didn't have to get permission, but in reality you had to make hotel reservations in advance through a government office. Consequently, the East Germans knew where you were going. If you didn't make reservations you might arrive to find you had no place to stay. So the East Germans had no trouble following where we went, but they never objected to us going anywhere with the exception of certain areas of East Germany that were off limits for military or security reasons.

Q: Were you there when there was an unfortunate incident where at least an American officer was killed?

CLARK: Yes, I remember that. He was with the U.S. Military Liaison Mission.

Q: How did that happen?

CLARK: As I recall, he was out doing what U.S. Military Liaison Mission does, that is, to go into sensitive areas to observe East German and Soviet troops, equipment and facilities. I think he got very close to some Soviet unit, got out of his vehicle, and started inspecting a tank while its crew was nearby. He took a great risk and was shot. It was a tragedy but he was doing something very risky and he paid for it.

Q: Was the Soviet military presence obvious while you were there?

CLARK: Oh, yes. Not in the center of Berlin, so to speak, but Berlin was ringed by Soviet military camps and barracks and domestic residential areas.

Q: While you were there, what was happening in Poland?

CLARK: Well, the Solidarity movement was active and East Germans were following it with great interest. I think there was a lot of comment in East Germany. Though the East German press didn't cover it at all, the East Germans could see and hear about it on West German TV and radio.

Q: Oh, so they could they could pick up TV?

CLARK: Oh, yes. There was no problem with that. They could watch western TV and listen to

western radio.

Q: I take it that everybody in East Berlin watched?

CLARK: I think so.

Q: Because I guess it was much more interesting.

CLARK: Yes, but not as pro-American as you might think. (Laughter) But as you know, the West German TV and press don't exactly toe the American line. They are frequently very critical of U.S. policy.

Q: Were you getting much feel for what was going on within the East German government with Honecker as President and all? For example, who's on top in the leadership, who's standing on the Kremlin wall next to whom and that sort of thing?

CLARK: Well, nothing dramatic. I mean we realized Honecker was aging and that his likely successor, the Crown Prince so to speak, was Egon Krenz. But we didn't see anything that would indicate any massive change would come about. The fellow who was the party head in Dresden, Hans Modrow, was considered the bright star of liberalism in the SED. I wonder what happened to him. But the general feeling was he was too liberal, too willing to take too many steps toward better relations with the West and ease restrictions, and if they eased restrictions the whole thing would come apart.

Q: Could you apply your political training when you were there? I mean, the Party was very disciplined and secretive. I think it would be difficult just trying to figure out who was doing what to whom.

CLARK: It was. You couldn't just go out and pick up a lot of gossip and so forth. There was no place to do that.

Q: In many ways it sounds more difficult than in Moscow, where over the years the Embassy developed a real science for wrinkling out information and clues by studying the papers and all to figuring out what was going on.

CLARK: That could be. I think Moscow has been so important for a lot longer, and a lot more effort has been focused on Moscow for decades. We were sort of new to the East Germany thing.

Q: Was there a feeling that having relations with East Germany made sense?

CLARK: Oh yes, certainly. Though we didn't think East Germany was going to collapse, we thought things would have to change in due course, and that the more the GDR was exposed to Western influence, the more it would have to change. I just didn't think it would ever come so fast. I never thought the Soviet Union would somehow let it go within a year.

Q: And really, this whole change was the result of developments in the Soviet Union.

CLARK: It was Gorbachev.

Q: It was Gorbachev. And maybe looking at it now, one could see that his policies were a logical development. I mean it got to the point where the Soviet system wasn't working, and they weren't going to go out and shoot a lot of people to make it work.

CLARK: I agree. When I hear people criticize Gorbachev, I think 'Thank Heavens for Gorbachev.' This is the guy that basically took the step that led to the dismantling of the Soviet Union.

Q: Absolutely. He didn't know it.

CLARK: No. He deluded himself in thinking that it wouldn't all come apart the way it did, but he did take the crucial steps.

Q: All right. Certain things became more and more impossible. For example, with the East Germans towards the end, they had the ability to go out and shoot mobs, but that wouldn't have really worked, for it probably would have destroyed the regime.

CLARK: Yes, I think that was it. In the end they decided they couldn't do that because that really would have ripped the situation apart.

Q: Yes. I think this is a good place to stop, Bruce, but we'll pick this up the next time. You left there in 1988, just before the deluge.

CLARK: '87, yes.

HERBERT JOHN SPIRO
Free University of Berlin
Berlin (1980-1989)

Ambassador Herbert Spiro was born in Hamburg, Germany in 1924. He attended Harvard University and spent some time teaching at the Free University of Berlin. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1994

SPIRO: From 1980 until '89, I was the University Professor for American politics at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies of the Free University of Berlin, an integral, interdisciplinary institute of the Free University of (West) Berlin. And since German universities are on vacation half the year, and they don't work very hard the other half, and in Berlin I was entitled to a sabbatical leave after every five teaching semesters, I'd spend more than half my time in this country, mainly in Austin, Texas starting in 1982.

In Berlin, I gave the introductory course on American Politics and Government, I taught courses on the Congress, on American foreign relations, on the Constitution. One graduate seminar comparing Presidents Nixon and Johnson, which is particularly interesting today just after Nixon's death. I retired from Berlin in 1989. In between I spent one term in 1983 as a visiting Professor of Government at Harvard, and half a semester in '84 as a visiting Professor at Tufts.

In '82 I was invited by one of the Soviet diplomats in East Berlin to visit Moscow. Herbert Okun, who was an old friend of mine from the State Department,

Q: I came into the Foreign Service with Herb.

SPIRO: started as Ambassador to the GDR, in East Berlin, at the same time that I started as a professor at the university in West Berlin. As a matter of fact, my oldest son Peter and I were walking in East Berlin, and we saw these limousines coming up, and there I happened to see Herb Okun, who was about to present his credentials.

Then I sent Herb a letter, which was a parody of the letters that you send to the other Ambassadors in countries like Cameroon, when you have presented your credentials: Your Excellency, I wish to inform you that I have this day presented my letters of credence and at the same time the letters of recall for my predecessor, the Honorable C. Robert Moore and blah, blah, blah. You conclude by saying: And I hope and trust that the excellent relations that prevail between our two countries, as well as between our two Embassies, as well as on the institutional and personal levels, will continue, and I remain with assurances of my highest regard etc., etc. Then I ended my parody to Herb Okun by writing, "No shit." He called me. We spent a lot of time together.

In '81 '82, US-Soviet relations were at their nadir, as the First Secretary of the Soviet embassy in East Berlin, to whom Herb Okun had introduced me, told me. They therefore invited me to come as a guest of the USA and Canada Institute, the Arbatov Institute, to Moscow, which I did in April of '82. The reason they knew about me was not only that Herb Okun had introduced me to Bogomolov, but I had visited our Embassy in Moscow twice, once in April '73 and once in September-October 1974--did you know Joe Neubert?

Q: I know the name.

SPIRO: He was then the Consul General in Leningrad, he'd been Senior Deputy of the Planning Staff when I was on it.

I had visited the Moscow twice under U.S. Embassy auspices. The first time I was invited to their Foreign Ministry Planning Staff, which had never happened to any U.S. official before. They took, this is what I referred to earlier, they took the Annual Reports on the "State of the World" of the Secretary and of President Nixon much more seriously than anybody in this country.

When I met with their Planning Staff the first time in '73, they said, what about the Nixon doctrine? I said, well, it's US policy. They said, but Zbig Brzezinski just had an article in Foreign

Affairs. And I said, "Brzezinski! Shit!" That closed it then I apologized. Then they said, "But Foreign Affairs is published by the Council on Foreign Relations and what they say really goes."

I always benefitted from the fact that unlike Kissinger, this is really coming to the close of the circle, Kissinger wrote his senior honors thesis, on philosophy of history. It was 400 pages long and led to the introduction of a top limit of 100 pages. I wrote mine under the same tutor, William Yandell Elliott, on the Marxian critique of democracy, Marx and Engel's critique of 19th century democracy, 153 pages, also too long but very good. We both graduated *summa cum laude*.

That thesis always helped me. Like the devil quoting scriptures, one of the communists once said. In dealing with these communists, who didn't know beans about Marx, they didn't know much about anything else either but certainly didn't know about Marx. I'd given one lecture at the Institute of USA and Canada affairs, so they knew me and they invited me and I came back as their guest.

I got completely paranoid in Moscow because they kept me sort of isolated, every once in a while I got out and Warren Zimmermann was Chargé and he gave a lunch for me. Arthur Hartman, by this time Ambassador to Moscow, had come back from consultations on my next to the last day, and I visited him and I told him how paranoid I'd gotten because they were trying to do things to me. At the end they tried to keep me there for longer than I'd planned by pretending that my return reservation hadn't been confirmed, and all that sort of thing.

I said to Arthur, yesterday I met with a younger member of the Institute, and I was about to give the name. And he said, no names please, pointing to where he assumed the microphone bug was still hidden. Then I said, the main problem is that my escort officer is, I've forgotten that name but I gave the name. He said, clear case of KGB. I said, he speaks perfect English. He said, I know, he's applied for a visa several times, we'll never give him a visa because he's KGB.

The next day I was taken for my farewell luncheon at the best Georgian restaurant in Moscow by the control officer and a Deputy Director of the Institute. They launched into an attack on Warren and on Arthur which I think was meant to sound as though they had indeed been listening to our conversation. I was a combination for them of a professor and an Ambassador. They thought that ex-Ambassadors were like serving Ambassadors.

They insisted on taking me to Leningrad where I'd been before with Joe Neubert. Joe by this time was the local representative for the American-Soviet trade council. He was in Moscow. They said, we want to take you to Leningrad to meet with our branch of the Institute there. I said, I'd been there. They insisted and I went with the Control Officer on the night train. I was really worried that they were trying to do all sorts of things to me, but they didn't. We were picked up by an officer of the Institute at the station in Leningrad and taken for a ride out to one of the museums - I got sick and tired of visiting museums and different palaces.

They said, you've been an intelligence officer. (according to *Who's Who*, I was in military intelligence during World War II.) I said, yes. They proceeded to ask some questions. I said, well I was in military intelligence during the war when I was 20. In my country, when you're out as an

ambassador, you're out. When you're out as president, you're out. Nixon wasn't all that out, that was his doing.

They said, in our country, once you are in military intelligence, you are always in intelligence. I said, well in my country it's actually very different from that. I don't know what they were trying.

RUSSELL SVEDA
Russian language training
Garmish-Partenkirche (1981-1982)

Mr. Sveda was born in New Jersey in 1945. After serving with the Peace Corps in Korea he joined the Foreign Service in 1975. His overseas posts with the State Department include Korea, where he served as Staff Aide to the Ambassador and in Moscow, as Science Officer. In Washington, Mr. Sveda was assigned as China Desk Officer and subsequently as Watch Officer in the Department's Operations Center. He also served as volunteer in the Sinai Field Mission. Mr. Sveda was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in June, 2000.

SVEDA: So, yes, I took it. It was one year of language training here in Rosslyn, Virginia. At the end of language training, I got a telephone call from the desk.

Q: That would be '81-'82?

SVEDA: Actually, '80-'81. In April of '81 just as I was finishing my Russian language training, I got a telephone call from the Soviet desk from a nice woman who worked there, one of my colleagues, who said, "Russell, I have some bad news for you and I have some good news for you. The bad news is that your position in Moscow as science officer, two science officers working with a counselor, has been abolished. So, the position to which you were going to go no longer exists. We can have you go to Moscow a year from now to replace the remaining Foreign Service officer who is there, but then we have the problem of what to do with you in that year. We would like to send you to Garmisch-Partenkirchen in Germany to the U.S. Army Russian Language Institute there to study for a year." I said, "What's the alternative?" She said, "The alternative is for you to go into the assignment pool and just take whatever happens to come up." I began kissing the phone because Garmisch is perhaps the closest to paradise that one can find on this planet. So, I spent a year of additional language training with one of my Foreign Service colleagues, John Fogerty, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Q: How did you find the Garmisch time?

SVEDA: Maybe 50-60 students there who were Army for the most part. There were also Air Force and one or two Marines. I don't think we had any Navy. The people had already studied language at Monterrey at the language school that the Army ran. They had a year of language study. But the language study was very different than the one that the Foreign Service Institute

taught. The method was very different. The method of the Foreign Service Institute is to have you speaking the language from the first day. They teach you the language basically the way a mother teaches her child a native language – stimulus response. You say the right thing and there's a smile. You say the wrong thing... basically, it's a very laborious method, but it works. The Monterrey method was more traditional. These are verbs; this is how you conjugate a verb; these are nouns, this is how you decline a noun, and so forth. It was more grammatical. The result was, when I got to Garish, I didn't know any grammar, but I could speak Russian. The Army officers knew grammar but they couldn't speak Russian. So, one of our teachers one day said to me, "What is the dative plural of this?" I looked at her blankly. I had no idea what the dative plural was. She turned to one of the soldiers and said, "What is the dative plural?" Very proudly, he gave her the dative plural. Then she turned to me and asked me something which required the use of the dative plural and I responded and she said, "Do you realize that you just gave me the dative plural of such a verb?" I said, "No." Then she turned to the Army officer and said, "He knows no grammar, but he can speak. You know grammar. You can't speak." The same teacher, who was a marvelous teacher, taught us how to read an article in the Soviet press, in Pravda, for example. She said, "When you're writing a cable, ignore everything until the word 'however.'" There will be a statement of garbage which shows that the writer knows what the Soviet policy on such and such is. And then they say 'however.'" Read that and begin reading there." I thought that was very sage advice. I had to smile about that.

Generally speaking, my relations with the soldiers was not good. They resented me because I had... One of the first questions they asked was, "What did you do during the war in Vietnam?" these were all Vietnam War veterans. I told them that I protested the war in Vietnam and I joined the Peace Corps and served in Korea in Peace Corps and I protested the war after that. This didn't sit very well with them. I wasn't being very diplomatic. I was being very honest, but they didn't like that. Some of them liked me, but most of them didn't. What I found about the Army culture is that it's extremely competitive. All of these officers who were captains and majors were desperate to become lieutenant colonels or colonels and they knew that very few of them would. They were competing viciously among each other, but they also were very much identified with their particular specialty, their branch of service (combat arms, intelligence, or whatever). So, their idea was to denigrate the Air Force people who were there, to denigrate the Marine who was there, which wasn't very wise because he was a lot stronger than they were and, frankly, a lot smarter. But they also denigrated each other's units and of course the civilians. We had people from NSA [National Security Agency] there who basically kept to themselves. The NSA is sometimes called "Never Say Anything." They were people who were getting special Russian language training so they could sit in darkened rooms with earphones and listen to intercepted telephone calls or other interceptions and do their translations. A miserable life, but there were people there who really loved the Russian language and they felt that they had to do that in order to eat. But there were two of us other people and we were given a lot of grief. My other colleague, John Fogerty, is very much the Gemini. A Gemini will always tell someone what he thinks they want to hear. So, he was very non-threatening. I am not at all like that.

GUNTHER K. ROSINUS
Public Affairs Officer/Deputy Chief of Mission, USIS

Berlin (1981-1984)

Gunther K. Rosinus was born in Germany in 1928 and emigrated to the Cincinnati, Ohio in 1938. He received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Harvard University. In 1951, Mr. Rosinus joined the State Department, serving in the Information Research Bureau and as a Southeast Asian Affairs analyst. When USIS began in 1953, he transferred. He served in Germany, and Japan, and with the Inspection Corps. Mr. Rosinus was interviewed by G. Lewis Schmidt in 1989.

ROSINUS: Then, after the CINCPAC experience and, again, this marvelous travel exposure to Australia and New Zealand, the Indian subcontinent, southeast Asia and so forth, we turned around and went back to Europe, this time to what might be considered the third tranche of my German experience, having first been in Bonn, West Germany, then West Berlin, which is a separate entity of sorts, and now as public affairs counselor and ultimately as deputy chief of mission in East Berlin and the German Democratic Republic.

That was our first experience in a communist country and my first experience in dealing with communist officialdom. It gave me another perspective, again strengthening the view that one must be a substantive exponent of U.S. society and policy -- and I say "exponent," I don't say constantly enthusiastic defender or proponent. I think the important thing is to make it clear and to put it in its context.

For example, Vietnam: I was always -- not always, I am sorry to say, I was not one of those precious few -- but by about 1968 and 1969 I became uneasy about our position in Vietnam. I began to see that it was based on a lag in perception that took us back to Munich. I began to see that it had not a damned thing to do with our national security interest and that it came out of an exaggerated view of a communist monolith and all that sort of stuff. In other words, I began to share some of many critical views about our presence there. Thereafter, I was not really, in my discussions with people, a defender of our position in Vietnam. I was an explainer of it. I explained the political perceptions that led to it. I explained the political reasons behind its continuation and so forth, and at the same time I gave voice, of course, to those who were criticizing it and why. I think that is a much more effective way of presenting American policy and American society than simply to sound like a propagandist or enthusiast for any existing administration's policies.

Now, in East Berlin, the role of PAO in the explication of U.S. policies was reinforced, because the real key objective for a public affairs program in a communist country is to keep constantly before the government the factual and perceptual bases of American foreign policy -- in East Berlin particularly to inform the Central Committee and the Foreign Ministry through their advisory bodies, with whom we worked very closely and on a very personal basis, and who were very interested about American policies toward the Soviet Union, obviously those toward eastern Europe, which were differentiated in terms of the countries of eastern Europe, toward German and central European problems and toward arms control, and then, more peripherally, toward the rest of the world and so forth.

So the results were fascinating discussions with these people, both direct and in conjunction with many American participants whom we brought in. You know, Helmut Sonnefeldt came through and a great number of specialists, Stanley Hoffman of Harvard, Foreign Policy magazine specialists like Robert Hunter and William Maynes, Soviet specialists, arms control specialists, et cetera.

One after another we trotted through people who could talk intelligently on arms control, eastern Europe, on the imperatives of U.S. policy, on the perceptual basis for U.S. policies, on the political rationale, on the political pressures at work at home to do this or that. That was, for example, the time when the great Solidarity problems began in neighboring Poland. It was the time when in East Berlin itself and East Germany itself a visible opposition appeared to the regime among the young people and the clergy.

That was the second part of our operation, to help in overt ways through our libraries, through our information programs, through providing them with information as best we could, to provide the clergy and the church people and the dissident young people who had organized under the umbrella of the church with as much information, again, as we could about the United States.

The East Germans blocked our libraries pretty effectively for quite some time. The dissidents were all being watched and often warned. As a result, we did not make a big production of contact with the dissident elements ourselves. We left that to particularly one or two officers in the political section who were young people themselves and who mixed well with these young people and who therefore took it upon their shoulders to serve as the embassy contact.

We fed them with our materials, as well as making available what we could by way of film programs in the Embassy and the library, which was unfortunately very limited.

So it was really more through the outreach through our embassy officers that we were able to provide information of relevance to the growing dissenting groups who were concerned with things like, you know, alternative cultures.

Just like in the 1960s in the United States, they were concerned with such things as conscientious objectors and treatment of homosexuals and environmental questions, as well, of course, as the overriding question for all of these Germans, greater freedom of thought and expression and why doesn't that damned wall come down -- or, at least, if it doesn't come down, why can't we have lots of holes in it that let us go in and out.

East Berlin, of course, together with West Berlin, as I have said before, is the supreme embodiment of my view that public diplomacy must engage in the projection of the open society. Nowhere else can you find the contrasts more alive between open and closed, free and totalitarian societies than in that particular city.

Another interesting aspect of East Berlin, which again confirmed the view we have discussed before about the political importance of cultural programming and cultural events -- I mean, specifically cultural events, not cultural in the anthropological sense but in the fine arts sense -- is that many of the musical events or dance events, for example, that we were able to bring in to

the East Germans were themselves demonstrations, again, of an open society at work and resulted in what were really political demonstrations on the part of the East Germans, who received these groups so well.

They were saying something to their own government when, for example, Lars Lubovich and his dance group were up there, able to express themselves, you know, through dance in whatever way they wished, loose and free and open in ways that were not permitted in their own society.

So when they got up and applauded a group that was not the most brilliant in the world but certainly a good one, they were applauding just as much for this exhibition of freedom which they themselves wanted for their own artists and themselves as they were for the performance.

Again, another interesting illustration was when the New York Chamber Orchestra came through. We put them on in various cities. In each city they got a tremendous reception, I am convinced one of the reasons for it being that this was an orchestra without a director. It was twelve people running themselves in a perfectly disciplined way -- again, what better demonstration in a totalitarian society of the validity of freedom than to have twelve excellent musicians working in unison without anyone dictating to them.

So I am really quite sure that the political demonstration of societal openness that cultural programs represent, including, of course, academic exchanges, remain and are a very integral part of an effective public diplomacy.

Then, as I mentioned, we ended our stay in East Berlin by serving at the end as Deputy Chief of Mission to then Ambassador Roz Ridgway, who, as you know, has been our Assistant Secretary for European Affairs in State since 1985.

That, too, was a wonderful opportunity and gave me a taste of things that, unfortunately, most of us in the Agency were never able to reach and reminded me of another long fight: trying to reach some sense of equality in consideration for potential DCM and ambassadorships which has never happened, of course, between ourselves and our State Department colleagues.

It reminded me of the Herter report recommendations (1967?) which were very trenchant, I thought, and my own feeling being that what we really need is separate agencies, yes, but to have the officers of the two agencies and particularly the political, economic and public affairs cones, if you wish to describe them as such, interchange periodically through each officer's career and from this interchanged experience to build the kind of broad-based individuals who can then run an embassy as deputies or as chiefs of mission and give public affairs the due it should have, along with political and economic and other elements of our diplomacy.

Altogether, I had about six months as DCM during our last year in East Berlin. During the last four months in particular I was fully occupied with those duties. So that was, again, a very nice way to close our overseas career.

NELSON C. LEDSKY

**Minister/Deputy Commandant
West Berlin (1981-1985)**

Ambassador Ledsky was born in Cleveland, Ohio and was educated at Case Western Reserve University and Columbia University. After serving in the US Army, he joined the Foreign Service in 1957, serving in Georgetown, Guyana; Enugu, Nigeria; Bonn and Berlin, Germany and in the State Department in Washington. In his various assignments he was closely involved in matters concerning the status of Berlin and West Germany as well as on the persistent Greece-Turkey conflict over Cyprus. Among his other assignments, the Ambassador served on the Department's Policy Planning Staff. Ambassador Ledsky was interviewed by Thomas Stern in 2003.

Q: That is the end of a very fascinating and unusual chapter in your Foreign Service career. That takes us to 1981, when you were assigned as Minister to our Berlin Mission. How did come about?

LEDSKY: It had nothing to do with a normal personnel assignment process. It was a combination of my being unemployed, David Anderson leaving Berlin to go to Yugoslavia as ambassador and Germany country director John Kornblum deciding I was the best candidate. I also had a lot of support among the "German hands." I think the assignment was checked out with Larry Eagleburger, who was to become the assistant secretary for EUR, having left Yugoslavia as our ambassador. That is I think how the assignment was arranged to take effect in the summer of 1981.

Q: Let's return to your Berlin assignment. Tell us a little bit more about the job, beyond how you described it when we were discussing your Bonn assignment earlier.

LEDSKY: The Berlin job was unique in the Foreign Service. Technically, I was the deputy Commandant, the American general in charge of U.S. forces in Berlin and the American sector in Berlin. I was also a deputy to the U.S. ambassador in Bonn, whom I represented in Berlin. So I was both in military and civilian chains of command.

My task was really three-fold: 1) to provide administrative services in Berlin, which would be required by our "occupation" of Berlin so that it would appear that the U.S. had a major voice in the day-to-day management of Berlin's municipal affairs; and, 2) to advise the U.S. commander on political matters as he exercised his role as manager of the U.S. sector of Berlin. These were matters related to his operational responsibilities, which had to be conducted without an appearance of dictatorialness or lack of consideration of the wishes of the Berlin citizenry. The third task involved reporting to the Department and to the embassy what was going on in the whole city, including the Soviet sector.

Let me just take a few minutes to explain the organization of the mission. It had a political section, headed by an officer who spent considerable time reporting on Soviet-East German activities in Berlin.

This section included a “Senat” liaison officer. This Foreign Service officer practically lived in the Berlin legislature; he had to review all bills passed by the legislature. By the time I arrived, this function had become essentially routine since we had long given up micro-management of the Berlin administration. Nevertheless, we maintained this office in the legislature, which reported on what was going on there. Of course, technically, we could have objected to any piece of legislation and blocked it or substantially changed it. But, as I said, we had really given up any role in the legislative process – in such fields as education, for example. There were areas, such as public safety or governmental authority, where we continued to maintain a keen interest.

Some of the issues were complex. For example, the Berlin government considered itself an integral part of the West Germany governmental structure. It had representatives in the Bundesrat of the Federal Republic. When the government in Bonn would agree to some bilateral or multilateral treaties with other countries, there was always the desire to have those agreements apply to West Berlin. We allowed that in some cases; some we rejected as applicable to West Berlin and continued that debate while I was in Berlin. The treaties that dealt with the status of the city or allied responsibilities, such as aviation, could not in our view apply to West Berlin. So, as I said, we had an officer who followed legislation very carefully to insure that allied rights were not diminished in any way. We could not have our “occupation status” changed by the actions of either the West German nor Berlin governments.

We had a “public safety” officer; he was the liaison with the Berlin minister of the interior – i.e. the police and fire departments. He was also responsible for security – “homeland security” – matters in our sector – maintaining air raid shelters, the stockpiles of food and medicines, as well as espionage cases. Technically, he supervised the police and fire departments in our sector. We had a lot of “security” issues in the 1980s. We also had an officer in the political section responsible for transportation issues. During much of my tour, he was very busy negotiating with the East Germans about the status of the subway system, much of which was above ground. We had an officer who spent most of his time working with the U.S. military. He followed their activities closely. There was also a protocol officer who worked with the city officials whenever important visitors came to Berlin. That was the political section.

We also had an economic section, which was quite different from those of any other State post. For example, we ran Tempelhof Airport. That required a fully manned fire department and all the other support systems required by a large and busy airport. It was someone from the Commerce Department or FAA who was in charge of the airport. That person was an officer in the economic section.

We had a number of functions that no other State post would have. I met with most of the officers handling these unusual activities regularly. Then of course, we had a consular section with three visa officers, and an administrative section. We had a couple of military officers assigned to us, as well as a CIA staff. I would guess we had about 20-25 American officers and about 100 locals. Then we had drivers for our cars, which were part of the U.S. military establishment – which was an unusual situation. The U.S. Mission to Berlin had an odd staffing pattern reflecting the unusual range of responsibilities assigned to it.

Q: You had been away from German affairs for about seven years. What was different in Berlin

from the time you last worked on it – if anything?

LEDSKY: In those seven years, many things had changed. The most important as well as key difference in that time was that we had established an embassy in East Berlin. That had happened in late 1974. By 1981, our mission to the GDR was fully staffed and functioning, having absorbed many of the functions previously discharged by our mission in West Berlin. In theory, our embassy in East Berlin was representing our interests in the German Democratic Republic, which did not include the Soviet sector of Berlin. It was a very fine distinction because with our embassy being physically located in East Berlin – i.e. the Soviet sector, it was very hard for it not to cover activities in that sector in its reporting. But we wanted to keep to the original agreement, which specified that Berlin was a separate, independent entity governed by the four powers of Great Britain, France the U.S. and the USSR. The important change in that seven years was the recognition of the GDR by us. While we never formally accepted the existence of the Wall, we in fact recognized that it was there and that we weren't going to do anything about it.

Furthermore, in those seven intervening years, the West German government had come to accept – slowly, but surely – the existence and probable permanence of the GDR. It had adjusted to the existence of a functioning East German state much more, I think, than the three western powers, so the West Germans were increasingly inclined not to challenge the GDR or to undermine or oppose it at every turn. Willy Brandt, in particular, led the West Germans in their acceptance of the GDR and in dealing with it as another sovereign state and in helping it to solving its problems, even with the cooperation of the west. That was a fundamental change.

The third change, related in some respects to West German acceptance of the GDR, was the increased interest of the west in the activities of the local Berlin government. That government was encouraged to deal with, accommodate, assist and live with its counterpart in East Berlin. Concurrently, there was a developing view in the West Berlin administration that it really did not need the occupying powers to manage its affairs. There was an increasing resistance in the West Berlin government to what it deemed as intrusions in its affairs by the three western powers. So, by 1981, there was strong resistance to the exercise of our second function outlined earlier. By 1981, as compared to even seven years earlier, the West Berlin government did not appreciate our assistance or suggestions in the administration of city affairs.

Q: What were our views on that score?

LEDSKY: I think, in general, by 1981 we had accepted the West Berliners' views on this issue. We were less enthusiastic and slower to accept this view than were the British and the French. We were the last to establish an embassy in East Germany as we were the last to accept the existence of the GDR. We were the most insistent in maintaining the fiction of allied occupation, although I think we were probably much more willing to accept the financial consequences of the changing nature of the occupation than were the British and the French. The latter two did not really want to give up the financial income that they received as occupying powers; that was not a motivation for us. But we did insist longer and more vigorously than the others that the original rules of the administration of Berlin be continued and remain unchanged. I think we were the country which was the most interested in using the occupation as an avenue for bringing down the Wall and in eventually reuniting Germany. That was still an American objective in the

1980s, even after the British and French had essentially given up that goal – as had the West Germans.

Q: Why were we interested in bringing the Wall down?

LEDSKY: I am not sure that we were really that interested. We may have been perhaps more interested than our western allies, but it certainly was not high on our agenda. We of course thought about it; it was, after all, one of the major reasons we were operating in Berlin as we were. Even though we recognized the GDR, Washington recognized – at least subconsciously and quietly – that the GDR was an artificial entity which could never really be independent. It required continual and substantial Soviet support. In light of that, for a long time, we more than anyone else, believed it right to bring down this puppet state. Some American policy makers – those who supported the relaxation of tensions in the 1980s – were in continual conflict with the more strident Reagan philosophy which strived to have the Wall torn down as part of a major policy reorientation by the USSR. I certainly felt that tension while serving in Berlin in the 1980s.

One of the main issues of the time was whether to deploy medium range missiles in West Germany. That was the main topic of debate during my tour. We had street demonstrations in Berlin, as well as in other German cities, against that policy. It caused a policy rift between the West Germans and ourselves. It was the cause of much anti-Americanism in the Federal Republic.

Q: How did the allied military commands in Berlin react to this proposal?

LEDSKY: I think the British, French and American commandants were united on this issue. They supported the placement of missiles in Germany. The fact is that the three allied militaries, when it came to Berlin or east-west relations, saw the world through the same prisms and were united in their views, as were the civilian governments. In fact, I don't remember the commandants really disagreeing on any east-west issues while I was in Berlin. The French and British militaries in Berlin took real tough stances. Occasionally, they had to be restrained by their civilian foreign offices or their military headquarters, but generally, they took hard-edged positions on east-west issues. For example, while I was in Berlin, we encountered some problems with the Soviets over air access to Berlin. All the military took tough, rigid stances.

Q: During your four years in Berlin, how many different American commandants did you work with? What were your views of the British and French commandants?

LEDSKY: Two American commandants. They rotated every two years. I thought the British and French military, in general, had some top talent in Berlin. It was an assignment widely sought, so that the cream of their military leadership was assigned to Berlin.

Q: Tell us a little about your daily routine as minister?

LEDSKY: We usually started the day with a staff meeting with the political and economic officers. These substantive "teams" were unique to Berlin. I would meet with the commanding

general – as I did also at the end of the day. I would, on most days, spend some time with city officials – either the mayor or someone in the legislative branch. Those meetings were most often on specific administrative or legislative issues. We held a monthly meeting with the mayor. I would see my counterpart in East Berlin periodically – three or four times a month. I would also often meet with a Soviet official in East Berlin. It was my responsibility to deal with the Soviets on matters related to the management of Berlin affairs. As I said before, for historical reasons, that was the responsibility of the Berlin mission and not our embassy in East Berlin. I also often spent time on what I would call “exclusively” State Department business, e.g. consular business. I had some responsibility for a public information program. We had an America House in West Berlin and I had a couple of USIA officers on my staff. We took every opportunity available to explain U.S. positions on a variety of issues. I gave speeches, I hosted lunches, etc. There was a U.S. business group in Berlin, which I would periodically host for lunch. The three ministers – French, British and American – would hold a weekly meeting. There were a lot of routine meetings that I had to attend.

Q: In retrospect, how much of your work was a legacy of times gone by, with perhaps little relevance to our interests in the mid-1980s?

LEDSKY: That is very hard to answer because it would be hard to categorize any specific activity in those terms. I would say that about half of our activities were related to what I would describe as the “artificial” nature of the occupation. Thirty to forty percent was real diplomatic work – that is work that would be expected from any State Department post of some importance. But to show you how arbitrary that distinction was, I would put meeting with the U.S. ambassador when he came to Berlin in the first category. I did so because much of his time was devoted to traveling to East Berlin to meet his Soviet counterpart or spending time with the French and British generals and ministers. I would spend a lot of time preparing for these meetings, writing and reviewing briefing papers for these meetings, accompanying the ambassador to these meetings. These were all activities that a normal mission would not engage in.

I spent a lot of time counseling the commandant, who was nominally the senior U.S. representative in Berlin. Although perfectly competent, he was called upon about half of the time to deal with non-military matters. He needed help from a non-military source.

The functions and activities that fell in the first category – i.e. the occupation-related ones – were not the result of bureaucratic inertia. They were significant in that they were the avenue for our continued occupation presence in Berlin, which in turn satisfied some very important political objective – to protect the status of the city until final negotiations were to take care of the issue. No one knew when those final negotiations would take place, but we certainly did not want any deterioration of our rights and those of the people living in the western sectors until agreements were reached. Therefore, these individual responsibilities, which by themselves might have been seen as picayune, were part and parcel of a much broader and very important objective. Others may disagree with that view, but as far as I was concerned, that was the rationale for maintaining responsibility for all occupation-related matters. So I think it was worthwhile working on what may appear as routine matters, many of which related to city management and appeared far removed from international politics.

I spent much of my time arguing with the mayor of Berlin about what was in his bailiwick and what was in ours. Even though the matter may have seemed trivial, there was a recognition on both sides that much more important matters were at stake. We were actually arguing about how best to protect the status of a Berlin unencumbered by Soviet or East German interference so that when final negotiations took place, certain fundamental rights had been maintained. There were those who accused us of spending time on meaningless or irrelevant matters, but I don't think I ever heard a German or American official responsible for the city's management make such assertions. I think the German leadership understood that we were trying to maintain a line – thin at best – between functions that might have no effect on final agreements and those which could play a significant role. That is not a line which can be drawn easily or one that is immutable and that was the reason for some of our disagreements with the Berlin officialdom.

I well remember one of the major areas of disagreement. It revolved around the question of whether the mayor should be able to call on the president of the GDR, Erich Honecker. That was a big issue in the early 1980s. The mayor thought it was important for him to do so and that there was no reason for allied permission – or even to tell us. We rejected that view; we insisted that the mayor get our permission, which he was not likely to get. It was this kind of issue that periodically gave rise to tension between the allies and the West Berlin government. I think all involved, regardless of their positions, understood the importance of the issue not only on its own merits, but as a part of the larger objective of maintaining the “occupation fig-leaf” to protect the future of the city. The difference arose not over the objective, but in our approaches to it.

Similarly, we had a number of disagreements with the Berlin authorities concerning that fine line between us about who had jurisdiction over a particular endeavor: where their authority ended and ours began. Some of these issues were quite difficult to arbitrate. I received no help or guidance from Washington, because the Department may not have fully understood the issue or the technicalities involved or perhaps may really not have wished to be involved. The Berlin administration, of course, did not agree with us on these issues and refused to take the actions that we suggested or required. Despite these occasional hiccups, I think over-all, we had a good relationship with the Berlin administration since there was agreement, as I said, on the long-range goal.

Q: You just mentioned the role of the Department. Did you have the feeling that the Berlin issue had been around so long that it was losing its luster and people cared less and less about it?

LEDSKY: I think there was very little interest on the Seventh Floor in Berlin issues. It had decreased dramatically from ten years earlier. Berlin was no longer high on the U.S. foreign policy agenda. Germany was still of great interest. It housed, after all, some of our major military bases; it was to be the home of the short range missiles; and, it was part of what we hoped would be – sooner rather than later – a united Germany. But Berlin faded as an issue of interest to policy makers. It may have had some symbolic significance, but I don't think the Seventh Floor gave it much consideration. There were undoubtedly some parts of the Department that wished Berlin would disappear, or should have disappeared before the 1980s.

I should at the same time say that the German division in EUR was very helpful; we had very good relations with them. The desk always tried to be helpful. I think the assistant secretary was interested in Berlin and followed events there. Both Richard Burt and Rozanne Ridgway recognized the role Berlin played in the broader question of East-West relations.

Q: Did you have many high level American visitors?

LEDSKY: Yes, indeed. As I said, Berlin was a symbol and therefore attracted high-level visitors. It also was a great shopping locality. President Reagan visited during my tour. We had many CODELs. Jesse Jackson came on a visit. Larry Eagleburger came as did George Shultz just prior to taking over as secretary of State. We had some cabinet members – Weinberger and Casey for example. We were never short of high-level visitors.

Some of the visits were quite substantive. I think the most delightful visitor was Ed Koch, who I think at the time was already mayor of New York. It was a sort of sister cities visit. He met with all of the senior city officials. I remember taking him to dinner at the Paris Bar, which was one of the swankier places in West Berlin. We also took him to Checkpoint Charlie, as we did with all visitors. Then we went to a U-Bahn station, which was called Kochstrasse Station. With a twinkle in his eye, he turned to me and thanked me for naming a station after him, even before he had arrived. I thought he was just a very delightful and charming individual and we had a very good time.

I also remember the Weinberger visit. He came with Colin Powell and Lauder, who was his staff aide. We briefed them on our air corridor problems. We had a number of close calls in the air and threats from the Soviets of more to come. The issue usually was the height of the flights; the Soviets were trying to impose an arbitrary ceiling. There also were some other disputes about flight interference. So we had some real concerns that we wanted to go over with Weinberger. He also met with the troops and I think it was a very good visit.

I also recall visits from Congressman Bereuter and Senator Joe Biden. The latter stayed at the ambassador's residence. So we had a continual flow of members of Congress.

Q: In protocol terms, who was the nominal host for these visits – the commandant or you?

LEDSKY: I think we used to divide the visits. The general was the host for Weinberger and his team, as he was for President Reagan. I met others, like George Shultz, and Eagleburger and other State officials at the airport. I probably met most of the CODELs and other civilian groups. The CODELs usually stopped in Bonn first and were therefore taken around West Germany by an embassy officer. These visits were time consuming; the actual visit was really not the time consumer; it was the preparation. Of course, with a presidential visit, the preparation took at least a month – with pre-visits from Michael Deaver and the Secret Service and the White House Communications Office and all the other establishments which play a role in presidential visits. Every movement that the president would make was reviewed over and over again; his words were carefully worked over.

Q: Let's talk about the presidential visit of April, 1982. What was its purpose?

LEDSKY: I think Reagan came to Berlin because every president comes to Berlin if he or she is in Europe – at least once. He wanted to stand in front of the Wall; he wanted to demonstrate his support for the free city; he wanted to demonstrate his support for close German-American relations. The speech was quite good, although it is not the one for which Reagan will always be remembered which was made in 1987.

I must say that I was not really that involved in the visit. In the first place, the official host was the commandant; I was in the second row. The Chancellor of Germany was there and the Berlin mayor of course played a major role. There really was nothing that I could add to the festivities or the briefings. I did shake his hands a couple of times and I did attend all of the events, but I really had little to do with either the preparation for or the visit itself.

Q: So this was primarily a “show the flag” appearance?

LEDSKY: Right. It was a day in Berlin as part of a visit to Germany.

Q: Was there anything notable about the visit?

LEDSKY: Everything went smoothly. There may have been a slight glitch. Reagan wanted to have a picture taken as he stood in front of Checkpoint Charlie. In order to do so properly, he would have had to walk into “no man’s land,” which separated West and East Berlin, which was against the rules. There was some concern that this gesture might not be welcomed by the Soviets or the East Germans and that some overly-eager guard might take a shot at the president. In the end, the president just passed Checkpoint Charlie and stood in “no man’s” land, had the picture taken and that was it. This whole routine was actually just sprung on us; we had no clue what Reagan would do at the checkpoint. I thought that it was a most unnecessary risk for just a picture. The presidential party was very proud of how they managed this “feat.” I don’t know whether anyone else still remembers that episode, but I will not forget it.

The rest of the visit went off without a hitch. I am not sure the president understood the significance of Tempelhof airport. He gave his speech at a new college. I think the visit was quite a success.

Q: During your tour, did there seem to be a decreasing interest in maintaining all the rules that the four allies had developed over the years, which may by the mid-1980s have lost their substantive rationales?

LEDSKY: There had been a steady decline for some years in our role in Berlin. It was noticeable. Much of decline was done consciously, but not necessarily welcomed by us who had been and were working on Berlin matters. We tended to reject changes in the *status quo* because, as I mentioned before, we were looking forward to the day when Berlin – and the two Germanies – might be united. We felt that until that day, symbolism was important and should be kept up. But there were still some meetings and contacts that were maintained strictly to keep the status of Berlin in the public eye. These meetings were an important part of the record; we made certain points at these meetings to bolster our position in the city. We stood on principal, even when we

knew that our requests would be ignored by the city administration.

Q: Why did you feel that perhaps we were moving too rapidly towards the dismantling of the occupation regime?

LEDSKY: By the mid-1980s, there was very little of that regime left. There were very few things that we were doing that really could be justified by the “occupation” theory. I felt that few of those practices should be continued for they were the last vestiges of a status that had to be maintained until a final resolution of the city’s situation. We should not have to watch our rights be whittled away while the Soviets were not giving up any of theirs. We probably were more concerned about this deterioration of our position in Berlin than was Washington or London or Paris.

Included in the last vestiges of our standing in Berlin were such matters as the regime at Spandau prison. Since the 1960s, the prison population had declined from about a half a dozen to one – Rudolf Hess – so a jail was maintained at considerable expense for one prisoner. We had a four-power guard rotation, monthly lunches, maintenance of a large building – all for one old, sick man who was certainly no threat. The West Germans complained about the costs and the stupidity of our position. In fact, by the mid-1980s, I don’t think the world would have cared about where Hess was being held and the Germans repeatedly pointed that out to us. We had held Hess since 1945; by the mid 1980s, it had less and less significance. It was almost entirely symbolic. We had to confront the reality of the situation – maintaining a jail built for five hundred prisoners which housed only one. We in Berlin persisted in keeping Hess in Spandau because it was one of the few four power functions remaining in the city. It was one of the few issues on which the western allies and the Soviets had a meeting of the mind and a cooperative relationship. The process had become routine and the Soviets were not about to upset that apple cart. They continued to manage the prison every fourth month; they continued to consult on Hess’ management regularly. It was the one issue where the Soviets had not tried to change the original four-power arrangements. These continued consultations offered an opportunity to discuss other Berlin issues, which was becoming impossible in other contexts. The Soviets were just interested in carrying on a dialogue about Berlin, but would do so in the context of the Spandau prison.

That is just one example of four-power responsibilities that we were carrying on in the mid-1980s. As I said, over time, these had become fewer and fewer, but I felt it important to continue as many of them as we could in order to preserve the “occupation” theory. Another example of this general theory was the Berlin air center, which was manned by four controllers – one from each occupying power. They supervised the air traffic in and out of the city. We believed that it was important to maintain that center for safety reasons, but also because it was one of the few activities in Berlin that was still administered jointly by the four powers. It was another example of a four-power cooperative enterprise and that was important as another symbol of Berlin’s status as territory occupied by the four powers. The occupation regime was still in effect and would not pass until a final settlement was agreed upon. As I said, we believed that it was important to hold onto these few remaining vestiges of the occupation to protect negotiations on the final settlement. We were concerned that otherwise these responsibilities would slowly but surely be turned over to the Germans, leaving nothing to be settled at the end. The Soviets would

have turned all the remaining responsibilities over to their client state – the GDR. We insisted on continuing them.

There were a number of other areas that should be mentioned. Under the “occupation” arrangements, we were able to send our patrols to all sectors of the city. That right had been challenged during the 1960s when the Wall went up. We thought it important to continue this regime. Every day, we would send U.S. military vehicles into East Berlin. These patrols could not do anything, but it was important to “show the flag” in East Berlin. People began to raise questions about this practice; why use good resources for just driving around one sector of the city? Then the number of patrols were whittled down, but we in Berlin were strongly opposed to ceasing the operation all together. We wanted the theory of a city open to all four powers maintained; we had the right to circulate in all parts of Berlin. In a number of areas we were insisting continuing practices which were meaningless and expensive perhaps in themselves, but had in our eyes important symbolic significance. Our position was not universally applauded, to say the least.

Q: While holding out for these vestiges, were we beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel, i.e., an end to an arrangement that had been in effect for forty years? Could you see any signs that “normalization” was foreseeable?

LEDSKY: It is a hard question. I don’t think that in the mid-1980s anyone had any idea how the Berlin situation or the German one in general would be resolved. None of us had any idea when or how the allied responsibilities for Berlin would end and how the functions that we were still controlling might be terminated. I don’t think, in fact, that much thought was being given in Berlin, Bonn, Washington, London, or Paris to how to end the occupation. There may be people who today will take credit for having thought and seen the eventual outcome, but if they did in fact exist, we certainly never heard of them.

There were discussions about specific functions. I mentioned Spandau, which was an obvious issue as the prison population decreased from half a dozen to three and then one. Obviously, the idea of closing Spandau was considered at various times. Some worried about what might happen if Hess died: would we continue to maintain the prison, which then would have held no one. So there were discussions about individual functions, but no one that I am aware of was tackling the larger question of a final solution to a divided city and two Germanies. We had no answer to this fundamental issue and that is why I felt very strongly that our vestigial responsibilities had to be maintained, lest our bargaining power be completely or essentially eroded.

I should add that at least on the U.S. side, there was a recognition that change would take place sometime. Nobody knew how to bring the fissure to a close, but we all knew that it would. I thought that the occupation would end at some point and that somehow the Wall would come down. I didn’t know when or how; neither did anyone else, but we were certain that major changes would occur. There was no question that the Wall was arbitrary, capricious, and artificial. It was not only inhumane, but it was also clearly a barrier that could not be permanent. It separated a city which historically had been one entity; it was grotesque and a symbol of dictatorial power and would eventually be torn down. No one was sufficiently prescient to even

suggest a possible scenario for its demise. I think most people did not see any change in the short and medium time frames; and therefore, no one was planning for that eventuality.

Q: You have mentioned the missile issue on several occasions. Tell us more about that.

LEDSKY: This not a Berlin-centered issue. We were really tangential. The question being debated was whether to place medium-range missiles in the center of Europe, i.e., West Germany. Most Germans were against it. NATO, pushed by the U.S., insisted that it be done. The Americans believed that the missiles would serve as a deterrent, particularly since the Soviets had placed similar weaponry in some Eastern European Warsaw-Pact countries. They were targeted on West Germany. The issue became a major political controversy among the German political parties. It got to be seen as a test of West German adherence to the western alliance because NATO – pushed by the U.S. – wanted it. In the final analysis, the West German government stood by the alliance. I think that in Berlin, the population was overwhelming opposed to it. We had major anti-missile demonstrations while I served in Berlin. It was “Down with the rockets” or “Down with the Americans”. The demonstrators were quite vocal about their anti-Americanism. I spent a lot of time on the stump defending our position, as did a number of my staff members.

Q: Did this anti-Americanism become more virulent during your four years in Berlin?

LEDSKY: I would say so. There was an increasing animus during my tour, certainly if compared to earlier periods. It was largely related to the missile issue. It was not sparked by anything we did in Berlin. Berliners, like most West Germans, were just opposed to the deployment of missiles on their territory. They felt that Ronald Reagan was leading the U.S. in the wrong direction. On the other hand, Berlin had been and increasingly became the center of left-wing attitudes. The Berlin Social Democrats were quite far to the left and anti-American. Berlin University was the center of student radicalism – had been and was in the mid 1980s.

I should add that although, as I said, anti-Americanism was quite strong during my tour, by the end of it, it began to subside. It reached its peak in the 1982-83 period. During the first Reagan visit, we were very concerned about presidential security and large demonstrations. By the summer of 1985, the missile debate was over; they were going to be deployed onto West German territory. Furthermore, the conservatives had made a major come-back in Berlin; Weizsacker was elected as mayor. The Social Democrats were essentially replaced in office; their influence waned considerably.

I should also mention that the new city administration was instrumental in raising the level of services to the Berliners. When I first arrived, there was a major problem with squatters. While it was never completely solved during my tour, by 1985 it had been alleviated considerably and solutions were being developed.

Q: You saw the Soviet representatives periodically. What were your impressions?

LEDSKY: I was able to establish and maintain a good relationship with the DCM of the Soviet embassy in East Berlin, as well as with one or two others staffers in that embassy. We held as

series of meetings between our ambassador, Arthur Burns, and the Soviet ambassador to the GDR – there were a couple of them during my tour. The Soviets were much more accommodating by 1985 than they had been in 1981, or since the Berlin blockade. In general, they were very friendly. They did not act menacingly at all; they seemed to be trying their best to be cooperative. They appeared to be almost as concerned about their client state, the GDR, as they were about the west. They showed considerable worry about the nature of the GDR regime; it did not seem to be working up to their expectations. They worried that the East Germans would find the west increasingly appealing. They also indicated a hope that the U.S. and the USSR return to their WW II alliance.

From my vantage point, I think this was a strange period of U.S.-USSR relations. The Soviets were concerned about and strongly opposed to the deployment of the medium-range missiles, but that did not affect my personal relationships with Soviet officials. I think others in Berlin had the same experience. The mid-1980s was a period of increasing U.S.-USSR cooperation, i.e., detente.

Q: How would you describe your relations with the embassy in Bonn?

LEDSKY: Actually, I think our relationship with Bonn was quite good. There were several “Nelson Ledskys” in Bonn, i.e., officers who followed Berlin affairs as I had done seven years earlier. Ambassador Arthur Burns followed Berlin affairs closely, as did DCM Bill Western and the political counselors. Of course, as had been true historically, there was some tension between the embassy and the Berlin mission. Burns had a steep learning curve regarding Berlin. He did know the long history that had preceded his arrival and I am sure was puzzled by some of the practices that had developed or the necessity for keeping them going, as I have discussed earlier. He was very perceptive; his thought processes were direct and unambiguous. That undoubtedly created intellectual problems for him; I am sure that he never fully understood why the allies were continuing practices that he probably viewed as passé. He would challenge me and our staff on many issues; we may not have satisfied him with our answers every time, but we had a good relationship. He was not only a good ambassador; he was also a wonderful person and we got along extremely well. I almost came to enjoy the Saturday morning seminars, which he would hold when he came to Berlin. These were serious sessions with Burns posing a lot of tough issues. He would come about once a month and stay for a few days.

As I said, I don’t think he ever fully understood what we were trying to achieve in Berlin. However, he was very interested in his position in the city. When we told him what his functions were in this quadripartite setting, he began to be attached to it. He was anxious to meet with the Soviet ambassador; he wanted to drive around East Berlin; he wanted to host social events in East Berlin, in part to meet GDR representatives. He was not too happy to have an American embassy in East Berlin, even though his jurisdiction did not overlap with that of our ambassador to the GDR. He always defended our Berlin practices and policies in any dispute with our embassy in East Berlin. The concept that he had a role to play in East Berlin appealed to him. There were times when we had to caution him to pull back in disputes with Ambassador Ridgway. In truth, I don’t think there was much love lost between the two.

Our relationship with Bonn was actually quite good. I would visit the embassy periodically,

seeing the ambassador, the DCM, the political counselor and staff. That was a change from earlier years, when a visit to Bonn by our minister in Berlin was a rare thing. But Burns, for example, wanted me to attend his monthly staff meeting; I could not do that every time, but I did try to get to Bonn at least once every two months and sometimes more frequently than that. I think it is fair to say that I was probably closer to the Bonn embassy than most, if not all, of my predecessors. They did go to the embassy, but not as frequently as I did. As I mentioned before, the mission's expenses, except the salaries of the Americans, were paid by the Germans under an "occupation costs" budget. As a result, my travels were at no cost to the American taxpayers. So, as the embassy's budget became more limited, my travel to Bonn was an obvious way to accomplish a necessary task at no charge to that budget. That principle soon applied also to conferences that were being held around West Germany. The ambassador or the DCM would send me because it saved the embassy money. This whole budget process was one of the many anomalies which had developed after WWII, when the "occupation costs" theory was implemented.

Q: It was the only situation in the world in which an ambassador and the embassy's administrative staff controlled expenditures made by a U.S. military establishment. Do you have any final thoughts on your tour as U.S. Minister in Berlin?

LEDSKY: Let me say that I instituted a couple of new processes in Berlin, which were unique and unprecedented. For one, I tried to establish and maintain good relations with Berlin's representatives in the *Bundestag* and the *Bundesrat*, the two chambers of the German Parliament. These were elected officials and as the 1980s progressed, it became evident that the Berlin representatives were becoming powers in West Germany political circles. That was a new development and spurred me to initiate and maintain good relationships with these people. I think I succeeded in that with members of both parties, the SDP and CDU, during my four years in Berlin.

I think I also established a relationship with Weizsacker, who was the mayor of Berlin when I got to Berlin, and who eventually became the president of the FRG. We got along extremely well, in part because I was willing to stand up to him and in part because he was very pro-American and very much attuned to the Republican party's approaches to policies and politics. The two of us traveled to Washington on a couple of occasions while he was the mayor; we made the rounds of the political arena. I don't think any of my predecessors did that with the mayors who were in office during their tours as ministers.

We established an American businessmen's group in Berlin to promote U.S. investments and business activities in the city. In fact, the American business community had begun to retreat from Berlin starting in the early 1980s. More and more of the American firms had replaced their American leadership with Germans and several of them had left Berlin completely. So, I spent a lot of time working with American businessmen to reverse these trends and to expand their presence in the city. We founded a U.S. business council to assist in these efforts. Many of the members were Germans working for American companies. We worked hard on encouraging further American investments in the city. Ford built new facilities. Gillette, which had had a presence in the early 1960s, renewed and enlarged its presence. I think these efforts had a lasting impact; they made sense – economically for the companies and politically for us. The city

cooperated readily with us; it had always had a practice of extending subsidies to foreign companies investing in Berlin. Over time, in some cases, that meant maintaining a minimal company presence in Berlin to take advantage of the subsidy, but to move many of the operations out of the city, where the costs were lower. That is what we tried to reverse – that trend – so that American companies would stay and expand their operations in Berlin.

That is another example of the challenges that our office in Berlin faced, which would not arise in any other subsidiary post. Berlin was unique. I felt that it was important to keep and, hopefully, enlarge an American economic presence in Berlin to support our position in the city, both from the American business community and the Germans. In fact, it was the American business community, both in the U.S. and in West Germany that would often take up our cause and defend the U.S. position on Berlin issues.

RUDOLF V. PERINA
Protocol/Senate Liaison Officer
Berlin (1981-1985)

Ambassador Perina was born in Czechoslovakia when that country was under communist control. He escaped with his family to Morocco, then Switzerland and finally the United States. The ambassador was educated at the University of Chicago and Columbia University. Entering the Foreign Service in 1974, Mr. Perina specialized in Military-Political Affairs at posts abroad, including Moscow, Berlin, Brussels, Vienna and Belgrade. In Washington he served on the National Security Council, specializing in Soviet issues. From 1998 to 2001 Mr. Perino was US Ambassador to Moldova. Ambassador Perina was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2006

Q: You went to Berlin in 1981?

PERINA: Yes. In 1981 we moved from Moscow to Berlin.

Q: What was the Berlin situation in 1981 because this was always a city of tension between East and West?

PERINA: The situation calmed considerably after the Quadripartite Agreement of 1971, which to a large degree stabilized the way the four allies interacted. There were still big differences in our interpretations of the Agreement and the status of Berlin, however. The whole theology of Berlin was extremely complicated. For example, we considered East Berlin still the Soviet zone of occupied Berlin. However, the Soviets had accepted it as part of the GDR (German Democratic Republic) and the capital of East Germany. So we had completely different views on the status of East Berlin, which had real consequences for actions in many areas. For example, when we traveled to East Berlin, we always insisted on being checked by Soviet officials, not by East German officials, because we did not recognize East German sovereignty in East Berlin. If we had any problems in East Berlin, we complained to the Soviets and not to the East Germans.

The GDR officials, on the other hand, wanted to make the point that this was now their capital, the capital of the GDR. So a complicated procedure was developed as a type of *modus vivendi* for dealing with all these differing viewpoints. Thus, when we crossed from West to East Berlin via Checkpoint Charlie, we would have these cards that we would show through the car window to GDR guards, but we would always keep the windows closed and not speak with the guards. If there were any problems, we complained to the Soviets. The East Germans came to accept this but were always pushing the envelope in one way or another. These kinds of practical arrangements were developed to cope in practical ways with all the contradictions of the situation. Berlin was full of this kind of theology.

There were similarly complex procedures related to road corridors to West Germany and the air corridors for air traffic. But by and large, the major crises of Berlin had passed by 1981. It was still probably the city with more espionage going on per square mile than in any other city in Europe simply because it was so easy for each of the four occupying powers—the U.S., the Soviet Union, the UK and France—as well as the East and West Germans to spy on one another. Each of the occupying powers had virtual sovereignty in their sector so they could do anything: control the police, control the phone network, build radio towers, etc. They were basically the law. So there was a lot of eavesdropping, everybody listening to everybody else and so on. But overall, the situation was stable compared to years past.

Q: You were there from 1981 to 1985?

PERINA: Yes, for four years. I had two different jobs in that period. The first was called the Protocol Officer job but it was actually the job of being the liaison with the Soviets on Berlin matters. This made sense because I had just come from Moscow, knew Russian and so on. I had a counterpart in the Soviet Embassy in East Berlin who dealt with me on Berlin matters. But I did not deal with the East Germans in any way because we had by that time opened a U.S. Embassy in East Berlin. Since we saw East Berlin as the Soviet sector of occupied Berlin and not as the capital of the GDR, the phrase we used was to say that our Embassy was “to the GDR but not in the GDR.” Obviously, there was a lot of convoluted theology here but it brought stability to the city and to the relationship between the two Germanys. And it was not just the U.S. that compromised but the Soviets and East Germans had to as well. A lot of their practical actions were also inconsistent with the positions of principle they espoused.

Q: What sorts of issues did you talk about with the Soviets?

PERINA: We would talk about all issues that came up related to Berlin. The Soviets really had an inconsistency to deal with because they wanted to have their cake and eat it also. They wanted to support the position of their ally the GDR but also still be regarded as one of four occupying powers of Berlin that had special privileges in West Berlin, such as access, a role in quadripartite discussions and so on. So they supported the GDR publicly but not always privately. A lot of things I talked about with my Soviet counterpart consisted of problems caused by the GDR—impeding our access to East Berlin via Checkpoint Charlie, causing problems through new restrictions on the air or road corridors to West Berlin and so on. The Soviets would usually say that it was none of their business and that we had to talk to the GDR, but then they would go ahead and help resolve the problem by bringing the East Germans into line. It was a continual

tug of war. There was also another category of problems I dealt with, and those were problems caused by the Soviets in West Berlin. We recognized privileged Soviet access to West Berlin because this stemmed from our interpretation of Berlin's status and we wanted the same privileges in East Berlin but of course we kept a close watch on them when they came. The problems that arose varied from drunken Soviet soldiers getting into bar fights to clear cases of attempted espionage by Soviet personnel from East Berlin. I remember one instance where I had to call my counterpart in the middle of the night, and we expelled two Soviet military officers for attempted espionage. They were caught red-handed trying to buy information from U.S. military personnel. In these cases, we would turn them over to Soviet authorities with a protest, and the Soviets would give a pro forma protest in return. We would not arrest them because we did recognize a type of diplomatic immunity for all occupying powers in all of Berlin, so we just kicked them out of the Western sectors. Toward the end of my time, we had another kind of incident—Polish hijackings of aircraft to West Berlin. They became a favorite way for Poles to escape from Poland, and we must have had six or seven toward the end of my Berlin tour.

Q: Was this a result of martial law in Poland?

PERINA: Yes, the country was moving toward martial law, and a lot of Poles were trying to get out because they saw a big crackdown coming. One of the favorite ways to escape was to hijack a plane and fly to West Berlin where they would land at Tempelhof airport and become our responsibility because it was in the U.S. sector. The distance from Poland to West Berlin was very short, and for Poles it was the closest thing to reaching American custody and protection. We had a number of these, mostly commercial airliners from LOT but also private planes, crop dusters and so on. We soon had a set routine of dealing with them. We would hold the crew and passengers overnight and question them, giving everyone the option of staying in the West or returning to Poland. We made a point of always punishing the hijacker or hijackers because we didn't want to condone hijacking, but they were handed over to German courts and often received fairly light sentences, though these did usually include imprisonment. There was an internal debate we had after the first hijacking on whether the hijackers should be tried by us, by the Americans, in courts that we establish. This was consistent with our position on the rights of the occupying powers but in practice promised to be extremely complicated. We would have had to set up a court, fly in judges, and so on. In the end, we decided it was easier to hand the hijackers over to the Germans for punishment. But the punishment was light enough that hijackers kept coming, and the Polish authorities were very frustrated by their inability to stop this. They started putting undercover air marshals on LOT flights, sometimes several on a flight, and usually the air marshals themselves were very tempted to stay in the West, if only because they were in big trouble for allowing the hijacking to happen.

There were many emotional experiences at these all-night sessions with people who suddenly found themselves in the West and faced the unexpected decision of whether to stay or go back to Poland. These were ordinary Poles who happened to be on the airplane but once they were in our sector, they knew that if they chose to stay we would allow them to do so. Sometimes you could see families debating through the night what to do because it was clearly a momentous life decision. Quite a few chose to stay, though I do not have the statistics. This was primarily on the commercial flights that came in. We also had some hijackings by people who would take crop dusters or similar small aircraft and just fly out. One fellow got an old plane somewhere, painted

red stars on it so that it wouldn't be shot down, and used a roadmap to find Berlin, flying just several hundred feet above the road. The ingenuity was amazing.

One interesting thing in my dealings with the Soviets that I forgot to mention consisted of visits to their Embassy in East Berlin. The Embassy was and remains still this huge building on the famous avenue Unter den Linden. Once my Soviet counterpart gave me a tour of the building, starting with an enormous marble staircase in the lobby. He asked me: "Do you know where that marble comes from?" I said, "No." He said, "Well, that is marble that Hitler was taking to Moscow to build a monument celebrating his victory over the Soviet Union. We brought it back here and made it into the staircase of the Soviet Embassy in Berlin." I don't know if that's an apocryphal story or not. It sounds apocryphal, but it's also very Soviet. There was also a chair in a reception room on the second floor where some visitors were taken. It was an old leather chair, and he told me to sit in it and asked, "Do you know what chair that is?" And I said, "No." He said, "Well, that was Hitler's favorite chair from the Reichskanzlei." I mean, a lot of people would not be proud to have Hitler's chair or to put you into Hitler's chair but clearly the Soviets took pride in this, an ever present reminder of how they had beaten the Nazis.

Q: Did you get any sense from the diplomats you dealt with that things were beginning to loosen up in the Soviet Union?

PERINA: Not really, and the developments in Poland suggested the opposite. But one thing that I began to perceive and that really became apparent in my next assignment at NATO was how very scared the Soviets were becoming of American technological know-how, and particularly of SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative). This was about the time that SDI was coming into the news as part of Reagan's plan to make nuclear weapons obsolete. It was, of course, very controversial, with much debate on whether it was really possible to build a shield against nuclear attack that would take away the threat of nuclear war. But I can tell you that the Soviets I dealt with took it very seriously and seemed very concerned about getting into a high-tech competition with the United States. The glory of the Sputnik was long past, the computer age was beginning, and the Soviets sensed that they were very far behind. They also realized that their strength as a world power came from possession of nuclear weapons, and not from their GDP or anything else. Without the clout of nuclear weapons, they would be in big trouble, and they realized this. Already in Berlin my Soviet counterpart would turn social conversations to SDI and try to argue why the U.S. should abandon the effort. Since neither of us had any responsibility for this issue, it was clear to me that his comments came from generic talking points that all Soviet diplomats had been instructed to use whenever possible.

This was, of course, within the context of the big debate in Germany about NATO deployment of intermediate range nuclear weapons (INF) to counter the SS-20 missiles deployed by the Soviets. It was a huge controversy during my time in Germany because there was much European opposition. When President Reagan visited Berlin while I was there, we had huge demonstrations against him by Germans opposed to INF deployment. So these nuclear issues were very much on the table during this period, and while East-West relations were stable in Berlin, there was a lot of tension in the broader U.S.-Soviet relationship.

Q: Did you have problems with American soldiers getting loose in the Eastern zone and getting

into trouble?

PERINA: Well there were incidents like this, but fewer than one would imagine because of fairly strict regulations on U.S. soldiers going to East Berlin. I don't recall any specific protests from the Soviets of this nature. By and large, our military was quite disciplined and responsible, and there were far more opportunities to get into trouble in West Berlin without the need to cross into the East.

Q: Who was the American Ambassador at this time?

PERINA: It was Arthur Burns, our Ambassador in Bonn. He had two hats. He was our Ambassador to the FRG in Bonn, but he was also the head of the U.S. Mission to West Berlin. So he also had two Soviet counterparts—the Soviet Ambassador in Bonn and the Soviet Ambassador in East Berlin on Berlin issues. There was a tradition that every six months there was a lunch on Berlin issues between the U.S. Ambassador and the Soviet Ambassador. Because I was the working-level liaison to the Soviets on these issues, and because I knew Russian, I was asked shortly after my arrival to serve as the U.S. interpreter at one such lunch, and I ended up doing it for my entire time in Berlin. In fact, once I was even asked to fly to Bonn and interpret at a lunch that Ambassador Burns had with his Russian counterpart in Bonn. But usually I interpreted at the Berlin lunches, which alternated between East and West Berlin. The way it worked was that both Ambassadors brought an interpreter, and the Russian fellow interpreted English into Russian and I did Russian into English. This was easiest for both of us because neither I nor the Russian, I think, were professional interpreters. But it worked well and allowed me to participate at all the lunches.

The first Soviet Ambassador for whom I interpreted was Piotr Abrassimov, who was a Berlin institution. He was a very senior Soviet Ambassador, an expert on Berlin who had negotiated the 1971 Quadripartite Agreement. After he departed, he was replaced in East Berlin by Vyacheslav Kochemasov, a less influential Ambassador for whom I also interpreted at these lunches. The lunches were fun to do, although I learned that interpreters rarely get a chance to eat and should not even try. The amazing thing about the lunches, however, was how little substance was actually discussed between the two Ambassadors. To be sure, there were always a few points that we wanted Arthur Burns to raise, and the Soviets would have their counterpoints if we raised our points, but by and large the lunches were social events. This was perhaps a reflection of how stable the situation around Berlin had become.

Q: Were you picking up any feel about East Germany from the place where you sat, any sense that the East German government was having a hard time trying to control the internal situation in the GDR?

PERINA: We didn't really sense that for the simple reason that we tried to avoid dealing with the East Germans. That was the job of our Embassy in East Berlin, and we tried to stick to dealing with the Soviets and with the West Germans. We dealt with the West Germans because we recognized that Berlin was a German city and the occupation would someday end, but technically we had sovereignty in West Berlin and only delegated the governing of the city to the Germans. My second job in Berlin, during the last two years of my tour, was in fact what was

called the “Senate Liaison Officer.” This was the liaison to the West Berlin government. I had an office and permanent staff in the West Berlin city hall, as did my French and British counterparts. The German city government had to regularly inform us of developments, and we—that is the Allies—had to concur with legislation passed by the Berlin senate. Of course, for the most part we did, and a lot of this had become routinized but it was still a unique situation for a diplomat.

Another example of this was that as Protocol Officer I and my French and British counterparts always went to the airport to greet the West German President whenever he came to Berlin and to say good-bye when he was leaving. This was to make the point that he was visiting somewhere that was not a part of West Germany, and that we the Allies were in fact the hosts in Berlin. The Presidents, who in my time were Richard von Weizsacker and Karl Carstens, were always very polite and cordial as we shook hands but they must have hated this ritualistic reminder that Berlin was not a part of their country. Actually, the Protocol Officers hated it as well as a real nuisance, but it was a Berlin tradition.

But the Bonn government of course played a very large role in Berlin and was the de facto government. One interesting aspect of this was the great rivalry in Berlin between the two Germanys—East and West. The West Germans put a huge amount of money into Berlin to keep the city prosperous, deter people from leaving and build this Western showcase in the middle of the GDR. Much of the city and its cultural life were subsidized by Bonn. This included everything from the universities to the opera, theater and museums. Even in the private sector, this magnificent department store, the Kaufhaus des Westens or KaDeWe as it was called, with its food section that included thousands of different cheeses and sausages, was a political statement designed to show the difference between East and West. The West German government also paid for all the operating expenses of the three Western powers in Berlin, including things like housing and furniture. Of course, in return West Germans were getting the defense of West Berlin so it was still a pretty good deal for them.

Q: We talked about the Soviets. What about the French and the British? They had their own sectors and did you get involved with them?

PERINA: We coordinated very closely with the French and the British. As a matter of fact, we even had our own telegraphic network in Berlin that connected the British, the French and the U.S. Missions in West Berlin so we could very quickly send confidential messages to one another. You have to remember that this was before the internet. It was another unique aspect of Berlin that I had not seen elsewhere. This was a classified network, just like the State Department’s classified telegraphic system. The rule on the system was that messages could be sent in either English or French. Of course, the French always sent us messages in French whereas we and the British always sent messages in English. Once on April 1 the U.S. Minister, Nelson Ledsky, a man with a good sense of humor, sent out a message I drafted to the French and the British saying that we had received new instructions from Washington and were no longer allowed to receive messages in French because of the delay in translating them during possible crises. The French fell for it and got very upset before realizing it was April 1. But on your question, the coordination was very good among the three Western allies, and we had very few disagreements.

Q: What about relations with our Embassy in East Berlin? Did you have much contact with it?

PERINA: Not particularly but we coordinated as colleagues. The U.S. Ambassador in East Berlin during my time was Roz Ridgway who later became Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. As happens bureaucratically, there was an element of rivalry between the Mission in West Berlin and the Embassy in East Berlin, especially in reporting to Washington. If it was a Berlin issue, we were supposed to report it. If it was an East German issue, the Embassy was supposed to report it. Clearly, there was sometimes overlap on specific issues and disagreement over who had action. But it was rarely serious and perhaps contributed to a healthy competition that improved overall reporting.

Q: Did you feel under any menace or threat during your time in Berlin as a result of East-West relations?

PERINA: Not really. If you had asked me, I and I think most others would have answered that the Berlin situation was very stable and likely to continue unchanged for a long time into the future. We didn't feel any menace in the Cold War context. Nobody seriously thought that there was going to be a World War III or an invasion of Berlin by the Warsaw Pact. Where we felt a certain degree of menace was from radical West German groups.

Q: The Baader-Meinhof gang?

PERINA: Exactly. The Baader-Meinhof gang and its off-shoots and imitators. There had long been attacks against West German political figures and businessman, and a number had taken place in Berlin. Although it had seemed that Americans were not targeted, the 1980's brought a significant rise in anti-Americanism as a result of the INF deployment debate. Berlin also had a reputation as a haven for West German radicals because students and young people living there were exempt from the draft. We had growing concerns about terrorist attacks against U.S. interests from such groups, although nothing serious happened during my time.

ROZANNE L. RIDGWAY
Ambassador
German Democratic Republic (1982-1985)

Ambassador Rozanne L. Ridgway was born in Minnesota on August 22, 1935. She received a bachelor's degree from Hamline College in 1957 and entered the Foreign Service in the same year. Ambassador Ridgway's career included positions in The Philippines, Norway, The Bahamas, Finland, and Germany. This interview was conducted by Willis Armstrong on June 4, 1991.

Q: You were on the West Coast?

RIDGWAY: Minnesota. He went on to Alaska and I came back to Washington and his Change of Command ceremony was in Alaska on . . . in July of '82, and I just suddenly thought that fellow shouldn't go through his Change of Command ceremony all by himself, so I flew up to Alaska, and it sort of began to straighten itself out about that time. We decided in September that we would marry even though it was going to be strange. I was sworn in as Ambassador to the GDR in October, closed up my apartment, went home for Christmas. Ted and I were married on the 2nd of January, 1983 and went on a honeymoon, and he returned to Alaska and I went to East Germany.

Q: Where were you married?

RIDGWAY: In St. Paul.

Q: In St. Paul. Well, that was sort of a better way to spend your time than the previous two years. And after your honeymoon you went to . . .

RIDGWAY: East Berlin.

Q: East Berlin. And he went back to Alaska. You must have had terrible phone bills.

RIDGWAY: We didn't, it hurt too much.

Q: You didn't try to do that?

RIDGWAY: Uh-uh. You have to . . . we sent tapes back and forth. And even after a while, we stopped that after about a year.

Q: Did you? Well, you never can really answer the tape you get, because by the time you get it everything is past.

RIDGWAY: All you keep doing is taking a scab off.

Q: Yeah, I think that would be . . .

RIDGWAY: So, we sent funny cards, and newspaper clippings, and letters. I would call occasionally and he would . . . I really had to be in the pits to give him a call because I knew it was going to be worse after I hung up.

Q: But you know, that's a heck of a way to start a marriage.

RIDGWAY: Yeah, but Ted had been married before and I had never planned to marry but I . . . if you'd meet him you'd see, he is just an unusual kind of a fellow. We both walked into it eyes open. We knew it was going to be this way, and one of the reasons that we had sort of dilly-dallyed over the years from '76, and never let it become anything except good friends and good colleagues, was, I knew I wasn't going to give up my career, and he wasn't going to give up his, and we were moving in opposite circles. And I think we both had mentally dealt with that over

the years as we realized that this friendship . . . I certainly knew all along that this friendship had more to it if we ever let it happen, I think he did as well. So once we really started down the road to change the nature of this good friendship, why, that had all been sorted out.

Q: I see. Yeah.

RIDGWAY: We hardly ever discussed it except the time that we talked about marriage and decided not to marry for all of those reasons. And then threw out that list of reasons and got married.

Q: Decided to do it anyway.

RIDGWAY: Yeah.

Q: Well, we have all the same things, as much of as you wish to, to go over . . .

RIDGWAY: That's right. It will go faster. Believe me, I didn't struggle the same way. It's cathartic. [laughter]

Q: That's good. I know how you were nominated, you did get a call from the White House?

RIDGWAY: I did this time . . .

Q: And you said it was Ronald Reagan . . .

RIDGWAY: I did, and then Joan was headed to Malta, so it just happened that Joan Clark and I had our White House appointment at the same time . . .

Q: Oh, how nice.

RIDGWAY: . . . and it may have only been five minutes, but it did all of the things five minutes should do. It produced the friendly picture in front of the fireplace that allowed me to say, "When I saw the President he expressed his views on what the relationship should be." I had exactly the right send off.

Q: He's very good at that sort of thing.

RIDGWAY: Uh huh..

Q: Excellent. Now, the Senate hearing, that was another pro forma?

RIDGWAY: Oh, yes, but this time, it was sort of, "We all know this little lady."

Q: Because they don't change as often as people do here.

RIDGWAY: They don't change.

Q: Who was on the committee? Can you recall?

RIDGWAY: I don't even know who was up there but it would have been Lugar and Pell; Pell was there of course.

Q: Oh yes, Lugar . . . how about Helms?

RIDGWAY: Mathias, Helms wasn't interested at the time.

Q: Swearing-in ceremony, you said each one gets.

RIDGWAY: It got smaller and smaller and by that time, I went down to Joan Clark's office and . . .

Q: Oh, really?

RIDGWAY: . . . and let's see who was there? Joan, Virginia was gone by this time, Genta Hawkins and Mary Lib Hoinkes

Q: How do you spell that?

RIDGWAY: It's Mary Elizabeth H-o-i-n-k-e-s. She was criticized by the Heritage Foundation as being a key Carter career carryover, been fired out of OES and was at that point in ACDA where she still is, as deputy general counsel, wonderful woman, very bright, a lawyer. She was there. Maryann, my secretary. Joan, and unbeknownst to me, by long distance phone, Ted.

Q: Oh, how nice.

RIDGWAY: So, that while I took the oath, Genta held the phone so that Ted could hear this and everybody sort of had their eyebrows raised. But they had it figured out by then, so that was also the occasion in which I said that we would be getting married.

Q: Oh, really, so you announced your engagement then.

RIDGWAY: He had been in touch with Joan by telephone and worked it all out with her as to what time I was supposed to be there and put the phone call through and everything.

Q: How nice. It adds a nice touch to the story.

RIDGWAY: Yeah.

Q: It's charming. And preparations for this assignment?

RIDGWAY: Yeah, pack up, rent the house . . .

Q: Same old hurry-hurry?

RIDGWAY: Same old stuff, yeah.

Q: Same old stuff, did you get to study German at all?

RIDGWAY: I did, I'm sorry, I was putzing around all of this time studying German and I loved it and I got in eleven weeks of German and I got my self a 3-3 plus.

Q: Good for you.

RIDGWAY: And loved meeting the German teachers over there. It helped fill in the time. Again, it wasn't cutting out time from a job. All I was doing was cutting out time from reading newspapers. And the assignment was hanging around from the spring, through the June phone call, through the October swearing-in, I was still with nothing to do, you know.

Q: Oh, yeah, from June to October. Why did it take so long? Oh, because the Senate didn't schedule it?

RIDGWAY: They didn't schedule it, it takes time to get the paperwork done and I don't know what all, but it was the better part of ten months between the notion and the fact.

Q: How about stopovers to this post, any courtesy calls?

RIDGWAY: No.

Q: No stop overs.

RIDGWAY: No, I flew from Minnesota where Ted and I had split and went straight to East Berlin.

Q: Oh, straight to East Berlin. Now, had you been there before?

RIDGWAY: I had been there one evening in 1970 or '69 to an opera. David Anderson was a junior officer at the time and I'd been to the opera but I didn't know East Berlin.

Q: So you did know the opera house though?

RIDGWAY: At night, you know.

Q: Yeah, which I guess is the pride and joy of the city. I notice there is a picture of it in here. It has been rebuilt twice . . .

RIDGWAY: The Schauspiel House . . . Yeah, that's the one.

Q: So, how about the arrival at post this day . . . this time?

RIDGWAY: Well, I arrived on KLM I guess, at the East German Airport, Schoenefeld. Certainly not a rush of photographers, in fact, protocol was all very upset and breathless that they had to meet me at a lower level because Andrei Gromyko had just arrived at the other end of the airport on a special Aeroflot flight, so they were all off playing obeisance to Andrei Gromyko, and so a bus pulled up at plane-side and key members of the American staff got out with the deputy chief of protocol and I got on board the bus and rode to the VIP lounge, where there was coffee and the like and I was asked to say a few things. And the American staff was all there sort of bouncing around but when the luggage was announced as having been there, I left and the deputy chief of protocol begged off accompanying me. And I said, "That's fine, I certainly understand." And I rode from the airport with the DCM. Walter B. Smith.

Q: Now, had you chosen him?

RIDGWAY: No, I was replacing him.

Q: Oh, his name was Walter B. Smith?

RIDGWAY: B. Smith the second.

Q: The . . . how about the reaction of the host country to a woman envoy?

RIDGWAY: No problem. They knew I was a career officer, they knew I'd had senior positions. I had signed the first diplomatic agreement ever, between the United States and East Germany which was a fishing treaty in 1976- 77.

Q: Had you really?

RIDGWAY: So, I was vaguely a part of their history and was considered sort of a serious, seasoned professional and there was no . . . but they wouldn't comment anyhow, I mean there was just . . . it's a very austere and basically hostile setting.

Q: Yes, it must be. And that northern European weather too, is so gloomy, isn't it?

RIDGWAY: Yes, it can be gloomy.

Q: In the winter anyway. How about presenting your credentials?

RIDGWAY: That was done very shortly thereafter and the residence, which is a great barn of a place out in the northern part of East Berlin, was really too far from the city for the ceremony to start there, and so by mutual agreement with the Protocol office, I was picked up at the Embassy by the East German Government chief of protocol who then accompanied me and the entourage, the usual group that I've always insisted on, the larger group. And we drove through the city, flags flying, to Karl Marx Square I guess, where the military troops were all lined up and I got out of the car and stood and the National Anthem was played and the commander of the guard of

honor at that point goose-stepped towards me. That was really a shock, I knew they still used the goose-step, but that was the first time I'd seen it.

Q: Oh, really?

RIDGWAY: sort of goose-stepped toward me and did all the stuff with the sword and asked me if I wanted to review the troops. And I went with him to review the troops and on into this great hall of the Republic, and again, once again, upstairs and the like, to another large hall, accompanied again by this same entourage, and then lined up, and I presented the credentials and introduced the group. And then Erich Honecker and I went off to another private conversation for about an hour, an hour and five minutes, which was principally one way. Mostly his describing to me what their policies are, and what's wrong with US policies.

Q: I see.

RIDGWAY: And then out and to the office to have a drink of champagne there.

Q: Didn't get quite the lift out of that one, did you?

RIDGWAY: Well, I didn't but we had a good team. Jim Wilkinson, who has come back with me to become one of the Deputy Assistant Secretaries there, was someone I picked as Deputy Chief of Mission for Berlin. I had been through his file when I sat on another one of those committee type things and he won the first James Clement Dunn award, so I was completely familiar with his file, and Joan Clark knew him and confirmed to me that he was what the file said, and so I had asked him to come from Bangkok to be the DCM.

Q: Uh huh.

RIDGWAY: And he arrived in July or so. The relationship between me and Walter B. Smith was not a good one,. I knew it wasn't going to be, and so I just sort of watched and listened and waited, and did all my calls and things for five or six months and then Smith left and Jim arrived and we began our mission. But by that point I had come to the conclusion that the United States had no policy toward the German Democratic Republic other than complaining about the wall. But we had decided to recognize the place in 1974 in the context of a lot of European agreements, and then we had never stopped to think about it and there were a host of problems to be solved and my instructions at the time were to go in and tell them that if they want an improved relationship with us that they had to do the following things. It elicited from the Prime Minister, Willi Stoph, after I'd paid a number of calls and sort of laid out this line, very unfriendly line as you can see,

Q: Yes sure.

RIDGWAY: . . . and they told us what was wrong with us. Willi Stoph said, "You know you always come in here with conditions. We have our list as well. Why can't we put them all on the table and see which can be solved and which cannot? And I rejected that, of course, because our interests were more important than theirs. But in fact, there was a germ of an idea there and the

more I got to thinking about this tangle of problems that had gone unsolved, some of them for a long time, I could see how you could, if you put them all on the table, you could match them differently.

Q: Yeah.

RIDGWAY: And you would serve US interests by solving the problems, and you wouldn't give up U. S. principle as to whose got solved first, there wouldn't be any question.

Q: Right.

RIDGWAY: So I came back to the States in June of '83, and I saw Larry Eagleburger and went over this with him and said I really would like to try a different approach. I'd like to try a package approach. We're going to stand at this door and argue about who goes through first forever, and there are some problems of importance to the United States that aren't getting solved. Larry's response was, "It's fine with me and you have complete authority. I leave it to you to hear the sound of the saw on the limb behind you." So, I went back, and as I say, Jim Wilkinson arrived and he and I talked all of this over and came up with several parallel developments of US interests and GDR interests that if they kept pace with each other would get done what we wanted done and would get done what they wanted done. And that's really the current course as well. We were able to reduce the divided family list and we were able to get back from the GDR fifty paintings by Lionel Feininger that he had left behind when he fled Germany in 1935, which their courts had agreed belonged to the Feininger family, but their policy on not exporting national treasure was holding up.

Q: I'm sorry how do you spell Feininger?

RIDGWAY: F-e-i-n-i-n-g-e-r, Lionel Feininger. And so that got solved and the paintings were returned to the United States. And the human rights list got a little better and Rick Burt who was the Assistant Secretary at the time, came out for a day's worth of consultations which allowed them to point to the visit of the highest ranking official ever from the United States

Q: Getting more attention.

RIDGWAY: Yeah, a political dialogue opening up and Sam Gibbons, again an old friend from Counselor days, actually from fishery days, because he had a shrimp constituency down in Florida, he came out leading a delegation and we had a reception at the house and the East Germans sent two Politburo members and that's the first time any Politburo members had been there. And then, you start talking about what you might do in educational exchange. Now, I wasn't around for the finish of that, but we do now have a Fulbright agreement with East Germany. And it's not easy to manage, they keep wanted to send us party hacks and we keep trying to get good people on it, and sometimes you have to take two and get one good one and one bad one.

Q: Yeah.

RIDGWAY: The small things, the Christian Scientists had been told in 1953 that they were an organization that endangered the state and they could not bring any of their materials in. I think our usual course of action, in fact it had been over the years, was to go in and bang on the table and this is this and this is that, but in a different kind of an atmosphere where they could see what they were getting, and a little bit of attention and the like, we were able to go in and just ask that they review it, and with assurances from the Christian Scientists that they were not challenging the authority of the State. And that turned out right, they now are able to send their instructional materials, in German, into their community. A new Mormon Temple has opened in East Germany.

Q: Really?

RIDGWAY: Uh huh. We didn't do that but I mean a more confident East Germany is willing to do more along those lines. We had some very tough problems with asylum seekers. I was in the States when the first of them came into the Embassy on a Friday night and would not leave, demanding that we send them to the West. I was paged when I was over here at National Airport by the Department, telling me what the problem was. I said, "There is nothing that I can do that I'm not already doing, which is trying to get on an airplane." And that became a problem throughout the spring of '84-'85. And it was particularly heavy, I think it was in '85, the dates get kind of fuzzy around that.

So, we worked on that and it got resolved. We did a lot of work on the commercial side there. American businesses do not know how to operate in Eastern Europe. I came back and saw Mac Baldridge [secretary of commerce] and got \$25,000 from him to help get us back into, a presence at the Leipzig Fair. The first Leipzig Fair I went to in March of 1983 I was mortified at what we had. We didn't know whether we wanted to be there or not be there, and it was just an undone and embarrassing kind of a presentation. We re-designed that and put some new techniques in and . . . very happy with the way that got left. And I think it's helped American business.

So, those were sort of the major events. We did, again, I think it is a professional kind of approach, to look at the policy and see whether it was true or false and found out that there wasn't one! Got that working, spent a lot of time traveling back and forth working the issues through here to make sure that no one accused us of having gone soft on Communism.

Q: Yeah

RIDGWAY: Keep talking about how we could advance the US interests and we did a good job.

Q: Again, did you use the same approach of using all the different parts of your embassy to . . . it's a different society . . .

RIDGWAY: It's a different society.

Q: . . . you couldn't.

RIDGWAY: You couldn't, we all had the same conflicts.

Q: You couldn't use the USIA, for example, to that extent.

RIDGWAY: Well, we had a good USIA group, but you couldn't . . . we could show movies in the Embassy but the few people who were privileged to come could come. So you have a party for the newspaper people, they don't accept, or they do accept, you don't know, and if they come they just spout the line at you, you don't have . . . you just sit down and work problems with those East German Government party officials who are in charge of those problems.

Q: Who are in charge, the ones that have the clout.

RIDGWAY: I made some good friends, went to the opera, I mean, the opera cost two dollars and fifty cents, so I went to the opera a lot and met people in that circle. There were some East Germans who didn't care any longer and they knew us.

Q: Now, all of this time when you were coming back and forth, were you able to see your husband?

RIDGWAY: I generally tried to find enough time to go on across the country, stop in St. Paul to visit my mother, go on up to Alaska, spent some time with Ted, come back the same way. Unless it was a really short trip, and then I couldn't do it.

Q: Was he able to get over to

RIDGWAY: Not until toward the end, he came once . . .

Q: He came once.

RIDGWAY: Yeah, at the end.

Q: How did you run this mission?

RIDGWAY: Quite a bit more formally.

Q: Was it more formal?

RIDGWAY: Yes, but it was the kind of an embassy where floors are separated because East Germans are in one place and not in another . . .

Q: Oh, I see.

RIDGWAY: . . . and the staff was more dispersed. It was a lovely chancery. I was just feeling more formal.

Q: Yes, did you do much entertaining, were you able to, or again was . . .

RIDGWAY: Well, you could not do any of the kind of entertaining that had been done in Finland. People would not accept casual invitations. I tried once and East German Protocol complained. I decided to ignore them, I went directly to the person I wanted, to see if he could come to dinner and I got a message back from Protocol, don't do that because our people will still come to us, and unless you have a reason, a visiting dignitary, these invitations should not be extended. We do not accept casual invitations. That was that.

Q: So that was that, that put the lid on that. Did you have much contact with your colleagues, the British and the French and West Germans?

RIDGWAY: Not much, not as much, a lot with my West German colleague because of those months of handling those issues, and it was the time of the deployment of the missiles in West Germany, so I think . . . that they were good colleagues.

Q: Well, all together, any relationship with the Head of State and so forth would be very, very formal.

RIDGWAY: That's right, in fact I never . . . we saw each other at the Leipzig Fair, because when we put in a different kind of an investment there they really wanted us to sort of be up front on the evening news, that they had a balanced relationship with the Americans which was good with their own public. So I probably had more contact than some of my predecessors had, I had only three predecessors, but it was not extensive and nobody ever came for a review of general issues. They didn't care, I mean, they didn't want to hear them. We never were able to meet with senior party officials. Indeed, I never met so much of the top leadership as I did when it was announced that I was coming back to fill in this job.

Q: Oh, is that so?

RIDGWAY: Oh, yes, then it really opened up.

Q: A different kettle of fish! Isn't that curious? The other locals, were you able to meet other locals, or were they sort of kept from American tainting?

RIDGWAY: There was no way I really could, my German wasn't that good. So, the few that I met from the church, from the cultural world, the orchestra leaders and things like that, that was fine, but these were people who were allowed to travel outside the country and the like because they had a cultural value. My current special assistant, I almost hate to give you his name because I'm not going to be able to spell it, but Walter Andrusyszyn, who is also here . . .

Q: Well, I can look him up.

RIDGWAY: Okay . . . was the kind of an officer in the right kind of position, at the right age and he could go out and do the movies and do the train rides and go to the church meetings with young people and circulate and that part of the embassy.

Q: Did you enjoy this tour very much?

RIDGWAY: I didn't enjoy it, but I was challenged by it. And I would have said the same as I did when I left Finland, I left with a sense of accomplishment, I left with a sense that there was something in place that would stay, in this case, not so broadly throughout the embassy because there was a different kind of a challenge. But certainly on the policy side, the policy framework has remained intact. Maybe that's inevitable since I'm here and I can decide whether it gets changed or not, but . . .

Q: That's very good though.

RIDGWAY: . . . that has gone well. But it was not easy and, but I didn't find it difficult to get through, it went on long enough and I was happy to leave. But I went back and forth very often in order to persuade this Washington bureaucracy to see East Berlin differently, or to get a Mac Baldridge to give me \$25,000. A bureaucracy will turn you down but if you come in and you go see the Commerce Secretary you get it. And we had some other problems of a kind I can't really talk about . . .

Q: Of course.

RIDGWAY: . . . they required the same kind of travel, and better done in person. The time could hang heavy, but it didn't hang all that heavy. Then there was West Berlin . . . I stayed away from West Berlin, and I tried by example to encourage at least the substantive officers on the staff to stay away from West Berlin. We had so much administrative support from West Berlin that our administrative people had to have a lot of contact. And our staff and our staff families whose children were in West Berlin had West Berlin ties. And they could simply look out of their apartment window or over the wall and there was West Berlin and so they spent their time there and a lot of it in the military community in West Berlin, in the sports activities for kids or the bowling leagues and things of that sort. But for the substantive officers, with a closed society much of what you do is sort of, what I've always thought a Chicago politician would do, or New York politician, you know your neighborhood and you know it through the soles of your feet, and you can sniff it and you feel it and it's in the air, and it's in the restaurants and it's in the shops and it's on the trains, and if you go over to West Berlin you rupture that.

Q: Ah, yes, of course.

RIDGWAY: And when you come back you have to go through that, even momentary though it might be, depression that hits every one going from West to East, and that jars your thinking and appreciation as well. So, I didn't spend a lot of time in West Berlin, but toward the end of my tour I made some very good friends in West Berlin: the manager and his wife at the Steigenberger Hotel. They stayed good friends and he hasn't visited us here, but she comes by quite often and has stayed with us. And they have access of course to the opera there, and so I started going also to the West Berlin opera, but every so often I'd have a Big Mac attack and I'd run to the McDonald's in West Berlin. But I didn't spend a lot of time there. I was ready to leave, but again I didn't mind the time that I had on my own hands.

Q: Yes, the problems were difficult but they were not totally frustrating, they were solvable, in increments.

RIDGWAY: They were solvable in increments, you could lay out a plan, you could work them, be frustrated, be annoyed, angered, offended by that regime, but you could deal with it.

Q: And you could see progress, too.

RIDGWAY: Well, not much, but I could see the framework. I was convinced then, as I'm convinced now, that it was the proper framework, and we did solve a few things.

Q: Now what about back here? Again the same question: did you have, you feel, enough policy guidance?

RIDGWAY: Oh yes, but I was writing my own. I came back here and wrote my policies and then went out there and implemented it.

Q: I'm told that's the best way to do it.

RIDGWAY: It sure is. [laughter]

Q: Very good. Where do children go to school there?

RIDGWAY: In West Berlin.

Q: Oh, they do? And they are permitted to go back and forth, with little passes, I suppose. I see. Did you have a good admin. section?

RIDGWAY: Yes.

Q: You really have to have in a place like that.

RIDGWAY: Well, you do, and they have to be creative and imaginative, and in this case had to be able to get along with West Berlin.

Q: Right, because your support came from there?

RIDGWAY: Came from there, yeah.

Q: Food and . .

RIDGWAY: Well, we went across ourselves for food, but warehousing and things of that sort. I for one believe it's not fair to take it from the East Germans when we had access to . . .

Q: I see, it's that limited.

RIDGWAY: Yes.

Q: I see, I hadn't thought of that. It's not something where you help their economy by using their products. Did you get any people from the Hill coming over there?

RIDGWAY: Well, we had a couple of delegations. Congressman Gibbons lead a delegation, and Joe Biden was through, but again, not much. Tom Foley, actually I saw him last night, and we were talking about it, Tom Foley came through. But by and large, no. But we also tried to control it. We tried to dole it out as rewards to the East Germans, without telling them, but an improvement in the human rights list might bring a visit that they could give some publicity to that made them look good. And we sort of let them know that there was a relationship and we worked every resource that we could find.

Q: What about the local press? How did they treat you?

RIDGWAY: As if I weren't there, unless the government wanted me to be there.

Q: Well, yes, so that would depend on the government's attitude.

RIDGWAY: Yes, you know, there would be the government announcement, "There was a reception last evening on, so and so was there and was received by," but it was not, I mean it's a Communist press.

Q: Of course, when one isn't used to it, it's hard to think in those terms isn't it?

RIDGWAY: Yeah.

Q: Consular problems?

RIDGWAY: Many cases. People wanting out.

Q: Of course, I don't mean consular, I mean really American, did you have any distressed Americans around?

RIDGWAY: Occasionally you'd have somebody who would end up in an East German jail for having done something dumb.

Q: No drug problems though? No drug problems? You don't seem to have been on that . . .

RIDGWAY: No, no Well, I think East Berlin is, I think East Berlin is a transit point, but we were not able to convince the East Germans that it was, not that they would admit it. I know from my Lebanese colleague, a very fine man from Lebanon, that he at one point had the responsibility for visiting seventeen prisoners in jail in East Germany on drug charges, drug transit charges, possession charges. So they were, the East Germans were acting to pick people up but they were not telling us that they were responding to our request for cooperation. They rejected our request for cooperation.

Q: Interesting. But you didn't have problems with American citizens in those situations?

RIDGWAY: Well, after the experience in Moscow I'm reluctant to say what was going on there. I mean if I didn't know it, it doesn't mean it wasn't going on. As far as I know we didn't have drug problems. I've learned since we had some fraternization problems, but I sure missed it.

Q: You didn't know it. How about within the mission itself, any problems with people going crazy or shooting each other?

RIDGWAY: No, at one point though I got the regional psychiatrist to come to visit. He was regional for Eastern Europe, and he never came to East Berlin and I got him up there. And he said, "Well you know you're not in the East." And I said, "Look I happen to think we have an unusual problem here. In Prague you can circle the wagons and you have the high morale that comes from being inside those wagons. We don't circle the wagons because we have an opening at the rear which is the West and so we're surrounded on three sides " He stayed about a week and came to see me, and said he was very sorry he hadn't come there sooner and that he had not realized the erosion of the spirit that comes from going back and forth. And from seeing, living next to something and seeing it, so that you never make an adjustment one way or another.

Q: I should think so.

RIDGWAY: So, I would hope that he's been visiting regularly since, but we didn't have major problems. We didn't send anybody home.

Q: You didn't have to evacuate, you had depressions but low level.

RIDGWAY: Yeah, we all had fits of depression.

Q: Yes, sure. Was morale pretty good, not too many intra-mission rivalries?

RIDGWAY: I wouldn't be the one to ask on that. I thought it was pretty good because people were doing things they were interested in. I think if you asked Jean, she would say I didn't have the faintest idea what was going on, and that morale was not good. She will often say, "Ambassador, you just don't understand," "or you don't really know."

Q: Well, yes, of course, people don't, there again there is that little tiny shelf you were up on there away from

RIDGWAY: Some of them I did, I just didn't want to know, so I officially didn't know.

Q: Well, that's a very good way too. What about Foreign Service inspectors?

RIDGWAY: They came through.

Q: How did they treat you?

RIDGWAY: Very well, but they came across some major issues that we differed with them on. We had some unholy fights and the issues had to be referred to the Department. But they were not foolish issues, they were serious, long term issues and I think I was probably in the mood to overlook them and they picked them up and demanded that they be reviewed. I said all right, but then they came out on one side and I came out on the other. Once the issue was put on the table, then we disagreed. We took it to the Department and the Department agreed with the embassy.

Q: Oh, did it?

RIDGWAY: Yeah, I was surprised. I thought we made a pretty good case. I don't know whether it was the right thing to do but once the inspectors demanded that the question be addressed, then we had a strong view on how it be done.

Q: Did you have any difficulty with entertaining at this post?

RIDGWAY: No, no. There wasn't all that much. There was a lot of embassies entertaining other embassies, which I simply didn't do. I tried to get a film and invite people from church circles or political groups. And you could invite 150 and you might get twenty. But we kept trying: try to have a theme of movies or of visiting American cultural events for which we had a lot of extra "paper" ourselves, and could fill up an audience and have a buffet afterwards. We had an annual program of famous American directors coming with their films, so we had Allen Pakula bring "Sophie's Choice," and that gave us entree into the whole film industry in East Germany once a year. And they were interesting people. I don't know if it affected policy but it gave us something interesting to do in the cultural sense. I did some entertaining of my own at the embassy around the embassy's regular film program. We'd bring in "Gone With The Wind" or something like that. And again you'd invite 200 people and get twenty. But at least you got twenty. And that was about all we could do except when visitors came through.

Q: Did you have a housekeeper there?

RIDGWAY: I had a strange situation there I inherited from my predecessor a French- speaking, native Urdu speaker Pakistani cook, a Portuguese washerwoman, and an East German butler. I got rid of the East German butler and got the Pakistani cook's brother in from Pakistan. And I got rid of the Portuguese-speaking maid because she was just skittering around the house like a cockroach all the time and nobody could talk to her. [laughter] And I'm trying to remember, who did the laundry after that? I swear I don't remember. There was a point at which I was doing the laundry.

Q: Really?

RIDGWAY: My own anyway, I wouldn't do it for the two men, I did my own. We got . . . oh, I know what happened toward the end, because the Wilkinsons had the same kind of problems. All of a sudden out of nowhere there was a little Filipino community in East Berlin.

Q: Really?

RIDGWAY: And I think it was being run by the Philippine Ambassador's wife who brought some Filipinos with her and they sent for cousins and the next thing you know we could all hire a Filipino washer-lady at that stage. So by the time I left I sort of had the household the way I wanted it. The Urdu-speaking cook and I, I mean that was just a joke. He was superb at French. He had been raised, started out as sort of a bearer at the French Embassy in Islamabad and also he was quite fluent. Came to Berlin with the French Ambassador and then got left behind when the French Ambassador went home.

Q: Oh, yes.

RIDGWAY: But he could not write. He had an Arabic script, he couldn't write Roman. And so he was trying to learn it, but I mean it was just impossible. I never could leave him notes because he couldn't read.

Q: No, because he couldn't read [English].

RIDGWAY: So we talked through a lot of things, and he had some recipes and we worked together on some. I know one summer we were making about four different kinds of cold soups, and so I would make it while he was standing there, and I would tell him what I was doing and he would write it in Arabic so he could have it

Q: Oh, I see.

RIDGWAY: but his English wasn't really all that good, so I was never quite sure whether he got it straight. It was not at all a smooth operation.

Q: No, and it is very wearing, isn't it, that sort of a thing.

RIDGWAY: Then we had, as I say, we had access to things in West Berlin so for awhile he did the shopping at the Commissary, and at the Military Commissary with a special letter, and in the West Berlin stores and some in East Berlin as well, but . . . rice and stuff like that. But I got a little nervous about his running around with hard currency and with a PX letter, so I took over the grocery shopping in dollars on the Military base. I just didn't want him over there.

Q: I don't blame you. He had been doing that before, had he?

RIDGWAY: Yeah, and I just . . . it made me nervous.

Q: I would think so too, because you never know about those things. But you had to really be in control of this whole shebang all the time. You had nobody you could delegate.

RIDGWAY: When I was in Finland the housekeeper helped do the accounts, but I did the accounts, the shopping lists that he and I worked on. He told me what he needed and then I would take off from the office and go do the shopping.

Q: Why weren't you able to have a special assistant?

RIDGWAY: Would you ask a career officer to do the grocery shopping for you?

Q: Well, bring somebody from the States the way Anne Cox Chambers did.

RIDGWAY: Who? Yeah, I know career people, I'd never ask Jean to do it, and I can't think of any young officer who would do it very happily.

Q: Some of the women hired wives of officers to do that sort of thing. Put them on the payroll.

RIDGWAY: Well, to do the grocery shopping?

Q: To do that sort of thing, yes.

RIDGWAY: I don't see it.

Q: You don't see it, yeah. It's funny the different ways people do . . . because I understand now that if you don't have a spouse that you are then entitled to have a special assistant to help you with the running of the house, if you want one.

RIDGWAY: One? I didn't know that.

Q: Maybe it's very recent.

RIDGWAY: It may be very recent, yeah.

Q: And maybe you have to squeal to get it, I don't know.

RIDGWAY: I wasn't feeling helpless

Q: No, but that's an awful drain on your time.

RIDGWAY: It really was, yeah, yeah.

Q: Terrible drain on your time.

RIDGWAY: Uh huh. Not to mention my temper. I really don't like pushing four and five grocery carts around. You can imagine the volume I was buying.

Q: I can imagine the volume you were buying, and then to have to do your own laundry and that sort of thing.

RIDGWAY: Well, I only did that for a summer.

Q: Even so, that's eight weeks. An ambassador shouldn't have to do her own laundry.

RIDGWAY: I was not about to ask the two houseboys to do it, just didn't want to. It's already uncomfortable enough with the living with two of them in the house and nobody else.

Q: But that shouldn't be, it really shouldn't. Are you opposed to the idea of hiring of a wife, an American woman, if she wants to earn her living this way?

RIDGWAY: If she wants to, fine. If you've got the money, but you know we don't have the money certainly.

Q: Yeah, I know, you have to give up another slot.

RIDGWAY: If it's a position, I'm not going to take it away from the political section, or another part of the administrative section that's serving the whole community just to have somebody do the grocery shopping for me.

Q: I think perhaps that is how it's worked, I'm not sure. We've discussed morale a little bit, now what about the wives, did they have organizations there, things to keep them busy, or did many of them work?

RIDGWAY: They didn't want an embassy wives group there. I tried to organize one, they weren't interested. There was however, an international embassy women's group, and those who were interested joined that. Some of the wives were teaching in West Berlin. Lots of small children, there was a point when I . . . it was pretty clear to me how people were handling boredom . . . really turning out the . . .

Q: So many babies (laughter)

RIDGWAY: . . . so many babies. A very young community, which I took as meaning the people were comfortable there. That's why I think if Jean and I ever discussed it, we'd probably disagree. Some of our young couples had been married ten years and decided Berlin was where they wanted to start their families. Well, that suggests to me that they found an atmosphere that was congenial and . . .

Q: Could they use the doctors in West Germany?

RIDGWAY: Oh, yes, yes. In West Berlin.

Q: In West Berlin, yes. So they would. You didn't have to have the school kerfuffle, though, or the commissary kerfuffle, did you, because they were all in West Germany.?

RIDGWAY: They were all in West Berlin.

Q: So you didn't have that to worry about, because those can be terrible bones of contention.

RIDGWAY: Yeah, they are, and we didn't have that at all.

Q: What about, were you able to continue your Thanksgiving celebrations?

RIDGWAY: Continued? I'm trying to think what we did for Thanksgiving. I wonder if we ever had anybody by? I think I ended up Thanksgiving, no, one year I came back to the States for a long leave that started with Thanksgiving, and another year I must have gone to the Wilkinsons. It was not a post that lent itself to that.

Q: No. Most people were married, were they?

RIDGWAY: Most were married, and the married communicators had already invited the Marines. I forget where Jean went, but it just didn't lend itself to it. People weren't . . . again if that other loop of the East had been closed, a full atmosphere would have set in, but lot of people went West, it was just different.

Q: It was different, a little fragmented, wasn't it?

RIDGWAY: It was.

Q: Not so much a total sense of community as you have said before

RIDGWAY: Not at all. We started a few things, we got a baseball team going and then we had, Embassy Berlin, US Mission West Berlin, Embassy Warsaw and Embassy Prague.

Q: Oh?

RIDGWAY: . . . and we rotated and visited each other's posts and most of them liked to come to West Berlin because of the shopping and that kind of thing. Our folks enjoyed going to Prague. We got one of those going. But bowling leagues were in the West. Most of the sports, the Marine's athletic activities were in the West.

Q: Were they? Did you . . . again, were you able to include your staff personnel at the residence?

RIDGWAY: Yes.

Q: You know I didn't ask you, at your other posts did you have your locals to the residence?

RIDGWAY: Yes, if they had worked a project, they came.

Q: And did you continue that in East Germany?

RIDGWAY: No, no.

Q: Oh, no, they wouldn't

RIDGWAY: On large receptions Fourth of July . . . sure I did include the East Germans, but most didn't come. They weren't permitted to. I mean, they were told whether they could come or not.

Q: What about Fourth of July, what did you do for that?

RIDGWAY: Fourth of July there was a little larger . . . it was a reception from about three until six, with much more elaborate food. And the Army band came over from West Berlin and set up and everything. It was an enormous house with a great, great long garden. I spent a lot of time redesigning the garden while I was there. We got some money for it. It looked like a cemetery.

Q: Oh, dear.

RIDGWAY: We got a West Berlin garden designer over and spent two years working that. But in the back was a large, round, cement circle. The West Berlin band, our Army band would come over and set up there and play Glenn Miller and it was a very popular reception and as many East Germans as could come, I think fought to come.

Q: Did they?

RIDGWAY: So that they could hear the music and eat the strawberries, and things of that sort.

Q: Did you travel around the country much?

RIDGWAY: Quite a bit, but it was so dreadful. I did Leipzig and Weimar, and Dresden, I traveled.

Q: When you say dreadful, in what way, what sense?

RIDGWAY: It's depressing.

Q: It's depressing, because they don't have much?

RIDGWAY: It's a police state, you can't avoid it, you just know that it's a police state. But I still traveled quite a bit, compared to others I traveled quite a bit. But I mean no speeches or anything,

Q: No, no.

RIDGWAY: . . . I tried to . . . and if you tried to go visit an industry or something, they just wouldn't answer you or they'd tell you it wasn't convenient for you to go look at a plant.

Q: Did you have to have permission to travel at all?

RIDGWAY: You didn't have to have permission to travel but if you wanted to go visit anything, you . . .

Q: You could just roam around, yeah. How about recreation and sports in that country?

RIDGWAY: I didn't do much there. I read a lot and I had a swim club membership right around the corner from the Embassy, there was swimming and a sauna. And I had a golf club membership in West Berlin, but I didn't play more than two or three times.

Q: Of course, apparently you traveled quite a bit, which would cut into your time.

RIDGWAY: Yes and I was back in the States or I was on the road, but I didn't . . . as I say, I read a great deal.

Q: Now, we can get to this: what was your husband's attitude toward your career?

RIDGWAY: Very supportive, as you can see.

Q: But of course you didn't have him there to be supportive.

RIDGWAY: No, but any man who would put up with being split like that is about as supportive as they can get.

Q: Exactly, in a different sense, quite. Did it make any difference in the way you handled your work and allocated your time?

RIDGWAY: No, no.

Q: To try to get more time to visit him?

RIDGWAY: No. no.

Q: How about private life there?

RIDGWAY: It was very private, me and all my books.

Q: Yes, very private. Do you still have a goldfish-bowl-- even more so in a police state, wouldn't you, because you must have been followed everywhere.

RIDGWAY: Yeah, but I wasn't doing anything that was . . .

Q: But did it bother you, that . . .

RIDGWAY: No, no.

Q: Your phone was tapped, of course.

RIDGWAY: Sure.

Q: Everything was bugged

RIDGWAY: Everything was bugged.

Q: But it didn't bother you? You made up your mind that this was the way it was?

RIDGWAY: Well, I didn't have, you know, we weren't seeing that many people. You get resentful of it but it didn't bother me that much. I mean, it sets in, it's a total depression, I don't mean that but it's not something that really gripes at your soul every day.

Q: I have lived in two police states, and I didn't realize how oppressive they were until I left, and that is why this going back and forth must be terribly

RIDGWAY: It's torture.

Q: It must be terrible. Absolutely awful, that's a good point that I had not thought of. People would think that would be better. It would be much worse.

RIDGWAY: Yes.

Q: Loneliness, I guess by this time you know how to handle that.

RIDGWAY: Yeah, I know how to handle it. I stopped drinking when I was there. I think, again, you really have to know where you're headed. I've been a teetotaler since Berlin.

Q: Have you really? No more Gallo wine?

RIDGWAY: No., no. Ted likes wine with a meal. But I just stopped. I don't need this, it's a dangerous time, and I had come off a dangerous time in Washington, and Ted was far, far away, and I could tell after the first couple of months there that that was just going to lead to trouble. So I stopped.

Q: Good for you.

RIDGWAY: I must say I haven't missed it. We've discovered a terrific apple cider the French make. Everybody makes the Virginia apple cider and it gives you the glass that looks the same way, and never . . . I'm glad I did, and I find now on the job that I'm on, if I were even . . . I just couldn't handle it.

Q: Well, I should think in the first place it makes you sleepy.

RIDGWAY: Well, or it can keep you going and you just get logy and try to get up in the morning and go to work and you are not at your best.

Q: That's very true. Did you have any health problems there?

RIDGWAY: Did I have any health problems there? No. no.

Q: Very good, maybe because you were drinking cider.

RIDGWAY: Well, there I wasn't even drinking cider, I was just drinking water or coca cola, but I didn't have any health problems there.

Q: What about personal dangers, were you . . .

RIDGWAY: No, totally safe, or totally unsafe, depending on the decision of the East German government. When I was there, I was totally safe.

Q: Sure. Now, we come down here to your post-AEP years, and we are coming to this one, the one you're in now. Okay, were you recalled for this job?

RIDGWAY: Yes.

Q: You were recalled for this job.

This interview was conducted by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2002.

Q: Did you study German before going?

RIDGWAY: I did indeed. I think I did quite well, ending up with a 3+ in both oral and written skills. I was confirmed in October, 1982 and arrived in East Germany on January 15, 1983. I stayed in East Berlin until June 1985.

Q: How did you find our relations with East Germany?

RIDGWAY: They were empty. It was a very interesting period. No one liked the East Germans, especially the communists. We were very suspicious of West Germany's "Ost Politik" which had been devised by Brandt and Genscher. We thought that they were "soft" on the communists and were not sufficiently concerned with the Soviet military presence of 400,000 troops in East Germany, and the East Germany secret services. We had West Berlin as the showcase of freedom, and we always compared it to East Berlin.

We only had an ambassador in East Berlin because of a number of decisions reached in the early 1970s as a result of the Mansfield resolution, which called for bringing our troops home from West Germany. Successive administrations fought this idea; they felt that the Soviet threat was still alive and well. Furthermore, there was a question of whether the Mansfield approach would have any impact on our arms control goals.

Between 1972 and 1975, a number of agreements were negotiated. The Soviet initiative, which was initially called "The European Security Conference" much to our displeasure, later became

the “Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe,” began in 1975. As part of this new approach, we initiated the “Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR).” The conferees agreed to recognize West and East Germany as two sovereign states. As a result, both became eligible to join the UN. Diplomatic relations were begun between East Germany and the NATO countries. This was the total of the European package. A lot was agreed upon due to the pressures from the European left which was increasingly frustrated by the lack of progress toward a “normal” situation on the continent. In addition, there was considerable pressure from the American Congress, for a more normal situation, which would allow for the return of the American troops in West Germany to the U.S. I think successive administrations recognized that the pressure was mounting and that it needed to be channeled into acceptable propositions, lest the situation get out of control to the great advantage of the Soviet Union.

The United States recognized East Germany in 1974. The Soviet Union had recognized East Germany many years earlier and had agreed that Berlin would be the capital of East Germany. However, we did not recognize East Berlin as the capital. I was the ambassador to the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and did not reside in the country. As far as we were concerned, Berlin was under the jurisdiction of the four powers: France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and ourselves, and we refused to accept any role for the East Germans in the administration of Berlin. Our mission in West Berlin ran military patrols daily into East Berlin to underline our position on the management of the city. In the evening, there would be helicopter flights over East Berlin to underscore the same point.

Our first ambassador to East Germany was John Sherman Cooper, the former senator. He was followed by David Bolen, a career Foreign Service officer, who retired from that assignment to join DuPont. Then came Herb Okun, another career officer. I followed Herb.

I left for Berlin with a long list of actions that the East Germans were going to have to take. I presented my credentials and paid my calls. When I did that, I insisted that the East Germans take action on our list, which included such matters as the Jewish claims, the tearing down of the wall, the facilitation of reunification of German families, the reaching an agreement on arms control measures, the return to the family of the Lyonel Feininger paintings, which had been left behind when he and his Bauhaus colleagues fled Nazi Germany, etc. It was a long list.

After I made all these demands, Willi Stoph, who was the GDR president, asked what the GDR would get in return for abiding by our demands. He was one of the more ridiculous members of the communist leadership, but he was the president, not Honecker. I told him that there would be no reciprocal actions on our part as the list consisted of actions that the GDR should be taking on its own as they were the “right” thing to do.

After completing this first round of calls, I found a way to get back to Washington, where I went to see Larry Eagleburger. I told him that we really had no policy toward the GDR, only a list of demands, many of which dealt with family reunifications, which were really the business of the West Germans. We did meet periodically with other NATO members on East Germany and ran an intelligence operation out of West Germany. Those activities were far from a policy. I told Larry that if Washington wanted the list taken care of, I had to have some “carrots” to work with. If that was not possible, then the best I could do was to keep reciting the list, but that I would not

expect much of an East German reaction unless there was something in it for them. If I could put the list into a package, then perhaps some forward movement might be forthcoming. For example, if the paintings were returned, then perhaps we could find a senior U.S. official to go to East Berlin and engage the GDR in political discussions. The Reagan administration, and some of its predecessors, considered such political discussions as giving the GDR something substantive and was, therefore, the last thing the administration wanted to do. I said that if we wanted the paintings, I should be allowed to explore what the East Germans wanted in exchange.

I was asked what the East Germans wanted to talk about. I mentioned arms control and suggested that someone from Washington be sent to Berlin to talk about that subject. I thought it was ludicrous that the East Germans got their information about the U.S. position on arms control from the Soviets. They should hear it from our own mouths. Eagleburger sort of rolled his eyes and said in effect that my suggestions were “very interesting.” He thought that I should try to sell my idea, but he would leave it to me to hear “the sound of the saw” as the limb on which I was crawling out on was being sawed away. I told him that that was fair enough. I had already found out from my experiences in the previous few years that my career was pretty well shot anyway. Senior officials never know whether they have a future or not.

I returned to East Germany and set up a meeting with the deputy foreign minister, who was not really a policy maker, but was the front man for interaction with the us. I suggested that as a starter, we try to sort out our goals in a different way. At about this time, the representative of the conference on Jewish material claims came to Berlin. He said that his people had been working with members of Congress, who had apparently suggested or blessed the idea of proposing a trade agreement with East Germany in exchange for a satisfactory solution to the Jewish claims. The revenues that the trade agreement would generate would be put into a fund to pay the claims. There are some people who today think that this was my idea; it was not. It was put forward by some members of Congress, although, I had discussed the idea with some people on the Hill who saw some merit in that kind of trade-off, the proposition that the representative of the conference on Jewish claims brought had come from Congress. To finalize it would need passage of some kind of U.S. legislation that would meet the requirements of Jackson-Vanik, which in effect barred trade with the USSR and its satellites.

As a result, I worked on an exchange package. I discussed this with the East Germans for the next two years and it, in effect, became my agenda. While the package was intended to match our interests with those of the East Germans, I always thought that we would be getting the better of the deal in the long run. I think that when I was ready to leave, the draft agreement was pretty much done. In the Spring of 1985, it was reviewed in Washington. Colin Powell, then the deputy national security advisor, chaired an interagency meeting to discuss the package. It was an impartial draft trade agreement with East Germany, as well as a draft agreement between the GDR and the conference on Jewish material claims. The dollar values were not filled in, but the concepts were all included. There was a definite relationship between a tariff opportunity on certain items and the contribution to the fund to satisfy the claims of the Jewish material losses. I must say that the conference people were very helpful in marshaling support in Congress for this package. Despite all this support, the interagency working group shot the whole package down. One of the “respectable” reasons for this opposition was that the administration did not want to be seen as being “soft” on communism, while it was negotiating with the Soviets on other issues.

Also, there was a group of people, some of them in the current administration, who could not bring themselves to deal with the East Germans, particularly since some parts of the package might free up some East German moneys, which could be used to buy weapons. This was a standard argument: if funds were made available to communist countries, they would use their own resources, which might have had to be devoted to satisfy Jewish claims to buy arms. So opposition to a mutually beneficial agreement won out and the package went down to defeat.

We did accomplish some things. Eventually, the paintings were returned to the Feiningers and we managed to reunify some families. Further, the opening for a dialogue with the East Germans enabled us to reach behind the facade of the professional ministries into the party machinery, where the important policy decisions were made. So, we did make some progress during my tour, but we never did come up with a policy towards the GDR. I was replaced by Frank Meehan, and I essentially lost track of our dealings with the East Germans.

Q: Did you get involved in any spy exchanges?

RIDGWAY: Occasionally. Dick Barkley handled these issues in West Berlin and in Bonn. He would periodically brief me on operations. I did get more involved in one situation, which started in East Germany and then spread throughout Eastern Europe. It ended when the Hungarians decided to ease border controls so that the East Germans could sneak into Austria.

At some stage of my tour, East Germans began to come to the embassy and then would refuse to leave with the result that we had people camping out on embassy grounds and in our building. We increased security to try to prevent this kind of occurrence. It was a difficult issue, but I don't remember all of the details. When the Pentecostals penetrated our embassy in Moscow and refused to leave for five years, they became a major issue in U.S.-Soviet relations. The same kind of situation was faced by our embassy in Hungary, when Cardinal Mindszenty took refuge on our premises and was our guest for many years. These events became major obstacles to any kind of dialogue with the USSR or Hungary. There were, of course, some people who thought that was just fine. But in fact, we had no leverage; these were human issues, which really tied our policy hands. Eventually, the Department issued instructions which barred any foreigner from staying in the embassy overnight.

As I said, the paintings were returned to their owners. There was considerable concern at the time that the 51 paintings that were to be shipped to the U.S. would be disbursed and would never be seen again. I thought that this might well happen, as, after all, the paintings did belong to one family and what they decided to do with the collection was their business and not that of any government. However, some of these paintings are still occasionally shown in art exhibits. And, in return for the release of the art collection, the East Germans got two visits: one from Rick Burt and one from Ed Rowney. They went to discuss political issues. That was the *quid pro quo* which worked quite well.

As I said, the Department's guidance with regard to embassy "visitors" was not to allow anyone to stay in an embassy overnight. But, it also said that no one should be physically ejected. I have been told that in Bucharest, for example, people would chain themselves to embassy fences or other fixtures. There, the embassy simply used cutters to sever the chains and then would put the

perpetrators back out on the street.

We in East Germany had a similar problem. One day, three young men entered the compound and would not leave. I was in Washington on consultation when this happened. I immediately flew back to Berlin to deal with this dilemma. What could we do with three young men who wanted to immigrate to the U.S.? We didn't have any kind of program for East Germans that would have given us some opportunity to work out a solution. The only possible avenue was for these young men to leave the embassy and find their way to West Berlin, where they might be processed. However, we found another solution.

Soon after my return, I met with Herr Vogel, the famous lawyer who had participated in many exchanges of personnel between East and West. In attendance was also a representative of the West German government. We somehow cobbled together a plan, which allowed the three men to leave our embassy and find their way to the West German embassy, where embassy officials would process them for further travel. The West Germans had an agreement with the GDR on a process that would take care of East German escapees to the West. So, using Vogel as an intermediary, the East and West Germans agreed to a plan which would allow the three young men to escape from East Germany. Vogel took the three to his office in his car, where they formally renounced their East German citizenship and the rights to their property in East Germany. Then, they were taken to the West German embassy, and from there through the wall and out of East Berlin. All of this was very closely watched by the media and many others.

As a result of this "success," we became a focal point for people who wanted to flee East Germany. However, when people would try to enter our embassy to seek refuge, we would apply the Department's injunctions. One day, when I was not in the embassy, my staff ejected some East Germans who were seeking refuge. Our process called for some of our people to escort these refuge seekers out of the embassy to wherever they wanted to go to make sure that the East German police did not use any strong-arm tactics on them. We took this action as soon as possible after the asylum seekers sought refuge, so that the East German police might be misled into believing that these East Germans were just in the embassy to seek information or for some other benign reasons. Nevertheless, we were accused of throwing people out. In one case, a guy showed up with scissors and threaten to kill his child unless we granted him asylum. We put him out on the street, where the East Germans immediately picked him up. His children were taken away from him and given to his parents. He went to jail, but I think his wife did manage to get to West Germany, where I believe she was joined by her husband much later. I suspect that he was not treated too gently by the East Germans.

All of these incidents were most unwelcomed by Washington. The West Germans were complaining that we were cold-bloodily putting people in danger. I finally drafted a message for Washington, with Jim Wilkerson's assistance, with was intended for Shultz and Eagleburger in which I said that the Department had left us with a truly cynical policy. On the one hand, we were told that people could not stay in the embassy overnight; and, on the other hand, when we did escort them out, we were chastised for doing so. I asked the Department to make up its mind and tell us what it wished us to do. I heard that the Department became very upset with this message. Larry said that the policy would have to stand as it was, but Secretary Shultz took our side and wanted clarification. I instructed my staff that the decision of what to do with asylum

seekers could not be left to junior officers, primarily to protect those officers from what might be a career-ending decision. I asked that decisions on these cases be left to me or the chargé, if I were absent. I did not see much of a future for me in any case.

On a number of occasions, we had to tell people to leave the embassy, preferably during the day, when the East Germans might not be too suspicious. No one would be allowed to stay overnight. We did follow up on those people that we escorted out of the embassy to make sure that the Stasi or other East German governmental entity did not take retribution on them.

There was one case, though, which we very strongly felt was a set-up. Some man from Rostock came in with his fiancée, who was a minor. His passport looked like he might have had a police background. We escorted them out, after they stayed overnight. We kept someone in the room with them to avoid being charged with allowing illegal relationships with a minor.

Obviously, all these cases were difficult and increased tensions with the East Germans. However, the East Germans were looking for a solution. In the meantime, these potential refugees decided to focus on the West German embassy, which began to have lots of “campers.” This was at about the time I left. It was clear to me, by this time, that the pressures on the GDR were becoming quite severe. Young people and families of all stripes were increasingly clamoring to be allowed to leave East Germany. I think it became well-known that we would not be an avenue for escape. Eventually, even the West German embassy became so overwhelmed that they began to escort people out of their chancery. There, these “campers” were called “line jumpers,” because the East and West Germans had agreed on a process which would allow people to leave East Germany; the people who tried to take refugee in an embassy were trying to get ahead of those who had applied to leave by the approved process. Unfortunately, some observers saw them as “heroes” rather than “line jumpers.”

That is roughly how we spent our time in East Berlin. Our debate with Washington continued. I would not accept being the “fall” guy for the Department’s inability to resolve the dilemma of whether or not to give sanctuary to refugees, thereby raising tensions with the East, or kick people out, thereby giving the media and others opportunities to lambaste us for our hard-hearted policy. I told Washington that if it insisted on ejecting asylum seekers from the embassy, we would call every time an incident occurred, so that we could get instructions on whether they could stay overnight or were to be escorted out of the embassy immediately. After a while, the incident rate dropped and the issue dissipated, although it was never really resolved.

My continual harping about this unresolved policy brought me to Shultz’ attention. I also came on his radar screen when the East Germans bought a large amount of bad wheat. The GDR bought wheat on the world markets through large international traders like Cargill. Agricultural trade takes place regardless of any politics or tensions. When the East Germans opened some large containers of wheat in Rostock, they found them full of mildew and rocks and heaven knows what else. That roused my interest in the wheat business.

About this time, the Canadians came to the GDR and offered it a great deal. Under Jackson-Vanik, our producers and traders could not offer interests rates below the going market. The next time I went to Washington for consultations, I attended a meeting chaired by Shultz on this

subject. I pointed out that our present position put two U.S. interests in conflict with the real possibility of losing out on both. Our position was that we would not compete for the sale of wheat (by lowering the interest rates) unless there was some improvement in their human rights policies. Unfortunately, both of those goals were ours, not the GDR's. As it could obtain wheat from other sources, we had just lost \$800 million worth of wheat sales in Eastern Europe without advancing the human rights cause one inch. I asked whether this was a sensible U.S. policy. I suggested that we approach the human rights issue step by step, thereby enhancing our traders' opportunities for sales in Eastern Europe. It was a horizontal approach, rather than a vertical one that caused all U.S. interests to lose.

So my intervention in this wheat sales policy and my continual pressure on Washington to resolve the asylum seekers dilemma brought me to Secretary Shultz's attention. I think he was probably impressed by my determination to find ways to advance U.S. interests in a step-by-step program.

I can't say that I found my tour in East Germany that boring. There were just enough issues to keep us on our toes. I had plenty of opportunities to come to Washington to make my views known on a person-to-person basis.

Q: Were your officers able to move around East Germany?

RIDGWAY: Absolutely. We had brilliant political and economic officers. Alan Thompson headed a section for a while. He was followed by Bruce Clark. We had a junior officer, Walter Andrusyszyn, who unfortunately is at this time in the process of leaving the Foreign Service. He zoomed to the top and is now at the NSC working on Eastern Europe. He escorted Mrs. Bush on her trip to Paris. He would put on his "working clothes" – Army field jacket, etc. – and get on trains and visit around. He would visit coffee shops and talk to the folks there. Our reporting on government-church relations, on "construction battalion" issues (conscientious objectors), on women's rights, on the Luther year, on the Bach year, and on other important events that were taking place in East Germany at the time was thorough. These reports were important not only because they measured what was going on in the GDR, but also because they were clues to other tensions in the whole Eastern European area. The staff really got out of the embassy and did some super reporting.

Q: I don't think that too many people realize the important role of the Church in the GDR at the time. During your tour, did we recognize this important role of the Church?

RIDGWAY: Absolutely. We followed the Church very closely. We had two issues. The Church was very important in providing a haven for dissidents. I think this was probably truer for the Lutheran Church than for the Catholic Church. We maintained contacts with both. I once called on Cardinal Meisner, who is now in Cologne. When I traveled in East Germany, I always called on the local Church hierarchy. I think these contacts were important particularly since the Church was vehemently anti-U.S. They were far to the left of the Social Democrats of West Germany in our point of view. The East German Church was also very much opposed to our arms control positions. It was during this period that we were proposing to base Pershings in West Germany and had a "zero-zero" (*nul-nul* in German) position on arms control. There were

anti-Reagan posters all over East Germany attacking him for his the “evil empire” speech. The many demonstrations against us, although organized by the government, had many church youths and leadership participating; we did not have many friends in the Church hierarchy. As I said, I met with many church leaders and submitted reports of my conversations with them.

On the economic aspects of our work, I must admit that I am very disappointed with myself and with my generation. I was not an economist and am still not so today, although I have learned something about corporate and financial analysis. As ambassador, I relied heavily on the CIA’s analysis of the East European economies, including the Soviet Union’s. As you know, we got that all wrong. In fact, the view that the East Germany’s economy was in good shape, particularly as compared to the Soviet one, was wrong. Both countries were in far greater economic difficulties than our analysts recognized. The consensus at the time was that the “East Germans were the communists that got it right;” it was wrong.

I traveled throughout the country and visited some factories. But I really was not welcomed in any worthwhile enterprises. I never got to any of the large manufacturing plants, like Carl Zeiss Jena, which manufactured optical lenses for the Soviets. I did see some old-line factories, such as chemical plants.

The analyses that I was being given to read claimed that the USSR and the GDR led the world in such things as steel production. That may have been true, but steel had lost much of its luster with the advent of plastics. These countries were also supposed to be the leading manufacturers of cement, but by this time, did cement really matter that much? The Soviets were known for their gold production, as measured by the number of miners and machines devoted to extraction. Did any analysts raise the question of efficiencies, which might have shown that manpower and machinery were not necessarily the best indicators of production? In fact, Soviet gold production was highly inefficient and much less than was projected when only manpower and equipment were taken into consideration. The same criticism should have been made of estimated Soviet oil production. It was highly inefficient and far below what it might have been, given the resources the USSR devoted to exploration and production.

I relied on our experts who maintained that if the Wall were eliminated – and we are talking about a period close to its actual demise – the East German economy would begin to tank until it hit a level at which it would stabilize. Having reached that base, the economy would then rebound. No one predicted the implosion that actually took place. I should have; but I also missed it. I had called on all the economic planners in East Berlin. Those meetings convinced me that there were at least two sets of “economic ledgers.” I could not believe that these planners were managing the economy as they were describing it to me. I was convinced that there was a second set of “books.” In fact, there was not a second set. The economy was as jerry-built as it looked. There were people who spent their lives in libraries, specializing in the Soviet economy. They described the academic vision quite well and when asked whether the economy really worked that way, they said they thought so. In this way we were fed a lot analyses that eventually proved all wrong.

Our embassy’s economic section was small and included people who worked on commercial issues, so we didn’t really do much independent analysis. I don’t think the U.S. government

devoted many resources to an analysis of the East Germany economy. People would see East German trucks in Nicaragua or East German SCUDS in Syria and assume that these were visible indicators of a mighty economic power. I think our agricultural attaché probably noticed the weaknesses better than most. He noted the inefficiencies in the East German agricultural sector, which had forced East Germany to import much of its food needs.

I will never forget that at Christmas time, neither mustard or oranges could be made available to the East German consumer without a major meeting of the East German Politburo. That should have been a clear signal that the system was broken. Every Christmas, this was a major issue. When I was the ambassador, the major question at Christmas time was whether the mustard would arrive in time to be eaten with the *wurst*. Honecker would have to make the decision to import the mustard and the oranges, because domestic production was inadequate. It should have been clear that the command economy was not meeting demand. Consumers lived by bartering; that was a clear indicator of the state of the economy. Bananas were another indicator. One day, just before the opening of the Leipzig Fair and during it, you could see bananas in store windows. If later, you went to the Jena Musical Festival, you would find the same bananas in store windows, only a little blacker. Bananas were being shipped from store window to store window, depending on when the regime wanted to put its best “food” forward. You wonder why they didn’t just manufacture or buy plastic bananas, since they obviously were for show and not consumption. So, while the GDR economy did not work, as far as I know, no one ever said so. I think it would have been very interesting to see what might have happened to the GDR if we had done the proper analysis and taken steps to bring that economy down.

Q: Were you aware of the surveillance that the East German services had placed on Americans in East Berlin?

RIDGWAY: I was aware of it. I am sure that my driver was a *Stasi* employee, as were my household staff. I finally got rid of the second-in-command in the house, a German among primarily Pakistani servants. He was not adding anything to the work of the staff; I am sure that his principal job was to report on me and on the other Americans.

We didn’t entertain very much. We would send out an invitation and we would get a call from the Foreign Office’s protocol office advising us once again that we were not allowed to send out invitations directly, but would have to funnel them through the protocol office. I refused to play that game. So I made friends in the cultural world. I cultivated opera participants and became friendly with some of them. We used to show movies at the residence. The NATO ambassadors met frequently, but that was not very enlightening or entirely useful.

We did accept invitations to speak at universities. We celebrated the 10th anniversary of U.S.-GDR diplomatic relations. Steve Mueller, then president of John Hopkins, came out to represent the U.S. on that occasion. He spoke fluent German. We went to the Karl Marx library at Humboldt University. There Steve told them that technology was advancing so rapidly that the GDR was in serious trouble. Information from the “outer” world came right through and over the Wall. The East Germans became furious when they heard this. They did not think that such a warning was appropriate as we were celebrating an anniversary. But Steve was terrific.

We had a library, which was open to one and all. Every once in a while, someone had the guts to come in and browse. There were police surrounding the embassy. Usually, when someone had been in the library, he or she would be stopped about a block away and searched to make sure that no material had been taken from the library, such as a magazine that might be circulated in the GDR.

Q: Did our embassy in Bonn or our mission in Berlin interfere with your mission?

RIDGWAY: All the time; that was constant. Bonn would send a cable to Washington describing East German political events and we would send a follow up, pooh-poohing everything that Bonn had said. We would also suggest that Bonn stop reporting on East Germany as it was not their territory and they were not qualified to comment on events in the GDR. Usually, one or two of our scorching messages would stop Bonn from reporting on East Germany. When Arthur Burns, ambassador to Germany, came to Berlin, he and his wife would sometimes travel around East Berlin and sometimes in East Germany. But the GDR was our beat. When East Germany was recognized in 1974, one of the major battles was to keep embassy Bonn out of the GDR.

The other issue that arose concerned the role of the ambassador and CIA operations. It also concerned the role of the CIA itself in its coordinating role. During the period of my ambassadorship, the CIA was told that it was a strategic asset, while the rest of the U.S. government representation was tactical. That meant that the two sides of U.S. representation were not to meet. And the CIA could not clear on activities that were considered tactical. The ambassador, who could be involved in strategic issues in his or her own country, was left out in a tactical situation of a split country, like West and East Germany. I have no idea how many people ran in and out of East Germany. These military intelligence people were managed out of Munich, the 66th MI. I had no way to clear them because the CIA had no way to clear them and without their participation, I had no opportunity to comment.

One day, I got a letter from an American citizen who told me that his sister, who was still in Germany and was married to a man who worked for the U.S. Army, had reported to him that her husband had not returned from work a few weeks earlier. No one in the U.S. Army would tell her what had happened. The American had tried to help his sister, but didn't get any satisfaction, so he wrote to his congressman. That was the letter that was forwarded to me with a congressional request for a follow-up and an answer. I looked into it and verified that the husband had been working for U.S. military intelligence. He was sent into East Germany and was "rolled up." The Army had no support system for the wife, and she was just left hanging. She, by making inquiries about her husband, blew the whole undercover operation. My reaction was that the Army had to develop a support system to take care of wives and widows whose husbands had been victims of a blown undercover operation. If it could not or would not, then the Army would have to cease its intelligence operations. So, I brought the Army's intelligence operation in East Germany to a stop. I just said that there would be no more Army intelligence operations in the country of my assignment until a better system was devised.

One day, when I was in Washington for my periodic consultations, Bill Casey, the CIA director, called me. He told me that I just didn't understand the important game that was being played. I told him that he didn't realize the terrible image the amateurish efforts of military intelligence

was leaving behind. I told him that I was well-aware of the positive aspects of intelligence, but that I could not support efforts which had a negative effect on our own citizens. I also said that I saw nothing wrong with my requirement that until operations were put on a more professional level, all activities were to cease.

During this same period, I was called to testify in a classified committee hearing. I got the same treatment as Casey had given me. The senators did not think I knew what I was doing. So I briefed them on the case and they finally agreed with me that intelligence operations needed considerable improvement before they could resume. The Army just did not have a complete intelligence machine in place. When a poor operative got caught, there was nothing in place to take care of his family, nor was there any process to control the story when it became public. I said that the present process could only end up as the case in point was doing: making the U.S. look amateurish and clumsy. I think that eventually the Army changed the process. However, I can't tell for sure, because undoubtedly it started its intelligence operations again without my knowledge as that was their method of operations. But I think at least I forced the military to take another look at its operations, and hopefully, improve them.

So, despite our ambivalent policy position vis-à-vis the GDR, I found plenty to do as ambassador. I kept busy on one issue or another. I had a great DCM, Jim Wilkerson, who was very helpful. I spent time with my staff, many of whom were just starting out in the Foreign Service. I had married just before going to East Germany; my husband was in Ketchikan, Alaska, where he was the commander of the Coast Guard base. He could not be cleared to visit me in the GDR, which was still viewed as being behind the "Iron Curtain." So, when I found an opportunity, I visited him there. As a result, I traveled back to the States periodically and had the opportunity to discuss our East European policy with many people. I talked about some of the obstacles which we had built and which were impeding the advancement of our own interests.

Q: One last question about your East Berlin tour. Did you see much evidence of a Soviet presence in the GDR?

RIDGWAY: I really didn't see much of it. They had a huge embassy on the *Unter dem Linden*, practically next to the Brandenburg Gate and "no man's land." If you went to the Gate from the east, you would encounter groups of Soviet soldiers in uniform, and I was always amazed by how Asiatic they looked. Other than on National Days, when the diplomatic corps would pay its respects to the ambassador whose country was celebrating that day, one would never see the Soviet ambassador. I would go to the Soviet embassy for its national day and see the ambassador then. But that was about it.

If you drove around the GDR, you might see Soviet bases behind tall walls. They were not, of course, identified as such, but one just knew what was behind the walls. Otherwise, one would hardly believe that the Soviets had a presence in the GDR. Their planes flew away from the Berlin area, so that their presence in the skies was not noticeable. They did have huge airbases, but their planes just did not leave a mark on East Berlin. There were 400,000 Soviet troops in the GDR, but we certainly did not see many of them in East Berlin.

Q: You were in East Berlin until June, 1985. What was your next assignment?

RIDGWAY: While in East Berlin, I got a call from George Vest informing me that the Secretary of State would be calling me soon to offer me the job of assistant secretary for European and Canadian affairs. About an hour after George's call, I got the call from Secretary Shultz. He offered me the job. He added that he wanted me to join him to take advantage of the opportunities that would arise from the agreement President Reagan and President Gorbachev had reached to meet at a summit to be held in Geneva in the autumn of 1985.

I reported to the Department at the beginning of June, but my nomination was held up. There was great opposition to my nomination, led by Mr. Fuller, who at the time was the head of the public diplomacy panel and is now the president of the Heritage Foundation. The Washington Times and others also objected. The opposition came essentially from right-of-center of the political spectrum.

Q: I think we would call them neo-cons today; that designation did not exist in 1985.

RIDGWAY: As I indicated earlier, I had pushed for the development of a relationship with East Germany; I was proud of that fact. The conservatives were not enamored of the concept. I had worked with representatives of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims to see if we could put together a respectable package, which would meet their goals without giving the GDR undue compensation for its actions. East Germany had never recognized the Holocaust victims; they had considered themselves also as victims of Nazism, and therefore did not feel obliged to do anything about the victims of the Holocaust. There were people who didn't like my view that as long as the U.S. had diplomatic relationships with a country and it had interests involved in that relationship, efforts should be made to advance our interests. So, when I was nominated, a full campaign was mounted against it. In fact, Fuller flew to East Berlin to ask me whether I was "soft or hard" on communism. My impulse, upon hearing that question, was to ask him to leave the residence; I refrained. I told him that had he been familiar with my record, he would not have asked such a silly question.

So we became part of the Department's "29", which even included such people as John Whitehead. His nomination was blocked for some period, which meant that Shultz could not travel. Finally, the administration broke that log-jam; Whitehead was confirmed. After my return to Washington, I testified. I thought I had done alright. The questions were not hostile; they were primarily intended to elicit my views on various issues and a little bit about my history. Many of the senators, such as Kennedy, knew me from my fisheries work. I thought I had answered all the question, but a few days later, I received a telephone call from H telling me that Senator Helms was not satisfied with what he had read. He had not been at the hearing, but was relying on the transcript, which I had reviewed. He wanted me back on the Hill that evening to meet with him. I should note that I was not the only one whom Helms wanted to interview further. Rick Burt was another. Rick and I are not friends; I am sure that he does not think very highly of me. But in any case, he and I were the ones that Helms wanted to see. So Mr. And Mrs. Burt and my husband and I went to the Hill that evening. I am everlastingly grateful to certain senators (Lugar, Biden, Kennedy, Mathias), who turned up that evening to make sure that Helms did not hijack the hearings and turn them into a propaganda session. So, both Republicans and Democrats attended that evening session.

I would characterize the session as a “star chamber” proceeding, in Elizabethan England terms. It was very unpleasant, not only for Rick and myself, but for our spouses as well. Helms chaired the session. It was so unpleasant that my husband and I agreed that I would never go through a confirmation hearing again, and I did not. The Helms approach was prosecutorial. I was painted as a “communist sympathizer.” At one point, Helms pulled out copies of State Department “Top Secret” telegrams. He accused me of all sorts of behaviors. However, he did not have the last page of these cables. Had he had those, he would have known that I was not in Berlin at the time those cables were written and they therefore had nothing to do with me. I did not have to tell him that he was way off base; the other senators figured that out in a hurry. I did not respond to Helms’ charges because I did not want to get others in trouble. I just took the beating and told Helms that he was wrong on all counts. For example, he accused me of being the cause for some German family being put in jail. I asked if I could explain; he said flatly “No.” Finally, he asked if I had anything to say. I told him that for some time I had wanted to tell him that that family was in West Germany and not in the East and that they had been released. That was the end of the hearing.

Rick Burt and I were abused that evening. It was a very nasty occasion. Nevertheless, I was confirmed. Whitehead swore me in; we were the only ones who got through. The other nominees were still being held hostage.

Q: Do you believe that Helms had some staffer who was doing his or her best to block your nomination?

RIDGWAY: There were two views on this then, as there are today. Who knows what staffer was working in which view?

The question is whether a country refuses to talk to any other, insisting only on promoting their own philosophical views or whether a country seeks alliances and negotiates differences and advances its own interests through a give-and-take process. My view, for example, is that on such issues such as human rights, Afghanistan or arms control, if you organize your interests vertically you sacrifice all the interests you have listed, because you hold each of those interests hostage to advances in the other interests. I have always thought that this was not a particularly positive approach. Interests should be organized horizontally, so that they can be pursued one at a time and whenever an opportunity arises. To say that you won’t negotiate on arms control because you don’t like the other side’s record on human rights means that you tie your hands so that you can’t make progress on either issue.

My view is not popular in certain circles, such as with those who may not want progress on arms control and for whom the vertical organization of issues is just fine because it blocks all possible progress. These people knew that I was being proposed for the assistant secretaryship. They also knew Shultz and Reagan were moving toward a summit, which they hoped would be the beginning of a dialogue with the Soviets, which, by the way, I think brought an end to the Cold War. There were people who did not want to have that dialogue take place or if it did, that it should not lead anywhere. I believe that Shultz offered me the job because he knew what my views were on the importance of dialogue.

We did get through the confirmation hearings in time to go to the 1985 Helsinki meetings celebrating the 10th anniversary of the founding on the CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) and the signing of the Helsinki Accords. The Soviets had brought a new player in their delegation: Shevardnadze, Gorbachev's foreign minister. Mrs. Shultz traveled with the secretary; for the first time, the wife of the Soviet foreign minister traveled with him. The plan was for the two ladies to do some sightseeing together and to become better acquainted.

The delegations first met in the great Finlandia Hall in Helsinki. The secretary and the foreign minister were there and I suggested to Shultz that since we were in the world's camera eye, he should get up to meet the Shevardnadzes, who were sitting several rows back. The secretary did that and the two shook hands, in front and in the midst of a lightening streak of flash bulbs. I think it was a very important moment. It was civilized; it did not give the "store" away, as some had judged it would, but it was a definite break from previous practices of talking to the Soviet Union. It replaced the standard stultified, stiff and unyielding approach that we had used in the past. Previous meetings consisted of Soviet foreign ministers reading their notes, leaving out all spontaneity and there was little chance for a meaningful dialogue. The participants were lucky not to fall asleep and fall off their chairs.

We met in the U.S. embassy, which I knew quite well from my previous posting. Shultz wanted to try to institute simultaneous translation, rather than sequential. It made a big difference to the quality of the meetings. The Soviets were very suspicious. Finally, we agreed that we would use simultaneous translation when the meetings took place in the U.S. embassy and consecutive translation when meeting in the Soviet embassy, which was their preference.

Q: In your mind, what was the biggest difference between simultaneous and consecutive translations?

RIDGWAY: In consecutive, you can't reach the person. You can't have a discussion; you can't get to the heart of the issue, or at least not in a give and take way. You don't have to wait an interminable amount of time to interject, by which time the right moment has passed and you have forgotten the vital points you wished to make. If negotiations are to make any progress, they must be much more spontaneous than a consecutive translation would allow. There have to be more inter-personal exchanges.

The simultaneous translations in our embassy did not make any major changes in the positions of the parties, but there were engagements across the table. You could ask questions for clarification purposes. It soon became very apparent that attitudes and positions would be quite different on the Soviet side. Shevardnadze had only a few aides around him, all of whom were trying their best to rein him in. He seemed to like the more spontaneous exchange that our new system allowed. His aides, on either side of him, would frequently try to get him to return to his notes and minimize the extemporaneousness of the situation. They would reach over and point to one of the papers that had been placed in front of the foreign minister.

Behind the foreign minister, was a fairly large group of additional aides, similar to what George Shultz had. But the Soviet aides kept jumping up and down trying to keep Shevardnadze

shackled in the old ways of doing business with the Americans. However, we did exchange views on many issues in an effort to prepare the way for an agenda for the Geneva summit meeting.

The last time we did consecutive translation was at our last meeting at the Soviet embassy at these talks. Never again did we use that atrocious method. It had become clear to Shevardnadze that if you wanted to avoid any agreements, consecutive translations was the way to go. On the other hand, he had some issues that he wanted to advance in Helsinki, and that would take simultaneous translations. After Helsinki, all U.S.-USSR meetings were held with simultaneous translations.

We returned from Helsinki in August and began an intensive period of preparations for the Geneva summit. By this time, Gorbachev was in charge, having followed a long series of leaders, none of whom lasted that long: Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Kosygin, Andropov, and Chernenko. Gorbachev had made his name in the Ministry of Agriculture and was known by Westerners for his work in that field.

Gorbachev became the party's secretary in March, 1985. He knew, as did Shevardnadze, that the Soviet Union was failing and falling behind the West. He looked for ways to change that dynamic. People may tell you that when he became Party Secretary, he was "scared to death" of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). I don't know and I will not get involved in that debate, because it is basically ideological and theological. Whatever role SDI played, it was clear to Gorbachev that the USSR was in great difficulties. He knew he had to take some action to rescue his country. He understood that his options were greatly limited by the huge military outlays that the Cold War seemed to require.

Shultz and Reagan sounded a consistent theme with Brezhnev, which emphasized that the USSR could not make much progress as long as it had a locked-down society. They also pointed out that the only way to ensure a rise in economic power was to move Soviet brain power from military questions to more economically profitable ventures. That is how *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* came to be. Gorbachev took the Soviet Union in new directions. However, that kettle had had a lid on it for so long that when it was lifted, it just blew out. Several years later, in 1989, when the people in Leipzig took to the streets to protest the policies of East Germany, Gorbachev could not call out his troops to subdue the uprising. That was the beginning of the weaning away of Eastern Europe from the USSR. Eventually, not only did that fall entirely apart but many parts of the Soviet Union became independent as well.

Q: When you started as assistant secretary, I assume that these changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union became your main focus. Was there hope that the situation was changing or was there a lot of skepticism?

RIDGWAY: There certainly was a lot of skepticism in the Washington community. The CIA thought all of these changes in Eastern Europe were part of a Soviet plot. It didn't think that Gorbachev was any different from Khrushchev, and that the "positive" steps that Gorbachev was taking were aimed primarily at bringing down the size of our defense budget. I had had enough experience with our intelligence efforts to understand that once the CIA makes up its institutional

position, it is very hard to buck. I suspect that the Agency's analysis of the Soviet economy also came to the conclusion that nothing had or would change: it was a "powerhouse." In looking back on this period, I have become more and more concerned with our failure to analyze the Soviet economy any more correctly than any of our other intelligence findings on the Soviets. Counting troops and therefore estimating military strength is not that difficult, but you need some real experts to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of an economy. The whole Agency was wrong on that task.

The people in EUR, joined perhaps by a couple of CIA analysts (rare exception) were somewhat more practical as they had to work with the Soviets and Soviet matters on a daily basis. They were not euphoric about what Gorbachev was doing, but they did note that his approach to issues was different from that of his predecessors. The embassy also noted this difference. The secretary thought it was different; he could feel something new in the air. As a result, the view in State was that negotiations did not require giving up or even jeopardizing the U.S. position on fundamental issues. Negotiations were, first of all, intended to explore the positions of the two sides, to probe the depth of the participants' feelings and to explore common denominators – if any existed. If nothing came of these discussions, that was alright; the resulting better understanding of the positions of both sides might be useful later. While State was willing to explore, Defense was not and it allied itself with the CIA. As a result, it was a battle from day one. The positions never changed.

Situations kept cropping up, such as spies in the embassy and the "bugging" inserted into the foundations being laid for the new chancery. We had signed a stupid contract with the Soviets, in which we allowed their people to do the construction of their new embassy on Wisconsin Avenue in DC, as well as supply materials, such as concrete, for our new embassy in Moscow. By the summer of 1985, when I arrived in Washington, the Soviet chancery was one great "tuning fork." The way the Soviets built the building, it allowed them to broadcast anything they wanted to send out over the airwaves. That was a red hot issue and people were demanding that we cease all discussions with the Soviets in light of their building activities. There were warnings that the Soviets would ply our young Marines guarding our chancery in Moscow with all sorts of temptations, as in the Sergeant Lonetree episode, and because of that, we should cease our dialogue with the Soviets.

Then there was the incident in New Orleans, where a Soviet sailor jumped ship. He swam to shore and in turn surrendered to the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service). They sent him back to the ship! That story hit the headlines quickly, because many people had witnessed one part or another of the story. Jesse Helms hit the roof. It was at this point that I began to see more clearly who our Soviet experts were, i.e., Louis Sells, Tom Simons, Mark Perris, and Mark Palmer. All were working on this "sailor" issue. In the middle of a raging storm in the Louisiana area, Louis Sells boarded the Soviet ship and demanded the release of the sailor; he took the sailor with him when he disembarked. Sells and his colleagues kept him on shore for quite a while, because they needed to be sure about this guy's *bona fides*. Finally, our people offered the sailor asylum in the U.S., but were turned down. At this point, the sailor wanted to return to his ship. This whole incident was played over and over again as televised hearings were held on the Hill. The poor INS really took a beating, first of all for initially returning the sailor and then for using a Ukrainian as a translator, which made for some communication difficulties. We held

meetings in the National Command Center in the White House, because Helms and some other senators were applying pressure. When I testified, I was asked whether I thought that the sailor had probably been threatened; I said that I thought that it was quite probable, and that threats had probably also been made against his family. I also said that the basic fact was that the sailor wanted to return to his ship and that we had no choice but to follow his wishes. Then the Coast Guard was assigned to escort the Soviet vessel back out to sea, opening a lane through all the ships that were trying to stop the Soviets from returning to sea.

About three years ago, the Soviet sailor turns up in Washington. He called on Senator Helms to thank him for all his efforts. Not one word to Louis Sells who risked his own life to get him off that ship. That did not sit well with me. I should mention that after the sailor returned to the USSR, we instructed the embassy to periodically check on him to make sure that he and his family were okay.

All of these incidents happened before the Geneva summit even started. With every new incident, there was a clamor from the right to cancel the summit. They viewed the Soviets as “evil” with whom we should not have any interaction. All sorts of judgments have been made about Reagan, but I will stand firm on my view that on issues such as having dialogue with the Soviets, he stood firm against some of his supporters. He wanted to meet with Gorbachev because he saw such a dialogue as a potential opening towards a more stable world. Reagan was going to go to Geneva and did, despite heavy pressure not to have anything to do with the Soviets. He understood the importance of holding a dialogue with Gorbachev. I was lucky enough to be on the team that worked the issues – day in and day out.

Margaret Thatcher supported Reagan; she said that the West could deal with Gorbachev. She became the greatest asset for those who wanted to hold the summit. For four years, every time we had a dust up and the right wing spoke in righteous indignation about the dastardly nature of communism, Margaret Thatcher, who had excellent conservative credentials, spoke up and said that we could do business with Gorbachev. Fortunately, she and Reagan were very close and her words carried great weight. I also think that Mrs. Reagan played a major role; she was determined that her husband should be viewed then and in history as someone who, regardless of political consequences, insisted on holding a summit meeting with Gorbachev as a means of fostering peace and world stability.

So we went to Geneva. It was the first of five summit meetings. I was fortunate to be in the position of assistant secretary. I was the behind-the-scenes organizer, negotiator and recorder for all of the joint statements and other arrangements that are an essential part of such meetings. I was supported by an outstanding team of professionals. Almost every summit was preceded by some incident or some issue that would give rise to tensions. In each case, loud voices were heard, including Senate resolutions shouting opposition to holding another summit. But Reagan persevered and we went to the summits in Geneva, Reykjavik, Washington, and Moscow. After Reykjavik, George Shultz and his EUR team were the only people in the U.S. government that asserted that the outcome of that summit had been positive. It was not viewed as such by Defense and other parts of the U.S. government, or the world media.

Today, I find in various reports that there were more people allegedly in Reykjavik than I can

remember being there. Today, everybody thinks that summit was historical and a great success. Of the 40 people who I know were there, only five, including myself, thought that we had made progress, particularly in the nuclear disarmament field, where a new era of arms reduction could be seen to be emerging. I think we made great progress in the human rights field, even though there was nothing in writing issued after the meeting. Today, a million people take credit for the successes of Reykjavik, which is quite a change from October, 1986.

The INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) agreement, which was born in Reykjavik, was signed in Washington in 1987 at another summit. Then there was another summit, this time in Moscow in 1988, where Reagan gave three speeches. In between summits, there was a lot of dialogue with the Soviets about the meaning of democracy. We did not tell them how to run their countries, but emphasized the historical fact that open societies were successful societies.

RICHARD C. BARKLEY
Political Counselor
Bonn (1982-1985)

Ambassador Richard C. Barkley was born on December 23, 1932 in Illinois. He attended Michigan State College, where he received his BA in 1954, and Wayne State University, where he received his MA in 1958. He served in the US Army overseas from 1955-1957 as a 1st lieutenant. His career has included positions in Finland, the Dominican Republic, Norway, South Africa, Turkey, and Germany. Ambassador Barkley was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 12, 2003.

Q: So you were in Bonn through '82 I guess.

BARKLEY: Well actually the beginning of 1982 until 1985.

Q: The ambassador was Arthur Burns at that time?

BARKLEY: Yes.

Q: Could you give a little background of Arthur Burns and how he operated.

BARKLEY: Arthur Burns was certainly the most prominent American I ever worked for. He had been the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board for a good long tenure. He had been Eisenhower's economic advisor. He was an economist of great renown. He obviously was elderly at the time. He was in his late 70's when he was appointed. But he was internationally known. Really I think, the Germans were extraordinarily pleased to have a man of that stature named the ambassador to the Federal Republic. Helmut Schmidt, who considered himself quite an economist, usually had contempt for anybody who couldn't meet his own standards in economics. Well, Arthur Burns not only matched him but trumped him several times. So Schmidt had great admiration for Burns. He was a man of almost intimidating presence. He was

just a lovely human being. He had sort of a flinty personality. He didn't suffer fools. I often thought that the worst job I could possibly have gotten was to be his economic advisor at the embassy in Bonn. Happily I was his political advisor, and he didn't claim to know much about the politics, so he did tend to listen to us. He was just an absolutely remarkable figure. Of course, when people came in to see him if they had any inclination to be feisty or combative, that evaporated once they met Arthur Burns. He was just a wonderful representative of the United States.

Q: What was the political situation like in '82 when you got there?

BARKLEY: Well we were going through the final throes of the NATO double track decision we were actually beginning to bring the Pershing missiles into Germany. That was a subject of popular great anxiety.

Q: You were saying Schmidt being an economist.

BARKLEY: Yes. He was concerned about the downward trend in the American economy in the first two years of the Reagan administration. One of my first tasks was to accompany Arthur Burns as note taker in his first meeting with Helmut Schmidt. It was agonizing for me to realize they were talking in a rather high technical terms, terms that I was not particularly familiar with. The art of drafting the memcon was really a challenge but it was a remarkable two hours that we spent. It was quite clear that Schmidt was really an imperial kind of character. He had great intellect. He was confident of his mind and abilities. He didn't cultivate too many people, but he had so much admiration for Arthur Burns it was actually an interesting exchange. Burns never would back down from him on any issue. He didn't feel he had to. It was a very interesting. But the seeds actually of the last elements of the Schmidt administration had been sown. His own party turned against him on the NATO dual track decision. Willy Brandt, who Schmidt had replaced and had gone into retirement, came out and led a frontal assault on Schmidt's policy on the defense, considering it an unnecessary provocation to the Soviet Union. In the course of the year, Schmidt fought a rear guard action. But the Schmidt government was a coalition government. It was a coalition between the Social Democrats and the Free Democrats. The Free Democrats were represented by Hans Dietrich Genscher who was the foreign minister. He had been foreign minister for many years. Genscher was uncomfortable with the position of the Social Democratic Party and was already beginning to make motions towards the Christian Democratic Union, the leader of which was Helmut Kohl. So tensions had built during this entire time. It built during the party conventions, where there were personal attacks on Schmidt. Schmidt tried to maintain his Social Democratic credentials and fend off what he considered the emotional outpourings of his own party. He was familiar with what was going on, but it became increasingly difficult to control these factions. By the autumn of 1982, he was in deep trouble. Actually Genscher broke ranks with him and entered a coalition with Kohl. The new government was born in September of that year.

Q: How did you find dealing with the social democrats, SPD?

BARKLEY: Social democrats like social democrats and labor party people everywhere are full of ideas. Some of them are cockamamie, but often a lot of creativity comes out of them too. I

think they at this time had gone so far, however in accommodation with the Soviet Union that it was very hard to find common ground. At the same time of course, they had been in power for a considerable number of years with Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt. They were looking for new economic models. I remember we put together a group of young economists from the Social Democratic Party who met with Arthur Burns. He had a fascinating lunch with them, and he came out sort of wagging his head and said, "You know they are really off the wall. All of their ideas in practice have no utility." I think that is often what happens when a party has been in power for a long time, a party whose leftist wing was uncomfortable with business policies of Helmut Schmidt. So this was the period of time of many new trends, not the least was the emergence of the Green Party. It had been around for awhile, mostly among college students. It went from pro-ecology to being anti NATO very quickly. In the elections of that summer, they actually went over the 5% barrier, and entered the Bundestag. There were new elements in the Social Democrats who were fearful of losing their liberal base, and they did lose large segments of their liberal base. That sent them into opposition.

Q: How were we looking at the greens?

BARKLEY: I think with great curiosity. Of course we were you are always a little bit aggravated when a party attacks you, or attacks NATO, which was the instrument that maintained Western cohesion for a long period of time. I am totally convinced that it was the glue that tied us all together in the face of Soviet threat. So these efforts were not totally appreciated, but our job as an embassy was to try to understand what was going on. We met with them all. We always had.

Q: The name that comes to mind is Petra Kelly.

BARKLEY: Oh yes, Petra Kelly is a fascinating figure. Her stepfather was a U.S. military colonel. She took his name Kelly, but she developed a terrible contempt for the U.S. military. She established then a personal liaison with a rather prominent German general by the name of Gerd Bastian. Bastian gave a great deal of legitimacy to the Green Movement because of his military background. At that time almost every leftist was concerned about the ecology. The forests were dying in Germany. At that time they were just discovering acid rain and all of those things, and young people were energized. You know it was a powerful appeal. So we tried to get to know them very well. Actually Joschka Fischer, who is now the Foreign Minister, was a highly successful member of the Green Party. I got to know him. He was a very charming fellow, highly intelligent, and of course was on the cutting edge of a new movement. At that time it was a little bit like a combination of don't trust anyone over 30 on one hand, and the idea of power on the other because they wanted to constantly change the leadership of the party in a system where seniority is rewarded, so it didn't work very well. They had been going through a lot of these things, and even to this day, there are two movements, the Realo's and the Fundi's as they are called. The Realo's want to follow a realistic course of constant coalition with the government and the Fundi's think that government is corrupting and therefore they should go back to the radical fundamentals of the Party.

Q: Were we concerned at that time from the Bonn point of view of West Germany somehow or another making a pact with East Germany to unify and become a neutral?

BARKLEY: That had been a concern for a very long period of time. It goes back to the early stages of the Social Democratic Party. And of course the anti NATO elements, not only the Greens but a large part of Social Democracy stayed in that direction. The idea is that a neutral Germany would form sort of a barrier between the warring East-West camps. So senior SPP officials did endorse it. Oskar Lafontaine, when he ran as Social Democratic candidate later on against Helmut Kohl basically espoused this kind of thing. There has always been a certain pacifist vein in Germany that came out of course of the excesses of World War II. I remember when I was a student in Germany, a lot of the kids said, "Well, the military is okay for some jarhead from Texas, but we are too cerebral and too cultured to engage in this kind of thing." You know it was that kind of arrogance. Fortunately it never took root with the vast majority of the German people. The Marxist intellectuals somehow could never find common ground with the laboring class.

Q: Talking of Marxist, ideology in all of Europe seems to have a much stronger strain, particularly Marxist ideology than in the United States. Did you see that? I mean were the teachers...

BARKLEY: There were the Greens, and the Greens had groups that had communist sympathies, I don't know how deep. But there was the kind of Marxists that goes way back to the 70's where the students decided it was time to make a "long march" through the institutions, basically grabbing the teaching positions. They tried this for a long time. Obviously they had some successes like you always do when you have a mass movement of intellectuals at the universities, but if it was going to catch, it never caught at that particular time. Then with the subsequent development of the collapse of the Soviet Union it really went begging.

Q: What about Helmut Kohl and the CDU? How did we view that, as they were sort of getting ready and assumed power while you were there?

BARKLEY: Well there were always a number of candidates for the Christian Democratic Union, and I remember we tried to make sure that the ambassador met with all of them. A lot of them had been around for a long time and were considered to be really serious candidates. But after meeting with all of them, the ambassador said, "Well, I can tell you categorically that the candidate will be Helmut Kohl, because he has a steadying influence, and he is strong where all of the others have great weaknesses." And of course he turned out to be absolutely right. He came out of Rhineland Palatinate. He was a German Catholic, much in the tradition of Adenauer. He liked Adenauer. Adenauer was also a Rhinelander. These were people who felt that the western moorings of the Federal Republic were absolutely essential to their existence. He was a solid guy, and he had a willingness to stand up and to do certain things. While the Social Democrats were fragmenting over the double track decision he came in 100% behind it. Of course he had the support at that time of Genscher. He was very firm in maintaining the draft, that Germany would continue to meet its military obligations to the West. He was a refreshing beginning, and obviously he was the chancellor for a good long time. I think, in fact, he was chancellor longer than Adenauer.

Q: While you were there did you see any problems about political financing?

BARKLEY: No. That all came out later. In retrospect it always seemed they had enough money to do the things they had to do. The political parties, you have got to realize, were financed by the government. I think probably if you ever look at it, now, it was a huge political issue, but we are not talking about enormous amounts of money. They had a couple of million dollars they had in their kitty to do what they wanted to do to make sure people behaved like they wanted them to behave. But it certainly was not apparent during my period of time '82 to '85.

Q: Was Berlin at all an issue?

BARKLEY: Always. Berlin is always an issue.

Q: Even at this period of time?

BARKLEY: Absolutely.

Q: What were the problems?

BARKLEY: Well the main problem was always the geography of Berlin. Let me back up a bit. The appeal for me of the Political Counselor's position was that it was the largest political section in the American foreign service. It was divided into five different groups. The external section. The internal section. Political military affairs, which was very big during the NATO double track decision. And the Berlin affairs group. I had all of those. We had 14 or 15 officers altogether, without secretaries. It was a large staff. In Berlin, the problem is so arcane that we had to make sure the ambassador and others knew what they needed to know without burdening them with all sorts of minutiae. It was very hard. We were constantly, trying to adjudicate issues. For example our embassy in Berlin was in the Soviet sector, right? Therefore, it could not engage in any activities with the Soviet sector government. That was the responsibility of our Mission in the American sector in Berlin. All access questions were a matter of coordinating with occupying powers, the French, the British, and the Americans. They met once or twice a week with their German counterparts and they would go through everything. There is an enormous number of things that come up in a city like Berlin. I mean it was the largest city in Germany. Whether it was a matter of making sure that you can get your necessary raw materials into the city, I mean it just goes on and on with the access questions. Now we were somewhat in a better position after the Berlin agreements of 1973. Nonetheless, there was always some nagging problem, and the Soviet knew exactly what chains to pull if they wanted to sensitize us as to our vulnerability. So there was constantly something going on.

Q: Well I would think our embassy in East Berlin would feel sort of subservient to our embassy in Bonn because of you know, they are sitting in a place where if they did something wrong they could really screw things up vis a vis West Berlin.

BARKLEY: But basically we did not have very active relations with the East Germans. There was no question where American political sympathies lie. The Ambassador there was basically in a reporting position, because of the status of Berlin, and because the Embassy, for administrative reasons, was placed in the Soviet sector. We could not have military attachés there, so the Embassy was a bare bones Embassy. It had an agricultural attaché, it had USIS, it

had political officers who were trying to figure out what was going on in East Germany as well of course with their relationships, within the Eastern bloc. So the embassy was somewhat smaller than the overwhelmingly large embassy in Bonn. Then we had a very large presence in our sector in Berlin, the U.S. mission in Berlin. So the East Berlin Embassy was very small. But its tasks were also commensurately small. There were certain things it could do and many things it could not do. But at this time actually one of the more interesting issues of my career came up. Our ambassador in East Germany was Roz Ridgeway who was extraordinarily effective diplomat. The only thing is that Roz did not speak very good German. One of the ongoing things that we had was an East-West channel that went back to the Power Able exchange, long time ago. That was a channel of discussions between the East German government and the American government. I was given the task of taking on this channel of communications with the East German lawyer Wolfgang Vogel, who was instrumental in working out, not only the Power Able exchange, but subsequent exchanges as well. We worked out the Sharansky exchange, and a whole variety of other prisoner exchanges. As political counselor in Bonn I became his American counterpart. It was a particular challenge because I knew of the sensitivity of our embassy in Berlin of talking with an agent of the East German government. So every time we met, I would either write or go up and see Roz Ridgeway and debrief her on everything that was going on, make sure that there was no freelancing and that she was fully aware of what was happening. Every ambassador we had in East Germany operated under a series of agreements that we had with the West Germans. One said that if any asylum seeker entered their Embassy we could not expel them. We could never turn anybody over who was a German citizen either of East Germany or West Germany to the authorities. This was an issue of extraordinary sensitivity in the West German government. And of course this was a constant challenge because we wanted to keep our embassy in East Germany open with access to the public without it becoming a point for asylum seekers. That turned out to be a nagging problem. We did not only do prisoner exchanges, Vogel and I, but we would also do personal cases where people would get into the embassy trying to seek asylum, and he would become the negotiator to make sure they were released without prejudice. He worked with his German counterpart who was the State Secretary for Inter German affairs in Bonn, to work out these things to the point that nobody was particularly embarrassed.

Q: Well you get to the point where you are a bunch of rational people on both sides trying to figure out let's take care of this thing without turning it into a propaganda thing or not.

BARKLEY: Well we would like to think that was the case, but inevitably things got dicey. When we got into discussions on a man like Anatoly Sharansky for example. Sharansky obviously was somebody we desperately wanted to get out of Russia, because he had been able to create a constituency of concern in the American government. Any American government that would be able to secure his release would be considered heroes by large segments of the American public. So there was political weight behind all of these things.

Q: How did Sharansky who is a Soviet citizen, end up with a couple of people talking about him in Germany?

BARKLEY: Well because the only agent who would discuss these things with the west was Wolfgang Vogel. The same thing was during the Power Abel exchange where the standards of

operations were set.

Q: This was when the pilot of the U-2 and Karl Abel who was a spy in the United States in New York I guess, were exchanged.

BARKLEY: That is right. Either they shot down the U-2 or somehow got hold of Powers and we wanted to exchange him. This was the first effort to do that. The channel they developed that the spokesman for the Soviet Union through the East German government was this independent lawyer Wolfgang Vogel. At that time his counterpart was Frank Meehan who was the political officer in the U.S. Mission in West Berlin. They negotiated this exchange. That was the beginning actually of using Vogel as the conduit for these kinds of exchanges. The problem was that American assets, most had been recruited either by the Defense Intelligence Agency, many of them based in Germany, were trying to gain access to East Germany, but other areas too. These agents were rolled up almost immediately by Eastern intelligence services, the Stasi of course, or by their Polish or Czech counterparts. We always had an extraordinarily difficult time seizing their assets, identifying them and bringing them to court. So there were a huge number of assets of ours that they had, and hardly any of theirs that we had. The only difference was that in terms of tradecraft, which is the intelligence system's view of themselves, the eastern Europeans and the Soviets would do almost anything to get their assets back, where we didn't seem to care very much about ours. So although there was a disparity in terms of the numbers, they were so desperate to get their assets back that we could usually strike some sort of arrangement.

Q: Well how did the Sharansky thing come up? Was it going when you got there or...

BARKLEY: It was in the background, and the Soviets had refused to consider trading for him. Quite obviously, although he was a political symbol in the west, he was also a symbol of resistance in Russia. Of course for the longest period of time he was considered by the Soviets to be an agent. So we said, "No he is not an agent, he is a civil rights leader." In the last analysis, what we were able to do is say, "If you agree to your definition", we will agree to our definition, and we will get him out. For the longest time the Soviets wouldn't play. It took them awhile to realize there were some advantages from their standpoint of getting him out because he continued to be, through particularly his wife who had gotten out, a thorn in the Soviet side. It took a long time. Actually that was finally consummated after I left in 1985-1986. But Vogel was always looking for the kinds of assets that we had in the West because there were so few, and looking for anybody because we had interest in a number of people, and indeed, just before I left, we did complete a major deal of 26 of our assets that we had for four of theirs, two East Germans, a Pole, and a Bulgarian.

Q: Well in a way you had to be rather sharp traders, let's go out and get some more. You were counting up...

BARKLEY: It sounds a little bit tidier than in fact it was. You know, whenever you would identify somebody, it had to be vetted through, if we held them in the United States. In this case we did hold all of them. You had to vet it through the Department of Justice, the CIA, and the State Department and all of the agencies that may be involved. As you know these agencies seldom agree. So it was difficult to find an asset that was useful. The big breakthrough in the

negotiation that I had was when we finally seized an East German agent in Boston by the name of Zehe. He had been lured up there from Mexico City and the FBI grabbed him. Although the East Germans claimed he wasn't a big hitter, they wanted to get him back. They were willing to negotiate actively. Then there was the great disparity between the American political and judicial system and that in Eastern Europe. The Eastern Europeans grab a person that they claim is an asset, they lock him up. We put them on trial, and in a U.S. trial you need evidence, and so the first thing the East Germans did was to get an extraordinarily capable lawyer in Boston. His name was Silverglade. He found out that the FBI did not have an iron clad case. There was of course the contention of entrapment, and the usual thing. So the East Germans did not want to negotiate if he was going to be found not guilty. There was a long hiatus there to find out whether or not we had some negotiating room or not. We did have a couple of people in custody, a Pole and a Bulgarian and subsequently another East German woman, who was a courier, they were not big fish. But we had sufficient evidence to get them. They were sitting in a federal penitentiary which is not a pleasant place to be. I have gone somewhat far afield but this is one of the major tasks that I was assigned at that time.

Q: Oh no. This is very much what you were doing there. Was there sort of a ritual, a bridge or something where they would appear and walk across?

BARKLEY: Well when we finally made the trade, there was a bridge between Potsdam and West Berlin called the Glienicker Brucke, it was also called Freedom Bridge. It was a bridge that was open and operative but was not open to public traffic. It became the exchange point. It was the exchange point for Powers and Abel and every subsequent prisoner exchange took place there. There was quite a ritual in which it was done. The American side would stay on our side and then they would go out and meet in the middle, and there would be Vogel and the agents, and they would do this exchange.

Q: You found out that once you started getting into negotiations things were carried on, games weren't played at the last moment?

BARKLEY: Well yes, there was always a certain amount of this. One of the problems was that Vogel was an extraordinarily effective fellow. There are books being written about him even to this day. Craig Whitney the New York Times correspondent wrote one called Spy Trader, all about Vogel. It was fascinating. Vogel was a man of his word, and if he said I can do this, he could do it. Our problem was different because we always had to go back and get clearance for everything we did. So we would make an initial agreement pending approval from the American authorities and the German authorities, because the Germans, these are almost all German citizens, also had to agree. Then all of a sudden the Germans would say no we don't want this guy. He works both sides of the fence; we are not going to play that game. Or the Americans would say okay we want to add four more. Or what was more often the case, we would come back and say, "We have got to add four more." He would say, "Jesus, I can't continue to do this. The disparities are already so great." So it was a real horse trading kind of thing, but I was the only U.S. voice. I was the only person who had sufficient German that I could do this. So when other people came over, I was not only the voice, but I was the interpreter. Many of our guys had the authority of their own office but they didn't have the full authority of the United States government. So the whole thing would never have worked if we didn't have someone like Tom

Niles, who was the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the European bureau, who was marvelous at getting these groups together and hammering out our positions.

Q: One last question on this. How did you find, we have got rather large consulates in Germany. How did you use them and what sort of role did they play?

BARKLEY: We used to have large numbers of consulates in West Germany. We had them in Munich, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Bremen, Düsseldorf, and Frankfurt, that was the biggest consulate I think in the world. Of course we had a mission in Berlin. The one that was probably the smallest and the one that didn't have as much impact was the one in Düsseldorf because it was very close to Bonn. But nonetheless, the Germans had a decentralized government system, and every state wants to have their American representative. So of course the biggest state in the union is North Rhine Westphalia, and Düsseldorf is the capital, so that had a lot of weight. There was always a question, of the use of the one in Bremen. There was a question for a long time whether we needed all of those in terms of what they produced. But in fact it became such political moment in Germany that the idea of closing any one at that time was not acceptable. I think they have subsequently closed Düsseldorf and Bremen, but that was after unification and after we opened Leipzig.

Q: Well is there anything else you think we should comment on your thing in Germany?

BARKLEY: Well you know, it was such a fast and active period of time. I am sure there is something. Maybe perhaps the very controversial visit of President Reagan to Bitburg. That was an issue of great public moment in the United States. I actually was the control officer for that visit.

Q: When this thing was being said you might explain what the problem was and how did it impact on you?

BARKLEY: Well the problem basically was every time the president of the United States makes a visit, the local politician tries to use the presidents to his specific advantage. This in the past had not been a serious problem. But when we were putting together the visit for Ronald Reagan, Helmut Kohl had great influence because of his foursquare support of the NATO double track decision etc. Reagan liked him very much, and we wanted to make sure this was a successful visit. Kohl's view of what a successful visit was predicated on a number of factors. One, he had just had an extraordinarily successful visit with Francois Mitterrand at which they joined hands at the Marne, one of the major battle sites of the First World War and prayed together. In other words this was a big moment of reconciliation in which they tried to lay to rest one of the most agonizing elements of European history. They wanted to do something similar with President Reagan. So the ambassador and I and the DCM went in to see Kohl's deputy to work out a program.

Q: Who was the DCM?

BARKLEY: Bill Woessner. We went in to see the national security advisor for Helmut Kohl who was basically in charge of the program. He said, "Well we would like him first to visit the

Chancellor's home area which is Rhineland Pfalz and we would like him to go to the Hambach castle, where the first stirrings of German nationalism occurred." That was fine. Then he said, "We would like to go to the cemetery following up on the Mitterrand-Kohl reconciliation." There is one very close to the American air base, also again in Rhineland Pfalz. It was called Bitburg, which of course subsequently became a trade name for people who were unhappy with the president. The problem was is that there were no American grave sites in Germany anywhere. In WWI and WWII we had no U.S. graves in Germany. So there was no Normandy or any place they could go. There was only a German grave site. When we sat there, and we talked about it, I said to Horst Telchek, who was the German national security advisor, after they went through what the chancellor proposed to do, (We have it all on documentation so I can be the hero at this particular moment) I said, "The one thing that would be unacceptable is if there were any SS troops in that grave." He said "I am sure that this will be fine." He didn't go any farther than that. What we subsequently heard is they went back and they told Kohl there can't be any SS there. Kohl apparently said, "But they were all troops. They were all Germans. They all died in battle etc. There is no distinction between the two." For the first time it showed me that Helmut Kohl's judgment was failing, because he should have been fully aware of how explosive the Hitler SS was. So the president's team came in. It was headed by Michael Deaver and a number of other people. They were all extraordinarily effective in photo-ops. They would go to these different places and say, "Yes the president will look good against this backdrop". We can take this picture; we can do that. It is just something that any Presidential advance group goes through and they were very good at it. When we got to Bitburg there was a bad snowstorm. All of the graves were flat in the ground so you couldn't spot what was going on. I remember we got Bill Woessner to tell Deaver that the only concern we have if there is any SS in here. Deaver didn't know what we were talking about. So I don't think it fully registered with him. Anyway they came out with the broad arrangements between the Germans on where the president would go. Then it hit the fan when U.S. journalists went up to Bitburg. The snow had melted and they looked down and they saw Obersturmbahnführer and so on, who bore these SS titles on the ground. Boy they went ballistic. We had a serious crisis on our hands. I mean a serious crisis on our hands. Thank God we had Arthur Burns because he was able to adjudicate some of the worst aspects of it. Well when it hit him, all of a sudden Kohl was aware that the firestorm was created by his decision. He wrote a letter to President Reagan saying that if President Reagan rejected the Bitburg visit, Kohl's political future was in jeopardy. It was a terribly powerful letter. Reagan said, we have to handle this some way, but I can't disappoint Helmut Kohl. Well by that time Elie Wiesel and American Jewish groups were highly incensed by this terrible blunder and really put pressure on the President. We went to work to try to salvage it. The way it was finally salvaged was to move the President personally as far away as Bitburg without you now jettisoning that part of the program, and then have him go to a concentration camp. So he went to Bergen Belsen where he did a kaddish. Then apparently Washington trying to find a way out of this mess got a call from Matthew Ridgeway who was probably at that time the U.S.'s greatest living soldier. You know the hero of Korea.

Q: And a paratroop commander.

BARKLEY: Yeah and NATO commander I believe. He was a man of enormous stature and he said, "I gather the chief is in trouble and if I can do anything, I will." Well the Germans then came up with General Steinhof who was a man also of great character.

Q: Air force pilot, badly burned.

BARKLEY: Badly wounded. And they shook hands while the president stood far away on the grounds of Bitburg. Of course there were all of these efforts to try to ease the pain, but by that time much of the damage had been done. It was an extraordinarily difficult time. I remember most of the journalists I knew stationed in Bonn, I mean Bill Drozdiak, and Jim Markham, great journalists said that their editors were all over them to come up with some salacious aspects to what was going on, and how bad the Germans really were and the whole thing, so there was enormous pressure on the press too. It was probably one of the ugliest experiences I have ever had.

Q: Well what about the reporters who were there. I am talking about the serious reporters rather than the ones running around with the crisis of the moment, but the serious reporters there. Were they trying to put this into perspective?

BARKLEY: Oh no. They had a scoop here. They had a story. They had pain and suffering. This is shock and awe almost. They were having a wonderful time. Of course they were taking these pictures of the gravesites and then they would do some research on who this guy was, who this SS guy was and what sins he had created. Of course because it took place in a grave area, they were tromping all over the graveyard. There was some talk of desecration of the graves. I don't know about that but certainly the visual media were tromping all over that place to try and get racy stories. All of the journalists I knew, reputable journalists, were somehow I think shocked by their home office demands for more and more stuff. I mean it was already bad enough. But somehow we got through it.

Because of Ronald Reagan having spent this difficult time at Kohl's side, he had certain credit to draw on. You and I know that credit can be drawn down pretty quickly in foreign policy. Nonetheless at that time, there was a great sense of gratitude for Regan's courage in continuing what for him was a very painful experience.

Q: Was there at the embassy level and all, and with the White House, was there a lot of finger pointing and trying to find the fall guy and all that?

BARKLEY: Oh yeah, of course. In that case, however, to have someone the stature of Arthur Burns is worth gold. They weren't going to attack him, and he knew perfectly well where the problems were. But it was one of those cases where I don't think they were going to get away with frying any of the young guys, so they just let it go. But there was a lot of talk about retribution. I didn't know where that was going of course, but our record was quite clear. This was where answering the mail and keeping up with documentary evidence is worth a lot, because it was all there. We had raised a cautionary note and they had disregarded it.

GREG THIELMANN
Political Officer

Bonn (1982-1985)

Mr. Thielmann was born and raised in Iowa and was educated at Grinnell College and Princeton University. A specialist in Political-Military Affairs, he held a number of positions dealing with such matters as Strategic Proliferation, Arms Control and Missile Programs. He also served abroad at several posts in the capacity of Political Officer and Consular Officer. His last position was Chief, Office of Analysis for Strategic Proliferation and Military Affairs in State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. Mr. Thielmann was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004

Q: Today is the 26th of January, 2005. Greg, you were in Bonn from when until when?

THIELMANN: I was in Bonn from September 1982 to I think July of 1985. I remember very well the day that I arrived in Germany because it was September 17th the day when there was a parliamentary confidence vote in the German parliament that resulted in the fall of Helmut Schmidt's government. This was when the Free Democrats and Hans-Dietrich Genscher pulled out of the Social Democratic-Free Democratic coalition. This left the SPD (Social Democratic Party) with a minority, requiring or allowing a new realignment that would remove Helmut Schmidt as chancellor. Since Schmidt had been chancellor for quite a while and a very impressive and successful chancellor, this was a very big day and the very day I arrived. This allowed me to say later that I brought down the Helmut Schmidt government.

Q: Was there any residual resentment, suspicion on the part of the Schmidt government after Carter pulled the rug from under him over the neutron bomb episode? He had made Schmidt get way out in front of him and then cut him off at the knees by changing his mind. I would've thought that that Schmidt's SPD would have been very suspicious about anything the Americans might want the Germans to do. I mean, was that around or not?

THIELMANN: Yes, I know it was very much in the air, and Schmidt was very bitter about the whole handling of the neutron bomb. I think that convinced Schmidt that Jimmy Carter was not a competent manager of national security issues. It seems to me that the irony is that in many ways Schmidt and Carter should've been close allies because I think that their sophisticated understanding of nuclear doctrine and the exigencies of the western alliance security situation really overlapped quite well. I think it was much more of a problem of personality and not very competent management on the part of the U.S. that really embittered Schmidt. But Schmidt had a lot of his own problems. He was a pragmatist, a pro-defense Social Democrat at a time when the party was leaning pretty far left. A lot of anti-American sentiment and a lot of leftover negative feelings that came out of the whole Vietnam era, were very much in the minds of the rising SDP leadership. So Schmidt himself, in the best of circumstances, had a very difficult time managing the German security position. I think he felt that the American leadership made that all the more difficult. That was the background of the neutron bomb issue.

The other little twist is Schmidt of all the Europeans was the one who was most instrumental in the NATO missile deployment decision because Schmidt complained at a very conspicuous and well publicized International Institute of Strategic Studies conference in London that the SALT-2

treaty, the latest strategic arms agreement with the Soviet Union, had not adequately addressed Soviet nuclear systems that threatened Europe. Foremost among them were what we later called the INF category missiles, SS4, SS5 and SS20 as well as the backfire medium range bomber. Those were going to be addressed in SALT-3. They were considered gray area systems. But Schmidt argued that this was a flaw of the SALT-2 treaty and that it needed to be addressed. Now this was constantly quoted in the west to justify missile deployments, but Schmidt would've much preferred that the systems be addressed by arms control and by an agreement for the U.S. not to deploy and for the Soviets to get rid of their systems, which is ultimately what happened. But Schmidt spent a lot of time trying to explain what he meant in registering that initial complaint about the need to do something about the SS20 missile modernization on the other side of the Cold War curtain.

Q: Okay, Greg, just to set the stage, when you arrived, was there the feeling the Social Democrats were out and the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) back in? So people were rubbing their hands and saying, okay, now we can get on to more conservative government and to making a strong response to the Soviets. Was there a feeling that things had changed for the better or not?

THIELMANN: There was certainly the feeling in Washington that Helmut Kohl, the leader of the Christian Democrats, could lead a party that was more naturally inclined to support the United States, more conservative on defense issues and that would make the task of the U.S. easier. The problem, which the Reagan administration encountered was that it had little feeling for and less sympathy for European concerns. The Reagan administration found out that Kohl genuinely believed in a dual track decision and worked hard on the arms control part of it almost as much as Helmut Schmidt did. So Germany became the leader of European pressure on the U.S. to negotiate seriously on the arms control track. This was dealing with the Reagan administration whose most influential members like Richard Perle, assistant secretary of defense, and I knew this from inside, wanted to sabotage any hopes of an agreement. He wanted to give the world the impression the U.S. was seeking arms control but to ensure that it never happened. Ronald Reagan never understood the issues even at a superficial level. So he was hopelessly out of it and had to be lectured by his good friend Margaret Thatcher to avoid his agreeing to give up all nuclear weapons later at Reykjavik.

Q: Okay, you get there in September '82. Could you talk about your job and what were the issues? Who was the ambassador and what was the set up of the area you were working in? Then we'll talk about the issues.

THIELMANN: The ambassador was Arthur Burns who had been chairman of the Federal Reserve. He was a very distinguished American, a sort of a non-career diplomat and one of the best arguments for political appointees. Anyone could point to someone like Arthur Burns. He was someone who actually had been a professor of young Helmut Schmidt, helping teach Schmidt economics, which was clearly one of Schmidt's strong suits. So Burns had very deep respect from the Germans even though there was a very wide-spread disdain for President Reagan to whom Burns obviously reported. Burns set a high standard I think in the embassy for a deep approach to issues. He would really conduct seminars in the embassy with foreign service officers briefing him on topics, not always directly related to the implementation of a foreign

policy but to issues at a deep and substantive level. So that was an intellectually stimulating atmosphere. It was a little bit different as regards the security function because Burns kept admitting to my bosses that he really didn't know much about this at all. He would sort of trust us in the management of these issues, which contrasted greatly with my poor colleagues on the economic side where Burns knew everything.

Q: I talked to somebody who was I think an economic counselor at one point to Burns and he said, "How can I do this? I mean here is the top economist in the United States, and I am supposed to be handling the economics and be his support in this field." I don't envy him. We had it much easier.

THIELMANN: So we didn't want to let the ambassador down on the security issues. But in many ways we had quite a bit of leeway in carrying out our instructions from Washington in the best way that we could see. The political section, I might just say at that time as I look back on my career, was really top notch. It was full of people who had served previously in Germany; sometimes German experts in the State Department pejoratively called the German Club, the German Mafia. I didn't really see it in a pejorative way. I think the great strength of the Department, was they had a whole stable of foreign service officers with experience who would've excelled in any area of the world. That's really the way I would characterize the political section at the time. You had a couple of people who were Berlin specialists, all the arcana of that odd, unique status of the city of West Berlin. They would be steeped in that. You had a lawyer who worked that issue. Then we had obviously the external section, the internal section as embassies usually have and a group of people who were successful afterwards too, like the political counselor who later became our ambassador to East Germany, Dick Barkley. So it was I thought a very strong section and I felt privileged also to be the junior of the three political-military officers. One was a civilian I the office of secretary of defense, and then there was a more senior veteran foreign service officer.

Q: Who was that?

THIELMANN: Root Felts was my immediate supervisor. Root had had a lot of experience both military and in Germany. So he was a very good mentor for me as a young officer. He knew a lot about these issues but less about the practical implementation.

Q: His name was what, Root?

THIELMANN: H. Root Felts.

Q: Root, R-O

THIELMANN: R-O-O-T. One of the little humorous side notes to this time in the office was that Root had a secretary named Ruth, R-U-T-H. One of his most important interlocutors in the German government was the commissioner for disarmament in the foreign office named Frederick Ruth. So it was not infrequent that you would hear in our office Ruth saying to Root that Ruth was on the phone. So there was sort of a three-way Ruth-Root situation. Americans would pronounce Ruth's name Ruth because R-U-T-H. Anyway that was the general setting of

the political section and the political military unit. It was an extremely intense time since there was a widespread perception, I think a correct one, whether or not this dual track decision would ever be implemented was going to be determined by what happened in Germany. So there was great anxiety in Washington and great attention to the cables that we would send out commenting on what was happening there, and the question in the back of everyone's mind was always, "will the Germans hold this or not."

Q: I mean, the dual track being the—

THIELMANN: The 1979 decision, but for both arms control and commitment to deployment.

Q: How, when you got there, how did each stand? Was anything happening on either end?

THIELMANN: At that point nothing much was happening on the arms control front because frankly both sides were basically posturing for the public. The Soviets were saying that they would consider freezing or decreasing the number of deployments as long as the U.S. would promise not to deploy anything. So in other words they were offering to freeze the imbalance. The U.S. had a proposal, the zero-zero solution that basically said neither side should have any weapons in this category, which ironically is ultimately what happened. The irony is that I know from inside conversations that the purpose of this position on the part of the U.S. was to ensure that there would be no agreement because the perception was that the Soviets would never accept freezing systems when they already had hundreds of them and we didn't have any -- not freezing but agreeing to eliminate all their systems without any U.S. systems to be used as leverage. In fact that judgment was correct in that we had to go through all of these tense years. The Soviets really only started negotiating seriously once the first cruise missiles were being deployed to the five countries where they were being stationed and the first Pershing ballistic missiles were being deployed.

Q: Also at that time the Soviets really didn't have much leadership did they?

THIELMANN: That's right. They had the kind of leaders that needed to be propped up from behind when they went to the polls and everything. I'm not remembering right now when Brezhnev died, but they had at least three in succession that were seriously health challenged.

Q: Andropov and then Chernenko was it? Anyway, you had the three before Gorbachev, and then Gorbachev had to work his way in. I mean he didn't immediately jump in with full power.

THIELMANN: That's right. That's right. He was immediately misread by the CIA and Soviet specialists. That gets to something later in my career. I remember hearing from all of the learned treatises on Gorbachev. "There is nothing new in Gorbachev except maybe he's a little bit smarter than a dedicated Communist who's Marxist-Leninist in every way. Don't expect any shifts from the Soviet Union."

Q: What piece of the pie did you have in your office?

THIELMANN: I would tend to work more on the arms control agreement side of it. A big part of

the political military function in Germany was managing those issues arising out of the fact that there were 200,000 American soldiers stationed in Germany. Any time that happens you have elaborate status of forces agreements and all kinds of interface between the American military and the German military that would be in many cases managed or at least would attempt to be influenced by the embassy seeing it as a very important piece of the foreign policy picture. So that was handled much more by my other two colleagues in the unit. I was supposed to be the expert on all the ins and outs of the U.S. arms control position and our dialogue with the Germans about all those large and small issues that came up during negotiations. When for example Paul Nitze would come back from his negotiations in Geneva with the Soviets and brief the German government, he would do that religiously and was always treated like visiting royalty when he came. I was sort of the default control officer for his visits, the one the embassy assigned to take care of Nitze. I'd take notes for him, and there was an unusual combination of things that made the Germans very solicitous and respectful of Paul Nitze. One was that Nitze had a background in German affairs and had spent earlier in his career significant amounts of time in Germany. He could understand some German for example, and he was respected for his intellect even though the Germans would've recognized him as hard liner in the Reagan administration. There were hard-liners, and then there were the nutcases. It always seemed to be a battle between those two sections.

Q: You would put Richard Perle and company in the nutcases.

THIELMANN: Well, Richard Perle was too smart to be a nutcase. I would just say that Perle was much more cynical than Nitze was and that Perle was completely untrustworthy in what he said. One could not believe him when he made an argument. Nitze was much more sincere in his orientation. The nutcases were more like General Schneider who was an advisor on the NSC and who, when he earlier had been in the field in Germany, had the habit of telling the troops to send their wives and children home because there was going to be nuclear war in Germany and they should get ready for it and who would in a State Department meeting that I attended for example lean across the table and tell the Deputy Secretary of State Dave Gofford that he was a McGovernite arms controller and start reading from the Republican Party platform in making arguments about which details of the U.S. policy should be formulated. So that's kind of what I'm derisively terming the lunatic fringe. Since there was always a battle for the rather vacant mind of Ronald Reagan on these issue one never knew exactly which part of this spectrum of opinion would come up. Even though Nitze was quite elderly, the Germans were very reassured that someone of Nitze's stature and intellectual capability and pragmatism was in a powerful position. So they did everything they could to strengthen Nitze's position, and, of course, we in the embassy would basically report on this situation which reminded Washington of what a great asset the U.S. had with Nitze in trying to preserve good U.S. German relations.

Q: Well, I'm sure there was a split in Germany over what we were trying to do particularly on introducing the Pershings and the Cruise missiles. How did that play out in the German government, people you were dealing with?

THIELMANN: Well, one of the concerns we had throughout this entire period was that the opinion polls showed that the majority of Germans were dead against any missile deployments in Germany. I mean this is the NIMBY syndrome, not in my back yard. One of the effective

slogans I think was along the lines of, “it’s better to be red than to have the missile deployment implemented.” There was a very real fear that the end of the world was nigh that there was a real chance there would be a nuclear exchange and we would be very susceptible to the banishing of the nuclear sword by the Soviets and the threats they would make. So you had millions of Germans on the street, a kind of historic linking of hands across many miles of German countryside. It was in this environment that there were so many doubts about whether or not the German government would hold because it was obviously politically damaging for the government to persevere in supporting the dual track decision. So a lot of our conversation with the German government was on the various elements of our policies, our statements, our deployments which would make it harder for them to sustain the dual track decision to which they were committed. That involved all kinds of things like the fear we had that one of these demonstrators would break through a security line somewhere, approach a live nuclear weapon, and get shot by some young American soldier. I know this is something that really haunted Ambassador Burns throughout that period. We had during that time a U.S. Pershing-I missile that caught fire and was snaking its way through a German village. There was a lot of attention about the effects of a nuclear warhead being burned up and to what extent there would be radioactive contamination in the area. Those were the kind of issues that we spent a lot of time with.

I had really a couple of missions. My main focus was dealing with people in the German defense ministry and the German foreign office where, to whom I would represent U.S. policies and lobby them in effect to cooperate with our version of the implementation of our policies. But an equally important part of our job, and I would say probably the most important part of our job, was to make Washington sensitive to how the Germans looked at these issues and where the opportunities were and where the perils were in carrying out policies the way we did. This was also the period when Ronald Reagan visited Germany and visited the Bitburg cemetery that had the graves of SS soldiers. I can talk a little bit like that if—now—

Q: Yes.

THIELMANN: This visit I think brought a lot of insensitivity on both sides of the Atlantic about the way issues would be perceived on the other side. When the team came to prepare for Ronald Reagan’s visit, it included Mike Deaver and several other members of the White House staff. My memory at the time was that they were more concerned about using their diplomatic passports to get a reduction on BMWs in Munich than they were about some of the substantive aspects of the issue. That might not be fair, and it was obviously not my little piece of it, but it is true that when Deaver visited Bitburg cemetery, it was snowing and the weather was unpleasant and he didn’t want to get out of his car. Well, you can’t really read those tombstones and see that they’re SS members when you don’t take a stroll through the cemetery.

Q: Well, I was interviewing just a couple of days ago Tom Johnson who was the USIA officer in Frankfurt who went out to Bitburg and asked the curator, whoever was the manager of the place if there were any problems here. He said, no. I think the ranking SS member who was buried there was a lieutenant, and they were mostly boys and they were drafted into the Waffen-SS. I mean it was essentially a made up issue.

THIELMANN: Right. Right.

Q: I think these, they were mostly people who had been bombed during the Ardennes offensive in Bitburg, a lot of civilians were there.

THIELMANN: I don't want to suggest that the issue was fairly represented, but rather that there was not sufficient sensitivity to the way camera images would play it up. There are other instances of German insensitivity. For example the chancellor wanted to as a gesture of respect to have a ceremony which would involve torchlight parades of German soldiers with shiny helmets and beating on the bong of a beer barrel and doing a lot of sort of German marching songs that would've been a nice supplement to the SS cemetery visit I'm sure.

Q: Anybody in that era thinking about Hitler, during the Hitler regime the troops used to march in torchlight parades in Nuremberg and all that.

THIELMANN: Yes, the Nazi film makers loved this kind of stuff. Kohl's deaf ear to the way that that would go over in the U.S. was something that we finally overcame. It was really my boss, Phelps, who can take credit for that event not happening. But another thing that interfered with the design of the visit that would've been the most meaningful on the American side was for example a visit to a concentration camp. I think it had been liberated by British forces. There were other camps that had been liberated by American forces, in fact most of them were. If I remember correctly, we highlighted a camp that had both the American Army liberating it and a large number of inmates who were German political prisoners as something that would perfectly address the themes that the Germans were victims of the Nazi dictatorship and not just the Jews of Europe. Of course it would emphasize the U.S. role in bringing that terrible dictatorship to an end. Well, there were internal German political reasons having to do with who was the minister of this German state and that German state. That wouldn't wash, but again there was sort of a conspiracy on both sides to prevent this visit from having the right kind of symbolism. It was so important not to make things worse since Reagan's image was so negative. We were trying to do everything we could to dampen down that perception on the part of the Europeans of Reagan the cowboy. So it was a bit of an ill-starred visit.

Q: I appreciate your comment. Tom Johnson had the feeling, again he was a USIA officer and looking at it from a public relations perspective, was saying that the Germans respected this visit because despite the pressure Reagan kept his word and went there as opposed to the feeling about Jimmy Carter and all that. So that this had in a way came out positive on the German side. I don't know if this holds water in your feelings or not.

THIELMANN: I think there were Germans who respected the fact that he came. I would hesitate to say that we benefited or got a big bounce in our relations from this visit. I don't remember having that impression. I'm confused about whether or not Reagan's "tear down this wall" speech in Berlin was on that visit.

Q: I think it came later.

THIELMANN: I think it did. Later on too with the way that the negotiations actually proceeded.

Even though I would say that Gorbachev gets most of the credit for the success of the INF negotiations, Reagan being a party to that and Reagan doing things like going to the Berlin Wall and saying “tear down this wall” helped significantly to amend some of the more negative images of Reagan.

Q: Again put a time context Kohl and Mitterrand not long before had gone to Verdun and stood, bowed their heads, holding hands. I think both their fathers had fought at Verdun. This was really sort of the, almost the leitmotif that brought France and Germany together again.

THIELMANN: Yes, I would say that an awful lot of things brought the two countries together including the very successful, widespread and visionary exchange programs in the 1950s. But the distance traveled from that historic enmity between France and Germany and in the wake of this terribly bloody war was enormous. I too remember that meeting and the photograph of them holding their hands as being really sort of transcendental in cementing the image of a France and Germany that had common interests and had not forgotten the past but put the past behind them. It had the same power I think as on the other side, bowing in Poland to sort of atone for the sins of the Germans during the war. Those images were almost iconic in their power. Kohl, who had a number of problems that history will not look on lightly, was an historian and did have a very deep sense of history and a sense of the importance of Germany transcending some of the things that were deeply embedded in its history, anti-Semitism and animosity toward France.

Q: What was the feeling that you were getting at this time when you were in Bonn about Soviet intentions. I mean was there a feeling that the Soviets were on the move, I mean they had already gone in late '79 into Afghanistan and all. Were we concerned that something might happen at that time?

THIELMANN: It's hard to remember exactly what the feeling was, but I think I simultaneously had two feelings at the time. I don't know how widely to generalize it, but one was that the U.S. leadership was exaggerating Soviet strength. We painted the Soviets ten-feet tall in every respect, and I judge the Reagan administration extremely irresponsible in saying things about the military balance which just were not true. Even cutting through all of the hyperbole and exaggeration, the fact was there were twenty-two Soviet divisions in East Germany and that we knew enough about Soviet war plans and intentions to know that their game plan was not to sit and hold ground, which is basically what ours was but rather to move through Germany quickly to the English Channel. So the fact that that enormous preponderance of numbers on the other side of the German-Czech border was always sort of looming out there as a reality which belied a lot of the Soviet claims that their intentions were peaceful. If they really wanted to defend Eastern Europe, their numbers and deployments would've been different. That was I think our feeling at the time and still the feeling today. That having been said I don't think that those of us at the time thought that the Soviets were tempted to attack Western Europe. I mean that's the whole purpose of having strong NATO defenses so they wouldn't be tempted. I think our concern was that you didn't want to do things to create temptation. You didn't want to do things that would create such a huge imbalance that there would be intimidation on the part of the west or an inclination to do whatever the Soviets demanded. That was what we were trying to prevent.

Q: Well, was one of the nightmare scenarios was that somehow the West Germans might come

up with a willingness to neutralize Germany in order to reunite and all. Was that around as a thought or at that time?

THIELMANN: I don't think people were seriously worried about it as something that was on the horizon as an imminent danger, a clear and present threat or anything. What I think, what I think was out there was the feeling that if one started down a certain road then there would always be the temptation for the Germans to reunite at the expense of what reuniting under some circumstances would actually mean. But I think that really any kind of high anxiety about that was really put to bed years earlier. I think most of the sober American analysts of Germany believed that there was a strong majority in Germany that felt that rapprochement with East Germany was necessary and desirable. But it had to be done carefully and with regard to preserving the kind of system that West Germany had developed so successfully.

Q: How did you find your German counterparts? Were you working as a team or was it difficult to work with them? I'm talking about both in the foreign ministry and the ministry of defense.

THIELMANN: In some ways it was mostly fun to work with the German defense ministry. I was left with a very high impression of the caliber of the German officers, and most of our counterparts in the arms control directorate and the defense ministry and the director that dealt with the U.S. were very impressive officers. They were knowledgeable about the United States. Many spoke excellent English. They were very politically savvy. I would have to say more politically savvy than the average Pentagon officer. So they had a degree of sophistication that made it easy as a foreign service officer and a diplomat to talk about the nuances of foreign policy, and they were very plugged into the psychology of the German people as well. They had a more rigorous program in the Bundeswehr to, let's say, be well attuned to the way average Germans were looking at issues, and to some extent it was a reflection of the fact that they still had the draft, still do. So they had that big input. They had to deal with the average Germans because they were being received by the German military all the time. They were composing large numbers of the Bundeswehr. So there was great sensitivity to public relations and that kind of thing. So that was very positive, but I also had a lot of respect for my foreign office counterparts and developed some close friendships with some of those with whom I had contact. One of my principal contacts at the foreign office during those years was a special assistant to German Foreign Minister Genscher. His name was Wolfgang Ischinger he is now the German ambassador to Washington. It was at the time a very comfortable relationship.

Q: From our perspective, from the embassy's perspective, how did we view the Kohl-Genscher relationship, and, particularly in your field, was there a distance between the two?

THIELMANN: I think, if "we" here means we the Americans who worked on these issues, there was not much respect for Genscher. He was seen as a very slimy kind of politician, incredibly political in every sense of the word, and I think my own personal feelings were out of the mainstream. I was very impressed by Genscher. I hope that doesn't reflect on me being slimy, but I saw, first of all I mean now looking back on Genscher at an incredibly long range. I mean he was the dean of foreign ministers in the West. He had many years of controlling German foreign policy. He was the spokesman for German foreign policy in an SDP/FDP government, Social Democrats and Free Democrats, and he was the foreign policy spokesman in the Christian

Democratic/Free Democratic government even though his party sort of hovered around five to ten percent of the vote. I mean that's an incredible political achievement. But aside from his being politically astute as a practitioner of foreign affairs, I have to admit that Genscher in many ways to me is a model of the way countries should deal with neighboring countries that are hostile to them. Genscher would deal with Soviet provocations and sort of outrageous policies and threats in a very consistent fashion. I would describe it as firm, and he offered criticism more in sorrow than in anger. He dealt with the Soviets as one would deal with a slightly unbalanced uncle. To me that was much more productive over time than the U.S. tendency to get in a snit and basically mimic sort of outrageous Soviet insults and everything with our own. That's a caricature, but I think I'm trying to get at some differences in technique here between Genscher - and it wasn't just Genscher -- and the Americans. It was Genscher and some of the other Germans on the scene as well. But the Germans because of their very vulnerable position in Europe and the fact that they had all these countries who were basically under control of the Soviets had a much more nuanced policy and one in which they would think twice about sort of egregious insults to the Soviet Union.

Q: Was there a view that when Genscher talked Cold War he was talking for Kohl or was there a feeling about Genscher saying this, but maybe we ought to get to Kohl or was that an issue?

THIELMANN: I think the U.S. sought to use Kohl against Genscher or appeal to Kohl to keep Genscher under control as it were. But I don't think we were good enough to really find fissures and fault lines that we could do that very well. Genscher was way ahead of us in making sure that his back was covered with Kohl and that he was working as a part of the coalition government. I think Kohl appreciated what Genscher brought to the government and would give him the handling of foreign policy issues. That's not to deny that I'm sure there was a lot hard bargaining and maneuvering between Kohl and his foreign minister. But I would have to say that I think they worked fairly well together. It wasn't like, well, let's say Colin Powell and George W. Bush. I mean there was one German government I think and not two.

Q: I realize you were pretty low on the feeding chain still in the embassy, but how did you and the embassy, when you were working with the Germans on this very important issue, deal with the fact that you thought that the president didn't have a clue of what was going on in regard to this particular issue? It's kind of hard to evoke the president's name if you're kind of making reservations all the time.

THIELMANN: Yes. This really gets at I think a recurrent theme in my own career, and I suspect many other foreign service officers' careers, of trying to decide how to represent policies of someone whose understanding you don't respect. There are at least two different poles of thinking on this. One, is that the you have to make sure that you are understood all the time to be the spokesman for a government whoever the president is and that you tow the line on every single policy nuance and twist so that there won't be any misunderstanding. When they hear you, they're hearing the spokesman of the United States and of its president. I lean a little bit toward the other pole which is to say that one of the most important qualities in the diplomatic relationship is credibility, and, if one aligns oneself so closely to a president that he has credibility problems, one just sacrifices one's own personal credibility without being persuasive. To be merely regarded as a shell raises the question about well, why don't you just fax me your

talking points? I don't really need to see you in person. But I think the real value of the diplomat is to help explain what seems inexplicable and around the margins to make bad policies seem less bad than perhaps they really are. That I tried to do. In some sense I guess I tried to disguise what I thought the reality was with the Reagan administration, which was a brightly lit house with nobody home and some chaos and real questions about who was in charge as the various factions battled it out. So in a way I was presenting a policy that was more coherent and more logical than maybe the reality was. That was, I thought, one of the services I could perform.

Q: Well, you did have a policy that made sense.

THIELMANN: That's right and on the dual track decision in many ways I felt that I was trying to carry out the policy that had been agreed to by the United States and by the Western European governments, and that it was some of the people in Washington who were sort of wandering off the reservation. It was quite clear that, when the Reagan administration came in, they didn't like this arms control track at all. Alexander Haig and Margaret Thatcher and the Germans had to argue very hard to get back on track to what the two countries had agreed. The Germans made pretty clear that you're not going to have any missiles here if you abandon the arms control track. That kind of blunt talk on the part of the Germans and the British, and even the French ironically, through Alexander Haig in those early months basically did get the U.S. back on track. So the policy that we were representing, even though at times it was not clear that Washington was going to adhere to it, was the U.S. government's official policy and the policy that had been solemnly agreed in a previous administration. Ultimately it was the policy that was carried out. So that, that was the policy that we were representing. I think that, in maintaining your credibility as a diplomat, means occasionally it is permissible to let interlocutors with whom you have a good personal relationship to signal that you have some skepticism about a particular policy. But the way I saw it was it's very important to use your knowledge of what's going on on the American side to explain what may seem irrational -- to explain the political realities in the United States. This is especially easy when you're dealing with the representatives of a foreign democracy. I mean, they understand what politicians do, and they understand how domestic issues often dominate in policies that have a foreign policy element. So to me that was part of what my job was -- to help them understand why Reagan would do what he was doing, what he really meant to do. Oftentimes it was much more benign in its intention than in its application. So in a sense I was defending the American government by explaining why Reagan was doing these things.

Q: How did you find the German media treated this whole issue while you were there, '82 to '85?

THIELMANN: Well, there were a lot of sharp criticism in the media, and I think it would really be a minority of the media that, in the views of most Americans, would treat the United States fairly. There was a lot of slanted analysis and sort of snide remarks, but then there was also a great underlying reservoir of good will. There was a lot of gratitude about our role in the post-war era. At least on the conservative side of the spectrum there was a lot of support for the essential U.S. role in helping the Germans cope with this huge threat right on their borders. Even on the other side, beyond all the sniping I think even on the left, there were very few who just wanted to get the Americans out of Germany. So part of it was I think developing a thick skin for

some of the snide carping at the time and understanding and appreciating that there were very deep roots for the implicit contract between Germany and the U.S. Germany would put up with tanks rolling over farm lands and jets screaming overhead and everything because it didn't want to think about the alternative.

Q: While you were there what developed in your particular field? Up to '85, how did things stand?

THIELMANN: Actually it was in '85, no it was in '83, that there was a critical Bundestag vote. It ultimately got down to a vote of the German parliament whether or not to go forward with the deployments of cruise missiles and Pershing-II missiles in Germany. There was tentativeness as regards the Germans signing on the bottom line. Kind of all the way up to the very end, I mean, the German government basically used as leverage that they hadn't really approved that arrival of the first missile in order to get the U.S. to have more forthcoming arms control policy. It played out in a very dramatic way when the U.S. was supposed to send the first systems over. They just could not land until the Germans said yes and the German parliament had a debate. I remember bicycling down to the parliament because of the huge crowds to witness it. The parliament voted to approve it. Within hours the first Pershing-II missiles landed at Frankfurt, and the head of the Social Democrats, leading spokesman said this was a black day in German history. The Soviets reacted by stomping out of the U.S.-Soviet INF arms control talks and threatened commensurate deployments on the Soviet side, which of course they already had. So all they could do was to make some gestures about deploying SS-20 missiles forward.

To me that late 1983 vote was a real watershed in the history of Western Europe. The Soviets had tried everything from the date of the December dual track decision of NATO until that vote. They had tried everything to make sure that the Germans never accepted the missile deployments. They could use the fear of new missile deployments and the Soviet reaction to bring about a sea change in the German political scene. It didn't work. I mean the German parliament and the government held even though it wasn't very popular among the people. There really was a solid consensus by the majority of the parliament in representing the parties that this was a necessary thing to do. That was really the beginning of serious Soviet negotiations on INF even though it wasn't recognized as such at the time. It was only really when Gorbachev became leader of the Soviet Union and had Shevardnadze as foreign minister that the Soviets could acknowledge to themselves that they had really blown it. They had had not thought through the implications of modernizing their intermediate range nuclear forces in a way which was such a provocation that the West really had to react. They overestimated their ability to play the Europeans against the United States on this issue and create a deep schism in the North Atlantic Alliance. So I was able to witness in the time that I was in Germany that whole drama going up to the vote and then the initial setback in relations or apparent setback but seeing under the surface that the Soviets were being forced to adjust to the objective realities in Europe.

Q: Well, was there much lobbying on the part of our embassy or through intermediaries of the members of the Bundestag? I mean did you get involved in any of this or not?

THIELMANN: Yes, I think there was, particularly those who were on the foreign affairs committee, and defense committee. They were close contacts; we would invite them to our

functions. We would try to provide them with information. In a parliamentary democracy obviously we were working most closely with those members of the government who held the cabinet portfolios and the chancellor himself. But there was also a significant public affairs program. Even those of us who were not in USIA would take part in this. I made a number of speeches around the country that may not have moved that many Germans but certainly put me in touch with how things looked at the grassroots level in Germany.

Q: What were you getting? What sort of reaction? I mean go down to the equivalent to the local beer parlor, do they often have meetings in places like that?

THIELMANN: Yes, that's true. In my case it was more going to the leadership academy of the Bundeswehr. I'm trying to remember some of the specifics. The Germans would have a lot of conferences, not just for specialists but oftentimes for active members of the political parties and I was sent to some of those events. They were always eager to have people from the embassy explain U.S. positions. It was on some of those occasions that you would confront the average citizens or at least the politically interested.

Q: Did you brace yourselves for real hostility or not?

THIELMANN: There was some real hostility. I mean, there was a part of the German population that was closely aligned with the Communist Party. I think it was after Grenada if I remember correctly. Within hours of the news of our attack there was a huge mob of Germans with red banners outside our embassy. The Marines all had their fatigues and helmets on and shotguns. We had to wait a couple of hours that day before we could leave the embassy because the assumption was that our safety would be endangered by trying to get through this crowd of angry Germans. So there was that element of the population. A lot of the response to speaking events was more along the lines of the Germans complaining in sorrow about U.S. insensitivity, and one of the frequent lines was the U.S. had no idea what war was like and that Germany did. It had fought two of them, and one of them was fought very much in Germany, in the cities and towns. So a lot of it was in a tone of people sympathetic to the U.S. but frustrated with U.S. policies and U.S. insensitivity about issues. There were occasional sharp dialogues about the cynicism behind U.S. policies. They didn't believe that we really wanted an arms control outcome. Then there were a lot of good, objective, polite questions. So when on those occasions when I would go out it really covered the full spectrum. It was hard to say if I would just meet angry farmers with pitchforks or whatever. It was the kind of forum that I suspect a foreign embassy person would get in the United States on the Iraq war with expressions of frustration and anger over why the Europeans weren't getting on board. It was that level of discourse.

WILLIAM VEALE
Political/Military Officer
Berlin (1982-1985)

Mr. Veale was born in Washington, D.C. into a US military family and was raised primarily at Army posts in the US and abroad. Entering the military after

graduating from Georgetown University, he served with the US Army until joining the Foreign Service in 1971. Throughout his career Mr. Veale dealt primarily with Political/Military and Disarmament affairs, serving both in the Department of State and the Department of Defense. Among his assignments, Mr. Veale was posted to Strasbourg, Berlin and Rangoon. He also taught in the Political Science department at the US Air Force Academy. Mr. Veale was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 2000.

Q: At the end of your mid-level officer's course you went off to Berlin, a fascinating post. Who was the head of mission there?

VEALE: The head of mission was the ambassador in Bonn who was Arthur Burns. The deputy head of mission for Berlin was Nelson Ledsky. [Editor's Note: Ronald Casagrande was Economic Section Chief and Brunson McKinley was the Political Section Chief when Mr. Veale arrived at post.] I was political-military officer in Berlin, but I also had to deal with commercial air issues which had to do with use of the corridors by commercial air and the whole issue of access to Berlin. I also dealt with the military activities in Berlin, keeping the military smart on the theology of our status program. There was a legal attaché, Don _____ who is now in the civil aviation office. He was very, very good.

Q: What was the atmosphere in Berlin? Were the Berliners still happy to have us there or were they getting tired of us?

VEALE: I think yes and no. There were different Berliners. Berlin was and may still be a kind of California of Germany. One whole part, the Spangenberg part of Berlin, was inhabited by people who were house squatters with radical fringes. You could escape the draft by going to Berlin where you weren't subject to the German draft. This created a kind of bizarre political reflection there. The symbolic role of the Americans in Berlin was greatly appreciated by the Berliners, but the day-to-day putting up with the things that keep a military proficient were constant annoyances to the Berliners. Issues like aircraft noise, military maneuvers, tanks were a constant thorn and the political left used those to their own purposes.

The real issue that I became aware of at this time was the ordinary bump of what was going on in Berlin at this time. There were a number of access incidents, some of which were the result of our own inaptitude, people not following the rules. But, if you recall the Soviet Union at this point was having a change in leadership. This was from 1982-85 when I was there. The Soviet Union was in turmoil at the top. It is my belief that the Soviet military in Western military districts were behaving with less political direction during this period than they had been before. They were looking for ways to stymie other foreign forces and it was fairly widely felt at that point that pin pricks in Berlin were a way of reminding the West how vulnerable it was on those issues. So, some of these access issues began to look like calculated efforts. There was interference with our aircraft. They reduced the corridors.

Q: By military or civilian flights?

VEALE: Both in the sense that some civilian use of the corridors was questioned. There were

some questions about whether that type of aircraft (small, not commercial aircraft but executive-type jets) that should be used. There were some threats made about shooting them down and I was involved in one of those crises. Then there were more complex problems having to do with the Soviet closure of the air corridors to move military aircraft across them. This became a recurring problem that would have the political effect of eroding our access ways. It looked to me like unsupervised military people were taking the low cost ways to move their aircraft from base A to base B. At the same time, this was something that could be used, from the political point of view, to remind the West how vulnerable it was there. This was an arousing issue over the course of the year or year and a half. We started out with some near collisions with civilian aircraft because we were moving squadrons and rigs through the air corridors. So this was a major issue that kept brewing for at least a year, but ultimately it died down.

Q: I think you are right though that the Soviets were in an in between period there and their lines of communication were probably not the best.

VEALE: Well people could pursue their own agendas without being collared for doing it; I think that is more the way that I look at it. We saw the Defense Ministry saying one thing and the Foreign Ministry saying another but of course that could have been orchestrated. It looked like gamesmanship.

Q: Berlin is a place that always attracts visitors. You were there for Vice President Bush's visit when he came?

VEALE: Newt Gingrich was going to come. I was going to be his escort officer and was delighted that he didn't come. As a matter of fact, I was in charge of arrivals and departures for the Bush visit. I must tell you they pulled some guy out of some law consulting firm to be head of the advanced team there and I have never worked with a nicer person. This was the great thing about the whole Bush visit. It was nice guys doing nice things for one another. This was a good visit and it went very well.

Q: This is Tom Dunnigan speaking on July 17, 2000. I am about to have my second interview with Bill Veale. When we spoke the last time you were telling me about your tour in Berlin in the early '80s. As you left there, what were your thoughts? Could you foresee a time when the Wall would come down, when Berlin, or even Germany itself, would be reunited?

VEALE: I had been an optimistic observer of Germany for many years. When I was in graduate school in the late '60s, early '70s, I was asked by a professor whether I ever thought Germany would be reunited and, at that time, I felt that yes it would be – probably within thirty to fifty years or so. I didn't see it lasting as a permanent state of affairs. When I was in Berlin, one of the main things that struck me was the artificiality of our presence there and the whole structure of subsidies that maintained the presence there as the Berliners would say, the absence of a natural hinterland for the city itself. Those were some of the more concrete observations. I think on a deeper level, the kind of thing that we later saw in unification had its seeds in this period with a very self-centered German population which was concerned about being able to get out of Berlin periodically, that the psychological, in a sense 'imprisonment' behind the Iron Curtain was something that psychologically weighed on people. So there was a booming industry of chartered

tours to places that other Germans from the Federal Republic would go to as well. There was a continuing effort by Berliners to do the things that other Germans were doing, to try to be as integrated as possible into the society and there certainly was an encouragement from the point of view of the Federal Republic on that.

The American military presence was clearly symbolic. I do not believe that we really had in place any military capability to defend Berlin and that our ability to keep anything of a military nature from happening in Berlin rested almost completely on deterrents and escalation of the types of things that would be done in Berlin, should it be subject to a military squeeze, would have bought only some opening move time for political decision to obtain unity in the West, to escalate and make the cost of any move on Berlin apparent. But, there were some really wild ideas that were circulating in military circles that might be used as ways to try to address that early stage of an opening Berlin conflict that, in my view, lacked a lot of political realities behind them. So, the tenuousness of our presence there I think was the thing that struck me.

I was also very much struck by the legacy of Berlin as a colossal example of the failure to have paid attention to details back in World War II and making assumptions about access rights, for example, and I would hope that this continued to be an instructive lesson for diplomats negotiating postwar type arrangements, or any type of arrangements for that matter, that requires detailed knowledge of the circumstances and a thorough thinking out of what needs to be done to make sure that things work on the ground as well as just words on a piece of paper. I think this is an area where we really have to make sure that we learn this lesson. I am not so sure that we have learned this lesson as well as we should have.

GEORGE M. LANE

**Political Advisor to the Deputy Commander in Chief of the U.S. European Command
Stuttgart (1982-1986)**

Ambassador George M. Lane graduated from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1957. His Foreign Service career included positions in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Morocco, Libya, Swaziland, Washington, DC, and an ambassadorship to Yemen. Ambassador Lane was interviewed by Richard Nethercut in 1990.

LANE: Despite the name of the U.S. European Command, in fact that command is responsible for all U.S. military activities, not only in Europe, but in most of Africa, and also in Lebanon, Syria and Israel, interestingly enough. The command structure was changed a few years ago when they created CENTCOM. They wanted to focus it (CENTCOM) on the Persian Gulf, and not on the Arab-Israeli problem. So they took Syria, Lebanon and Israel, and left them with the old European command. So as it turned out my experience in Lebanon and in Africa was very useful, I think, to the command.

While at CINCEUR, the big crisis in Lebanon came in 1982 with the Israeli invasion, followed by the deployment of the multi- national force -- the U.S. troops, French troops, Italian troops,

and eventually, I think, some British, who first went to Beirut to oversee the evacuation of the PLO fighters from Beirut in 1982 after the Israelis had invested the city. Then after the assassination of the Lebanese President Bashir Gemayel there was the massacre at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut, and a multi-national force was sent back in to try to establish a presence which would assist, in some way, the Lebanese government in gaining control of the situation, and facilitate the Israeli evacuation of Lebanon. A long tangled tale which resulted in basically disaster for U.S. foreign policy with the blowing up of the Marine barracks in October of '83, and killing 243 Marines and sailors. The command was very much involved in all that because the chain of command ran from the Marines on the beach, through the Sixth Fleet, through U.S. Navy Europe headquarters, and then through U.S. military headquarters in Europe - that is, Stuttgart -- and then back to the Pentagon. So the ultimate responsibility in the field for that operation was with General Rogers, who was both the NATO commander and the U.S. only commander, and his deputy, General Lawson, who was the de facto commander of the U.S. military operations in the command because even though General Rogers officially wears two hats. (He's the NATO commander, and he is the U.S. only commander), in fact, he spent so much of his time being NATO commander that he delegated almost all of his U.S. only responsibilities to his deputy in Stuttgart, who in this case was General Lawson. And since the Lebanese operation was clearly not a NATO operation, this was a very important responsibility for the command to try to figure out how best to position and use the U.S. Marines who were sent in there.

In some ways interesting, and some very frustrating because this was a job (POLAD) where I was involved in everything, and responsible for nothing. Unlike something like Yemen where you are involved in a very small part of the world, but you have the ultimate responsibility for it in the field. And almost all the policy in this case was being made in Washington. My role was basically writing memos to my boss in the field, and working with the officers there in Stuttgart. But we weren't making policy, and there weren't very many people in Washington who were listening to anything we were saying about policy.

I visited Beirut a couple of times. The last time I visited Beirut, I guess, was a week before the Embassy was blown up in April of '83. I was sitting in Ambassador Bob Dillon's office with General Smith, who was then the commander. A week after that, they had that horrendous explosion of the suicide bomb in front of the U.S. Embassy, which killed something like 23 Americans and 50 Lebanese employees. The Ambassador wasn't killed, but he was hurt -- he was cut up a little bit. And that was the explosion in which Bob Ames was killed. He was the CIA expert on Middle East and Lebanon, and many other CIA people were meeting with him in the office directly above where that explosion took place. It was a real disaster because Bob Ames was a very bright, very smart, and very experienced guy, and he had the confidence of the Secretary and some high ranking people in Washington. Who knows, things might have been a little different if Bob had lived. It was a real tragedy.

I visited Egypt later on with the boss, but that was the last time in Lebanon.

Q: Was there another major activity that you were involved with in EUCOM?

LANE: The two major activities going on during the three years plus that I was in EUCOM

were, the question of INF deployment in Europe, and this problem in Lebanon that I mentioned. The INF deployment in Europe grew out of the dual track decision of 1979, that we were going to negotiate with the Soviets about reducing nuclear weapons in Europe, but if that didn't succeed we were going to begin to deploy a whole new generation of intermediate range nuclear weapons in Europe to counter the Soviet's SS-20s. And this was a very controversial political move. This was a period when this decision was to be implemented -- after Reagan took office. And there was great opposition in Europe to the idea of any more nuclear weapons going into Europe, particularly with U.S. finger on the trigger. And particularly, as seen from Europe, with this cowboy who was talking about the evil empire and that sort of thing, in charge of U.S. foreign policy. So for three or four years it was a major political-military operation getting ready the places where all these intermediate weapons were going to be deployed. Getting the U.S. installations organized in Belgium, in Germany, in the UK, Greenham Common, in Italy, Comiso. Coordinating -- all of this very closely between the U.S. military and the U.S. embassies, making sure that the people in Washington didn't send us instructions that were impossible, or stupid, to implement in the field. I have often said, I think it was the only foreign policy success in the first Reagan administration, as far as I'm concerned, that we succeeded in doing it. One of the great ironies, of course, is that it is now all being undone. As part of the INF treaty, all that has been taken out. Which is a good thing. I mean I think the INF treaty is a good thing to do. But the contrast between that operation, and the Beirut operation, was really dramatic because in the one we had very close political- military cooperation in the INF deployment in Europe. Both the embassies and my boss in Stuttgart, and in Washington too, to some extent, went out of their way to try to coordinate and be sure that everybody knew what the other fellow was doing, make sure that the guys in the embassies know what the military problems are so they can keep those in mind when they negotiate with their counterparts, and make sure the military guys understand the political sensitivities so they don't go charging around like bulls in a China shop messing everything up and causing problems they don't have to cause.

The Ambassador in Bonn at this time was Arthur Burns for most of this period. Arthur Burns occasionally thought I worked for him; so it did require some diplomacy on my part. But my coordinating efforts encompasses all of our embassies in NATO capitals. It was important that our Ambassador in Denmark knew what was going on with this military deployment so if the Foreign Minister called him, he could reassure the Foreign Minister even though nothing was going on in Denmark. Again, it's a long story and I would like sometime...it's one of those things I would like to write up some day, is the story of that INF deployment, because I think it would make a fascinating article on political-military cooperation, and how it can work. I think the kind of cooperation that we developed, and one of the people who started all this was Ed Streater who was the DCM in London in 1982, I guess, because it was very shortly after I got there. He sent a telegram into Washington saying, "Look, as I look at the schedule here we're supposed to be deploying these things in Europe one year from now as part of what we've said we're going to do, as part of our policy. We don't have plans to do this. We haven't talked about it among ourselves, among the Embassies, or traded ideas about where the problems are. We haven't talked to the military, we've got to sit down and do this." London organized a conference, and got all these people together. This was Americans only, including the military. A lot of the key Generals and Colonels who were doing this. Get everybody in the same room talking about what their problems are.

I went with two or three of the General's people. The other POLADS were there, the political advisers from the embassies, the political-military officers from the embassies, Political Counselors, and they did the same kind of a thing with Public Affairs people. How are we going to sell this? There was a lot of opposition in Europe to having more American nuclear weapons, with American fingers on the trigger. Not surprising if you were a European.

The Greens were certainly symbolic at this point. You know, Germans camped out in front of the compound in Stuttgart, and sort of in effect saying, "Why do we need more nuclear weapons?" And trying to explain to the American GIs, "These guys are not anti-American, they are anti-nukes. If we were trying to do this outside your hometown, it might be your sister out there. We will try to get this point across." But, anyway, it worked well. We had problems of course. They are, of course, strong minded people, and you have got a military guy who comes in and says, "God damn it, my orders are to do this. Get out of my way." Sometimes you get the State Department, or political types who say, "Oh, my, you mustn't do that. You might ruffle somebody's feathers." You have to try to balance these out. But anyway, it was a classic example of good cooperation, whereas the Lebanon operation was just the opposite. We had five different special Presidential envoys, I think, who were trying to manage that Lebanese problem: Phil Habib, Morris Draper, Rumsfeld, McFarlane, and Fairbanks, I think. Not one of them ever came to Stuttgart. Rumsfeld, I think, went through Brussels to talk to Bernie Rogers, and my boss went up there to see him, unfortunately I didn't get to go. I am not saying that if they had let me come it would have solved all the problems, but it would have made things easier.

Another thing that was really important in all this, was during the INF deployment my boss, a four-star General who was acting in charge in Stuttgart, invited every single U.S. ambassador in Western Europe to come visit him, spend 24-hours, sit in on a briefing, and have dinner with him at his residence. So we would give them a briefing with a dog and pony show that the military always puts on, and then he would get to talk for as long as he wanted to about the problems in his country, and some of us would ask him questions. And then the boss would throw a big dinner party for him with some leading people from Stuttgart, and some from elsewhere. And at the end of 24 hours if there was a problem in the Embassy two months later, General Lawson could pick up the phone and he knew the Ambassador -- they had had dinner together. It was a big help. It made a difference.

I basically don't claim much credit myself. I think this was General Lawson's idea before he came. I did a lot of facilitating -- my office did -- of setting up the ambassadorial visits. I would talk with the ambassador's staff, when is a good time for him to come, and explain to the ambassador's people what we did in EUCOM. They were talking with somebody who was from the Foreign Service, as they were, so that made it easier. And a lot of these people I did know from some post or other. The first visitor we had, I think, was Harry Bergold, who was the Ambassador in Hungary. Harry and I came into the Foreign Service together in the same class. I played a facilitating role but I don't claim to have organized it.

I think there very much is a problem often in military-diplomatic coordination. They do tend not to be comfortable with each other. I used to say once in a while, a little facetiously, that every Foreign Service Officer seems to think that every U.S. military officer is a dumb cluck who can't

say anything except, "nuke them until they glow." And every military officer seems to think every Foreign Service Officer is an effete slob, if not a homosexual, and will give away the whole store if given half a chance. The trouble is that about one out of a hundred they are right in each case. But the other 99, of course, it is totally wrong, and if you go to places like the War College you discover that sometimes the Foreign Service people are much more hawkish than the military in terms of using force. How do you get around it? Things like the War College are good, cross-cultural assignments, getting Foreign Service Officers into the military academies, getting military guys into the State Department. We need as much of that as we can get because, of course, those cliches are way off. There are some very bright Colonels that I met with EUCOM -- I say Colonels, because they were mostly Majors and Colonels by the time they reached that staff. And there are some dumb Generals and we have got some dumb ambassadors, and some bright people in our Service too, and some dumb people. I don't know quite how you get around the problem except as much cross fertilization as you can get.

FAYE G. BARNES
Spouse of US Embassy Officer / Co-Community Liaison Officer
Bonn (1982-1987)

Mrs. Barnes was born and raised in Canada and educated at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Minnesota. After marrying her husband, Richard Barnes, an officer of the US Department of Agriculture, she accompanied him on his assignments in Washington DC and abroad. Their overseas assignments include US Embassies in Caracas, Madrid, Lima, Bonn, Mexico City and London. Mrs. Barnes served in the Community Liaison Office (FLO) and Family Liaison Office (FLO) at a number of these posts. In 1998 she became Director of the Family Liaison Office in Washington, DC. Mrs. Barnes was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2010.

BARNES: So we were back for a year, less than a year and hopped back overseas again and ended up spending five years in Germany.

There is where the whole issue of support for families really came to a head for me, and I remember sitting in meetings with some of the spouses who brought up the 1972 directive, which took spouses off the husband's evaluations. I had never thought about that too much because we came in '73 and I was never evaluated. And Dick was in agriculture anyway, but some of the senior spouses were still resentful of this change. And that was an eye opener for me because some of these meetings we had were part of the movement that took place in the mid-eighties to get remuneration for spouses who performed duties related to representational entertaining. The FLO (Family Liaison Office) at that time was very active in promoting it as was, Marlene Eagleburger. And I mean I thought it was a great idea that spouses could be given some remuneration because we had a very active social calendar in Bonn because there was an inter-embassy agricultural group. The other agricultural representatives from the other embassies and our German ministry contacts kept up a busy social pace. There were a lot of Ag reps from other countries in Bonn, plus we had a lot of German contacts. And so we were entertaining a fair bit,

and it always kind of bugged me at the end of the evening. I was the only one who didn't get paid. I did all the cooking; I did all the planning; I set the table, bought the flowers, etc. We hired people to serve and bring the food out; they'd get paid. I didn't get paid and I'd done all this work. At the beginning it didn't bother me but I thought, I'm helping advance my husband's interests, whatever. But it began to wear a little thin. So we got a little optimistic that this proposal to get some kind of spousal remuneration was going to pass, but of course, the Gramm-Rudman budget axe hit and that was the end of that.

Bonn was again a colder European embassy. We had Arthur Burns as the first ambassador. His DCM was Bill Woessner. And he and his wife Sheila were very supportive of the community. We were there five years. Burns was replaced our last year there with Rick Burt, Rick and Gail Burt. He was much younger and had a totally different management style. His DCM was Jim Dobbins and his wife Toril. So there was, there was definitely support from the top, from both DCMs and in the case of Dobbins, his spouse. There was a community liaison office coordinator at the time. So I was familiar with the office because I had known the first CLO in Lima. Mette Beecroft who was first deputy director at FLO was the CLO and I went to speak with her and she gave me some information. I had a child in nursery school and a child in the fourth grade. So I was occupied in meeting other moms. I joined an exercise class that was partially embassy. There was an American women's club, joined that. So I filled up my days with volunteer work. I became the scholarships and donations person for the women's club and reviewed requests for money and sat on the scholarship committee for a couple years and was neighborhood chairman of the Girl Scouts, again volunteer. We (Embassy families) were unhappy with the school. It was a DOD (department of defense) school, a military school. There were a lot of family members that were unhappy with it. And there were particularly a couple of grades that were problematic. So I took on my first role as an advocate I guess you would say. I wrote a letter explaining the problem and what some solution might be to the management counselor at the time who was Dick Bowers. He was unhappy with the school too. So it fell on fertile ground. And we were actually able to have something done since part of the money that we all paid as tuition since we were not military came back in the form of a trust fund to the school which was used for enrichment activities for special classes and general special enrichment activities. So that was somewhat of a help, but of course we still had some of the teachers that were not very good. But I got to know Dick Bowers, the management consular there, and I knew the community liaison coordinators reported to him. So I thought this might be an interesting job since I'd been very active in the community. And I was a president of the women's club by this time. The first time the job opened up, I applied; and I was not hired. Anyway it came open again in '86 and I was hired then as the co-CLO in 1986, started in March of that year.

Q: Okay. Well, let's talk about, can you give an idea of with examples, you don't have to mention names obviously but the type of work you were doing?

BARNES: We had one of the big issues that hit in Bonn while we were there would fall under the role of crisis management, which was one areas of my responsibility of the community liaison office coordinator. That was the Chernobyl incident and we were—

Q: That was leakage from the—

BARNES: Leakage from the—

Q: From the nuclear thing here.

BARNES: Nuclear energy, near Kiev. We were downwind from Kiev so there was a lot of concern in the community about this and should we leave, should the children be playing outside at the school. Should we be playing indoors. So we took a lot of listening to community members and would follow guidance from Washington, from management as to how we should counsel the people and keep people on--did they want to leave? Did they want to go back to Washington? It never got to that point but there definitely was some concern about radiation coming into Bonn.

Q: Yeah.

BARNES: It was a major issue for a while and we had a lot of people coming in to talk about that. The other issue, the crisis issue we dealt with was the Libyan issue. We went in to bomb Libya and it was a god-awful failure. This was probably '86 as well. There were concerns about retaliation. This is the point at which diplomatic security started putting up barriers around the community, around the sales store. We had to start wearing these IDs (identification) on a lanyard. This all took place. This was very disconcerting to people. Spouses had a hard time coming, harder time coming in and out of the embassy. Harder, people had a harder time coming in and out of the American community center and the club because there were barriers out up. There were gates there. There were guards, which hadn't been the case before. So we had a lot of questions about that.

There was the whole issue of the school problem hadn't gone away yet. Because it was a DOD school and there were two teachers in particular that, fifth and sixth grade teacher that was not teaching too well and it turned out in the final analysis one of them was having a, well, two bad teachers actually, one of them was having a nervous breakdown. But with a lot of school meetings and action on the PTA, the principal brought sixth grade into middle school, which meant that that teacher would have a homeroom but was not teaching every class in that grade. Kind of spread out the problem a little bit. But by the end of the year he ended up leaving because he was problematic. The same happened to the other teacher, was moved from fifth to sixth grade, and because that was middle school they had a homeroom teacher but then had other teachers for other classes, and it was not this problem teacher for all classes. We also had integration issues with people not getting out into the community. Many Germans speak English but in the mid-1980s not as many spoke English as speak English today. And Germans can be very standoffish. So there was a tendency for staying in the Siedlung, (settlement) or the Goldener Ghetto, the golden ghetto as the German's called the American community housing area in Bonn.

Q: The settlement.

BARNES: The settlement, to be a little bit isolationist. And we felt Donna and I, Donna my co-CLO felt like we needed to do more to bring people out to integrate them into the German community. And what we did was we paired with the American women's group, which was the

organization that I had been president of before being hired to be a community liaison officer coordinator, because they organized trips and tours into the countryside. And a lot of the members of this women's group were American women living on the local economy, American women that married Germans or that had been military that had retired in Germany. So this was—

Q: So you didn't limit your, I mean you as a broad umbrella.

BARNES: A broad umbrella because we did not want the people to feel so isolated. So we would encourage them to go out. There were weekend ski trips as well that families would go on, busses to Italy or to Austria. So the idea was to get people to get out there and meet others and not remain isolated. Because you could stay in that settlement, that Siedlung, and pretty much have all your needs met because there were shops and the schools and a church. The American community church, which had Catholic services, as a matter of fact you look like Father Bill who was a Catholic priest, Catholic services and protestant services. They shared the same building. It's the Stimson Memorial Chapel. And there was this school, most of the kids went to that American Department of Defense dependent's school. And ballgames, plays, social events, the embassy I think had a bowling league, things like that. So, you could pretty much if you wanted to live your life in that community and not make too many forays out. There was a shopping center. You didn't have to deal with the local grocer at the Edeka especially if you didn't understand what he said--. Of course you went to the open markets you could not touch the fruits and vegetables. You'd get your hand slapped. So people had some aversions. So we always tried to do an orientation as people came to brief them on what life is like in Bonn, and these are the dos and don'ts. And there's a lot to see and do here so don't stay in your community. Get organized, join us, get organized and go out and see the sites, take some shopping trips, take some trips into the beautiful countryside. So what could have been or we thought was pretty in some ways a cushy post for some people was not a cushy post at all because they didn't feel part of the larger community in which they lived. I think that still exists today in Frankfurt.

Q: Well, did you have the problem that I've seen when you have Defense Department schools for example where this happened in Seoul where the embassy people were asking for stricter standards and the military community was asking for more crafts teaching and all that sort.

BARNES: It was definitely part of the scene in Bonn as well. The embassy community was looking for a prep school for college. They were looking for a school with high academic standards. This is another interesting thing that happened because of high academic standards. Tom Leaf who was the principal of the high school for the first few years we were there, he had done his Ph.D. on the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. His wife was Australian and he had studied in Australia. So he was a big proponent of the International Baccalaureate program, and he brought it in. There was a push back even from the embassy because IB was so new. He did IB not AP, the advanced placement classes. And American universities in the '80s were still more focused on kids with the advanced placement accreditation not the International Baccalaureate. So there was a bit of stand off even for the IB, which is what you would've thought most of the embassy people would've wanted because it's a very strenuous and rigorous academic program. But there was a push for having more AP classes. Tom Leaf left and took a position in one of the other DOD schools and the new principal that came in was not such a

proponent of the IB program so he let it wind down a little bit and brought back in more advanced placement classes. So that was another issue that we had a lot of concerns with the school and with parents complaining about it.

So security, which you would not think would be a problem in Germany but this was during the Libya crisis. So there was a bombing at, there were several bombings in Berlin at discos. So there was a security concern, a safety concern, but not for crime because that was one of the beauties of Bonn. You could send your kid out on the StrassenBahn (streetcar) at the age of ten, and they'd come back. It was not a problem. They had to speak some German of course. But as long as they knew how to use the cards, the called Strip cards, Streifen Karten, you'd put them into the machines, and go off on the street car. They could also ride their bicycles to a nearby park without problem. Traffic was not a problem because it was a small town, but there were issues of feeling accepted and integration that we dealt with a lot.

And then spousal employment, that also was an issue. There were positions in the embassy and those positions usually had many, many, many more applicants than could be hired. The Foreign Service Nationals of course were very protective about their positions, and after the Rockefeller Amendment came thru, Americans living abroad could also apply for FSN positions. This amendment made it possible for an American living locally or a family member to apply for a position that had previously been held by a foreign service national. But it had always been embassy policy that you could not hire anyone into a position that had been encumbered by a foreign national if that impeded the career path of another FSN. So it was pretty difficult. You can't really advance yourself as a family member. But there was a little bit of opening for family member jobs, and of course we sat on the dependent employment committee as it was called. And my job was to remind those offices that were interviewing people that family members had hiring preference. And that was in the Foreign Service Act of 1980 and then revised in '81, and if a family member was deemed to be able to do the job, if they met all the requirements and was as good as anybody else, the family member preference meant you had to hire the family member. There was a lot of hemming and hawing about that and a lot of sort of back room deals because I discovered very quickly that managers did not want to hire family members. They wanted to hire locals because the locals were going to stay there. And the family member was going to go off in another two years or three years or whatever. Those experiences on the employment committee really made an impression on me, and I think that's why later on I became a strong advocate for family member employment because I could see there were so many artificial road blocks thrown in the way of the legislation that existed. It's human nature, and you just have to deal with that, and you have to make your arguments, and you have to make your arguments very effective because otherwise family members are not hired for a job unless it's for a job that's really low level and doesn't really need a lot of thought or brain power attached to it. So—

Q: I would think though that the language side would become rather important. So okay somebody in America if they're not native born I'd say born in Germany and go to the States and come back as a spouse or something, their language skills aren't going to be, certainly aren't going to be up to that of a native born German.

BARNES: If a job was language qualified, if the job had a language requirement then of course

family members would never be hired unless they were German-American, and there were quite a few of those German American spouses in Bonn. They had an easier time of getting hired for jobs because they had the language. What happened later in my career as an advocate for family member employment, I would see positions that were language qualified where they really did not need to be language qualified which was a way of keeping family members out of those positions. So I discovered that HR (human resources) in embassies can play a game that in some ways not helpful to family members, but of course most of the people working in an HR office are locals. You'll have maybe one American officer or two at a really large post, and the rest are Foreign Service nationals or as we call them today LES, locally engaged staff. And there is in many instances no great desire to hire EFMs. That exists in Japan; it existed in Germany; certainly in Mexico and in London, the last embassies I ever worked. I didn't work in Japan, but during my time in the family liaison office on a visit to Japan I was pretty aware of that. But Japan was one of those places where you're not going to find too many Americans who speak good Japanese to be able to deal with a job in the housing office or anything like that. But if you're in a position, a housing office position where you're dealing with American requests for housing, the GSO (general services officer) for furnishings and so forth where you really don't have to have local language contacts to get your job done, there's no reason that can't be filled by an American. And there were positions in HR, there were in Mexico, and there were in, pardon me, in London and in Bonn, these of course were bigger embassies where an American family member could have that position because they were responsible for ensuring that EERs of the American officers were completed and for dealing with family member employment with the community liaison office coordinator and appointment issues. So in big enough embassies you could usually find a position that met the requirement, or there were family members could meet the requirements but you couldn't find that everywhere.

Q: How did you find with the CLO, the liaison office, the clout within the embassy in Bonn?

BARNES: In Bonn, we did go to the country team meeting. I would say, I wasn't there much with Arthur Burns because I started in February, and he left in that summer. We didn't have much clout with Arthur Burns. Arthur Burns was an old school guy, academic, and this was community stuff. He didn't want to be bothered with that. Richard Burt who was almost the antithesis of Arthur Burns, was young, cocky, and his wife a charming woman well connected with the White House. She'd been Nancy Reagan's social secretary. He was concerned about his community profile believe it or not, and he wanted a way to bring the community together. So we had the first American embassy Volksmarch with Richard Burt. So he was interested. He wanted to do community things. And so surprises of all surprises, his wife Gail, having been a social secretary, having been in the White House, she was also very interested in the community and what they could do. They actually extended the invitations for more people to come to the residence than the Burns had had. They had a much higher entertaining profile and exquisite food. They brought on a fancy chef and so forth. So they moved up the social profile of the embassy.

I would say the DCM because he was as political military guy, Dobbins, wasn't so interested, but his wife was. We were able to use the DCM's residence for a lot of events. In fact we started it, I had gone to a FLO training in that fall in Bern, Switzerland had gotten some new ideas for an orientation. Our orientations were so dreadfully boring and were held in a conference room in the

embassy. We switched them to the DCM's residence because not everybody used to get invited there. So this way all newcomers would get a chance to see the DCM's residence. They had one huge room where they had GSO set up as an auditorium, and we had an abbreviated orientation session where we asked the heads of sections to present their mandate. I cut out my husband...Agriculture wasn't there. We had econ; we had Pol, and Military, Consular and management. Management Counselor Dick Bowers was a fabulous public speaker, and he covered GSO and the whole realm. So then we had Pol of course and we had the military because the military was a big arm there. So we had four or five sections of the biggest sections to talk about what was happening in the country, what their responsibilities were, and then we had a social event afterwards. So people came to it because it was going to be fun. It was at the DCM's house. They were going to have drinks and food afterwards and so it was also social. Toril Dobbins was wonderful to have and really supported the community liaison office program. So we were lucky there and that she, we wanted to make a change and this was a change that she was happy to do as well.

It was an embassy heavily weighted towards the military. There was a huge defense, defense intelligence agency group and a huge, I call them the war mongers but they have different names in different countries. But they're the people that sell military hardware. They're the people that network in the community and network with local military and I guess pay the piper because they, they end up making a lot of money for the U.S. government because they line up contracts, but they're not defense intelligence. They have different acronyms in different embassies. We had a huge group there.

There was a large economic section. We had an economic minister, and there was commerce, agriculture and regular econ but a pretty large section. And of course Arthur Burns being an economist was always very interesting in what was going on in the economic section, and agriculture had a pretty high profile because of the German government agriculture at that time played a pretty high profile. And obviously as I mentioned all these other countries had agricultural representatives there. So we had a separate group that we dealt with, the Spaniards, and the Hungarians and the Dutch and the Austrians and the Israelis, and a few others, Turks. And they all had, Australians too, and they all had agriculture people there as well. So we had another separate set of business and social contacts there. Then the country team, Rick Burt was interested always in what was happening in the community. Arthur Burns, not so much. So again it all depends on the ambassador, and as long as nobody was complaining and everything was running smoothly and nobody made any waves, community waves, that meant we had it under control, everybody was happy with the program. And we had a lot more reports to send off to the Family Liaison Office in those days than were required in my day. I think there were quarterly reports we had to send which went then down to twice a year. So there was a lot of time spent writing cables and documenting what was going on in the community and there were the first education reports that came out. You had to go to the school and interview people and gather information and send those reports in; and then the semi-annual employment report we had to survey who's working where. So we had a fair bit of bureaucratic reporting to do as well back to Washington.

Q: Well did, what about sort of the individual persons depressed or somebody's husband's beating up on the kids or the wife or something. Did that—

BARNES: That, we did hear, that does always end up, not always, but mostly ends up in the community liaison office. There was a huge Med group in Bonn with a regional medical officer and a regional psychiatrist. The agency of course had their people as well. So those people who really felt a need for that kind of service, this was a time of mental health grants as well so there was a mental health grant coordinator who ran programs to talk about issues and problems and so forth. So we had somebody to refer these people to. But there were some deaths that really traumatized the community. One was a really well respected, well-known gentleman who had been there for years. He had a relapse of skin cancer, melanoma and died very quickly. That was very traumatic for the community. Prior to that it was the econ consular died of a heart attack while just exercising in the gym, terrible shock. Left his wife and two kids. So we did a lot of that kind of listening to people and concern and questions that they have, and advocating to make sure the people, the kids were able to finish school and stay in embassy housing and not being moved off, shuffled back to Washington in the middle of a school year. And if you have empathetic and benevolent management, that can happen. But we'd been in Peru where the opposite experience had happened. This was before we had a CLO, community liaison coordinator. An employee was swimming had an accident, died on the weekend and his family had to be away from post by the Monday. They had to leave. They were kicked out of housing. This was someone who was interpreting the rules very rigorously, not giving any leeway. So the guy died on Saturday and Monday when everyone went back to work and the family was expected to leave post, leave school. This was during Easter vacation. And leave their housing and go back to wherever their home leave address was. So that was an experience that made a very negative impression on me, and when I was in a position where I could help someone to try to avoid that, I certainly wanted to do that, to advocate for the best for the family. There are provisions in the regulations, you can't go out and rent a new place because that's an expenditure of government funds that you could not do. But if that person who passed away, if that replacement is not on post yet, you can keep the family in that house or apartment or in a temporary apartment that's not being occupied so as not to disrupt the child's school year because already they are emotionally scarred. But we did hear, concerns and I don't know if there were any divorce cases in Bonn. I can't think of any now. I did have one in London that was a very difficult case, another bad case in Mexico. Abuse cases in Mexico, not in Bonn. I did not have any that I dealt with there.

BARNES: Well, we were talking about Bonn actually where we left off. That was my first involvement with the CLO (community liaison office) position and with the Family Liaison Office. And we had, we were five years in Bonn, but I worked in the office just a year and a half. And we had two different ambassadors there as I mentioned and pretty enlightened management. Dick Bowers very impressive management officer and Rick Burt who was the final, was the ambassador as we left who took some interest in the community. He was kind of a young-ish hot shot as compared Arthur Burns, his predecessor who was the gray eminence. So it was a big switch in embassy how would you say, focus.

Q: This was from when to when?

BARNES: This was, we were in Bonn from '82 to '87.

Q: This was early years.

BARNES: This was early years, early years. This was also the time that the Family Liaison Office had started this project, FSA, Foreign Service Associates where they were trying to through Congress get remuneration for spouses, senior spouses who performed representational duties. Marlene Eagleburger who had been a Foreign Service officer. She was a good proponent of that. There was a write up in the Washington Post, and it looked like it was moving ahead; however, the Gramm-Rudman Budget Acts hit and that was the end of that. And that particular concept project has never surfaced in that form again. I think partially because the family members, spouses, most of them still females at that point were looking at this as, well, I'm not a senior spouse and I wouldn't qualify for this and I don't want to do representational work. If I am going to be employed, I would rather be employed in my field or do something else. So it's never been resurrected.

Q: So it's this, well, okay. How about, let's talk a bit about you're getting this thing going. How did the not the at the ____ level, but within the community, how is this CLO office seen?

BARNES: Bonn was a very large community, but it was a community that had housing. It had the Siedlung. So people were together. There was a lot of community feel there so it actually, the office got a lot of use. But where it didn't get used and you would think it would get use, we had an adjunct office in the community and so we used to go that office every once a week. I think it was Wednesdays. And we would almost die of boredom because nobody stopped in.

Q: When you say I mean what was the difference between two? One was located in the chancellery?

BARNES: In the mission, in the chancellery, yes.

Q: In the chancellery. And the other was—

BARNES: In the community. Between the commissary and the PX (post exchange) and a few other little shops there. And you'd think logically that a lot of families with issues would stop by there, not many. We used to do briefings there for newcomers as they came in. But eventually we just discontinued it because it was a waste of our time.

Q: What was the problem? I mean not the problem, were there no problems or—

BARNES: Well, I think that was it. There were so many support groups in Bonn that there were not as I mentioned previously one of the big issues of concern was the Chernobyl incident. People were afraid. And then the Libyan bombing. And then people were afraid because that's when all the security fences started going up. People had to start wearing IDs (identification) like we wear today. This was a major shift in what people were used to. So we did get a lot of questions about security, a lot of questions about health. The school was probably the main issue in Bonn because it was a Department of Defense (DOD) department school. It was a school with some frills because they had, those of us who paid tuition there was a kickback to the school in the form of a trust fund and that trust fund paid for some special programs. But there were

always issues, and I was on the, I was the CLO that went to the PTA (parent teacher association) and the school board meetings. And there was definitely a feeling of embassy families versus everybody else. We were considered a bit needy by the DODs officials.

Q: Iran into the same problem I think I mentioned before in Seoul.

BARNES: Yes.

Q: Where in Seoul they brought this Department of Defense school, we wanted a little more meat to the courses because our children were all college bound. The Department of Defense they wanted, that's the wrong characterization but somewhat, right, more shop, more technical courses.

BARNES: Yes. Yes. Somewhat similar in Bonn as well although the actual number of military students at that school barely squeaked in what the minimum was for having a DOD school. They were brought in from the surrounding areas and from the embassy. It was a huge military mission there. But there were a lot foreign students that went there as well. I mean all the Israelis went there because obviously they were not going to go to the German gymnasium and we had a lot of Koreans. Those were probably the two major non-American ethnic groups or countries that had kids at the school. But the trips and tours kind of programs that I mentioned before was kind of a breeze there because the women's club did these fabulous trips, and we just piggybacked onto them for the embassy. So we got involved a lot of sort of embassy admin issues.

Q: Well, did you get involved in something which I think is more prevalent than it used to be, and I may be wrong in this, but the foreign-born spouse of Department of State personnel who really pretty new to both the country and to the job, to the situation.

BARNES: You know Bonn was one of those examples that the employee is assigned to the country because he or she has a facility for the language and an understanding of the culture. We had a lot of officers who were married to German-speaking women, Germans and Austrians. So the largest foreign-born contingent there was the Germanic crowd. We had a few Korean spouses, a few Filipinas but not too many Spanish-speaking, African. It was basically the foreign-born spouse issue wasn't such a problem there. It was more of a problem in London and in Mexico City although Mexico City had more of a Latina contingent as well.

Q: Well, was there a problem, I mean you are sensitive because of your job to the community out there. Was there a problem with say the Germanics origin spouses and the others, and I mean were they, was there a divide between those who were sort of in their native land and those who weren't?

BARNES: I'd say there was a divide; it wasn't a huge problem. Those who were European born, particularly those who spoke German, purchased things locally, did things on their own, got out in the community and didn't blink an eye about driving 135 kilometers an hour, 150 kilometers an hour, pardon me, not 135, 200 kilometers an hour. I'm getting my things mixed up on the autobahn where those of us who were a little more reserved weren't so keen on driving on the autobahns. Because Bonn was such a self-contained community, the Americans could actually

stay there, do all their shopping, there was a church right there, school and really didn't take many forays out except for visits to the military bases. And this was one of the problems that we tried to change with piggybacking onto these tours with the women's group.

The other problem with the Bonn community which happens often in a situation where there's assigned housing is the class differentiation. The senior officers were housed along the Rhine in shall we say larger, more attractively furnished, nicer apartments. And as it went back from the Rhine, you would get people of the lower rank, lower grade structure, people who worked in communications. There were contractors with communications because they, they ran a program for Africa out of Bonn, and they definitely felt the difference and kids pick onto that. It's like nyah, nyah, nyah, nyah, nyah, nyah. I live on the Rhine. So you try to be, make it egalitarian. We're Americans. We don't believe in a class structure. This is where these people are assigned. You try to get cross-mixing, but it was one of these things where the ambassador didn't invite a lot of people to the residence. So the class differentiation was there.

Q: And of course it sounds great to try and eliminate this but certainly in American society the class—

BARNES: Is there. It's there.

Q: You can tell where somebody lives here in Washington by their zip code number.

BARNES: Of course. Of course and their schools and so forth.

Q: It's you have to strive—

BARNES: You have to strive, yes.

Q: You're an American and we have to.

BARNES: Right. That's right. And I have to say one of the things that I tried to do in every CLO position that I encumbered is that I treated everyone alike. Some of the hanger-on agencies—that sounds like a disrespectful term—but some of the other agencies who didn't have a lot of presence in overseas missions were shocked when I treated them like everyone else. I remember one instance in London a spouse from the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) who was actually working for the military across the street in the Navy building. She came in and she was looking for something and I said, "Could I help you?" She was shocked and she turned around and said, "You're the first person that's ever talked to me in this office," which blew my mind.

Q: Yes.

BARNES: The purpose of the CLO was to be helpful to everyone, but obviously that had not been, or her perception of the situation.

THOMAS G. WESTON
Deputy Political Counselor,
Bonn (1983-1986)

Ambassador Weston was born and raised in Michigan and educated at Michigan State University and in France. Entering the Foreign Service in 1969, he was posted first in Zaire, after which he began assignments in the Bureau of European Affairs and abroad. His posts include Zaire, Germany, Belgium and Canada. Ambassador Weston was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: Today is March 25, 2005. Tom we are going to Bonn in 1983. What were you going to do in Bonn?

WESTON: I went to Bonn in '83 as the deputy political counselor.

Q: And you were there from '83 until when?

WESTON: Until '86.

Q: '86. Who was the ambassador?

WESTON: When I went to Bonn it was Arthur Burns who had gone out as ambassador two years before, when I was on the German desk, which we talked about before, so I was very much one of his choices to go to the embassy. He was the ambassador '83-'84, '84-'85 and he was replaced by Rick Burt, Richard Burt, for the last year I was there.

Q: Well, we talked about this but still when you got there what was the, this is a rather tumultuous time, I mean we are talking about SS-20s (Soviet intermediate range missiles).

WESTON: Very, it was...

Q: Can you explain what the...

WESTON: Yes, we were very deep in the so-called implementation, the so-called Dual Track decision on Intermediate Range Nuclear weapons which had two components. One was the deployment of American/ NATO Intermediate Range Nuclear weapons to act as a deterrent to Soviet SS-20s which had been deployed against the wishes of NATO. Act as a deterrent and reestablish the strategic nuclear link between the defense of North America and the defense of our NATO allies in Europe, in particular Germany. The second track of the Dual Track decision was to use the deployment of those weapons as an incentive to enter into negotiations to do away with this whole category of weapons. The idea was that there is no incentive for the Soviet Union to do away with their SS-20s if there were no deterrent on the other side or similar category of weapons on the other side.

The strategy was ultimately successful in removing not only intermediate nuclear range weapons but short range nuclear weapons so it turned out even better than one thought. In '83, however, it

was exceptionally controversial in particular in Germany. The weapons were deployed in actually three different NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) member states, but most of them were in Germany. The strongest protest movements were in Germany, one, because they were nuclear weapons, two because at that time the Green Party was emerging as a national party. In Germany many people thought that it was a simple protest movement but it gained strength very, very rapidly and in part I think gained strength because of this deployment decision on intermediate range nuclear weapons.

We arrived in Bonn in the summer of '83. One of my responsibilities was dealing with both tracks of the Dual Track decision. This involved both the deployment which led to a tremendous amount of work on security issues, how do you deploy these types of weapons in a very hostile environment, at least politically hostile environment, as well as the negotiating track which was going on in Geneva. In '83 we moved into our house which was right on the Rhine. I took my two kids out, it's right in the middle of a large park called the Rhinella, and I guess my eldest daughter was, she must have been about twelve then and my youngest daughter must have been five or something like that. Well, at any rate, we went out for a walk and we almost immediately ran into a very huge and very threatening I would say type of demonstration, a tremendous amount of anti-Americanism to it. I have my two kids here in the middle of the park in the middle of this demonstration. Now, I don't mind demonstrations that much, having participated in plenty of them myself both at Michigan State and then in Paris where demonstrations could get out of hand very easily. But it is a different situation when you have your two kids with you and it's a blatantly anti-American demonstration. I can remember saying if you ever see this get away from it. Unfortunately, you can easily be identified as an American and these things can get out of hand. So it was a very early lesson for my kids in what to watch out for in dealing with political direct action.

Q: From your perspective, from your work situation, what were you doing in Bonn when you sort of hit the ground?

WESTON: Well, I've already mentioned the political section was relatively large. There was the political counselor, I was the deputy, there were then about five different sections. It was about a 25-person political section, quite large. You had an internal section, a political/military, an external and you also had something called the Bonn Group which was the management of the continuing occupation of Berlin. We also dealt with inner-German relations. You had a separate legal unit, so it was quite a large section. Of course, the individual members of the section, all of whom I supervised except for the political counselor, obviously, who supervised me, did all the various elements of substantive political work that you have and this was one of our largest political sections, one of the most complicated in the world especially at that time. But in addition to, if you will, managing the section and all the activities of it I took on a couple of substantive responsibilities including the IMF (International Monetary Fund), the Dual Track decision and another over time that I assumed were some very sensitive negotiations initially related to spy exchanges but then developed into dissident exchanges which were negotiated through mechanisms involving the East German lawyer named Wolfgang Vogel.

Q: Yes. He was exchanged.

WESTON: Exactly, so during that time I was the one who would fly up to Berlin after coordinating with the German government who had a very strong role in this. I talked to Vogel and actually did the negotiating on those things. They initially were basically exchanges of spies held by the respective East-West sides but turned into negotiations which ultimately lead to the release of Natan Sharansky who is currently a very controversial figure in American life. These were the exchanges at the Glienicke Brücke (Glienicke Bridge) in Berlin and so on. Because of the time I had spent in Bremen earlier and especially the sorts of ties that I had with a lot of political figures and Social Democrat Party and among the emerging Green party I did a lot of directly internal political work as well.

Q: Well, on the one and this is on the spy thing now, what was your evaluation of Wolfgang Vogel? Where did he come from? How did he get arrested?

WESTON: He was an East German lawyer; he's also a member of the bar in West Berlin, which was quite unusual. But he had made his way and he had developed a legal practice in what was obviously a very unusual situation in the old German Democratic Republic, I think in part because of the establishment of very close ties with a lot of the emerging leaders of the then GDR (German Democratic Republic). He however didn't begin to do a great deal on exchanges until he was approached by a woman, West German Olympic swimmer whose fiancé, or boyfriend, describe it as you will, who was also an Olympic swimmer was arrested in the GDR. This woman went to Vogel to try and seek his release. Vogel eventually negotiated his release. Then as luck would have it he ended up marrying this lady and I think she remains his wife to this day. She became his assistant as well as his wife and he kind of developed a reputation as the person to go to do these sorts of very delicate things. So, I think it was something which developed over time because of his unusual situation of having well developed ties with the political leadership in the GDR, also a legal background and ties being a member of the bar in West Berlin plus personal interest that came out of this. It was a very lucrative business for him after the collapse of the GDR regime. He was tried by the Federal Republic on a whole series of tax evasion charges and such; there were all kinds of accusations that he had benefited from acquiring assets of some of the exchangeees whose release he had negotiated. I suspect some of this was justified. We suspected it at the time but this is a pretty shady business that you are talking about and you don't necessarily deal with the most savory characters. At any rate, that's my impression.

Q: On the deployment did you, obviously there are military considerations on where you put the things but there have to be political considerations on where you put the things.

WESTON: Yes.

Q: Did you get involved with that.

WESTON: The actual, you mean the actual location?

Q: Yes.

WESTON: Basically the decision was taken that they had to go on U.S. military facilities for

obvious reasons, control of nuclear weapons, and there were two different types of weapons: Pershing II missiles and GLCMS (Ground Launched Cruise Missiles), nuclear capable.

The Ground Launched Cruise Missiles had to go someplace which had a runway so that ended up being U.S. airbases in Germany of which there weren't that many to choose from. The Pershing missiles ended up on U.S. army bases with artillery facilities, they were in essence rockets. So, when you have those requirements to start out with your options for actual locations become extremely few in number, the same thing is of course true in other NATO states where these weapons were deployed: the Netherlands and Italy, as it turns out. So it was really those military considerations or tactical considerations which governed where they would be deployed rather than political per se. They ended up of course because of where U.S. military bases were, both air and artillery, basically in southwestern Germany.

Q: Were we reaching out to try and get to the Green Party? Was the Green Party so hostile that we couldn't deal with it?

WESTON: No, we did everything we could to deal with it and they were clearly an emerging force. They were in many ways a refreshing force in German political life which had been pretty staid with three parties basically during the entire post war period. They brought a lot of issues to the forefront of German political life which really needed to be addressed. The genesis came out of opposition to things nuclear, both peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons, but they were very strong on environmental issues, human rights issues, gender equality and things like that. A lot of us saw them as kind of a renewing force, if you will, in German political life which was quite welcomed even though if you were dealing with American policy at that particular time there were some peculiar problems attached to it, in particular the deployment of nuclear weapons.

We made tremendous efforts to reach out to them and I can remember having a number of them over to the house. The current foreign minister of Germany, a Green, Joschka Fischer, was one of the earliest that we reached out to. I can remember him when the Greens first entered the Bundestag, which I believe was 1984. He was at the house in his black t-shirts and rather overweight and really a figure out of the '60s. We made real effort and not only myself but the American government in general, the whole embassy, the ambassador on down, to reach out to the Greens.

Q: Did you find it was hard to ride herd on this group of people, of 21 or more officers running around in often different directions?

WESTON: No, this was a very talented group of people; I mean we are talking about the '80s in Bonn attracted absolutely the best political officers you can imagine. All of them very language capable, very experienced, very professional. I can remember only one instance that I would call difficult to deal with in a personnel management sense, that part of the job. But in terms of the substance of the work of the political section, when you have these kinds of great people, I'd say it is not hard.

Q: During the time you were there, what were some of the issues particularly that you got

involved in?

WESTON: Substantive issues? Well, they ranged on the totality of our relationship with Germany. This involved, of course, all of our relationships with both NATO and the European Community at that time, other multilateral organizations and a tremendous number of bilateral issues, a tremendous number of basing issues. A large number, not only because of weapons deployment but large number of troops still deployed in the Federal Republic at that time. You know, ranging from negotiating new legal arrangements and Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) to dealing politically with the fall out of some G.I. takes off in his tank and rams into a pub in a village, what have you, training issues, and basing issues in general. I was deeply involved; I think because of my interest in German politics, in domestic political affairs. It was a very dynamic time in domestic political life in the Federal Republic. I was deeply involved in inner-German relationships, the relationship between the Federal Republic and the GDR. This was growing rapidly at that time. I remained deeply involved in the technical management of the occupation of Berlin and the residual rights and responsibilities that the United States enjoyed in Germany as a whole which was a lot of coordinating work in quadripartite mechanisms. So, legacies of the war, to very contemporary political issues, and obviously I loved doing this. I think one of the things I loved about it most was the range of issues you were dealing with all the time. Always something new.

Q: In the '80s did you see a new breed of German politicians?

WESTON: Yes. I think you were seeing the emergence of the first real postwar generation of German political figures, people like Gerhardt Schroeder, the current chancellor, during this time. I actually knew him before when I was on the German desk and he was head of the so-called YOUSOS, (Youth Branch of the Social Democratic Party). While I was there he won election as minister president of Lower Saxony. Constance Fot, who is now in the foreign ministry of the Federal Republic, another young social democrat and from the other side from the CDU (Christian Democratic Union), the CSU (Christian Socialist Union) and even the FDP (Free Democratic Party), the smallest party, as well as the Greens. Already you were seeing the emergence of the first generation that had been basically my age. They were people who had been born in the mid-late '40s and just emerging on the political stage. The biggest change was their wish to be judged on their own terms and not in the way that Germans had felt themselves judged, I think before that generation which was heavily burdened with the legacy of the Third Reich in the Second World War. Just to give you a difference: Chancellor Kohl, who became chancellor during this time, every time he would meet an American, whether it was the president or anyone else, the first story he told about was how he had gotten his first suit to go to his wedding in a care package and so on. His generation I think still felt a tremendous burden from what had happened in Germany. It was an emerging, a different political generation. Now it is the generation in political power and I think you can see a real difference between the way that that generation exercises power in Germany, quite different from the wartime generation, or occupation generation, if you will. It is much more assertive and much more attuned to clearly following what it sees as German interests rather than perhaps broader trans-Atlantic or even European interests, it's not burdened as much by the legacy of the Third Reich.

Q: How were you seeing at this time Germany and the European movement?

WESTON: It was then the European Community. Of course, this was before Maastricht. Germany at this time, the basic political philosophy was the post-war philosophy that German integration into wider European mechanisms was the path to German recovery. It was through the coal and steel community and so on from the war; two, the path to protect Germany from itself, integration into a larger whole prevented Germans from exercising their worst instincts as they had in the Third Reich. I don't really buy this description of psychology of Germans but I think a tremendous number of Germans do, and I think it is what underlay the absolutely firm support for integration, no matter what, at that time of German political life. Once again you see the difference now. The new generation of Germans really came of age politically in the late '70s and the '80s questioning integration much more than was the case of those in power in the '80s.

Q: Was there concern at this time that some how or another Germany, West Germany might cut a deal for somehow the integration of East Germany, or neutralize itself? Was that possible?

WESTON: It wasn't a concern of mine but it did exist for some people. It goes back, you can date it back to the Ost Politik of Willy Brandt. Some people would even date it back to the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of World War II. It was the "great bargain" between the two central European Empires. Austria and Hungary having disappeared from the scene. There were people who thought in those terms. I think it was totally unrealistic in terms of what Germany had become in the postwar period. There was a great deal of continued support for fostering relations between the Federal Republic and the GDR doing what one could to ease tensions. You saw all kinds of private transfers of families, of monies and so forth to do that. What I call fringe elements of German political life which really not so much sought reunification of Germany, because that was basically a political goal of Germany all along, but it was always reunification when East Germany was freed, if you will, from the Warsaw Pact or however you want to describe it. There was a fringe group who saw the possibility of recovering the of German Lands, this would be Königsberg, East Prussia (which is now Kaliningrad), and Oblast of Russia, or even Silesia territories in Poland. They knew that the only way to do that was to deal with Russia. But those were really fringe groups, very small numbers of people. Even though some of these concerns were expressed in particular by the right wing of the Republican Party. Remember the '80s were the years of Ronald Reagan. I don't think they were a realistic reflection of what Germans were, what the politics of the Federal Republic were, or what the intent of any significant number of German voters or political figures were.

Q: I take it that under the "Sudeten Deutsch" this was no longer a factor?

WESTON: Well, they remained a factor in terms of being a very well organized pressure group which sought compensation for their expulsion from then Czechoslovakia, which became the Czech Republic. In fact, they remained a factor even to the point of enlargement of the European Union to include the Czech Republic not that many years ago in which they remained a very powerful influence on the negotiations by the German government on Czech entry. There had to be a deal to solve some of their claims. They were also even more an influential force within the CSU (Christian Social Union), which is in Bavaria which is where most of the Sudeten Deutsch had settled after returning from that part of the world.

Q: Looking at that time, of course, you were looking at East Germany and there was so much talk about East Germany being the tenth greatest economic power and everything else and eventually would not too long thereafter when East Germany turned up to be almost a basket case. Were you getting reports that the significance of East Germany was considerably overrated?

WESTON: Well, it depends on what you are comparing it too. It was a basket case compared to the Federal Republic. It was not a basket case compared to Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Russia and so on. It is all kind of relative or certainly farther afield into the developing world. I don't think it was seen as really a threatening power in any economic sense of the term. Remember from the days of the coal and steel community in European communities you essentially had fairly open trade insofar as it was allowed by the GDR regime with the Federal Republic and the rest of Europe. Germany was treated as a whole for purposes of the European Community and later the European Union. But it was never seen as an economic threat to the West. It was seen as a force of if you wanted to make some goods which would meet European standards with cheap labor, especially consumer goods, it wasn't a bad place to do it. For instance, in the '80s when it was still the GDR, the Swedish firm Ikea basically started by sourcing the production of most of this, mostly wooden furniture in the GDR because of the very cheap labor cost. I can remember going out in Bonn to the Ikea store and getting some bunk beds for the kids or whatever it was that you put together and of course it's all coming from the GDR.

There was a lot of economic interaction insofar as it was allowed by the GDR regime not the rest of Europe but the Federal Republic, never seen as a threat. I think in military terms it was seen as a threat as part of the Warsaw pact. The "Volks Army" (People's Army) was a large very well armed force and of course there were large numbers of Soviet troops in the GDR in particular in the northern plains. To go back, remember when I was in Bremen we did the establishment of the northern Brigade to meet that perceived threat across the northern plains of Germany, that was the threat from the Soviets. At any rate, but it was seen as very much a Warsaw Pact threat, not an individual GDR threat. It was certainly seen as a threat in terms of espionage by the Federal Republic, the authorities, by the Federal Republic population, and I think by the United States. I think the counter intelligence effort against the Stasi consumed a lot of resources of a lot of people.

Q: When one thinks about that whole intelligence war it sort of eliminated one another but kept a lot of people employed.

WESTON: Going from John Le Carre and The Spy Who Came in From the Cold, it is all in Berlin and I did negotiations with spy exchanges which were very low grade recruited agents being exchanged on the two sides, but it was a very different world.

Q: By this time had the threat of, we had had the threat of 2+4 and all that, the threat of...

WESTON: The threat of 2+4 is later.

Q: so Berlin was still...

WESTON: 2+4 is in '89, '90.

Q: Oh

WESTON: Yes, the negotiations on unification of Germany and indeed the occupation.

Q: True but I mean by this time had we seen that the boil of Berlin essentially had been drawn. I mean that was no longer the place where World War III was going to start, or not?

WESTON: I wouldn't say that because remember our actual knowledge of what was going on in the Soviet Union in particular and hence in the West of the Warsaw Pact and specifically the GDR was limited. We knew there was a military threat but we didn't know what the trigger mechanisms could be. I think I mentioned already in one of these discussions having to deal with some very immediate things at this point in time relating to Berlin which could have been interpreted as actions triggering conflict. Trigger one: East-West war. One of them I talked about was this Soviet tank coming across Checkpoint Charlie while I was at the desk in the early '80s. The other one was the difficulty in the air corridor with an aircraft which we called back for fear that it might be shot down in the air corridors. Now that was in I believe '85, it was while I was in Bonn doing Bonn Group so it was in the mid-'80s. If the Soviets had shot down an American civilian aircraft one can speculate about where that might lead but it certainly would be a very dangerous situation.

Q: This is just the time when the Soviets did shoot down a Korean Airline.

WESTON: Yes they did. KAL 007 was it or...

Q: Well, what was the incident that sparked this plane calling back?

WESTON: You had this situation of three air corridors between the Federal Republic and Berlin which came from the days of the Berlin airlift with the results of long negotiations. Think of them as three tubes in the air, there is a bottom level to them, a top level and right and left, one coming from the north, one from central Germany and one from the south, all towards Berlin. A plane taking off, a civilian aircraft, American flight from Berlin and there was some question whether it was bad weather and if it was outside the vertical limits of one of the corridors. All of this stuff was monitored obviously not only us but by the Soviets. When this plane which may well have wandered outside the vertical limits all of a sudden we picked up on our radar Soviet fighters scrambling out of a base in East Germany, headed towards this aircraft. I mean that was the incident and there were some warnings, radio warnings and I'm not sure how much I should go into this sort of discussion but it ...

Q: It was classified but we are talking about twenty years ago.

WESTON: We are but I'm not sure if a lot of this remains unclassified. The long and the short of it was a decision had to be taken by the Mission in Berlin about whether to recall this aircraft to Berlin or to have it continue on its flight in order to continue to assert U.S. use of these air corridors in an uninterrupted fashion which is the sort of thing in the past we had threatened to

go to war over. Whether or not we have use of the air corridors to resupply Berlin. The decision was taken ultimately because of uncertainty about how the Soviet fighters were operating to recall the aircraft. That sort of an incident gives you an indication this was not the time when everything was terribly relaxed. It was very, I mean for people like myself, and I was in East Berlin as often as I was in West Berlin, I would go up and take my kids and we would go over to the museum and all of that sort of thing and drive all over the place because we had access under the post-war arrangements including the Quadripartite agreement on Berlin. But, there was still tension -- probably too strong a word -- but still a degree of tension in relationships related to Berlin.

Q: Were we at all concerned about at this point about the German treatment of "gast arbeiter" (guest workers), this sort of thing?

WESTON: Yeah, you mean was the United States officially concerned. Yeah, because the "gast arbeiter" was our concern and I'll give you two different answers. The "gast arbeiter" by then had been in Germany of course for thirty years. I was going to say a generation, and a lot of the people who were called "gast arbeiter" had been born in Germany. Germany was having a hard time coming to grips with this. In sociological terms, in economic terms, in all kinds of other ways, and there was a great deal of debate in the '80s which ultimately culminated in changes in German citizenship law. A lot of this incidentally was fostered by the Green Party which I say was emerging as a force then. Changes in German citizenship law which in essence gave the possibility of citizenship to a lot of those who were "gast arbeiter" that didn't come until much later but the debate about it and the development of it was going on at that time. There was a clear sense that the "gast arbeiter", in particular the Turks who were actually more Kurds than Turkish, but that is a whole other discussion, were clearly discriminated against economically and socially. An anecdote I can remember at that time: a German film came out reportedly showing the plight of the "gast arbeiter" which was called "Ganst Unten" (All the Way Under) meaning at the bottom of the social ladder, social and economic ladder. It was about a Turk in Munich who had to work as a janitor and how harsh life was. But interestingly at this time right now there are several million Turks or Turkish Germans of various kinds in Germany, at that time I'm sure there were over a million, I've forgotten what the actual figures were; but out of all those Turks they couldn't find a Turk to play this role. Instead, they had the role of this Turkish worker played by a German and used makeup to darken his skin. Now, if you know Turks and Kurds, they can be of all varieties but here a film purporting to be sympathetic and showing the plight of the "gast arbeiter" has the role played by a German with artificially darkened skin. So, I think that puts in a nut shell the situation which existed then. I mean it was a situation which people were aware of and which were being debated. A lot of people were concerned about it. I think officially the U.S. government saw this as obviously a domestic problem to be resolved by Germany. We, of course, have certain problems with immigration of our own to deal with but I personally, when I would discuss it, found myself in great sympathy with the positions being taken by the Greens most prominently but also by the Social Democrats who sought to improve the lot of these folks who at that time had none of the benefits of citizenship, were expected to thoroughly integrate anyway into German society, have their education in Germany.

Q: I know the citizenship laws back in the middle ages to 1955 or '56. I was in Frankfurt. I was the baby birth officer, registering American children. We had our laws and they had their laws.

WESTON: And theirs were based on blood rather than place of birth.

Q: Theirs were based on blood, however if a woman was married to a foreigner the child would not get German citizenship.

WESTON: But, if the father was German and married to a foreigner he would, he or she would.

Q: Now we have a German woman married to an American. He may have married her but very obviously was not the father when the baby was born. According to German law the baby was not German; according to our law the baby was not an American because there wasn't that birth factor there. I used to try and go up and down with them trying to, you know, we ended up getting stateless passports for these kids so they could be adopted.

WESTON: Now you were in a conflict with German and American law on citizenship but if it had been the case, the real difference before the changes -- in I forget the exact date -- I think it was about '91 or something like that in German citizenship law. If a child is born in the United States unless they are not subject to U.S. law that is, diplomatic child in essence, you are automatically an American citizen, doesn't matter who your parents are, whatever. That was not the case in Germany and it still is not the case in Germany. That's the big difference -- based on blood rather than on place of birth.

Q: Re points of view. Did you find yourself, this is sort of subjective, find yourself in dealing with the Germans every once in a while your approach differed from where they were coming from with a different point of view than we were?

WESTON: You are talking about political or economic or social issues? I think culturally there were clear differences. I'll take an example from the '70s, relates to raising children. We arrived in Bremen and we had a kid still in diapers and we hadn't found our permanent housing. We were in temporary housing so we had to go to a laundromat for clothes washing. That was fine and the way you did it in Germany in those days if you went to a Laundromat you gave the laundry to the "washhelfern" who worked there and the person put it in the machine and washed it and then put it in the dryer and you basically waited for it. You didn't do it yourself because you were an American and they had a different way of doing things. We were a young family, had a young kid and knew it would take a while so we had the kid with us, my daughter. I guess we are more liberal in allowing certain sorts of behavior in laundromats with our kids than Germans were but, in any rate, she was walking around and climbing on things while we were waiting for the stuff to go. All of a sudden the clothes finished in the washing machine and the "washhelf" she brought them forward, put them on the counter all wet and said "go". So here we were asking why not dry them? "No, this child is misbehaving." For us, this kid hadn't misbehaved at all, hadn't cried or anything else but had been moving around and got up on a chair or something like that and that was a very direct thing, evidence of a big cultural difference coming from a very different place. There are cultural differences certainly. I think they are becoming fewer and fewer over time as the whole world gets more and more homogenized on American culture but they remain. I think they were more pronounced and more apparent in a place like Bremen than they were in a place like Bonn.

When you move into the realm of policy I think the cultural differences recede somewhat. It was a time when we were really changing these generations that we have talked about. I guess I could understand why the burden of the war had such an effect on political and social behavior to a certain extent of Germans who had experienced them as either teenagers or young people, particularly older people. What a devastating experience it was in the knowledge that it had been done with the will of the German people and complicity of the German people. It's a pretty heavy burden to bear and has effects on people, differing effects on different people, but has effects. I could understand that. I think that led to real differences as you put it where people were coming from on particular political or even economic issues, certainly in social issues. I think that was changing a lot when we were in Germany with this new post war generation of Germans and German political leadership.

Q: The people you were dealing with one, were they interested in American political life and political process and two, were they looking for either examples or things to avoid? How did you feel?

WESTON: There was certainly a fascination with and an adoption of American cultural life at large, popular culture and everything else and that obviously continues to this day in Germany; that hasn't changed much. There was a lot of interest among the political class in the United States politically at that time, you remember early in this period, when I was in Bonn, we were dealing with the Social Democratic government, Helmut Schmidt, and then it changed to a CDU government, Helmut Kohl. I would say across the political spectrum the politics of Germany was to the left, including the CSU-CDU, of the totality of the political spectrum in the United States. Certainly the center of the political spectrum was to the left of the center of the political spectrum of the United States. So, that had its effect on the assessment of the United States and how we dealt with a lot of issues, not necessarily foreign policy issues, but great opposition to the death penalty, concern about religionosity in American life, those sorts of things.

Q: How about Ronald Reagan? By the time you got there he had been in office a couple years, I mean did you see a change in the perception of him? How did they define his worth?

WESTON: I think he was a mystery to a lot of Germans. Even though with the change of government to a CDU government, there was clearly a more sympathetic view of Ronald Reagan, of the Republican Party. I think President Reagan was still seen by most Germans as a somewhat unpredictable figure, if you were on the German left he was a cowboy figure and, of course, Reagan having played a cowboy in a lot of movies didn't help. On the right and right center the unpredictability was more "we're not sure what this guy ultimately would do in the world including with the Soviet Union." Remember during this period of time, in addition to things like INF (Intermediate Nuclear Force) there was the Reykjavik Summit, I don't know if you remember that.

Q: I remember that...

WESTON: Where the President apparently offered to do away with nuclear weapons completely. Now, if you really are an aficionado of the nuclear deterrent and of the guarantee of Berlin, and

of maintaining stability in the post-war period until the end of the cold war and all that sort of thing, the idea of doing away with nuclear weapons completely by the United States and the Soviet Union was a pretty scary thing to Germans despite the anti-nuclear mood of the country. There was a fear based on unpredictability.

Q: Before we move on, did you see a change in attitude or methods between Ambassador Burns and Ambassador Burt?

WESTON: Day and night. Arthur Burns was a grand old man revered for his academic brilliance. Remember that he's kind of the father of the theory of business cycle, his many years as Chairman of the Federal Reserve. He was seen as very much a statesman and a revered academic. He was revered that way not only by Germans but by people like me in exactly the same way. I arrived in Bonn when Helmut Schmidt was still the chancellor. He had been finance minister when Arthur Burns was still the Chairman of the Fed so you know, you are talking about people who had worked very well together in one of the more difficult areas of economic or at least fiscal life. He was really admired very widely, not only among the political elite but by Germans in general and his appointment to Bonn by the President was viewed very much as the United States taking Germany seriously by sending one of its finest senior statesmen there as ambassador. It gave him clout as an ambassador which was quite remarkable to watch.

Rick Burt, a brilliant man intellectually, was of a very different stripe. Remember he had basically made his way politically in the administration through the development of the INF decision. He would see himself in many ways as one of the architects of the Dual Track which of course was quite controversial among the public in Germany. He was much younger, did not have nearly the resume, if I can put it that way, had a very different style, a very different, I would say more aggressive and less than fully diplomatic style. Burt never enjoyed the admiration of either the German political elite or certainly the German people, so it was a very marked contrast. It was nobody's fault it was just two very different people with very different backgrounds, very different styles, hence viewed very differently.

Q: But did you see a change in response from Washington, in other words when Burns went to Washington things might be...

WESTON: Washington listened.

Q: When Burt went I mean it was not...

WESTON: Burt had to fight the battles. I mean there were a lot of other actors.

Q: Was there concern, this is pretty early on but, it might be more apropos later, but that Germany was no longer as much as a focus of interest as it had been before or not really?

WESTON: I think there was some of that. It was not so much what happened later which I would identify much more in the '90s in the post cold war period of this distance growing with Europe in general and with Germany specifically. It was more that Germany had always been seen as the heart of European NATO and of the European Community, the key to U.S. policy in Europe.

Because of where it was, Germany was the most important ally vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. This changed a bit in the sense as the Soviet Union started to show signs of changing. There was more and more attention to the overall super power relationship rather than to the relationship with Germany or other NATO allies. It wasn't the same as I believe happened in the '90s, but there was a bit of the sense that Germany is not the center of the universe perhaps the super power relationship is the center of the universe.

Q: During the '83-'86 period obviously it wasn't in your realm but everybody was looking at the phenomenon of Gorbachev at that time. Was he considered to be for real or same old same old with a new face or...

WESTON: In Germany no, I mean, people hoped that this was a positive change and Germany did what it could to foster seeing Gorbachev in a relatively positive light as a potential agent for change.

Q: How did you and your colleagues feel about it at the time?

WESTON: I think there were probably those of us who had spent a long time working in European affairs, and maybe in particular those of us who had worked in Germany and had a habit of working with the Soviet Union in a way others didn't, like the management of Berlin. I guess to some extent it made us a little bit, maybe even warier, of whether there was real change going on in the Soviet Union. I at that time was also doing things like negotiating exchanges which obviously involved Sharansky departing the Soviet Union. I could see that some things seemed to be starting to be possible which didn't seem to be possible before so there was something going on. But I think there was also a degree of unsureness, of skepticism, we don't have enough information, let's not move too rapidly in the assessment of what was going on.

Q: How much did you get involved in the Sharansky exchange?

WESTON: I basically negotiated it, I mean on the ground negotiated it. The actual transfer took place with Rick Burt, who was the ambassador, greeting him as he came across the bridge and that sort of thing but the negotiations with Vogel I did.

Q: What were the issues?

WESTON: Basically, the Sharansky case grew out of our ability to do exchanges for far less controversial figures most of whom had been arrested as spies in one Warsaw Pact country or another. These exchanges were not only people from the GDR; they could be from the Soviet Union, or Poland, or Czechoslovakia, or wherever. It worked, but that experience lead us to believe that Sharansky of course was one of the most prominent dissidents that we had been working to get out...

Q: Perhaps you can explain who Sharansky was.

WESTON: He was a prominent Jewish dissident as well...

Q: In the Soviet Union.

WESTON: In the Soviet Union and is now a minister in the Israeli government, also apparently President Bush's favorite author these days because of his book on democracy. At any rate, he was basically a Soviet dissident but was probably the most prominent Jewish dissident; now remember this was in the wake of such things as Jackson-Vanik legislation, trade relations with the Soviet Union could not be normalized unless Jewish immigration was allowed and so on. So the Sharansky exchange grew out of what were spy exchanges. We were taking advantage of a channel which had worked for obviously incredibly sensitive negotiations to try and use it for a very prominent dissident. I think that because of changes in the Soviet Union that we have just been talking about as much as any other reason that it became possible to negotiate it.

Q: Was there a quid pro quo?

WESTON: There was but I don't think I can get into that even to this day because it involves a lot of people still very prominent in various governments.

Q: I mean, did you ever find yourself with somebody calling up and saying, "Hey, we got this guy standing at the edge of the bridge and he wants to come on over"?

WESTON: No, it was not that sort of arrangement and the GDR was not that sort of society where someone ended up at the end of the Glienicke Brücke one day and said they wanted to come over. No, this was a very lengthy and complex process which had a great deal of involvement with the Federal Republic as well and ultimately a lot of other countries, in the case of Sharansky, Israel.

Q: Now then, is there any chance we should talk about this period?

WESTON: There were so many issues at play then. It was a terribly exciting time and I really felt deeply involved in all of it doing foreign policy then even making foreign policy a lot of the time in what we were doing. There were a lot of other events then, one of them I can remember specifically. Do you remember there was a presidential visit to Germany? This was Ronald Reagan and one of the ceremonies which had been arranged was to put flowers on a grave in a cemetery in Bitburg (Bitburg is where we have a major U.S. air base, not unimportant in terms of our previous conversations) but it turned out after this was all arranged and announced that several members of the Waffen SS were buried in this very spot. So, we had a situation in which the American President was going to appear to honor some pretty unsavory folks and a German Chancellor who felt he could not politically back down from this particular ceremony. That's just another example of some of the things which were going on at that time and I mean there are several books full of material on that period of working on German affairs.

Q: Kohl came away with a great deal of admiration for Reagan. Reagan kept his word and didn't back down. A lot was made of this and I mean these were kids in their teens who had been killed in the Waffen SS which was not a nasty SS unit, they could do nasty things but I mean they were basically just draftees in a...

WESTON: But of course there was a political cost to it still in the United States.

Q: There was a political cost and we're still talking about it in these interviews but...

WESTON: I think it is true that Kohl came away with great admiration for the President sticking to his word. I think he came away from it with an even greater admiration for Arthur Burns who he felt was the one making the recommendations that the President go through with this despite the political cost. Arthur Burns of course was Jewish and perhaps in knowing that another example of the role that Arthur Burns played in the relationship at this time. I think the admiration was as much for Arthur Burns as for the President.

Q: But also to there was the horrible example of Jimmy Carter and Helmut Schmidt when Carter...

WESTON: When Brzezinski came in.

Q: In the nuclear, how was that?

WESTON: Oh yeah, the neutron bomb, you are talking about another. I had another problem with it and that's...

Q: That one, Schmidt never forgave Carter. I'm sure in German party politics they think had Reagan done an about face they would have, I mean American presidents would have gone down in estimation in Germany.

WESTON: Well, the Schmidt/Carter relationship was complex for reasons other than the neutron weapon. That was the complicating factor but there were several other things. I remember the first meeting when the Chancellor came to Washington during the Carter administration. I knew about this because I was just coming from Bremen then. I remember working on Congressional Affairs and President Carter invited his national security adviser in for the conversations, Zbig Brzezinski. Brzezinski took to lecturing the Chancellor of Germany on his responsibilities in Central Europe, in particular in Poland in a way that I think had a very adverse effect on the remainder of the relationship between President Carter and Helmut Schmidt. I mention that because I think these issues like the way the neutron bomb was dealt with clearly have an adverse effect on international relationships in my opinion. I don't think we should lose sight of the importance of personal relationships whether good or bad in relationships between nations to this day.

WILLIAM BODDE, JR.
Consul General
Frankfurt (1983-1986)

William Bodde was born in Brooklyn and raised in Long Island. He served in the US Army in Korea and attended Hofstra College. He entered the Foreign Service

in 1962 and served in Austria, Sweden, and German. He was also ambassador to Fiji, Tuvalu, Tonga and the Marshall Islands and served as EE/MP to Kiribati. Mr. Bodde was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

BODDE: If you were an ambitious Republican during the Reagan Administration, the place to be each summer was Bohemian Grove. Reagan went every year when he was President so it was the place to be seen. One year Secretary of State Shultz invited German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt to Bohemian Grove. Well, any other U.S. Ambassador to Germany, especially if he belonged to Bohemian Grove as Arthur Burns did, would make sure he attended to protect his interest. Not Burns. He was secure enough that he went on his usual vacation to Vermont. After Bohemian Grove, Chancellor Schmidt went to Vermont to visit him!. This gives you a little bit of an idea of Burns' prestige.

Arthur Burns was good man to work for, and he was the perfect Ambassador to Germany, To the Germans, few people have as much status as a professor and having been Chairman of the Federal Reserve was icing on the cake. With his professorial manner and white mane, central casting couldn't have found a better envoy. He had a lot of influence. The President of Germany at the time was an old friend, Richard Von Weizsaecker and he called me at home one day. It was funny because I was giving a lunch the U.S. Army V Corps Commander to talk about the problems we shared. Anyhow I think the Commander was General Colin Powell at the time. Our housekeeper interrupted us to tell me that the German President on the phone. He called to complain that Arthur Burns was forever lecturing him that the Germans did not work as hard as they used to. He wanted me to tell the Ambassador to stop lecturing the German President. I didn't of course but that was pure Arthur Burns.

So in 1983 I went to Frankfurt as Consul General. It's the largest consulate general in the world. And so it was just a great experience, because -

Q: You were there from when to when?

BODDE: From 1983 to 1986. Just the management part of it was a challenge. Learning to manage 575 people, most of whom were from other agencies, was the equivalent of earning an MBA. You were faced with the chronic dilemma we face in many places in the world, that is, responsibility without authority. Most of the personnel do not work for you, and you have to use your negotiating skills and what limited authority you have to achieve your goals. I did control the consulate housing because the facilities came under the State Department.

For example I told the CIA that I would not accept any additional agency personnel unless the agency funded two full-time positions in the Consulate General's general services office. I found out later I didn't have the legal authority, but you often have as much authority as you're willing to assert. I assumed I had the same authority as an Ambassador and that I could say no to additional personnel. I told them we didn't want cover positions that were just on paper; I wanted full-time people including another GSO, because I had the largest State Department-ran housing project in the whole world, and I only had one GSO. That was because we took the assistant GSO and made him the systems manager. I also needed a facilities management specialist. We went head-to-head for a couple of months, and the embassy kept saying I should give in. Of

course if Arthur Burns had told me to give in, I would have given in, but they didn't bother Burns with administrative details.

It was the administrative counselor at the Embassy who was pressing me. I told him that we would not accept additional people if we don't have the wherewithal to take care of them. Finally, the Agency gave in. And I think they were smart. They realized that I was very cooperative on the stuff that counts, and believe me there was a lot of stuff going on in Frankfurt. So they gave in. Often it was the people that you didn't have authority over or that would run afoul of the German authorities. Then they would come running to me to intervene. I guess we had about 2,000 to 3,000 people living in our housing. Among them we had about a hundred couriers and their families. The Courier service used Frankfurt as a base to handle Europe, Africa and Asia. . There are two places where we have couriers overseas - Thailand was one and Frankfurt was the other. The hundred couriers from Frankfurt were on the road most of the time so we had to worry about their families. We particularly had problems when we had tense situations and we did have real terrorism problems. These wives were there alone with a couple of kids and normally had little to do with the consulate except on occasion with the GSO. Yet, at the end of the day, we were responsible for their welfare and safety. But it wasn't just the couriers, although their frequent absences complicated matters.

There were all the many other Federal agencies that came under Consulate responsibility. Many of their employees had little experience living in a foreign country. Our major task was to find ways to get to these people so we could help them and, hopefully, to keep them out of trouble. The biggest problem was keeping the lines of communications open. Sometimes they would get in trouble. I remember we had a case of a woman, well into middle age, who went on home leave, and her boyfriend, an ex-GI, took up with another woman. When she came back she was furious. Her son, a man in his 40s came on a visit. Would you believe it? To take revenge for the other woman stealing his mother's boyfriend we caught him pouring sugar into the gas tank of the other woman's Mercedes. You have even more serious problems such as a scoutmaster molesting kids. . It was like being the mayor of a good size town with international terrorism thrown in.

Q: This is Tape 3 of an addendum for the interview with Bill Bodde. Yes.

BODDE: One time the military people came to see me. The daughter of one of our communicators was dating a guy who was wanted for murder. They wanted permission to tap the family phone. The guy was a bad apple who had taken his discharge in Germany. That was one of these problems that I used to discuss with V Corps. GI's would take their discharges and stay in Germany. Suddenly when they got in trouble they were no longer be the Army's problem but the Consulate's problem. A few of them were criminal-types.

Well, this guy stabbed another GI in a bar, but he ran away and was wanted for murder. So I called in the family and said the military wanted to tap their phone. I was most concerned about his daughter. When they told me that they were going to send her to live with her sister in Colorado in a month. I suggested that they send her away right away to get her away from the guy whom we believed was in Germany. I told him that it was too dangerous for her to keep her in Frankfurt for another month. He sent his daughter to her sister right away. I'm sure that the

police would have liked us to keep her in Frankfurt as bait to trap the guy, but I was more interested in her welfare and her family's welfare. Well, it was really strange because a few months later, my security officer comes in to tell me that he had a phone call in the middle of the night from Colorado. The police had picked up this guy who was supposedly wanted for murder but they could not find any outstanding warrant from INTERPOL.

When we called the Germans, and they said they had not issued an international arrest warrant out for his arrest. The German police felt that it would be very difficult to successfully prosecute him when the witnesses were scattered and he would claim he acted in self-defense. They were convinced that in a fight between two GI's in a bar they would never get a conviction. I said, it looks more to me that the German authorities didn't really care if one American murders another American. I said that you could be sure that if he had murdered a German they would be requesting extradition.

I went to see, the Minister-President's (Governor) Chief-of-Staff and asked him to do something about it. He told me that there would be a warrant sent out right away. They did, but it turned out that it took too long and the Denver police had released the guy. However the idiot got in a drunken brawl and was arrested again, so we had him. The Germans sent police over to pick him up and he was extradited. They were unable to get a conviction in the German court and he went free. They were right in their assessment, but I still think we were right in holding their feet to the fire.

If you know consular work you know how complicated extradition can be. When I was in Sweden we tried to extradite an African American bank robber. The Swedes wouldn't extradite him because he couldn't get a fair trial in America. Custody cases are even more difficult. If you read the case in yesterday's paper you know what I mean.

Q: Custody, a father, his German wife illegally took the kids and went back to Germany where she gave the children into social welfare, and the father is an American and hasn't been able to see his kid, or he can't have custody of the kids.

BODDE: Right, because the German court says that it would be traumatic for the kids to return to the U.S. It is better that the children should stay in foster care in Germany rather than being with their natural father in America. Germans are terrible on custody cases and now it has moved up on the official U.S.-German agenda. Secretary of State Albright raised it with the German foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, who was in Washington. He's an old radical who became a leader in the Green Party. The first time he was ever invited to an official American's home was when I invited him to our house in Frankfurt for lunch. He was a Minister in the Hessen State Government at the time. Anyhow, he told Secretary Albright that he would look into it, but he told her that Foreign Ministers do not have very much influence on German courts.

My tenure in Frankfurt was complicated by an increase in terrorist activity. In 1984 we had three major bombings in Frankfurt. A bomb went off at the airport and killed a couple of people. Another bomb killed a person at Rhine-Main Air Force Base, which is next to the Airport, and a bomb went off by the Non-Commission Officers Club in the city by the PX. In addition, terrorists firebombed the Consulate General's residence in Frankfurt.

Q: *Who was bombing?*

BODDE: The Red Army Faction was responsible. The Red Army Faction was the successor to the infamous Bader-Meinhof gang and they were much better organized. To my knowledge the German intelligence services never penetrated the RAF and very few of them got arrested. The Red Army Faction firebombed our residence over the holidays, right after our son Peter and his family had left. Peter was Consul in Hamburg at the time and they were down for the Christmas holidays. That night after they left the RAF threw a couple of Molotov cocktails at the house. The RAF waited until Peter, his wife and the kids had left because, for image reasons, they did not attack women and children. A tree next to the house caught fire. If it had burned a few feet higher our ancient roof would have caught fire and we would have had serious damage. So we were lucky. Clearly they had the house under surveillance for some time.

After the bombing we upgraded the security at the residence. They put in a guard booth, sensors, more TV cameras, and better lighting. Before the bombing we employed a German guard service at night that was barely competent. We really beefed up the guard service when our Marine gunnery sergeant took his discharge in Frankfurt, found German financing and put together a really good security firm. His firm also provided guards for the Embassy and the Consulate Generals throughout Germany. He introduced discipline into the guard service. I'll give you an example of how bad the German guards had been. One Saturday morning Ingrid and I were having breakfast - we'd sent the help away on the weekend so we'd have some privacy- and we heard a *bang*. We went out, and the German guard had shot himself in the foot.

Q: *Oh, no.*

BODDE: Yes, the old play-with-the-gun thing. Not that things didn't happen after the new security people were in place. The shift supervisor, a former LA policeman, stopped to use the toilet we had installed in the garage. He had a heart attack and Ingrid tried to no revive him with CPR but he was too far gone.

Not long after the firebombing the German police raided an apartment in Frankfurt and discovered a treasure trove of RAF documents. Among the papers was a "hit list" with my name at the top. The Germans put a security detail with me 24 hours a day except when I stayed in the house. I had three bodyguards and a follow-on car. One would ride in my car, and the other two would be in the follow-on car. They were exceptionally good people and part of group of about 15 anti-terrorist state police who guarded VIP's. They'd rotated and each week you'd get a different three. They took security very seriously. Two or three times they and the military intelligence people came to warn me of a possible attack. They would tell me that although they were not sure exactly what was going to happen there was an increase in the activities of the terrorist underground. Therefore they would advise us to leave town for a few weeks. The most effective way to disrupt the terrorists was for the target to leave and undo whatever work and preparations they had undertaken. Once we went back to the States and once we went to a friend's house in Italy. We would just take off without telling anybody except the State Department and the Embassy. In Germany if I went to dinner, my bodyguards went with us. In fact they went everywhere with us. It was like the Secretary or the President's Secret Service

detail. I had dinner in Frankfurt with an old friend of mine, who was DCM in Lebanon. After dinner the two of us were sitting by the fireplace having a brandy and a cigar. He asked me if I carried a weapon or kept a gun in the house. I told him I did not carry a weapon nor did I have any guns in the house because our grandchildren often visited us. He told me that was fine but at least I should know how to use the weapons of my security detail. There have been situations where people have been attacked and their bodyguards killed or wounded and they were unable to defend themselves with their bodyguards' weapons because they didn't know how to use them. That made sense to me and I talked to my detail. From then on, every month we'd go out to the police range and I would fire their different weapons and we would do practice drills together. They carried Sig Sauer handguns. It is an excellent nine-millimeter weapon. The Navy Seals use Sig Sauers because like the old M-1 rifle - you can drop it in the mud and pick it up and it still will fire. They also had Uzis and an AK-47, Kalashnikov. When I was leaving Frankfurt, I wanted to give them a thank you gift. They told me they had problems getting ammunition for the AK-47. My security officer called his colleague in Lebanon where on the street you can buy anything you want. So at the farewell barbecue we hosted for them I gave them a case of ammunition as a farewell present. They were delighted and I thought it was a pretty unique farewell gift.

So the security situation was very serious in Frankfurt. I'm no more courageous than the next guy, but I didn't stay up nights thinking about it. It didn't raise my blood pressure or anything. I got used to the bodyguards and, in fact, I enjoyed their company. It was tougher on my wife, and family.

Q: *Yes.*

BODDE: They didn't guard her because the Red Army Faction didn't go after women and children because it was bad PR. So when I got out of the car, they stayed with me, and she was on her own. That wasn't what bothered her. What bothered her was worrying about me. I read about this situation once which is called "the copilot's syndrome." That is, those copilots who survive a crash are usually in worse shape than pilots who survive. This is because, unlike the pilot, they can't do anything about the crash, which is out of their control, and yet they are a part of it. It was tough on her. One time we went on vacation to Hawaii, and were walking along Waikiki. Suddenly she spots a brown paper bag lying in the sand. She tensed up and asked me to check it out.

It was full of empty beer cans but you are conditioned to look for anything out of the usual and she took it seriously. When we were firebombed she didn't run to the window or go out in the yard to see what happened. We went into the safe-haven room and got a couple of buckets of water and waited for the police to come. She was calm and did the right thing. I have no doubt that her wartime experiences as a teenager in Germany prepared her to take on almost anything. Yet, it was tough on her. But that was a part of life in Germany in those years.

After the firebombing, Ingrid looked at mug shots of Red Army Faction people. She recognized one woman whom she had seen around the house before the incident. Years later when the Wall came down the Germans arrested the woman in East Germany. She was one of the six or so top people in the Red Army Faction. They were very professional. We had a TV camera at the front

gate and before they threw the firebombs they taped over the lens while our guard was on his rounds. Later we had two guards so there was always one in the front and the back. But terrorism was and is a part of Foreign Service life. Did you see Mike Causey's farewell article in the *Washington Post*? He wrote his last "Federal Page" the other day. It's a very nice article, and he said it's been great writing it for all those years. He said, "I've known a lot of wonderful civil servants and I've known a lot of people who were willing to risk their life for their country. I don't think there are too many people in corporate America or in politics that are willing to do that, but there are a lot of people working for the U.S. Government that do it all the time." That's true.

The consular work was interesting. You were a consular officer.

Q: One of my first jobs in the Foreign Service... Frankfurt, for many people my age, was our "mother consulate" job, and one of my jobs was Protection and Welfare, and I kept a diary. That's the point person there.

BODDE: I'm sure the locals that worked with you were there in my time.

Q: There were a few - Irene Bruckhagen, Anneliese Steig, and one other one.

BODDE: I don't remember her name but we had one woman whose willingness to go the extra mile for Americans in distress was legendary.

Q: Probably it was Irene Bruckhagen, I would suspect.

BODDE: Once she even bandaged the feet of some destitute guy who came into the consulate with his feet all blistered. I had a very good Citizenship and Welfare Officer who was kept very busy. We had between 100 and 120 people in jail at any given time. I don't know if you had as many military personnel in the Consular District made up of Hessen, Rheinland Pfalz, and Saarland.

Q: When I was there we had about 100,000 civilians, and the 97th General Hospital was cranking out children, babies born - I was baby birth officer one time, including one of mine too, but this was back in the '50's.

BODDE: Yes, I think the numbers grew over the years. Of course, since the end of the Cold War they have declined drastically. I think we had 120,000 military personnel in the district, so if you multiply that by three or four you get an idea of the civilian population. We always had a bunch of people in jail, and in fact, all our consular officers had to take turns visiting prisoners. They were in jail for everything from murder to theft, but most of them were doing time for drug.

Q: We didn't have as many because drugs were not a deal.

BODDE: In a big place like Frankfurt there were a number of women's clubs. There was a Consulate Ladies Club, There was a military wives club and there was the huge Frankfurt International Women's Club. My wife had to belong to all of them and for her sins was elected

the President of the International Women's Club. She spent a lot of time adjudicating disputes between the long-time German members, whose main purpose in life was to keep younger German women from becoming members, and the transit international community. There was an interesting businessman's wives club in the Taunus. It was a rather successful attempt to replicate the support system the U.S. Consulate provided for its families. When new business families arrived, the Taunus Wives Club would try to do for them what our Community Liaison Office did for Consulate families.

Anyhow, in the spirit of community service the Taunus Wives Club decided to visit Americans in jail. The problem was that one of these women was really good-looking, so all of a sudden all sorts of prisoners were claiming to be American so they could meet with this good-looking American woman. The large American prison population was always a big part of the Consulate's workload. I will never forget - I obviously can't go into details - but the son of one of our senior colleagues from another post got arrested at the airport on drug charges. It was really tough calling somebody you know and telling him his son had been arrested. The son wasn't a kid by that time; he was a grown man but that doesn't make it any easier on the parents. That said, citizen protection is probably one of the most interesting jobs in our business.

Q: Oh, yes, because it's not just one thing. It covers a whole spectrum of things. Tell me, did you notice that Germany was no longer the tourist destination that it once was?, Americans used to flock into Germany,, but it got the reputation for being expensive, and now package tours take them to France, Portugal, Spain, Italy and maybe the Mediterranean.

BODDE: I'm sure that's right. It also has a lot to do with the dollar. In the old days the dollar was worth more than four Deutschmarks. In any event, Frankfurt is mostly a transit stop. Actually, it turned out to be a very nice place to live, but people don't visit Frankfurt to see the sights. They just go to the airport and get on a bus or a train or whatever and go somewhere else. But I don't think the number of tourists has dropped in total numbers because our population's increased and more Americans travel, but I don't know. I don't think tourists were our major problem. For the Citizenship and Protection person, it was also resident Americans and kids bumming around Europe. The majority of our problem cases were related to the large military presence. It was a busy shop. I had a very good officer, Tom Rice, who was mature and had very excellent judgment. He never panicked and he was helpful but was not so soft that he spent every waking hour at work giving all his money away. At the same time he was compassionate and imaginative. I think it's really an important job. He had a good sense of what to bring to my attention and what to take care of himself. Congress passes laws with unintended consequences. For example they passed a law that if you were convicted of a drug crime, there was no way you would be allowed into the United States. We would have cases where the German wife took the rap to save her military husband from drug charges and then she would be banned from entering the U.S. forever. He could return to the states, and his kids could come, but his wife couldn't, and there was no way you could get that waived. I would get calls from leading German politicians pleading the spouse's case on humanitarian grounds but there was nothing I could do. There were some real human tragedies, but there was nothing we could do about them.

Q: What about the military? How did you find relations with the military, because, you know, this waxes and wanes? It depends on the personalities.

BODDE: Well, I think that's a lot of it. Obviously, there were generals who had well-developed political instincts, like Colin Powell. He was much easier to work with because he understood the political dimension not just the military dimension of his decisions.

Q: He was Corps Commander then.

BODDE: He was V Corps Commander for a short time and then he came back to be Deputy Director of the National Security Council. He wasn't there very long when the President called him back to Washington. He didn't want to leave his command because he was, first of all, a soldier. V Corps Commander is a big job, and he loved it. He told me as corps commander; I have two Mercedes limousines, my own jet, a command helicopter and two jeeps. Now I will go back and drive myself to work at the White House every day. But it was clear that he was special and had a great future ahead of him. Relations between the U.S. forces and the Germans had undergone a transformation. The Germans were less passive and certainly less tolerant about being inconvenienced by the U.S. military. You can imagine. You were there in the '50s. That's when I was in the army over there and it was not that long after the war. People remember the CARE packages and generosity of the Americans. By the 1980s, that generation was long in the tooth and the new generation of Germans didn't have those sentimental attachments to the U.S.

The presence of hundreds of thousands of American troops in a relatively small and heavily populated country like Germany, was bound to create problems in civil-military relations. In fact, I think it's amazing that after all these years there had not been more friction. Of course it has gotten worse since the end of the Cold War. But even back in the 1980s the argument that the U.S. forces were keeping the Soviets at bay had lost a lot of its impact. Germans were very unhappy about the noise from low flying military aircraft. Military maneuvers were also a real irritant with U.S. tanks tearing up the roads, convoys clogging the autobahns and helicopters flying at nap of the earth levels. Firing ranges were a constant source of complaints. Years ago the firing ranges were out in the middle of nowhere, but now Germans live nearby and they don't want to put up with night firing.

By the 1980s there was much more tension in the relationship. For instance, the Army wanted to move a helicopter wing to Wiesbaden. That created a political firestorm even though the helicopters made less noise than the autobahn that ran next to the heliport. The perception was that the helicopters were the problem. The U.S. military's view was that we are in Germany as part of NATO to defend the free world. Strategically, or at least tactically, it was better to have the helicopters in Wiesbaden and the Germans are just going to have to live with that. The new breed of officers were more politically sophisticated and they understood that sometimes compromise was necessary if we were to get along with the Germans.

The Army was better at civil relations than the Air Force because the army is used to living and operating within civilian communities. In Europe the Army had lots of people living off base and is in the habit of interfacing with the German population. I saw a major part of my job to be smoothing the civil-military relations. It wasn't just relations between the military and Germans. But there was also the relations between the military and American civilians. In the Consulate General we had all sorts of military units, including recruiters from all the military branches. In

addition to the Marine Detachment we had the Marine Company in charge of all the Marine Security Guards in West and Eastern Europe. I even found a military unit in our buildings I didn't even know about when we had a fire drill one-day. It was military spook unit that kept an eye on the Soviet Military Mission in West Germany; a relic of the occupation days.

Over the years, we turned parts of the Consulate housing area into offices because we didn't have the space downtown at the Consulate. We had the courier's facility, offices, out there. Of course, we had enormous CIA presence and so on. So you had to work on these relations as well. For example, in the wake of the bombings, I mentioned earlier, the Department instructed us to fence in the housing area immediately. Well, parts of the original housing area were now German apartments. In other places our apartments were set back not more than 15 feet off the streets. Putting up a fence would only provide shrapnel that would make a bomb more deadly. Fencing off streets was both controversial and ineffective and would have created serious problems of access for the Germans and Americans. The problem was that the Department didn't care if it made sense or not; but wanted to be seen as doing something. My security people told me the most useful thing to do was to coat all the windows in the housing area with a protective plastic to keep them from shattering. It would cost a fraction of what installing a fence would cost and would be much more effective. In fact, it was the plastic coating on the windows that limited the damage at the NCO club bombing. When the bomb went off - the windows ballooned in and ballooned out, and nobody was seriously hurt. The high rate of casualties as the second bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Lebanon was caused, in part, by moving into the building before the windows had been coated with Mylar.

Q: I had my windows in my residence in Saigon - this is back in '69 - had Mylar - in fact the Mylar coating reflective so you couldn't look in.

BODDE: Yes that is an additional benefit. Well, anyhow we had a big management problem on our hands. First of all, we had to convince the Department. The Department's attitude was Bodde, we are giving you a million dollars to fence in the housing area and if another bomb goes off and people are hurt it is your ass. The second part of the problem was that we had a couple of thousand people living in the consulate housing, many of whom had only a tenuous relationship to the Consulate General. To calm them down we had to nip rumors in the bud and convince the community that we were looking after their welfare. We didn't want them to become hysterical, and the rumor mill was already going like crazy. Our message was that while we were not going to put up a fence because it would do more harm than good. We were going to take other steps that would make them safer. We held a number of town meetings at the housing area to discuss security. My deputy, Merle Arp, did an excellent job at these meetings of listening to the community's concerns and explaining what we were going to do and why. I set up an inter-agency committee and we thrashed out the alternatives. At the time my attitude was that I would do whatever I thought was right and not worry about my career. I knew I had the community behind my decision to resist putting up fence. We did not fence in the housing area and we did Mylar all the windows. I consider that a management success story.

One of the things that you mentioned when we were on the coffee break was how different the academic world is than our. Like many Foreign Service Officers I had always thought that if I hadn't gone into our business I would have become an academic.

Q: Yes, that's sort the way I was pointed.

BODDE: Well the East-West Center experience convinced me that I had made the right choice. I must say I have enjoyed teaching at the University of Hawaii for the past four years. Each summer I do a half-semester course on world politics and business. But I'm left alone to develop my own curriculum and the Dean is very supportive. It's a very nice experience. But when I was at the East-West Center I saw the pettiness of academe life, up close. I like to think that pettiness is the fringe benefit of the academic life. I mean, I would go to faculty meetings, and the nonsense that some of the academicians would spout and the hours-long debates over minor issues were unbelievable. If someone tried that at an interagency meeting in Washington they would be laughed out of the room.

There was also a one hand washes the other mentality in Academe. You don't criticize your colleagues work and he or she doesn't criticize yours. Of course you band together against outsiders. I have experienced that first hand. I'm doing a book on the South Pacific which, I wanted the University of Hawaii to publish it. I ran right into a wall. How could a non-academic know anything about the South Pacific and even if you might know something we won't let you break our rice bowl. Now, I think we can all think of bad things we put up with in the Foreign Service, but we have a lot of good and smart people.

Q: And also, at a certain point, you get on with it. If there's a crisis, all of us a sudden a not particularly congenial group will be right there and, you know, they're there. There was book written. It was almost a pejorative term, but it's point is it's a pretty good club.

BODDE: Is that the name of the book?

Q: Yes, it's about the old Foreign Service.

BODDE: I'd like to read that some time. Do you have it hear? Can I borrow it?

Q: I don't know. I'll have to take a look and take a peek at that.

BODDE: That leads right into the next thing I was going to talk about and that is probably the most important thing about being CG in Frankfurt was its location. First, it is a big place. The large housing area attracts the many government agencies there. You have Rhine Main Airport near Frankfurt and three large military hospitals nearby. That is why so many victims from terrorist hijackings and hostage situations are brought to Frankfurt. All sort of horrible situations would end up in Frankfurt. We also got into the spy swapping business because we had the U.S. Air Force facilities there to do it. I set up a special inter agency task force to handle such incidents. I am not fond of committees as such but when you require inter-agency cooperation and coordination they are a necessity. The key is in knowing how to use them.

If we heard on the radio or TV that there was a plane hijacking, or some other hostage taking situation that might end up in Frankfurt, I would convene the special task force. More than likely the victims would end up in Wiesbaden Hospital. They'd come into the Rhine Main Air Base,

and be taken to Wiesbaden or the 97th General Hospital in Frankfurt. We had a number of plane hijackings and other incidents while I was there. When Levin, the *Newsweek Magazine* reporter who was a hostage in Beirut escaped he was flown to Frankfurt. We had a very interesting spy swap that involved the Russian dissident, Sharansky. The Consulate General was very involved.

That was really a peculiar situation. I got a phone call one day from Bill Woessner, the DCM in Bonn, telling me that we have a special case that he wanted me to handle. A famous dissident is going to be exchanged and we want you to receive him in Frankfurt. The case all has all sorts of political implications, so I want you to see that everything goes smoothly. His wife, who has led a high profile public campaign to get him out, will be coming from Washington with a DAS from EUR. The Israelis will have a plane waiting to take him and his wife to Israel. You should receive him and Ambassador Burt who will be arriving on a special plane from Berlin. Keep the press and everybody away from them. Put he and his wife in a secure area at the airport where an Air Force doctor can look at him and see if he needs any immediate medical attention. As quickly as possible put him and his wife on the Israeli plane. He added that an Israeli official would be contacting me. A half-hour later my secretary came in and told me there was a gentleman there to see me on an urgent matter. I thought, boy Israeli intelligence is quick. He told me he was in Frankfurt to be helpful and to coordinate the arrangements. That was one part of the operation.

The other part was that we were trading a bunch of East German and Soviet spies who were in German prisons. The East Germans would be brought to Rhine Main Air Base on the morning of the swap. They and a Czech couple, who was coming the day before from the U.S., would be flown to Berlin on a U.S. military plane. The actual exchange would take place at the famous Glienike Bridge. Our Ambassador to East Germany, Frank Meehan would bring Sharansky to the border in the middle of the bridge and our Ambassador in West Germany would receive him on our side and bring him in the same plane to Frankfurt.

The two spies coming out of the United States were husband and wife. They were naturalized American citizens originally from Czechoslovakia. They both had worked for the CIA and were caught spying for the Soviet Union. The husband had been convicted and the Agency was convinced his wife was also involved, but they didn't pursue the case against her. The idea was that they would come to Frankfurt and kept under guard at the Air Force Base until we flew them to Berlin. We were going to use the Air Force hotel on base to put them up, but the U.S. Marshals Service didn't feel that was secure enough. So they put them in the drunk's tank at the MP station. The wife arrived in a mink coat and was incensed to have to spend the night in a metal-lined jail cell. It had been agreed beforehand that a consular officer would come over to Rhine-Main, and formally witness their renunciation of U.S. citizenship before we made the swap.

Fortunately, the one thing you learn in our business is Murphy's Law. So I called Dick Barkley, the Political Counselor at the Embassy, and asked him what we should do if they refused to renounce at the last minute. He told me he would get back to me which he did a short time later. He told me that if they refused to renounce their citizenship we should immediately telephone the East German lawyer, Vogel, who was the intermediary in this exchange and he would make sure they did what they had promised as a condition for their exchange.

Well, sure enough, she was so angry about her treatment that she said she wasn't going to renounce her citizenship. So the consular officer steps out of the room and says to the sergeant - this is on a military base - he says to the sergeant, "Get me East Berlin on the phone." The sergeant replies that "We don't talk to East Berlin, Sir." Well the Consul snapped back, "You're talking to East Berlin now." The sergeant got Vogel on the phone and he read the Czech pair the riot act. So they went ahead and renounced their U.S. citizenship. We put them on the plane with the U.S. Marshals and waited for the East German spies who were being exchanged. When the convoy arrived with the East German prisoners and we put them on the plane to Berlin, and the swap took place as planned. Another thing I have learned in our business is that it always pays to be early. Sure enough, Rick arrived with Sharansky an hour early. When I got everybody out there two hours early there was some complaining but we were ready when Burt and Sharansky arrived and everything went smoothly.

Sharansky turned out to be a remarkable man. We got to chat with him a bit, and he told us that he hadn't known what was happening to him. The Russian guard in Moscow told him to get his stuff together he was being moved. He had never been a religious Jew, but he had become religious in jail, so he went to get his payer book. The guard said he could not take it with him. And Sharansky said, "Well, then I'm not going." Now that's courage. That's *chutzpah*, in the best sense of the word. The guard gave in, and he took it with him. They put him on a plane but they didn't tell him where he was going. When the plane landed, East Berlin looked so much better than Moscow that he thought he was in Sweden. It was not until U.S. Ambassador Frank Meehan went to see him in jail that he knew he was going to freedom in Israel.

But that was the kind of exciting things we got to do in Frankfurt. The hijacked TWA hostages eventually came to Frankfurt and there were a bunch of American senators and German politicians there to make sure they got their picture taken, grandstanding all the way.

We also got to witness tragedy as well. When the bombing of the marine barracks in Beirut happened the 250 bodies were flown there to be identified and then sent home. I was there to receive them together with Marine Commandant General P. X. Kelly. When the wounded were sent to the military hospitals. I went with General Kelly to the Wiesbaden Air Force Hospital to visit the wounded marines.

After General Kelly left I heard that World Airlines was offering free travel to Frankfurt for any of the immediate families of the wounded Marines. For us it was a recipe for disaster. Families would fly in to find that loved ones have either died or been shipped out already. The military moved them back to the states and soon as they could. It had all the markings of a public relations disaster, where we would be the "heartless State Department" that didn't take care of these people. I got off a cable to General Kelly and told him it could be a public relations disaster for the State Department and for the Marine Corps. I need a senior Marine officer here to set up an office that's going to take care of these families when they come in. The next morning a Marine Colonel walked in to my office and says, "Mr. Bodde, General Kelly sent me here to report to you. What am I supposed to do?" It was a wonderful response from the Marine Corps and it worked out fine but you know how it could have gone wrong. Think of how many times the Department has gotten a black eye from somebody complaining, "They didn't care about my

family,” or “they didn’t care about me.” You can get those complaints no matter how hard you try.

I must say, my wife, God bless her, got together some of the other Consulate wives, and they visited all wounded who were in Frankfurt. Many of the marines were in bad shape. Some of them didn't make it. She thought it might be nice to bring them some cookies. The nurses told her that they might choke on the cookies so she went out and bought up all the German soft candy, *Gummibears*, that she could find. She'd ask the Marines, "Are you a Redskins fan or a Dallas Cowboy fan?" My wife doesn't know anything about football, but anything to get them talking.

We visited the hospital where General Kelly awarded Purple Hearts right on the spot. He and I went into one room, where there was a marine lying there with all kinds of tubes going into him. He was unable to talk but he made a writing-like motion. Somebody thought that he wanted Kelly's autograph, but Marines don't ask the Marine Commandant for autographs. Then the nurse, being smarter than the rest of us, turned his chart over and handed him a pen. And this guy, who is just hanging onto life, scratches out, "Semper Fi." It was one of the most touching things I have ever seen. You know, there's something about Marines and I have great respect for them. It was this sort of thing that made the job in Frankfurt so special.

Q: Let's talk about local politics - Hessen politics, and what were we doing, and then we'll talk a bit about the banking, too.

BODDE: Well, the politics in Hessen were interesting. Walter Wallmann, the lord mayor of Frankfurt, was an old friend of mine from my Bonn days. He had been in the Bundestag when the Christian Democrat Party asked him to run for mayor. As Frankfurt was a socialist stronghold he was expected to lose and return to his seat in the Federal Parliament. To everyone's surprise he won. This was just as we were leaving Bonn, in 1977. So he was lord mayor in Frankfurt when I arrived, which is one of the most powerful political positions in Germany. That was a big brake for me because we were on a first name basis and access was automatic. He played a major role in the party and was a confidant of Chancellor Helmut Kohl. He provided me with insights that we couldn't have gotten anywhere else. The state of Hessen was also very important in German politics. Helmut Boerner, the governor, called Minister-President in Germany, was, a Social Democrat. I had a lot to do with him and his Chief of Staff because of the large number of troops stationed in Hessen. One time the German forestry chief for Hessen was going to severely limit the annual military exercise "Reforger."

Hessen had had a tough winter and so the forest director for Hessen wanted to put a large part of the wooded area off limits. The ground was soft which meant that the tanks and other vehicles would wrack havoc with the local environment. Well here were hundreds of thousands of troops on the way to Germany where they would pick up their equipment and participate in this huge two-week large maneuver. I rushed over to see the chief of staff and told him that it would be disaster if we couldn't train in the area the forester wanted to put off limits. The chief of staff was a savvy political guy, and suggested that the V Corps Commander take the forester up in a helicopter to survey the area. He was sure they could agree on a compromise over a glass or two of *Schnaps*. The Forester was rightfully worried that the tanks would rip up the soft earth and we

could agree to stay away from the most fragile areas.

In fact, the tanks, as usual, did considerable damage. Fortunately U.S. Army had damage payments down to a science. Behind the tanks came a finance officer in a jeep with cash on hand to pay for the damage. A tank or a Bradley Fighting Vehicle would make a turn onto the narrow village streets and knock off half of the corner of somebody's house, you know, or maybe even damage the *Rathaus* or city hall. So anyhow, it was interesting politically because you had the local stuff that was important because our presence was so large, but it also played into national politics. The first Red-Green coalition was in Hessen. That is a coalition between the Social Democratic Party, and the Green (environmental) Party. Now there is a Red-Green Coalition running the country in Berlin. So, yes, the politics were interesting.

Q: Were we seeing at that time the Green Party as being more than some kids getting out there jumping around?

BODDE: Well, sure. I like to claim, and I think it's accurate, that the first report ever sent to Washington on the Greens was an airgram I wrote when I was in Bonn. In those days, the Greens began as an anti-nuclear movement. They tried to prevent the shipment of nuclear waste and I wrote a report about the growing strength of the group. Of course, they had become a lot more powerful by the time I came back to Germany in the '80s. By then the Greens were a national party represented in the *Bundestag*. There has always been a split within the Green Party between the fundamentalists or *Fundis*, who are really radical and do not want to compromise on any issue, and there is a pragmatic group that is willing to compromise to gain public support and hold power. So there's always great strains in the Green Party. Someone like Joschka Fischer, who's the foreign minister now, is obviously from the pragmatic group. At every party convention, he must defend himself against the charge that he has sold out.

The Greens got their first big boost in U.S. consciousness because one of their early leaders, Petra Kelly grew up in the United States and spoke fluent English. Petra's mother had married an American military officer. Do you remember when I mentioned that the French would not take you seriously if you didn't speak French? Well Americans tend to overrate any foreign politician who speaks good English. They get much more American media coverage and they are better on TV. So Petra Kelly was given much more prominence in the United States than she had in Germany because of her American accented English. It didn't hurt that she was also a nice-looking young woman. So the American media interviewed Petra Kelly over and over again. Over time she became more and more radical and became one of the leading *Fundis*. Her live-in companion was a former German general who had become a peacenik. It ended badly. I not sure what happened. It was either a mutual suicide or murder-suicide. Their bodies were not discovered for some time so it was a very gruesome ending. By the time she died she was no longer important in German politics.

The Greens have become significant in German politics for a number of reasons. One is the German proportional representation election system, which means no single party is likely to win enough votes to govern alone. It isn't a winner take all system like here, so once a party gets five per cent of the vote it is represented. The system encourages splinter parties. The five per cent helps ameliorate that somewhat but the large parties almost always need a coalition partner to

govern. Secondly, the Greens were the first to realize that environmental issues could be popular and they were able to capture mainstream voters. Now all the political parties in Germany push environmental issues and they probably wouldn't have taken them up if the Greens hadn't forced them to. Much in the ways that Ralph Nader has pushed American politics in certain directions. The Greens also appeal to the romantic streak in the German character. I mean, the Germans are attracted by romantic idealism. It is a strain running through German political history.

Q: Yes, I've always seen when you see demonstrations in Germany, more than anywhere else, you see people in costumes and all.

BODDE: Well that's becoming popular here now too. Look at the World Trade Organization demonstrations in Seattle.

Q: But this was-

BODDE: In Germany they put on skulls and death masks to represent nuclear victims or whatever. I read the other day, it's now becoming the thing among American radicals. I think the less serious they are, they more the costumes appeal. When we had demonstrations a couple of weeks ago during the World Bank meeting, I read that "a peaceful end to the demonstrations was negotiated by the deputy chief of the Washington police and a woman who was dressed as a tree." That sounds a like Germany to me. But, yes, with the Greens, this romantic streak is strong.

The biggest political issue that we had to deal with during my time in Frankfurt was the 1994 deployment of Intermediate Ballistic Missiles into West Germany. The deployment was to counter the introduction of a new class of ballistic missiles by the Soviets. The Soviets did everything possible to forestall the U.S. deployment. They walked out to the arms control talks in Geneva and mounted a gigantic propaganda campaign against the deployment. The German Left, including the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party plus all sorts of anti-establishment political groups demonstrated against the missiles throughout Germany. There was heightened concern about possible terrorist acts.

Ironically it was Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, a Social Democrat who had originally urged the U.S. to deploy the missiles to counter a new generation of missiles the Soviets were deploying. Schmidt's idea was that the threat of such deployment would be a powerful bargaining chip. If the Soviets went ahead and deployed we would introduce our new missiles. The idea was to get the Soviets to come to the table and be serious about negotiating the removal of all intermediate range missiles. If we were not successful in getting the Soviets to remove their missiles we would at least be able to counter them with our new missiles and maintain the balance.

That's how it eventually turned out. We were able to negotiate an Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile Treaty and get rid of missiles on both sides. But it was an enormous and divisive issue in Germany. As I said the Social Democrats and the Greens opposed deployment. There were massive demonstrations every weekend, in Bonn, in Frankfurt, and all over West Germany. The radicals had demonstrated for years against building another runway at the Frankfurt airport. That too became a hot issue, and every week they'd go out and confront the police. People would

get arrested, and there'd be rock throwing and other violence. But these latest anti-missile demonstrations were nation wide. A large segment of German Youth had been radicalized as a result of Vietnam and the student revolutions in France and Germany.. These anti missile movement went beyond the youth and it was significant political movement supported by a large proportion of the public, at least tacitly. It really took political courage on the part of the Kohl/Genscher Government to support the deployment. It would have been popular in Germany if the Government told us not to do it. But the Bonn Coalition stuck by the original agreement, and Kohl deserves tremendous credit for that. It was the right thing to do.

It was interesting that once the deployment actually began the Soviets backed off completely. They stopped supply funds and other support to the demonstrations. The demonstrations stopped. The Russians came back to the table and they started to seriously negotiate and within a reasonable amount of time negotiated a ban on all intermediate range missiles. But in the beginning it was not a sure thing.

Q: What was your impression of the CDU in your local context at that time?

BODDE: Well, both local and national. Well, I would say - we talked about this earlier because you had asked about *Ostpolitik* and Brandt. Washington, in general, preferred the CDU to the SPD. The CDU and it Bavarian sister party, the CSU, are conservative and more in tune with the Republicans and the so called new Democrats. On social issues all the parties in Germany are to the left of the American parties, even the German Conservative Parties. For example, the CDU is not as conservative as the right wing of the Republican Party in the United States. In fact, basically, probably moderate Republicans would be the natural partners of the CDU. Of course, the Germans are smart. They do business with whichever party is in power in America. Kohl developed a close relationship with Clinton, and he had a good relationship with Reagan. The huge financial scandal that's recently come to light has tarnished the Kohl's reputation. He most likely will not run again for the Bundestag, and he could even be prosecuted in Germany. I didn't have a clue about that. Everybody knew that every once in a while there was a scandal about party funding in Germany just as there is in the U.S. It was just bound to happen. In Germany most candidates are professional politicians. You make your career within the party. You start out in the local party organization and move up. It is rare when a candidate is chosen who has had a career in business or the professions.

Q: Because you're put on the list.

BODDE: You're put on the Party election list, and you spend your whole career within the party organization. Oh, yes, I was talking about the German electoral system. The New Zealanders, for some unexplainable reason, have decided to take over the German election system in New Zealand. The Ambassador in Washington had been Prime Minister when this happened and I asked him why New Zealand had chosen one of the most complicated election systems in the world. He told me the voters were unhappy and they just wanted change just for change's sake. It is so complicated that hardly anybody understands it. I remember that U.S. Ambassador Marty Hillenbrand, who was the ultimate German specialist, raised the system once at a staff meeting in Bonn. Well the political counselor tried to explain it, and added my two bits, and by the time we were done, there wasn't anybody in the room who wasn't confused. Some candidates are elected

from the lists, and some candidates are directly elected and the apportionment of the votes becomes very complicated. As I said the system makes the large parties hostage to small parties, because you're rarely going a single party obtain a majority.

In Germany politicians make their careers entirely within the party. That's what they do for a living. We too have professional politicians such as Al Gore or Bill Clinton who haven't done anything else with their lives but politics. But we don't have a whole class of people spending their life doing that. The Germans don't draft outsiders to be candidates. They don't pick academicians or bankers. In Germany, academicians stay in the academic world. Businessmen stay in the business world, and politicians stay in the political world. There's no revolving door and they suffer from it. You know, we always complain of the ethics of the revolving door, but it makes for new blood and it brings in other experiences. I think it's a good thing, by and large.

Q: Well, now, on the other side, Frankfurt is the big banking center. But I would have thought that because it's such a worldwide banking center that this would almost be the province of the Economic Section of the embassy.

BODDE: Well, they thought it was. [*Laughter*] Of course it was. In Paris and Bonn we have Treasury representatives in the Embassy. Usually it's a two-man section and most often the second man is an FSO. When I was in Bonn in the mid-1970s the Treasury man had been there for years. He later retired in Germany. I think he might have been born in Germany. Nobody is more jealous of their prerogatives than the Treasury representatives in an Embassy.

Q: Oh, yes.

BODDE: Mere mortals are not allowed to compete with what the Treasury Department is reporting. So there was always a tension between the Treasury rep in Bonn and the Consulate General in Frankfurt. For instance, the President of the Bundesbank would not receive the Treasury rep from Bonn. He'd meet with Arthur Burns or other U.S. Ambassadors, but he didn't think he had to deal with anybody below the Ambassador. I doubt if Allan Greenspan meets with many ambassadors. However, he would come to the Consul General's house for dinner and that really bothered the Treasury rep. That said, the Treasury representative, when I was in Frankfurt, was first rate. He is now a senior banker with a German bank in New York City. Can you imagine going to a staff meeting every week and explaining the German economy to Arthur Burns? I mean, you've really got to know your stuff. As I said, Burns didn't suffer fools gladly, and he certainly didn't suffer people pretending to know something they didn't. But sure, there were tensions. Once in a while I would encourage a junior officer to do economic reporting. They would report something on the banks, and *Boom*, the Embassy would slap our wrist. But, of course, Frankfurt is a banking city, so I spent a lot of time with bankers.

When I got there and I looked around at the territory. Remember that song in The Music Man, "You Got To Know The Territory?" It was clear that the name of the game was banking. Back when I was preparing to go out to the Pacific islands, most of the published material about the islands was anthropological - you know - Margaret Mead, Malinowski, etc. So I read a lot of anthropology, and spent a lot of time with anthropologists at the East-West Center and the University of Hawaii. Well, when I looked at the Frankfurt bankers they seemed to me to be a lot

like a tribe. So I thought that it might be useful to take an anthropological approach to understanding them.

Of course, you have to know something about economics and finance but I had taken some good economic courses at SAIS. Anyhow the banking tribe had their own taboos, status and class and a well-defined hierarchy. This anthropological approach worked quite well. Bankers used to say, "Bill, I never met somebody outside the business that knows as much as you do about it." I didn't know that much about it, but I could understand what was going on. And it was fascinating, because it was there that I got the first clues about globalization. It wasn't yet called globalization but that is what it was. In Frankfurt billions of dollars were moving back and forth without any recognition of national borders and governments. It was a whole different world.

I also learned the first law of banking. One day I was talking to the head of the foreign exchange operations of one of the major banks. I asked him, half in jest, "Well, what's the dollar going to do tomorrow?" He grinned and said, "Bill, it doesn't matter to us as long as it moves." And I realized that's what it's about. It's about taking advantage of financial movements. It doesn't matter whether the dollar is going up or down as long as you are right about the direction or at least hedge against being wrong.. These guys were making their money on movement, just as banks make money on the float. The bankers were interesting people to deal with. Most of the German bankers had lived abroad and the American bankers that were there were first-rate.

We were talking about terrorism before. The bankers were also targets of the Red Army Faction. I remember my security people telling me that nobody can guarantee that they can protect you one hundred percent. In fact, if they really want to get you, they can get you. After all, they have killed American presidents, you know. What good security can do is to make it difficult enough so that the terrorist chose an easier target. Two weeks after we left Germany, the Red Army Faction killed the President of Deutsche Bank, the biggest German bank. They set off a bomb by remote control when he was driving to work. He had an armored car and a follow-on car, but they still got him. If they really decide *you are the target*, and they're willing to do whatever it takes, they can do it! At the counter terrorism course they tell you to vary your routine and never take the same road to work every day. I lived in a *cul de sac* so what were we supposed to do?

Q: I know what you mean. I was told, as I drove my own car in Saigon, where I was consul general, and they had all these things, but the problem was there was one-way traffic, and what the hell are you going to do, you know?

BODDE: Vary your working hours. Sure. I could work from two or four in the morning.

Q: Yes, sure.

BODDE: The Consulate was a public business. That's when the Consul General has to be there, right? You can vary it a little bit, but basically you have little flexibility. I had a wonderful driver and an armored car and all that kind of stuff, but he was very German, and set in his ways. Getting him to change routes was the triumph of hope over experience. I could get the terrorists to change before I would have gotten him to change.

Q: Well, Bill, is there anything more? Have we kind of brought it up to where the other thing is, now?

BODDE: I think we have. I haven't edited the last part. I'm still on the part before the addendum. Editing directly on the computer is much better and I will give you a complete edited version. Of course you will want to check it.

Q: Unless, you know, there may be other subjects of cultural, academic, what have you? You know, I'm just... whatever you think of. And that sort of bring us up to where the other part picks up, doesn't it?

BODDE: I think so. That's when I came back to be Deputy Assistant Secretary and work for Roz Ridgway in EUR. I don't think I mentioned how that happened. Bill Woessner, who had been DCM in Bonn and then was DAS in EUR, visited Frankfurt. Just before he arrived I found out from a friend at the Embassy that Bill was going to retire. When he came I asked him who was going to take his place and he said that it had not yet been decided and I told him I was interested. He called Roz, and she told him that she had already decided to ask me. Then Roz called and I said yes, although I had just extended for an additional year in Frankfurt. Ingrid was not wild about the decision because in Frankfurt she had a real role to play. I mean, being Consul General Frankfurt is like being an Ambassador. It's better than being an Ambassador in many ways. I just learned the other day that there are three posts that are considered by the Department to be ambassador-level.

Q: São Paulo, Frankfurt, and...

BODDE: Frankfurt and Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Q: Well, Taiwan, definitely, but São Paulo is all...

BODDE: It may well be, too. It's funny because when I was first assigned to Germany in 1971 she had her doubts about going back to her country of birth. You know, she was an American now, and she had made that leap of faith to become completely acculturated; something that is rare among the foreign born wives in the Foreign Service. Just before we left for Germany we were having dinner at the Swedish DCM's house, and he had invited the Israeli DCM, who was going as Ambassador to Sweden. It turned out he had been born in Berlin. He told Ingrid don't worry because you are going to love it. You'll understand everything that's going on, and yet you won't be emotionally involved in it. She found that she could understand everything that was going on, but that she was seeing through American eyes. As I mention before, she had been President of the International Women's Club in Frankfurt, which was like running the UN. American join clubs because they like the activities or for the prestige. Germans join so that they can get together with their clique and keep other Germans out. Now that may be an exaggeration, but if so, it is only a slight exaggeration. She used to get 25 phone calls a day from intermediaries that Frau X was unhappy or Frau Y was unhappy, yada yada yada. She would tell them "Have her call me herself if she is not happy." No, the whole thing was Byzantine. She did a tremendous job and she really enjoyed Frankfurt. We had a lovely house, and we had found a gourmet chef. We served much better food than was served at the Ambassador's residence in

Bonn because of this fantastic chef. I got her into the master's school after she worked for us. There were 38 students and only 20 graduated. She was the only woman in the class and she graduated number one. So not only did we live very well but we could host fabulous dinners at home for a tenth of what it would cost in a first-class Frankfurt restaurant. So life was very good.

The job as DAS was great for me but not so much fun for Ingrid. I worked twelve hours a day and loved it while she sat at home bored. It took her about a year to find herself. She became a volunteer in the emergency room at Suburban Hospital, which she found very rewarding. But no, it was not an easy move. People ask - mostly non-Foreign Service people - "What was your favorite post?" I can't say because they were all so different. Do you have a favorite post?

Q: Well, in a way, Belgrade, but other ones were more interesting. Yes, I do have a favorite post. But I certainly enjoyed them all, and each one's an adventure. It's a learning experience.

BODDE: I found them all a learning experience. Maybe it's the lack of intellectual rigor or something, but I was never bored. I remember when Harvey Feldman was going to Papua New Guinea and people saying, "Poor Harvey, he's going to be so bored out there." Well, I wouldn't be bored. There's always stuff to do - particularly in Papua New Guinea, which is fascinating. I found every post interesting. The Marshalls were probably the least attractive, but even there we had some nice times and it was not boring. So I would find it hard to name my favorite post. Maybe setting up and running the APEC Secretariat in Singapore was the best but I am not sure. It's a great life.

GEORGE F. WARD
Chief Internal Political Unit
Bonn (1984-1985)

Ambassador Ward was born and raised in New York City. He attended the University of Rochester and entered the US Marine Corps in 1965. Four years later, in 1969, he entered the Foreign Service and began a career which took him to Germany and Italy. He also held an ambassadorship to Namibia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2001.

Q: You were doing this job until '84?

WARD: Yes. Then I went to Bonn as the chief of the Internal Political Unit. We had a very large political section in Bonn that was divided up into a number of small pieces. One was the Internal Affairs Unit. We did exactly what that connotes. We followed German internal politics. I watched over the Social Democrats and the Greens. My colleague, J.D. Bindenagel, looked after the Christian Democrats and the Liberals.

Q: You were there from when to when?

WARD: I was only there for a little more than a year. Our ambassador was Arthur Burns, a grand

old man who became one of the most recognized and influential men in Germany. He was devoted to his job. He worked very long hours because he really loved, almost more than anyone I've ever observed, the intellectual stimulus of work. He was a very effective ambassador and was really loved by the embassy staff. We had a capable political section. Richard Barkley was the political counselor. Tom Weston was the deputy political counselor.

Q: What party was in power in this period, '84-'85?

WARD: Chancellor Kohl and the Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union were in power in coalition with the Liberals. Kohl had been elected in 1982. When he was first elected, it was very much similar to the kind of thing we recently went through with President George W. Bush and also some of the early thoughts about President Reagan. Was this man intellectually capable to hold the office? In all three cases, they proved their detractors wrong pretty early. Kohl jokes were rampant in Germany. You could buy joke books about the Chancellor, which was unusual in a country that respected authority. Later, during Unification, Kohl proved himself to be the single politician in Germany who understood at a deep level what was happening.

Q: You were looking at the Social Democrats, the Liberals, and the Greens. What was our reading on the Social Democrats?

WARD: They were terribly divided between Atlanticists and more left-wing figures in the party. Slowly, over time, the Atlanticists were gaining ground, but they were bedeviled by the tendency of some in the SPD to turn leftward in order to counter the growing Green Party. To the extent that the Social Democrats moved toward the center, the Greens would occupy the left. The Greens were a chaotic party, a party that was fun to cover because they were so chaotic. The party was composed of many factions. When you'd go to a Greens convention, you'd find dogs running around, kids running around, women sitting on the floor and knitting, agendas disregarded, etc.

Q: Sounds like a student movement.

WARD: It was very much a young people's movement. The Greens began an environmental protest party. A much harder line, truly Marxist element, people who had come out of Marxist splinter parties, later infiltrated them. There was tension between those two wings within the Party. Eventually, over a long period of time, the more moderate wing prevailed. Said another way, radical figures became over time more moderate. I remember that Joschka Fischer, now foreign minister, was photographed during the '70s beating a policeman during a demonstration. When I knew Fischer in the '84-'85 period, it was already clear that he was very realistic about the place of Germany in Europe, about Germany's need for security. He was one of those Greens who in a quiet moment, perhaps after a couple of beers, would admit that Germany had a role in NATO despite the fact that the platform of the Greens party was very definitely for German withdrawal from the Alliance.

Q: Was there a concern that agents of the Soviet Union, of East Germany, had pretty well infiltrated the Green Party?

WARD: There certainly were within the Green Party people who had been influenced by Marxist ideology. I don't recall a special concern about agents within the Green Party, although later it emerged that there were East German agents just about everywhere, including in the American mission.

Q: Were we concerned at the time that at some point, the Soviets and East Germans might come up with a deal, saying, "Maybe you can unite if you, West Germany, and you, East Germany, get out of NATO?"

WARD: That sort of idea was present in the background, enough to be of some concern to us. During the unification saga, it turned out that there were some German leaders, perhaps even Foreign Minister Genscher, who might have been willing to compromise on the question of a unified Germany's position in NATO.

Q: How did the Liberals fit into the scheme of things?

WARD: The Liberals were the Free Democratic Party (FDP). Hans Dieterich Genscher, who was the most popular politician in Germany, headed the FDP. The Liberals were always threatened by the possibility that they could fall below the five percent minimum of the popular vote needed for representation in the Bundestag. The Liberals were also split between a left and a right wing. More or less traditional 19th century liberals dominated the party, but others were further to the left. Genscher became the longest serving foreign minister in German history and was the absolute master of the foreign office. He ran the ministry quite autocratically. He knew everybody because he had been minister for so long. He made even small decisions himself. His stewardship produced a generation of German diplomats who were very cautious because they knew that their chief wanted to call all the shots. They were quite cautious and operated within much narrower limits than the British or French that I observed in the Quadripartite Talks.

Q: At a later date, Genscher has had the finger pointed at him for speeding the dissolution of Yugoslavia, more on his own...

WARD: When we come to that, there is a very interesting incident that I can relate.

Q: We'll eventually come to that. How come you left Bonn after only one year?

WARD: Chuck Redman, who became Deputy Director of the Office of European Security and Political Affairs in the Department in 1984, was moved up in 1985 to become deputy spokesman of the Department. Chuck of course went on to much greater things, but his departure left the office without a Deputy Director in a very busy period. Charlie Thomas and Ray Caldwell asked me to come back to be the Deputy Director. Because I was so interested in the substance of what that office did and in the larger issues, I agreed to do that. I received a "directed assignment," cutting short my time in Bonn.

RALPH H. RUEDY

**German Desk Officer, USIA
Washington, DC (1984-1986)**

Ralph Ruedy was born and raised in Iowa. Between receiving his bachelor's degree from Iowa State University and his master's from Duke University, he spent five years serving in the U.S. Navy in Vietnam. Mr. Ruedy joined USIA in 1974. His overseas posts include East Berlin, Dusseldorf, Bonn, and Moscow. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: After you left there in '84...

RUEDY: Yes, that is correct.

Q: You went where?

RUEDY: I came back on a first Washington assignment to be German desk officer at USIA, responsible on the Washington end for support for the programs in East and West Germany. So it was a logical onward assignment and I enjoyed it. I did that for two years and it was a very, very busy period. We had a super dynamic Director of USIA, Charles Wick. Wick was very interested in Germany; Wick had come to Krefeld and had also been very supportive of the whole tri-centennial activity so Germany was very, very much his scope. I was kept busy cranking out all kinds of stuff because he was a very dynamic and fairly demanding individual. He knew about Germany and he visited Germany a number of times while I was desk officer so I would be cranking out memos and decision papers and briefing papers and my God I worked hard and something that was on his scope at the time was RIAS, Radio In the American Sector. He and the German intendant of RIAS had come up with the idea of launching RIAS television so RIAS television was very much under Director Wick's scope. That meant that it was on my scope and it was on the scope of lots and lots of people and there were lots and lots of people between my level and his level. So, I did lots and lots of decision memos and briefing papers and background notes and all kinds of stuff.

Q: RIAS was in Berlin?

RUEDY: Yes, RIAS is in Berlin and the RIAS was established as an occupation radio. In fact, I think RIAS went on the air with little power to tell Germans where to line up for food and coal and everything else and it was on the air obviously during the Berlin airlift and later then during the period of the Berlin wall. By the time that I was involved in German affairs RIAS had pretty much evolved to become a German station. It was still under official American sovereignty because, of course, the United States was officially sovereign in the American sector of the city of Berlin, but RIAS had a German intendant. It also had an American who was serving at RIAS but the relationship between the German and the American was always very good. The day-to-day operation and day-to-day policy, everything else was handled on the German side. There was a good deal of back and forth about what the American political role would be in RIAS television, what the American financial contribution would be to RIAS television, all kinds of stuff. It got embroiled to some extent in German internal political concerns because I think there were people in Germany who perhaps saw RIAS and RIAS television as a counterweight to what

some Berliners, some Germans felt was the left of.

So as I say there were all kinds of political agendas and political motives at work here and it was a very, very interesting couple of years.

Q: How did it come out?

RUEDY: RIAS television got established and it broadcast for a while and then of course everything changed in and around Berlin. I inherited RIAS television concerns later on because my onward assignment after two years on the German desk and a year at the National War College and then an interim stint as acting director of the operations center at USIA was an onward assignment as deputy public affairs officer in Bonn. I guess as a BPAO in Dusseldorf, as a field officer I complained sufficiently about the way things were handled in Bonn that for my sins I was told, "Well, OK, you are going to be the deputy public affairs counselor in Bonn and you are the person sort of in charge of field operations."

Anyway I got to Bonn then following the two years on the German desk at USIA during the Wick period and a year at the National War College and then an interim period as operations center director. I got to Bonn in February 1987.

THOMAS F. JOHNSON
Consul/Branch Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Frankfurt (1984-1988)

Born in Illinois and raised in the Mid-West and New York State, Thomas of Johnson entered the Foreign Service in 1967. He served in Paraguay, Germany, Liberia, Mexico, and Singapore. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.

Q: And in '84 you're off to Frankfurt?

JOHNSON: I thought I was destined for Central America, but Frankfurt turned out to be our favorite post. While we were waiting for our flight to the US I ran into an American businessman. I told him I was headed to Germany. He replied, "That's probably safer than Mexico City?"

"Why do you say that?" I asked.

"You were Gavin's bodyguard, weren't you?" he asked.

"Bodyguard?" I responded incredulously.

"Yeah, every time I saw you, you were standing menacingly behind him," the executive replied.

“I was one of his spokesmen, not his guardian,” I said defensively.

I could not help but think that Gavin would have been pleased with the businessman’s image of me.

Prior to my arrival in Frankfurt I had to cut my home leave short and take the two week consular course, otherwise State would not have granted me the title of consul. Being a “Herr Konsul” in Germany is a big deal, because the Germans think of consuls in the context of their own Roman history and a consul two thousand years ago was a powerful man.

My boss was Bill Bodde, one the most capable Foreign Service Officers I have ever known. I had met him in 1979 when I inspected USIA Suva, where he was the ambassador. Bill’s considerable diplomatic skills were augmented by limitless energy of his gracious wife Ingrid. Ingrid and Bill developed a lasting friendship with Carolyn and me. Bill’s deputy was Merle Arp, an easy going consular officer. Merle’s wife Jean was a joyous extrovert. Together the Boddess, Arps and Johnsons made a great team.

I inherited a very able local national staff and an American assistant. My family and I moved into a spacious ranch house with a large yard within walking distance of the Consulate General and the Amerika Haus. My large office overlooked a park near where the Rothschild’s’ Palace stood before the war. The stately old building was badly damaged during an air raid in World War II and was demolished like so many other partial ruins. Had the Germans thought more about the esthetic quality of their future than obliterating reminders of their past, they could have restored many damaged buildings of architectural merit. On most days I walked to my office to check the newspapers and meet with my staff before continuing on to the Consulate General to check classified cable traffic and meet with Bill and Merle.

Q: You were doing that from '84 to '88. What was the importance of Frankfurt as a post at that time?

JOHNSON: Frankfurt was important for several reasons. It is the banking and finance capital of Germany. The Bundesbank, the German Federal Reserve Bank, is less than a mile from the headquarters of most the country’s most important banks. The Frankfurt stock exchange, the nation’s largest, is few blocks from the headquarters of several large commercial banks. The largest single biggest employer in the state of Hessen, which includes Frankfurt, is the Frankfurt am Main Airport, which boasts the busiest freight and second busiest passenger terminal in Europe. The US had major military facilities in Frankfurt and its environs, including Rhein-Main Airbase, V Corps Headquarters, Wiesbaden Airbase and two hospitals.

When I was living in Heidelberg and Berlin I swore I would never serve in Frankfurt, which had a reputation as boring. As a student I had spent a couple days in Frankfurt while attached to a TV camera team covering a trial of some SS guards who had served at Auschwitz and I had not been impressed with the city. However a Christian Democratic Lord Mayor Walter Wallmann and a Social Democratic Kulturstadtrat (senator for culture) spent more than \$2 billion dollars rebuilding the Old Opera and constructing theaters and a half dozen major museums. The city became one of the most culturally active metropolises in Germany. The center promenade was

aptly named “Die Fressgasse” (chow street) for all the little fast food spots and restaurants which were intermingled with boutiques and book stores. The Rhein Valley was at our doorstep, Heidelberg was only 70 miles to the south, France just two hours to the southwest and Berlin seven hours to the northeast.

Q: What was the quality of your German and American staff?

JOHNSON: I had an American assistant and a dozen German staff. The assistant I inherited was competent although he didn’t seem to be very interested in Germany. He was rather tense and my efforts to get him to loosen up met with little success. His replacement was a chain smoker, lethargic and a slow writer. He did not receive tenure and settled in Germany after marrying a USIA local employee. We parted cordially.

I had a very strong German staff, including a dynamic secretary and a director of programs who was eccentric but completely competent. I often teamed up with the program director for joint lectures-- more about that later. By the time I left Frankfurt I am convinced the Amerika Haus Frankfurt was the best branch post in USIA Germany.

Q: What did you think of the US and German staff at the Consulate General?

JOHNSON: Overall the quality of the German employees was high. The political-economic officer had an able assistant, Christine Bunz. I worked closely with her boss, a mid-career officer. There were three Administrative Officers during our tour of duty. One, who lasted only a few months, was a tragic figure. He had served previously in Beirut where he had helped staff a new embassy building. Unfortunately many of the Lebanese he hired were killed when the embassy was bombed on April 18, 1983. The American unfairly blamed himself and returned to the US where he could get counseling.

Most of the junior officers were punching their tickets in the large consular section prior to moving on to more desirable assignments. One Junior Officer Trainee nearly ended his career during a Fourth of July picnic in the American housing area. Merle Arp had assigned him the task of buying beer for the event and the young man arrived with cases of chilled Bud Light. The normally placid Merle Arp, a serious beer drinker, exploded. Reminding the untenured officer that we were in Germany, a nation famous for its fine beers, he snarled, “Be back here in 20 minutes with real beer or your career will suffer. Get moving!” The Bud Light was vanished and the officer sped back to the commissary. With several minutes to spare, the breathless JOT returned with cooled cases of some of the fatherland’s best brews. I lost a ten DM bet to a German colleague that he would not make the deadline.

Q: Did you have any cultural adjustments you had to make in Frankfurt after your transfer from Mexico City?

JOHNSON: I had to get used to a much more rapid pace of life. For example, shortly after I arrived Horst Richter my Program Manager and I invited two senior political scientists to lunch at a gasthaus just off the Fressgasse. We had a nice lunch and just as I thought we were getting into the real substance of our meeting, one of the academics looked at his watch and reminded

his colleague of another obligation. They stood up, shook hands with Horst and me and left. I looked at Horst and asked, "What did I do wrong?"

"You didn't do anything wrong," he replied, "we had a very useful exchange of ideas with those men."

"But they left after just an hour," I protested.

"What did you expect?" Horst responded.

Then I realized I was back in Germany and the long lunches of Mexico were for me a thing of the past. I missed how Mexicans took time for people.

In fact one of the big differences between Germany and Mexico was the openness of Mexican schedules. Sometimes in the embassy we received word on very short notice that an important US lawmaker or trade delegation would be arriving in the country. If the Mexicans were interested, they made time to see the visitors. On the other hand, it was insulting to Germans to ask them to disrupt their schedules to receive even important visitors. Mexicans are spontaneous, sometimes to the point of being chaotic, where as the Germans are deliberate to the point of being inflexible. One thing that is for sure, it is a lot easier to know where you stand with a German than with a Mexican. Masks play an important role in Mexican culture for a good reason.

Q: Isn't Frankfurt rather rainy and grey?

JOHNSON: It is sunnier than Berlin or Brussels and besides Carolyn comes from Oregon so she felt right at home. Our large back yard had to be mowed regularly which gave our boys another means of working off their boundless energy.

Let me interject an interesting story here. Soon after we arrived in Frankfurt, I attended a function at the Rathaus. A somewhat elderly woman approached me and introduced herself as a member of the city council. "I understand you went to Union College," she said.

"Yes, how do you know about Union?" I asked.

"Well, did you ever study under Professor Hans Heinebach?" the politician continued.

"Yes," I said, "He was my German professor."

"He and I were once in love," she replied in a low voice.

I was shocked by her candor. "When was that?" I stammered.

"In the 30s. He was graduate student at the University of Mainz. Hans completed his doctorate and fled the Nazis," she continued. "Then the war came and by 1945 we had gone our separate ways."

There were no tears in her eyes, only that look of resignation I had seen so often when Germans talked about the war.

I told her that Heinebach had been a fine teacher and was admired by everyone who knew him. Soon after he retired from Union he began receiving sizeable annuity checks from the German government. In response to his inquiry, the embassy in Washington informed him that in as much as he had completed all the requirements to be a university professor, and that had it not been for the criminal policies of the National Socialist regime, it is assumed that he would have had a career as a professor. Accordingly under German law, he was due a full annuity. Unfortunately Hans Heinebach died only a few years after he retired. I wanted to ask her if she had Professor Heinebach had met after the war, but I sensed the subject was too still sensitive.

Q: Who did you work for as Branch Public Affairs Officer?

JOHNSON: Good question. I served two masters: the Consul General in Frankfurt and the CPAO (Country Public Affairs Officer) at the US Embassy in Bonn. Bill Bodde and his successor, Alex Rattray, were both very demanding but fair. As far as they were concerned, my first loyalty was to the consulate general. I worked for three CPAOs: Phil Arnold, Tom Tuch and Terry Catherman. Phil was not interested in Germany and did not stay in Bonn long. Tom and Terry were old German hands. Tom was actually a Jewish émigré who had returned to the fatherland with an M-1 on his shoulder and had served as a junior officer in Frankfurt. Terry had been a predecessor in Heidelberg and had been PAO in a the US Mission Berlin when I was in Heidelberg. They were both very supportive and gave me free reign to develop programs, including working with the US and German military.

Q: Did you ever receive orders from the CPAO that conflicted with instructions from the CG?

JOHNSON: No, however on at least one occasion I was told not to talk to my USIA superiors regarding sensitive activities in Frankfurt. Also both Bill Bodde and Alex Rattray wanted to engage peace groups actively, which USIA Bonn was reluctant to do. When I found myself in conflict with Bonn it was usually with Tom's and Terry's deputy or with the USIA administrative officer who was so ill that he could no longer do his job.

Sometimes there were tensions between the Press Attaché and me. Our territories overlapped and I attempted to exert primacy over relations with the Frankfurt media. However tensions never reached a point where either the Embassy or the Consulate General became involved.

Q: So you revived your interest in cooperating with the US military in Frankfurt?

JOHNSON: I spent a great deal of time with Army and Air Force officers planning civil-military affairs programs and helping my counterparts in uniform deal with the German media. I worked closely with Bill Bodde, who had served in West Berlin and Bonn and had an excellent grasp of political military issues. Periodically Bill, Merle and I lunched with senior Army and Air Force officers. They briefed us on what they doing and how it might impact the politics, economy or public opinion of the consular district (Hessen, Rheinland-Pfalz and the Saarland). We offered

them advice and provided them with an analysis of upcoming state and local elections and trends in the economy and public perception of the military. I also assisted the public affairs officers at V Corps HQ and the major bases deal with the German and international media.

Q: What bases are you referring to?

JOHNSON: Our most frequent contacts were with the V Corps HQ which was only a few blocks from the consulate general and the Amerika Haus, and with Rhein Main Air Base which shared runway with the Frankfurt Airport. We were also in contact with army and air bases in Kaiserslautern, Ramstein, Bitburg, Spangdahlem, Wiesbaden, Giessen and Mainz.

I helped V Corps handle the media regarding a walk-in defector from a Communist country in Asia. On another occasion an US Army enlisted man, who had defected to the Soviet Union with his German girl friend, returned to Frankfurt to face military justice. There was a great deal of press interest in his case because American turncoats were rare.

When the first Patriot missile system became operational in Giessen, Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger flew over for the ceremony. Although the Patriot missiles have a conventional warhead and replaced the Nike system, which had a nuclear capability, we still had to deal with peace activists, who wanted all US forces out of the country. Secretary Weinberger and the German Defense Minister Manfred Woerner held a joint press conference, which attracted more than a hundred journalists. During the Q&A Weinberger continually referred to Woerner as "Manfred" while Woerner addressed Weinberger as "Herr Minister." I thought Weinberger's staged familiarity would grate on the Germans but as one Bundeswehr (German Army) major told me, "We are used to it." At the conclusion of the press conference, the V Corps PAO hurriedly handed me the audio cassette of the press conference and said, "Do me a favor, Tom. Transcribe this and send the fax to the Pentagon." My secretary and I no problem translating Woerner's German into English, but figuring out Weinberger's jumbled jargon was a different matter. I called the Pentagon, where a nameless colonel told me wearily, "Sir, do what everyone else does: complete his sentences for him."

During my four years in Frankfurt there were three terrorist bombing. One at the Frankfurt civilian airport, which we suspect was a device that exploded prematurely. Body parts were strewn everywhere. Some hung off light fixtures. There were no American casualties.

Another bomb exploded at the PX on a snowy Sunday afternoon. Although there were a lot of shoppers in the area and there was a lot of property damage, there no injuries. Carolyn and Suzanne had just returned home from the PX when the blast occurred.

A bomb in the parking lot of the base headquarters at Rhein-Main Airbase killed two and injured several. The device completely demolished a car and dug a hole a foot deep in the macadam. I spend most of that day shepherding TV camera teams through the blast area.

During the mid-80s wounded Afghans were flown to Rhein Main Air Base and treated in German hospitals. I would have liked to have publicized the humanitarian relief effort which our Air Force supported, however it was decided to keep a low profile on the operation. In

retrospect, I wish we had gone public on the plight of the wounded Afghans.

One morning an officer at Rhein Main Air Base called me with the startling news, “We have found poisonous gas on base.”

“I will be right out,” I replied.

“Don’t hurry, its German gas,” he chimed in cheerfully.

“That’s worse,” I continued. “I am on my way.”

“Take your time it has probably been here since 1918,” he said reassuringly.

“1918?” I asked now totally confused.

It seems that at the end of the First World War some German soldiers did not want to be bothered with the paperwork of turning in a quantity of artillery shells containing mustard gas and so they buried it at the edge of their base which once occupied land that later was part of the Rhein Main Air Base. Nearly 70 years later the shells had corroded sufficiently to allow enough gas to escape that someone noticed the smell and the dead grass. The Consulate General and the Air Force decided that the gas was still German property and thus the Bundeswehr was called in to remove it along with contaminated soil. Only a short article appeared in the weekly news magazine Der Spiegel. Had the US Army taken the lead in digging up the shells, it is likely that some German reporters would have falsely linked the gas to our stores of aging chemical weapons.

While we are on the subject of poisonous gas, in 1987 or ‘88 the United States and Soviet Union finally agreed to destroy their chemical weapons. German peace activists had been campaigning for years for the US to get its chemical weapons out of Germany. As I recall, nearly all the shells and bombs were stored at a depot outside Fischbach, a town in the western Rheinland-Pfalz. Because of both technical and logistical problems poisonous gas was no longer regarded by our military planners as a very useful military option. Many of the warheads were older than the GIs assigned to fire them. Like nuclear weapons systems, chemical weapons were more a political tool than a military weapon. When we secretively removed the chemical weapons from Fischbach, the Germans were dismayed that the US Army announced the closure of the facility and job cuts among German staff. Fischbach was so typical of our civil-military relations in the FRG. The Germans wanted our forces to vacate facilities, particularly those in the town centers, and yet maintain the same level of employment of the German work force. In 1985 the US military was the second largest employer in West Germany. Only the bloated bureaucracy of the Bundespost (postal system) handed out more paychecks.

During my tenure in Frankfurt I helped our military deal with journalists covering the release of several groups of hostages from the Middle East, including a cruise ship and some commercial flights. The Rhein Main Air Base and the Consulate General worked out a well-rehearsed scenario for moving hostages and the press while balancing the right of the hostages to privacy and the right of the media to coverage. In most cases USAF buses moved the hostages to military

hospitals in either Wiesbaden or Frankfurt. Late one dreary night I was standing with a group of reporters waiting for plane to come with several former hostages when I heard a report say to no one in particular, "Being a foreign correspondent is like being a maitre d' in a fine restaurant. You get to meet so many famous people under such humiliating circumstances."

Washington of course got involved in receiving and processing the hostages. The response teams from State and Department of Defense included a brash Public Affairs Advisor who I crossed swords with on several occasions. While acknowledging the legitimate role of Washington in dealing with the press, I was not about to give up my role as the public affairs representative of USIA Germany.

On February 11, 1986 the Soviet dissident Anatoly Sharansky walked across the Glienicke Bridge from Potsdam to West Berlin to freedom. Ambassador Richard Burt met him half way across the span and led him to a limo which sped him to a waiting aircraft that flew him to Rhein Main Air Base, where he was reunited with his wife. Although I don't believe we told the press, the release was actually a prisoner swap: one Russian dissident for two Czech spies. The venerable Frank Meehan, our ambassador in East Berlin, was instrumental in making arrangements for the swap. The Czech spies Karl and Hanna Koecher, naturalized US citizens, had been flown to Rhein Main Air Base the day and before were being held in the base stockade (jail) until Sharansky landed in Frankfurt. Karl had been a translator and analyst at the CIA. Hanna had been his very willing assistant in the conspiracy. At the last minute Hanna, indignant regarding the quality of her accommodations on base, balked. Bill Bodde, who was not about to let anyone ruin the swap, was ready with Plan B. He had the consular officer, whose role it was to take the oaths from the spies renouncing their US citizenship, place a call to a prominent attorney in East Berlin who spoke to Hanna *convincingly*. (Italics mine) According to Bill, the Czechs "meekly renounced their citizenship."

Q: Did the media know about the swap?

JOHNSON: I don't know. Swaps were almost routine during the cold war, so had they gotten wind of it, I doubt it would have been much of a story. Anatoly Sharansky was such an important figure that the release of the Czechs was a tiny footnote to a very dramatic story.

Q: What was your impression of the level of political sophistication among your military counterparts?

JOHNSON: As I think I said earlier in the interview, Army and Air Force officers were very cautious in dealing with political issues. Most of the flag grade officers (generals) had attended a civilian graduate school or the National War College, which exposed them to geo-political problems in a substantive manner. LTG Sam Wetzel was the V Corps commander when I arrived in Frankfurt. Wetzel spoke fair German and had excellent contacts in Frankfurt. He was replaced by Colin Powell, who had just served for several years as Deputy National Security Advisor to the President. I attended Powell's change of command ceremony at V Corps HQ. Powell opened his remarks with a short pep talk to the troops and then he said, "Now I would like to say a few words to our German hosts." He spoke for about ten or fifteen minutes in excellent German. I was sitting between the mayors of Giessen and Marburg, both of whom were greatly impressed

by Powell's command of German and the sincerity of his remarks. Unfortunately after about six months at V Corps, Powell was recalled to the White House. When he left Frankfurt he told Bill Bodde and me that he thought his military career was over. Of course he got his fourth star while he was Reagan's last National Security Adviser. When he became Secretary of State he brought to that position a genuine concern for the welfare of his subordinates.

Incidentally in 2004 I was talking to Secretary Powell in the State Department and I reminded him of his change of command ceremony in Frankfurt. I asked him if he still spoke German. He replied that he regretted that he had been so busy in the intervening years that his command of the language had deteriorated badly.

Q: How about the Air Force officers?

JOHNSON: The highest ranking Air Force officers in the consular district were colonels. They were very competent and eager to work with us at the Consulate General. Overall the Air Force had fewer problems with the Germans than the Army.

Q: Why?

JOHNSON: There were many reasons. The Air Force had fewer facilities and none of their bases were in cities, although some, such as Wiesbaden and Frankfurt, were on the outskirts of major cities. Except for low flying airplanes, Germans had few complaints about the USAF. On the other hand, slow moving Army convoys often disrupted highway traffic. Soldiers were much more likely to get into trouble with the police than airmen. Maneuvers caused considerable damage to farm land and roads.

Sometimes the Army would do dumb things. For example, every time there was a ceremony on the lawn of V Corps HQ, the Army fired off 75 mm pack howitzers which rattled the windows of German apartments all around the base and set off car alarms. I suggested that the Army reduce the noise by cutting back on the amount of gun powder in blank shells. No, I was informed, tradition called for a loud report.

If I may return to aircraft noise one day I was driving along a winding country road in the Pfalz when I had a premonition of an emergency. Just as I gripped the steering wheel of my car, two fighter bombers roared over me literally at treetop level. My window was open and I swear I could feel the exhaust. I pulled off the road. I was shaking. German villages were routinely subjected to simulated attacks by US, German and Canadian fighter bombers. It was a price that Germans paid for being in the front line of the cold war.

Q: Did the advent of simulators lessen the intrusiveness of the military on the civilian population?

JOHNSON: Good question. Yes and no. I think what simulators did was to increase the amount of realistic training that could be accomplished indoors more than diminish training outdoors. For example, pilots continued to fly low level missions along Germany's roads and valleys while at the same time spending additional hours in flight simulators. Tankers honed their skills

between live firing exercises on simulators. The percentage of tankers who qualified as “expert” increased by more than 50% thanks to the practice on simulators. Pilots told me they were more confident flyers and more accurate bombers because of the time they spent on simulators. Many of the younger soldiers and flyers grew up on computer games, which allowed them to readily adapt to simulator training.

Q: Did you ever try using a simulator?

JOHNSON: I am not very coordinated and do not belong to the computer game generation, and thus I performed poorly on electronic games and simulators. I had a very hard time fitting my 6’2” frame into a tank simulator and was quickly killed by the enemy. Death in the simulator was a loud bang and a red light, very disappointing theologically.

Early in my tour of duty in Frankfurt I visited a helicopter simulator near Hanau. The simulator consisted of cabins moved by hydraulics in front of a miniature reproduction of the area west of the Fulda Gap. The reproduction included little roads, inch-wide streams with bridges, tiny houses and trees and assorted buildings- everything but people.

The whole apparatus must have been 40 wide and a100 feet long. I marveled at the detail. “Who built this?” I asked.

“Who do you think?!” admonished the major escorting me.

After a long pause, I ventured, “The Chinese?”

“The National Peoples’ Army!” he announced proudly.

A couple years later the major called to tell me that the old hydraulic simulator was being replaced by a much smaller and more advanced electronic simulator. He asked me if I would like panel as a keepsake. I declined, a decision I later regretted. I wish I had accepted a large panel and cut it up into pieces to give to friends. The readiness of the PLA to help the Americans prepare to defend themselves against the Soviets said volumes about the Cold War.

Q: Were you in Frankfurt during the deployment of the medium range missiles?

JOHNSON: Yes, that was the last round of the cold war. The Soviets tried to tip the strategic balance of power by deploying their SS-20 system, a highly mobile medium range ballistic missile. NATO responded with Pershing 2 (P-2) and ground launched cruise missiles (GLCMs). I don’t recall the number of P-2s and GLCMs that were deployed in the FRG, but I spoke to a number of German audiences on the unfortunate necessity of the deployment. There was of course a lot of resistance by Germans to deployment by of the P-2s and GLCMs, particularly by peace activists and students.

Q: Did USIA and the US military develop a coordinated public affairs strategy prior to the deployment of the missiles?

JOHNSON: Yes. USIA worked very closely with Army and Air Force civil affairs and public affairs officers. Of course political-military affairs officers from our embassy in Bonn were involved in the discussions, most of which took place at EUCOM HQ in Stuttgart and at the embassy.

Q: Did you ever see one of the missiles?

JOHNSON: The Consul General, and I am not sure if it was Bill Bodde or his successor Alex Rattray, and I visited the GLCM facility on an air base north of Mainz. We were ushered into a large bunker where the missiles were kept in airtight tubes. Our host, an Air Force colonel, briefed us on the delivery system, although not the warhead since none of us had a Q clearance for nuclear secrets, nor a need to know. While we were touring the facility the CG and I were followed by armed security guards. The message was clear: "Don't touch anything."

Q: How long did the missiles remain in Germany?

JOHNSON: Not long at all. In December 1987 the Soviets agreed to withdraw their SS-20s from Eastern Europe if we would take our P-2s and GLCMs out of Western Europe. The dismantling process ushered in another chapter of USIA-US military cooperation. After trying to convince the Germans that the deployment of the missiles was a good idea, we announced that mission had been accomplished and that the missiles could be safely withdrawn, which was an easy sell.

When the first Soviet inspection team arrived at Rhein-Main Air Base, more than a hundred journalists showed up to cover the big story. The Russians were technicians and did not give interviews to the reporters. As a result, the story quickly faded in the media. One amusing incident, concerns the first night the Soviets were at Rhein Main. The USAF put them in bachelor officers' quarters and provided a buffet dinner. Some of the Russians had never seen a salad bar and were particularly mystified by little crumbly red lumps (bacon bits). Particularly perplexing to them was the intelligence that bacon bits contained no bacon but were made from soy beans. "Wat? No oink, oink?" After caucusing and some hesitant tasting, the Russians declared that bacon bits were really quite tasty and no doubt good for you.

The agreement to withdraw and eventually destroy the medium range weapons concerned only the missiles and not the war heads nor the launch control systems. Our technicians covered the launch control consoles with thick brown paper so the Soviets would not realize that much of the equipment was available in Radio Shack and in other retail outlets.

Q: Did the German and American military public affairs officers cooperate well?

JOHNSON: The Germans PAOs were very eager to work with their US counterparts and the Americans were equally intent on collaborating with the Germans. Because of the lack of language training provided the American officers, the dialogue was almost always carried out in English. I organized quarterly meetings at the Amerika Haus of German and American military public affairs officers. The Consul General, embassy officers and political scientists spoke at the gathering to which I also invited German Army Jugendoffiziere (Youth Officers) who specialized in community outreach to youthful audiences. Most Jugendoffiziere were first

lieutenants and captains. I developed a very cordial relationship with the Jugendoffiziere and often invited them to programs at the Amerika Haus and to social occasions at my home.

Before we leave the subject of civil-military affairs, I want to state that it was a great pleasure to work with the US and German officers. In retrospect I think it is clear that the US armed forces and our allies successfully deterred the Soviets from temptation to embark on military expansion. Meanwhile the political and economic system, upon which the Soviet Union and the other East Block nations was based, decayed until the USSR collapsed and the Warsaw Pact was dissolved. I don't want to sound hawkish- quite to the contrary. I believe in the long run, I contend ideals and not weaponry determined the outcome of the Cold War.

Q: What was the press like?

JOHNSON: Germany had two state owned television networks. One was in Mainz, which was very near Frankfurt. I had good access to it because I was friends with an anchorman of an evening TV newscasts. We had studied journalism at the same time at the Free University. Through him I was able to get the network to participate in a number of USIA WorldNets, a major coup for the Agency. My work with the network also reunited me with a friend from Prague, who had left his homeland in 1968 and had become a successful producer of documentaries.

Germany's leading conservative newspaper was the Frankfurter Allgemeine (FAZ) and the country's most influential left of center newspaper was the Frankfurter Rundschau, so I spent a lot of time with both of them. The head of the America desk at the Frankfurter Allgemeine, and I continue to be very good friends. He's now in Berlin where he is a senior editor for a German radio network. The conservative tabloid Bildzeitung and the left of center Rundschau were printed on the same presses.

Germans sometimes complained that the FAZ, particularly the economic reporting, was tedious. An editor told me that the publisher of the New York Times had stormed into the office of one of the daily's columnists and declared, "I have read your piece five times and I still don't understand it."

The learned journalist looked up from his desk and said, "I wrote that column for six people and you are not one of them."

"The same can occasionally be said for our writing at the FAZ," remarked the editor.

I developed excellent ties to Hessen Radio (HR), which incidentally was housed in a suspiciously round building, which had been constructed after WW II to house the Bundestag, the German parliament. However Konrad Adenauer, West Germany's first post-war chancellor, vetoed Frankfurt, a bastion of the Social Democrats, as the capital. He did not want to give up his rose garden nor be too far from Cologne where he had been Lord Mayor before being ousted by the Nazis, thus the quiet university town of Bonn became West Germany's capital.

One of the senior reporters at Hessen Radio became a close friend. He was active in the

American Field Service student exchange program and founded the partnership between Hessen and Wisconsin. On a couple of occasions I participated in a call-in show devoted to US-German relations. I think I was the only USIA officer to take part in call-in programs, which could be very contentious. On more than one occasion I had to respond creatively to questions regarding our military presence, for example, "Why do convoys move so slowly?" Unfortunately none of our Army or Air Force public affairs officers I knew had sufficient German to go on live radio.

Speaking of civil-military relations, Hessen Radio was located directly next to AFN Frankfurt. The two organizations worked very harmoniously with one another. For example, when HR needed a piece of music from AFN Frankfurt's vast record library, AFN would play the work at given time so HR could record it for its collection. Copyright law forbade AFN from simply making a copy for HR. The German station did a lot of favors for AFN, including building sets for its TV news studio .

Q: Could Germans watch AFN TV?

JOHNSON: Not unless they had the right equipment which few of them did. I am no technician, but there was something about the antenna and perhaps AFN was using NTSC while Germans use the PAL system. We got AFN TV at our home on cable but our TV could receive both PAL and NTSC. Weekday evenings I watched the opening monologue of Johnny Carson Show. Carson's jokes told me what was important in the United States.

Your question regarding German viewing habits raises a ticklish matter concerning the piracy of American TV programs by the German networks. Remember the hit series "Dallas"? Well, the Germans picked up the programs from AFN TV and broadcast them without dubbing to audiences across the FRG. The owners of the rights to that series threatened to stop providing it to AFN unless the Germans stopped pirating the shows. The ambassador came to Frankfurt and we met with top German officials and German network ceased airing the programs in English. Guess who got a spate of angry letters from German viewers? I responded candidly and explained that the practice by the German networks of taping "Dallas" off AFN has been a violation of copyright law. Fortunately most Germans respect law.

Speaking of German respect for law, I was told by a security expert that the reason USAREUR delayed putting up barriers in front of its headquarters in Heidelberg was that the street directly opposite the entrance was one way and no German terrorist would think of driving the wrong way a one-way street. I suspect that the story was apocryphal, but I learned a long time ago that a tale does not have to be factual to be true.

Q: How would you compare the German press to the Mexican press?

JOHNSON: No comparison. No comparison. First, the German press was not in anybody's pocket, and secondly, a much greater degree of professionalism among German reporters. Unlike Mexico, Germany has a completely free press and newsmen do not fear of intimidation. Of course another huge difference between the media in Mexico and Germany was the infinitely superior technical quality and depth of resources of the German media.

Q: Were there many foreign correspondents in Frankfurt.

JOHNSON: Because of its airport Frankfurt provided the base of operations for at least a dozen American reporters, including CNN.

Q: When you were a Student Affairs Officer in Asuncion I assume that you did some political reporting. Did you write any political reports in Frankfurt?

JOHNSON: I attended the election night festivities in Saarbrücken in 1985 and wrote the reporting cable. Oskar Lafontaine, the Social Democratic Lord Mayor of Saarbrücken unexpectedly won the election for Minister-President (governor) of the Saarland. To learn what may have tipped the scales for him, we would have to read my telegram. I was at the SPD headquarters where there was a hell of a party. I followed Lafontaine into a hallway where the press was waiting. Suddenly a man emerged from the crowd and plastered the governor-elect with a pie. The assailant was a member of the Green Party. I suspect the whole event was a well staged publicity stunt. Although I had to get up at an ungodly hour the next morning to catch my train back to Frankfurt, I had fun writing the cable.

A few weeks later Bill Bodde and I had lunch with Lafontaine. As I recall, we discussed primarily political and military issues. We agreed to disagree on my subjects. Lafontaine later ran unsuccessfully for chancellor against Helmut Kohl.

Q: Did you spend a lot of time at the airport meeting visiting firemen?

JOHNSON: Yes, and it seemed that visitors only arrived on weekends. Teddy Kennedy and his entourage swept through early one Saturday morning. I was detailed to go out to the airport to meet General Vernon Walters, who was a sort of ambassador-at-large. I met his plane and escorted him to the VIP lounge. I asked him if he had any classified cables he wanted me to take to the Consulate General. He shook his head. After a while he frowned, "I see you are eyeing my briefcase."

"No, not really," I responded defensively.

"But you keep looking at it," the general admonished. "Do you know what is inside? State secrets, right?"

"I wouldn't even venture a guess," I replied hesitantly.

"Go ahead, open it," he said with a smile.

"I can't do that," I asserted.

"No seriously, open it," Walters order.

I popped the brass latches on the case and survey several note books and pens and underneath them perhaps a dozen chocolate bars.

“Swiss chocolate, Mr. Johnson, the best,” he beamed, “Let’s have one.”

I don’t usually eat chocolate, but he was right. It was very good.

On another occasion I received a cable asking me to meet then Senator Al Gore who wanted to talk to a senior newsman. Dr. Michael Groth, America Desk editor at the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, and I met the senator as he got off his plane and adjourned to the VIP lounge. I don’t remember what Senator Gore had to impart to Groth, but after the reporter left, Gore and I talked amiably about Germany. After about a half hour the senator asked, “Do you have a family?”

“Yes, a very supportive wife,” I responded, “and three active children.”

“I can take care of myself,” the senator assured me. “Please go be with your family.”
Needless to say, I voted for Al Gore in 2000.

Sometimes politicians just showed up. A congressman appeared in Frankfurt one Saturday. I think his name was Moffett. I don’t believe the Consulate General had received a heads up from Washington. I must have been duty officer, so I went to his hotel to see if I could be of assistance. The lawmaker said he had attended a meeting somewhere else in Germany and had a day to kill in Frankfurt before flying back to Washington. I took him through the banking district and into some stores. We visited a silent Amerika Haus and talked about foreign affairs. Then he asked me, “Do you know anything about Heidelberg?”

I told him I had served there for four years. “How far away is it?” he asked.

“About an hour’s drive,” I responded.

“Will you take me to Heidelberg?” he asked with a big grin. “I’ll buy dinner.”

Soon we were dodging BMWs and Mercedes on the Autobahn and by late afternoon we were in the old city. Moffett walked as fast as he talked. We hiked up to the castle and had a glass of Riesling at the Weinstube. Later I showed him around the university and we adjourned for supper at the “Hackteufel,” my favorite Gasthaus. We had a sumptuous meal. It was a thoroughly enjoyable outing and profitable for both of us. The congressman sent me a very gracious thank you note from Washington. I mailed him a Heidelberg University sweat shirt which he promptly reimbursed me for. We stayed in touch for several years after he left politics.

Q: Of course, the issue of the cruise missiles and the Pershing missiles was on the front page all during this time, and this was in response to the Soviet SS-20, but the Germans seem to be able to produce costumed mobs, demonstrating against things all the time. Did you find this was something you had to deal with?

JOHNSON: There were many demonstrations against the US. We really caught hell when we attacked Libya. However compared to Heidelberg in the early 70s, Frankfurt was fairly tame. I used to speak to peace groups to explain our position, which put me at odds with some of my

bosses in Bonn, who had a let's-keep-a-low-profile-and-maybe-it-will-blow-over position on confronting our critics. I wanted to go out and debate the Soviets. Eventually I ignored the admonitions from Bonn and found the Soviets weren't as formidable as everybody thought they were. They had a lot of weaknesses.

One thing I loved to dwell on was that while in the United States we have many shortcomings, we do not imprison anybody for refusing to serve in the military. Of course, the Soviets had no answer to that. I also pointed out that the United States, for all its shortcomings, was a democratic society which did not imprison critics in mental hospitals. I also noted that our deployment of the Pershing 2s and the ground launched cruise missiles was in response to the deployment of the SS-20s. So usually I came out pretty well, although I got roughed up verbally on more than one occasion. One thing I learned about speaking to German audiences: be very sure of even the most insignificant facts in your presentation. Even a verbal typo or a mispronunciation of a name can bring the wrath of the audience down on your head.

Q: How about demonstrations not directed at the United States? Were there other objects of ire for angry youth and workers? I watch French TV here in Fairfax County. You look at their demonstrations, and they seem to be awfully cut and dried and almost pro forma. These demonstrations, how serious were they?

JOHNSON: The worse anti-government demonstrations I experienced concerned the cutting down of trees to build an additional runway at the Frankfurt Airport. A policeman was killed. In Frankfurt and other large cities there existed a hard core of extremists society dubbed "chaotics". Some were skinheads. I suspect most were anarchists who were neither Left nor Right. They were simply violent. Incidentally while most skinheads were anti-immigrant, others were openly pro-immigrant.

Q: Was the Amerika Haus attacked by these extremists while you were there?

JOHNSON: No. There were fewer anti-US demonstrations in the 1980s than in the 1970s. I had my share of bomb threats, but only one bomb. Upon returning from a quick trip to Bonn, I found the Haus full of German policemen and their bomb squad. It seems terrorists had placed a sizeable incendiary device against an outside wall in the garden. My well meaning but not very bright janitor had noticed the package, and deeming it unsightly, brought it inside the Amerika Haus. Another member of my staff thought the parcel was suspicious and called the police.

The bomb squad removed the device and exploded it at their facility. The German police surmised that the bomb had been made by the same terrorists who killed several people at the Frankfurt Airport.

Q: You must have been furious with your janitor. Did you fire him?

JOHNSON: No. I was furious with myself. I had failed to realize that the janitor was as much a part of house security as the guards who sat at the front desk and screened visitors. I instituted security briefings for the entire staff, including the janitor. The Consulate General held security seminars in the auditorium of the Amerika Haus. In addition to films and lectures, diplomatic

security officers demonstrated repelling methods and instructed American staff in the use of firearms. I made sure the auditorium door was shut tightly before the instructor brought out the Berettas and the Uzis.

Q: Was your official vehicle armored?

JOHNSON: Yes, I had armored doors but no armor on the floor and the windows were normal glass. My limo by the way was a big Plymouth station wagon which was in declining health. I asked Bonn for a replacement several times but without luck. One day I drove out to a US military junk yard to see if I could find a replacement hub cap. I parked the station wagon near the entrance and went off on my quest. When I returned with my prize in hand I found the yard foreman unscrewing the consular plates from my vehicle. "What are doing?" I asked.

"You're leaving this piece of crap here, aren't you?" he responded.

"No, damn it, that is my official car," I confessed.

As I drove away I could see the foreman through the blue exhaust still shaking his head in disbelief.

Q: Were there other emergencies at the Haus?

JOHNSON: No bombs but one night I received a call from my contract security guard to come to the Haus regarding a telephone threat. He said he had already called the V Corps bomb squad. In the few minutes it took me to get to the Haus, a military policeman had arrived with a cocker spaniel bomb sniffing dog. My contract guard had locked, so he thought, his German shepherd in an upstairs office. Unfortunately the German shepherd hit a flat door latch and bolted into the hall intent upon having the cocker spaniel for dinner. The MP jumped in front of his little dog and was bitten on the hand by the German shepherd. No bomb was found, the wounded soldier departed for the hospital and I had words with my contract guard. The next day I called the soldier's commanding officer and apologized. "What can I do to make things right?" I asked.

"A fifth of Southern Comfort would definitely lessen the pain," the captain responded.

I got my graphic artist to fashion a medal which we affixed along with a note of thanks to a half gallon of Southern Comfort and delivered it the soldier's barracks.

Q: Did you have other false alarms?

JOHNSON: Our home had red buttons in every major room. One push of the button dispatched a carload of German police to our residence. I warned the children never to touch or even play near the buttons. However one day the boys were roughhousing with some friends and someone was shoved against an alarm button. The police arrived promptly at our front gate. Carolyn explained that it was a false alarm and apologized for the accident.

Q: Did your house have a “safe haven” room?

JOHNSON: Yes, it was in the basement and had a thick steel door. Unfortunately once inside, there was no way to communicate with the outside world.

Q: Did you receive any threatening mail?

JOHNSON: One young man who lived outside our consular district wrote me annually. His letters always began with “Hoch verehrter Herr Konsul” (highly honored Mr. Consul) and ended “Hochachtungsvoll” (very respectfully yours) and his full name. Sandwiched in between the salutation and the closing would be two pages of diatribe against the United States. I assumed the guy was a nut but had the authorities check him out and learned that he had a gun permit. I suggested that the police consider disarming him, but I don’t know if they did so.

Q: Did the Consul General have a bodyguard?

JOHNSON: Yes. Several German plain clothes officers traveled with him wherever he went. One night someone threw a Molotov cocktail at his residence. The only victim of the attack was a small tree. I noted to the press that radicals had contributed to “Waldsterben” (forest death), a hot button issue in Germany. On another occasion, Bill Bodde had to embark on an impromptu vacation to Switzerland in response to a warning.

Actually the Consul General who really had to be careful was the Turkish CG. Apparently among the 32,000 Turks residing in Frankfurt there were Kurd and Armenian extremists. Turkish security officers surrounded the poor fellow. Unlike the German policemen who shadowed Bill Bodde and Alex Rattray, the Turkish bodyguards enjoyed the cocktails at receptions. I knew if someone popped a balloon, I would hit the floor.

One amusing story about security, the State Department installed a barrier at the entrance to the Consulate General that lifted up and was strong enough to stop a tank. Bill Bodde had received a new stretch Ford armored sedan only a few days before. Just as the vehicle was entering the compound the guard accidentally hit the raise button. The barrier emerged from the pavement. The big sedan was lifted off the pavement bending its frame: a total loss.

Q: Let’s talk about the universities in your consular district.

JOHNSON: I concerned myself with four universities: Frankfurt, Mainz, Giessen and Marburg. All four had major American Studies institutes to which I provided speakers. Frankfurt has an excellent department of economics, which I worked very closely with. Bill Bodde suggested that we get the Frankfurt Chamber of Commerce to pay for a series of short-term lectureships by American professors of business. The university recruited the lecturers and provided them quarters in its spacious guest house and thus for three years we enriched the curriculum of the university and offered a top flight lectures at the chamber at virtually no cost of the US Government. It was a tremendously successful program.

I worked very closely with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Research, a major think tank at

the University of Frankfurt and provided it with a steady stream of speakers, both academics and senior diplomats.

Q: Frankfurt is well known for its trade fairs. How much did you or the Consul General concern yourself with these trade fairs?

JOHNSON: We had an excellent officer from the Department of Commerce. Another officer headed the US Tourism Office. However most of the trade shows were fairly specialized such as the furriers' show. The one fair that we went all out for was the annual international book fair, during which more than half of all international book deals were closed. I was point man for the large USIA exhibit and facilitated the exhibit of the Government Printing Office. Imagine more than a million square feet of displays of books in every conceivable language. Even the Albanians had a booth. The Consul General offered a reception to support American publishers. At the end of the fair I received dozens of the newest titles from appreciative exhibitors. Every September this book nut went to heaven for four hectic days.

Q: Were you visited by famous writers?

JOHNSON: Joyce Carol Oats spent several days in Frankfurt. Carolyn and I drove down to Heidelberg to pick her up. She spoke at the Amerika Haus to a large audience. Later Alex Rattray offered a dinner in her honor. Arthur Miller engaged in a long and very productive dialogue with students and faculty at the University of Frankfurt and then was guest of honor at a dinner at our home. Historian/journalist Harrison Salisbury spoke at the Amerika Haus and later in our living room on most recent work The Long March which concerned the epic trek in China. Time magazine reporter Strobe Talbot talked at the Amerika Haus to a large audience of journalists, military officers and political scientist about his book Deadly Gambits a very thoughtful analysis of the arms race and disarmament. Talbot later became Deputy Secretary of State under Clinton. I really enjoyed programming and breaking bread with Oats, Miller, Salisbury and Talbot. They were unfailingly considerate and cooperative. Timid souls in the US Embassy in Bonn questioned the propriety my inviting Strobe Talbot, a critic of the Reagan administration, to speak at the Amerika Haus and be the guest of honor at a large dinner at my home. However a few months later Richard Burt became US Ambassador to Bonn. Burt had been Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and had worked with Talbot on his book. My critics shut up.

Many lesser known writers visited Frankfurt while I was there, including Wolfgang Leonhard, whose book The Revolution Deserts Her Children is a stunning portrayal of Stalinist Russian and the early days of the German Democratic Republic. Leonhard was born in Germany during the Weimar Republic and emigrated to the Soviet Union with his mother in 1933. He was raised in elite school for Communist cadre and arrived in East Berlin with Walter Ulbricht where he organized Communist youth until his disillusionment with Marxism-Leninism. He defected to Yugoslavia and later to the United States where he became a professor at Yale. He spoke before a large audience at the Amerika Haus. Afterwards I offered a dinner in his honor at my home. As a grad student he was one of my heroes and it was honor to have him in our home.

Q: Sounds like you did a lot of entertaining at home.

JOHNSON: Yes, I programmed at least half of all the speakers USIA Bonn provided me at my home. Fortunately the Amerika Haus received more than \$10,000 a year from renting space to a commercial English teaching company and I was able to use most of that money to pay for food, beverages and waiters. There were several advantages of programming in my residence rather than at the Amerika Haus. Because the programs included a buffet dinner the audience did not have to rush back to work as they would with a program during the work day. The more leisurely pace of the event allowed a longer question and answer period following the talk and permitted me, the USIA staff and officers from the Consulate General to have more substantive contact with the German guests. Because there was ample parking in my neighborhood it was easier for busy academics, business executives, journalists and labor union officials to attend programs. Germans liked coming to an American home and eating American food, although I of course served German wine.

Q: Give me some examples of programs you held at your residence.

JOHNSON: Since counter-terrorism is in vogue nowadays, I programmed Paul Bremer, then counter-terrorism at the State Department and later ambassador to Iraq to talk on terrorism as a form of informal warfare. The following evening Jean Gerard, our ambassador to UNESCO in Paris spoke in my living room on "Do Some Organizations Foster an Atmosphere Conducive to Terrorism?" The response to both programs was excellent with more than 60 invited guests attending each event. Bremer and Gerard were both first-rate speakers. Deeply conservative but conciliatory, Gerard handled critics in the audience deftly. A few months later she returned to Frankfurt at my invitation to speak at a seminar we cosponsored with the daily Frankfurter Rundschau. The all-day seminar was devoted to the "new information order," a subject that has mercifully disappeared from the world stage.

I programmed three or four speakers a month at my home. In addition I hosted numerous dinners and receptions for speakers following their presentations at other venues, including the Amerika Haus. Incidentally one such dinner was with Albert Speer's son who is a professor of urban planning at the University of Kaiserslautern. I showed him the book of his dad's memoirs signed by the author. He was pleased that Carolyn and I had known his parents.

In November 1988 my staff convinced me to have an "Election Breakfast" the day after the presidential election in the US. We invited German political scientists, business executives, military officers, labor union officials and colleagues from the Consulate General to my home for the election returns starting at 5:00 a.m., 11:00 p.m. EST. More than a 60 guests showed up. My sons greeted them at the gate with paper hats and election material. The event received a lot of coverage in the media and was a great success. The local tabloid ran a picture of our daughter Suzanne titled "She Attended Election Breakfast in Her Nightgown".

Q: Sounds like you had a nice house. What other events did you hold there?

JOHNSON: Yes, my residence was a sprawling ranch house with a large living room and cozy dining room. In the back there was a spacious patio and yard, a great place for cookouts.

Carolyn and I worked closely with the American Field Service student exchange program and hosted an annual American-style breakfast complete with pancakes, maple syrup, bacon and eggs for 75 or 80 German returnees. We also provided former 50 to 60 Fulbrighters with a Thanksgiving dinner every November. I borrowed extra Weber grills from the Marine security detachment assigned to the Consulate General so I could cook five turkeys and hams. Colleagues from the Consulate General helped out preparing sweet potatoes and apple pies in their ovens. Both the AFS breakfasts and the Fulbright Thanksgiving dinners were a lot of work but thoroughly enjoyable. Our three children helped with serving the food.

Q: Did you host many dinner parties?

JOHNSON: We had at least two dinner parties a month usually for eight people but sometimes for up to 20. We really enjoyed entertaining and I think we excelled at bringing colleagues from the Consulate General together with Germans from the diverse backgrounds. Sometimes it was fun to just watch a vice president from one of Frankfurt's big banks spar with a labor union official. On several occasions Germans told me that our home was the only place they had substantive contact with countrymen from other social strata.

If I may, back to the subject of the former Fulbrighters, one day several young professionals who had studied in the US on Fulbright scholarships asked me if I would help found an alumni association. Over the next few months we held several meetings and established incorporated club. We put on a one-day seminar, which the Fulbrighters dubbed a pow wow which attracted former Fulbrighters from all over Germany. The club is still going strong, and last I heard, my name is still on its letterhead as an adviser.

Q: Did you belong to professional clubs while you were in Frankfurt?

JOHNSON: Rotary never approached me, and that was probably good. However one day the political officer and I received invitations to meet with representatives of a Lions Club. I accepted their invitation to apply for membership and was accepted. The political officer begged off. The Lions Club met at the exclusive Society for Business, Industry and Science across the street from the Consulate General. I soon realized why Lions wanted me as a member. Having a Herr Konsul in their ranks added to the club's standing and I quickly became "Mr. Visa" for the club. I didn't mind occasional calls to facilitate visas, although I resented demands for a formal apology from an irate Lion whose daughter was refused entry to the United States on a tourist visa after she told the immigration officer that she planned to work during her stay.

The club board asked me to be club president. I begged off. I was working 60 hour weeks and while my German was quite fluent I never mastered the rhetorical skills that educated Germans expect from a club president or a politician. I recall being asked to speak to a large audience of German Fulbrighters at a reception in the Frankfurt Rathaus. I was under a lot of pressure from USIA to complete a project and I asked Horst Richter, my Program Manager, to write the remarks. He presented me with a wonderfully clever speech full of rhetorical flourishes. I thanked him for his effort but declined to use the text. The Germans would have known that I was giving a canned presentation that no American would have written. I managed to close my door for a few hours and wrote a simple, factual and direct talk that was well received.

Q: Was your membership in Lions useful to you?

JOHNSON: Absolutely. Lions provided me with many helpful contacts in business and industry. As the only American in the club I was privy to inside information regarding German politics and society. On several occasions I was cautioned not to repeat things I heard at the luncheons and I respected the obligation for confidentiality. After we returned to the United States, we hosted the daughter of a Frankfurt Lion for several months. We are still in touch with her.

Q: Did you have much official travel while you were in Frankfurt?

JOHNSON: Two trips come to mind. I was detailed to handle credentialing at the Eduard Shevardnadze-Shultz meeting in Geneva during the Mutually Balanced Forces Reduction Talks. It was a pleasant respite and a chance to visit with Chris Henze, a Foreign Service classmate, who was PAO in Geneva.

I also rode shotgun on a supply convoy from Helsinki to Moscow. The head of the diplomatic courier office was complaining one day during a meeting at the Consulate General how hard his couriers worked. When he bet that none of us officers would do a courier run, I called his bluff and was duly commissioned a courier for one trip. I flew to Helsinki and the following day three Americans and a Finnish driver set out for Moscow in convoy consisting of ten ton truck loaded with supplies for the Consulate General in Leningrad and construction material for the Embassy in Moscow and a motor home chase car. We allowed Soviet border guards to inspect enter the cargo bay to count the crates and permitted their German shepherd to sniff the boxes. Later we bounced along the washboard road to Leningrad at the perilous speed of 40 mph. After a brief stop at the Consulate General in Leningrad we drove until midnight when we pulled off the road for a few hours of sleep. The two professional couriers guarded the truck while I slept. At 6:30 we were back on the road dodging pot holes. We arrived in Moscow mid-afternoon. I stayed with PAO for several days during which I toured the Soviet capital.

I provided the Foreign Service Journal with an account of my trip, which appeared in the October 1989 issue.

Q: Did you ever offer to be a courier again?

JOHNSON: No. It is a hard life with a lot of lifting heavy boxes. Many couriers suffered back injuries. There was also a lot of waiting around airports and many hours spent aloft. Incidentally I knew one courier who used his time flying around the world profitably. He read the "Wall Street Journal," "Barons" and other publications and then bought and sold stocks profitably. Over a period of about twenty years his investments made him a great deal of money.

Of course when the public thinks of diplomatic couriers they conger up pictures of men in trench coats sitting in stuffy compartments on the Orient Express with attaché cases handcuffed to their wrists. I am told that the process of manacling bags to couriers ended some years ago when an airliner made a crash landing at sea, a courier jumped for a life boat, missed it and was dragged to a watery grave by an attaché case.

Q: Were you able to take a leisurely home leave while you were in Frankfurt?

JOHNSON: I am not sure how leisurely it was but I am sure I took off a month. Our home leave address caused a little bit of confusion in Washington. I received a phone call from a civil servant in personnel. "Mr. Johnson, am I correct that you are in Frankfurt, Germany and you want to go to Frankfurt, Michigan?"

"Yes, but the town in Michigan is spelled with an "o" rather than a "u", I remarked.

"Oh, well that's no problem, Sir." She continued, "Is there anything else I can do for you while I am on the line?"

"Well, could we get diversionary travel on our way to Michigan?" I asked.

"Where might that be?" replied the clerk.

"Frankfort." I announced.

"Are you pulling my chain, Sir?" she asked hesitantly.

"No." I said, "My family has farm land outside of Frankfort, Kentucky and it has been a long time since any of us have checked on it. (Long silence) Are you still there?"

"Yeah. Yeah," came a weary reply. "I suppose we can do that, but please send me that in a cable, because they are not going to believe me otherwise."

Unfortunately there was not time for me to have consultation in Washington and spend a reasonable amount of time with my family in Michigan and Carolyn's in Oregon and also visit Kentucky, so USIA never issued the travel orders with three Frankforts/Frankfurts.

When I was an inspector I once spent fifteen minutes explaining the International Date Line to a clerk. She had a hard time understanding how I could leave Suva on a Wednesday, arrive in Honolulu on a Tuesday and catch a flight a few hours later to Tokyo which got me to the Japanese capital on a Wednesday- all in one day.

Q: How did your family like life in Frankfurt, Germany, that is?

JOHNSON: They loved it. Our children went to the prestigious International School at Oberursel, just north of Frankfurt. Carolyn was den mother to Suzanne's brownie scout troop and was so active in the women's club of the consulate general that I was known among the staff as "Carolyn Johnson's husband", which I took as a high compliment. Of course we took full advantage of Frankfurt's location and traveled widely to France, Austria, Italy and Czechoslovakia. During a visit to the British Channel Islands we toured fortifications the father of a German friend had designed during World War II.

The kids learned to ski in Austria. It was a wonderful assignment.

Incidentally my sons Patrick and Erik were active in Boy Scouts. I went on a couple of camping trips with them. A few weeks prior to a national jamboree, the scout master called me and asked me if I could pull some strings in V Corps HQ to get a bus to take the scout troop and a German troop to the jamboree. I called a colonel in Transportation and convinced him that by providing a bus and driver he would contribute mightily to the improvement of German-American relations. We told our scouts that we would pick up the German scouts at a church in a nearby town. I mentioned in passing that German scout troupes were generally divided along religious lines, Catholic and Protestant, and that the Germans we would be camping with were Protestants. Our boys nodded and mumbled their consent.

When we pulled up to the church, our troupe let out a collective gasp, "Girls?! We are not camping with girls! No way!"

"I'm sorry I forgot to mention that this is a co-ed troupe and, yes, you will camp with girls," I announced sternly. The scout master threatened any scout who was rude to a girl with expulsion..

About half the German scouts were boys. The Germans were excited about riding on a big American bus and tried to engage the shy Americans in conversation. Fortunately the trip was short. Some of our boys pretended to sleep. Others responded reluctantly to the effort by the Germans to break the ice.

When we arrived at the jamboree we could hear a steady rumble which sounded as if we were at the foot of huge hydroelectric dam. Then I realized it was the collective bedlam from several thousand children. As soon as the German girls showed their mettle in sports our scouts accepted them as equals. The weekend was a great success.

Q: But back to the Soviet Union, did you have any contact with Russians in Frankfurt?

JOHNSON: There was a Soviet military mission near Frankfurt, a relic of the occupation. The Soviets maintained a mission to the British in Gelsenkirchen and one to the French in Baden Baden. The western allies had missions in Potsdam. The Russian officers based in Frankfurt dropped by the Amerika Haus library occasionally to read the latest aviation and technical journals. Sometimes they were in uniform. My librarians treated them like anyone else. One day I invited a colonel to have coffee with me in my office. During the course of our conversation, he said to me rather wistfully, "The Cold War is coming to an end. One day we will look back on our rivalry with nostalgia."

Q: By the time you were there, Reagan was moving into his second term. At that point he had sort of shed his almost cowboy image, things were really moving along with Gorbachev and all. Were the Germans responding to this? What was their attitude?

JOHNSON: The Germans are class and job conscious, and the idea that someone who had been an actor -- who they considered not a very good actor -- would become President was inconceivable. Although Reagan was a great communicator most Germans did not like his

conservative ideology. The most popular thing that Reagan did in Germany was the president's least popular action in the United States. The year was 1985. Helmut Kohl had returned from a fence mending trip to France where he stood hand in hand with Mitterrand at Verdun where their fathers had faced each other across the barbed wire and shell holes during the mindless slaughter of the battle of Verdun. Kohl wanted desperately to have a similar reconciliation with the Americans and it was to be in the sleepy town of Bitburg, which was in the Frankfurt consular district. The US Air Force had a major air base just outside Bitburg. I was assigned as the primary site officer for USIA.

I had never been to Bitburg. I called the Public Affairs Officer at the air base, a Luxembourg national, and told her I would soon be visiting her to discuss preparations for the president's visit. I made my way to the base along foggy, winding roads and met with the public affairs officer, the wing commander and the base commander. They told me that a presidential advance team which included Michael Deaver had preceded me. I drove over to the cemetery where Reagan was scheduled to lay a wreath to look at access and a holding area for the press. Snow covered most of the tomb stones. I asked the caretaker if anyone whose presence might embarrass the President was buried in the cemetery. He responded that the people interred were mostly townspeople, many of whom had been killed in the air raids on the city during the Battle of the Bulge in December of 1944 and January 1945. Bitburg was on the southern flank of the offensive. I assumed that there were SS buried in the cemetery. SS were buried in most German cemeteries. I determined that the highest ranking SS officer was a lieutenant, many were draftees and the average age was about nineteen. These were kids thrown into the battle. There were no remains of war criminals in Bitburg's sandy soil.

One of our Air Force officers had told Deaver about the presence of SS in the cemetery. Deaver reportedly replied, "Let me worry about the president's schedule." Once the American media latched on to the presence of SS there was a feeding frenzy which exhibited the worst qualities of a sensationalistic press in the United States. The Jewish community and the American Legion were soon up in arms. I lost more sleep because of the president's trip to Bitburg than any other problem I confronted during my career. I unfairly blamed myself for not warning the embassy about the presence of SS in the cemetery. I guess I wanted to be a hero. Actually nothing I could have done would have made any difference. The die was cast. Kohl had called Reagan and told him his government would fall if he canceled the stop. Reagan had given the German chancellor his word and, to his credit, he ignored pleas from wife and influential advisors and went through with the trip as planned, although a face saving visit to the memorial at Bergen Belsen concentration camp was added to his program.

In his book A Different Drummer- My Thirty Years with Ronald Reagan Deaver takes responsibility for the problems associated with the visit. But to get back to the visit, the time allotted for the stop at the cemetery kept getting shorter and shorter. One of the Secret Service agents did a mock up tee shirt which showed the Presidential limousine going by the gates to the cemetery and a wreath flying out the window. It said "Bitburg Wreath Toss". The agent thought about the effect of the cartoon might have on his career and the tee shirt disappeared.

During a planning session I had suggested that Mrs. Reagan place flowers on the graves of the family Schneider, a father and mother and four children, who had been killed in the bombing.

Unfortunately the graves were immediately in front the journalists and we could not risk unruly reporters shouting questions at the first lady who was under a great deal of strain. I am confident that Germans would have greatly appreciated it if Mrs. Reagan had shown her awareness of the terrible price the civilian populace paid during the war.

We were besieged by sensation-seeking American newsmen. For example, Newsweek had different covers on its U.S. and its international edition. The international edition cover showed just a grave of a SS soldier, while the U.S. edition had the grave of the SS soldier with the German flag, which the photographer borrowed from city hall under false pretenses and place on the grave. One US newscast producer called Bitburg mayor Theo Hallet at home, and when Frau Hallet informed the caller that the mayor had retired for the night, the executive threatened to make life difficult for him unless he returned the call the next day. During an interview with a US newsmen, the mayor stepped out of his office. When he returned, he found the reporter going through his desk. Finally I filled in as the mayor's public affairs adviser until the Chancellor Kohl's office could provide some one.

One night shortly before the visit, several German officials and I were having dinner at the pub belonging to the brewery. I noticed several American Jews sitting at another table. I went over and introduced myself and invited them to sit with the officials and me. Perhaps tired of one another's company, they accepted. I asked what their principle complaint regarding the visit was. The spokesman for the group responded, "It is the cancellation of visit to Dachau. We understand it had been on the president's schedule. It should have stayed on his schedule."

"So it is not the wreath laying at the Bitburg cemetery," I persisted.

"Of course we don't like that, but we wanted him to go Dachau," he replied.

By the time we parted there had been some much need reconciliation between the Americans on one hand and my German colleagues and me on the other.

I was tied up with preparations when I received a call from a Frankfurt reporter who had learned of a classified exercise that was to take place at a air base not far from Bitburg. I was afraid if he ran the story German peace groups might make a difficult situation ever more complicated. I admitted to him that he had his facts right but convinced him not to run his story with the understanding that I would make it up to him with an exclusive on an even better story.

Q: He did not print the story and you kept your word, right?

JOHNSON: Correct. One bit of comic relief: a few days before the President's visit a Canadian fighter bomber was circling Bitburg Air Base when the pilot threw the wrong switch and dropped his belly tank which sailed gracefully down and landed perfectly on the roof a rental car signed out to one of our flyers. Fortunately no one was in the sedan. Unfortunately the Canadian's commanding officer got the news on AFN.

But back to serious things, on the morning of the visit a White House staffer and I headed to the cemetery along with about 50 journalists. The German police allowed the newsmen to proceed

but stopped the White House official and me. The German police refused to recognize our escort passes. The White House advance man was a former campaign worker and very full of his own importance. I told him we had plenty of time and drove back to the Secret Service post on the air base. The German police detained the political hack. To my intense regret, they released him. Meanwhile after one call from the Secret Service, I was on my way to the cemetery.

When I arrived at the cemetery I found that American TV networks had taped their cables to stone crosses. Incensed, I tore the cables off the crosses. Soon the technicians were yelling at me that their contacts might short out on the bare ground. I responded that I didn't care about their contacts or their feeds, and reminded them that they were in a cemetery not a union hall. German reporters were stunned by the conduct of the American TV crews.

The visit to the cemetery went smoothly. The President arrived with retired Army General Matthew B. Ridgeway. Chancellor Kohl was accompanied by former Luftwaffe General Steinhoff. Kohl and Reagan walked up to the monument and stood solemnly while Steinhoff and Ridgeway placed the wreath at the foot of the monument. A Bundeswehr bugler blew some notes on his instrument.

Reagan walked to the front of the cemetery, turned left toward the journalists with the monument to his right. His head slightly bowed. His hand toward the public was relaxed, while his hand toward the monument was white knuckled. If a journalist had asked me a question at the time, I am afraid I would have broken down crying. The strain of preparations and confrontations with the American reporters had been enormous and I felt completely drained. I felt great pain and a sense of relief.

Following his visit Reagan's standing was higher in Germany than any other time in his presidency. He had given the chancellor his promise and had stood by his word in spite of tremendous pressure to opt out of the visit to the Bitburg cemetery. A few years earlier Jimmy Carter had pressured Chancellor Helmut Schmidt into accepting deployment in the FRG of the neutron bomb and then Carter canceled production of the weapon. While the German government did not want another nuclear weapon system on the German territory, they had agreed to accept it and were incensed by the flip flop of the US president. I gather that Schmidt never forgave Carter.

Q: How did the citizenry of Bitburg feel about Americans after Reagan's visit?

JOHNSON: They understood the difference between press opinion and public opinion. The Bitburgers loved the US Air Force, which was the largest employer in the county. Many of the locals built houses and apartments for the Americans to rent and about one in ten had a relative in the United States. Business and political leaders of the city met quarterly with officers from the base to discuss civil-military relations. On one occasion the director of the brewery lamented that the Greens on the city council were pressuring him to build a tall smoke stack. The environmentalist party claimed that the smoke stack was needed to vent steam from an addition to the brewery. The Americans voiced concern about having to contend with another obstacle near their flight path. Then someone suggested running a pipe under the road from the brewery to some barracks recently vacated by the French army. A Patriot battalion was due to take over

the barracks. The heating system needed to be upgraded and additional steam would be welcome. So one night the street between the barracks and the brewery was closed for few hours and the pipe was laid which made everyone happy, including the Greens. Of course there was a rumor that there was a second pipe for beer.

Q: How did the citizenry feel about having a US Army detachment assigned to Bitburg?

JOHNSON: There was concern that soldiers would bring bar brawls and drugs to Bitburg. However the issue died when the assignment of the Patriot battalion was canceled.

The last time I visited Bitburg was in about 1995. The base was on the Pentagon's cut list and I was given a petition containing the signatures of thousands of German residents asking Washington to keep the base open. The petition did no good. After all whose congressional district is Bitburg in?

Q: Reagan also visited Berlin while you were there. How did that visit go?

JOHNSON: Very well indeed. I was detailed to handle the press at Tempelhof Airport, which he flew into and departed from. He spoke to hundreds of invited guests in the cavernous ticking hall. I gave a live TV interview regarding preparations for the visit. The highlight of his visit to Berlin occurred at the wall where he said, "Mr. Gorbachev tear down this wall!" The Berliners knew it was bull but they loved it.

A few days before Reagan's visit Mathias Rust, a German teenager, embarrassed the Soviet military by flying a light plane from Helsinki and landing it on Red Square. The Germans, particularly the Berliners, thought the prank was uproariously funny. The hottest selling item in Berlin was a tee shirt showing a Piper Cub with a German flag painted on its tail parked in front of the Kremlin. Beneath the sketch were words to the effect Celebrating the Opening of the International Airport Red Square.

Q: Did you get to Berlin very often from Frankfurt?

JOHNSON: Maybe once a year. It was a six or seven hour drive, although any time I wanted, I could go on the US military duty trains which traveled to Berlin and back every night. The trains left a dedicated siding in the Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof (main train station) at about 6:00 p.m. and arrived in a special siding Berlin Lichtenberg at about 7:00. The return train followed a similar schedule. There was no cost to travelers. The French and British also had duty trains leaving from Baden Baden and – I believe- Gelsenkirchen respectively. I never took one of their trains but can attest to the fact that, although the US trains supposedly had sleeping compartments, passengers had to be very tired to get much sleep. Entering and leaving East Germany the trains changed engines, with lots of jolts and noise, moreover the Soviet KGB guards manning the check points going in and out of the GDR did a lot of shouting.

I attended several meetings in Berlin while I was assigned to Heidelberg and Frankfurt. To keep costs down USIA required some of us to travel by duty train. My colleagues in Hamburg and Munich were permitted to fly. One night returning to Frankfurt I shared a compartment with an

Army intelligence officer. Neither one of us could sleep so we were swapping “war stories”. I asked him if the Reds had ever hoodwinked him. He grinned broadly and asked me I had ever heard of Peenemuende.

“Of course, that’s where the Germans developed the V-2,” I said. “It is on the Baltic.”

“It is on a peninsula that for many years was off limits to foreigners,” he remarked. “Well, the East Germans kept moving trucks in and out of huge warehouses they had built. We were certain that they had a major facility there. When they finally let us into the warehouses, we found they were empty and decayed. The NVA (National Peoples Army) and the Soviets completely snookered us. We wasted all sorts of time trying to get a look into those warehouses.”

I mentioned to the intelligence officer that the Soviets guards on the Autobahn access routes to Berlin will swap with an American a Red Army belt buckle for a copy of Playboy. He said he of course knew about the black market in magazines and brass. “Do you know what happens to those magazines, other than the KGB soldier drooling over it?” I asked.

“You think capitalism is dead in the Soviet Union? Think again!” he chided me. “According to our sources, the soldier who receives the Playboy sells it to his NCO for at least a week’s salary. The NCO sells the magazine to an NCO in another company for a big profit or a major favor. The NCO in that company “rents” the magazine to soldiers and makes his profit before selling the magazine again. For all we know the Playboy eventually makes its way to the Ministry of Defense in Moscow.”

Q: While you were there had some of the menace of the Fulda Gap gone by this time?

JOHNSON: I don’t think anybody expected war. NATO had sufficient nuclear and conventional forces to deter the Soviets from attacking. I led a number of tours of German journalists to Fulda and to the forward staging areas. The Germans wanted us to reduce our military presence, particularly in the urban centers such as Frankfurt and Munich. At the same time a clear majority were supportive of NATO and its peace keeping function. I had an amusing exchange with Frankfurt’s member of parliament Joschka Fisher, who was very much in favor of a draw down of US forces. However he cautioned against closing American Forces Network. I told him, “When the GIs leave, so does AFN.” He was not happy with my assessment. Fisher later served as foreign minister in the Social Democrat-Green coalition headed by Chancellor Schroeder.

Q: Did you do much public speaking while you were in Frankfurt?

JOHNSON: I spoke to many German military audiences on US-Soviet relations. Sometimes I was accompanied by my Program Manager Horst Richter, who talked on the Strategic Defense Initiative, SDI. I defended US policy in Central America in presentations to several audiences. I don’t think I made much headway against the widespread rejection among Germans of our stand in El Salvador and Nicaragua. I gave numerous lectures on barriers to understanding between Germany and the United States, presentations that were directed to student audiences and German-American clubs. I talked on several occasions on German cultural influences on the United States and US influences on German culture. I believe I gave more lectures than any

USIA officer.

One memorable audience was the officers of the famed Sixth Panzer Division, Field Marshal Rommel's old unit. Following the dinner and the Q and A, the commanding officer asked me if there was anything he could do for me. I responded that I would like to ride in a Leopard II tank. He replied that he would do better than that and asked me to be ready at 6:00 a.m. By early afternoon I was a certified tank driver. Accompanied by a fearless instructor, I took the steel monster full speed through mud holes and over barriers. Unfortunately there was no place on base to fire the machine gun or the 120 mm smooth bore cannon. I couldn't believe I was getting paid to have so much fun.

Q: What was the most persistent prejudice German hold concerning the United States?

JOHNSON: That we are "kulturlos" (uncultured.) Look at the American television programs and films export. Germans tend to have an elitist view of culture and look down on popular culture. On the other hand, Germans who have spent much time in the United States know the quality of our orchestras, schools of fine art, book stores, public radio and public television. German visitors are also impressed with our better wines and our micro-breweries. In the last analysis, I think that Germans share with their neighbors a "eurosnobism" which is the last defense of the old world which fears that it is growing obsolete. Germans also link their fear of the effects globalization may have on their standard of living. They, I believe, wrongly consider the United States to be in the vanguard of this threat.

Although Germany is one of the most modern nations in the world, I found it very interesting how fearful many Germans are of technology. I took an assistant with me to a meeting with a senior official in the teachers' union to discuss a program on utilizing computers in education. USIA Washington was ready to provide a noted expert on the subject. The union official turned us down flat. His reason: "Computers cost jobs." My assistant and I didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

Q: In the mid-1980s did Germans still discuss World War II with you in casual conversation?

JOHNSON: Not much. While I missed the exchanges, I was very grateful that Germans rarely voiced a lament that I often heard in the 1960s and 70s, i.e. that the United States should have made a separate peace with Berlin to fight a common foe: the Soviet Union. I found it absolutely exasperating that Germans imagined that the Americans and British could ever have considered joining forces even with a Germany that had rid itself of the Nazis to fight the Russians, who had lost 20 million soldiers and civilians. Once at a reception in Mainz several conservative businessmen raised the old charge that the US had been short-sighted not to have grasped the golden opportunity to check the Red Army before it occupied Poland, Czechoslovakia and Germany. I responded that such a pact would have been morally repugnant and politically impossible. I added that as much as I admired the courage of the members of the 20th of July conspiracy to kill Hitler, in the long run it was fortunate that they failed, because the western allies would not have made a separate peace with them had they been successful in taking the reins of power. I reminded the men of the "stab in the back" lie that the Nazis and reactionaries had used during the Weimar Republic to explain away Germany's defeat in World War I. I challenged

them to imagine how much harder it would have been for Germans to have established a democracy after World War II had Churchill and Roosevelt refused to negotiate a separate peace with a German government, which presumably would have had Field Marshal Rommel as chancellor.

Q: Did you write many speeches for the Consul General?

JOHNSON: Both Bill Bodde and Alex Rattray knew what they wanted to say to each audience. My input was generally limited to providing talking points. However I was with Alex Rattray en route to a speaking engagement in Koblenz when Rattray announced that he had not had time to write his speech. Fortunately I had a pad of yellow paper and we drafted his remarks in the back seat of his car while speeding down the Autobahn.

Q: You mentioned that you took the consular course before going to Frankfurt, did you have any consular duties?

JOHNSON: I can only think of one time I exercised my authority as a consul. Adolf Reuter, an elderly German came to my office one day and asked me to help him get an American pilot decorated for bravery. Reuter explained that on June 26, 1944 he had witnessed Luftwaffe fighters under his command shoot down B-24 Liberator near Vienna. The pilot, Lt. Jack Weller Smith, waited until his crew had parachuted to safety before abandoning the burning aircraft and consequently died of injuries suffered when his parachute failed to open fully before he impacted with the ground. Reuter was convinced that because Lt. Smith remained at the controls of the doomed bomber, he saved the lives of his crew. I translated Reuter's statement into English, witnessed his signature, added my own and then had the seal of the consulate general affixed to the document. I submitted the testament to the Air Force where it was corroborated by a statement from Lt. Smith's copilot. On April 17, 1986 Lt. Smith's family received the Distinguished Flying Cross at a ceremony at Bolling Air Force Base.

Incidentally one task that somehow fell to me at the consulate general was to respond to queries from American veterans. At least a dozen wrote to ask assistance in locating the German Luftwaffe base where they were interrogated after being shot down. The answer was simple: the barracks at Oberursel, which were just down the road from where our children went to school. In my responses I noted that after the war, the American Army used the base to interrogate high ranking German POWs, some of whom were tried at Nuremburg.

One autumn afternoon a German in his 60s applied for a visa at the Consulate General. The young consular officer noticed on his application form that his mother was an American. The officer asked the man, "What were you doing from 1941 to 1945?"

The man responded, "I was in the Wehrmacht.

"Where did you serve," asked the American.

"Russia and Italy," he replied.

“Who did you fight in Italy?” inquired the American.

“Mostly Americans. Why do you ask?” queried the German.

“Because since your mother was an American you would probably have been eligible for a US passport,” the vice consul explained. “But since you engaged in war against the US, you have almost certainly lost American citizenship which you did not realize you had.

“Does that mean I can’t go to the United States?” asked the German.

“Of course you can go to the US. I will give you a visa at no cost. Had you opted for a passport, it would have cost you \$75, responded the American officer cheerfully.

Q: Speaking of consular work, were there very many Americans in German jails in the Frankfurt consular district?

JOHNSON: I can’t recall any numbers, but not many. I remember a visit by a State Department colleague whose son was serving a lengthy term for heroine possession. The father told the consular officer not to extend any special courtesies to the young man.

Q: I assume that you and your colleagues all knew that the Berlin Wall was going to fall the next year?

JOHNSON: No, but there’s an interesting story about that. When General Vernon Walters, who replaced Rick Burt as our ambassador in Bonn in 1988, called on Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the Foreign Minister reportedly asked him if there was anything really important he expected to occur during his tenure. Walters supposedly responded, “I’m going to see the collapse of East Germany and German reunification.”

Genscher looked at him and said, “How will that occur?”

Walters replied, “Gorbachev has revoked the Brezhnev Doctrine, and without it the GDR can’t continue to exist much longer. The GDR will collapse because it can’t exist as a separate state by itself.” History soon proved the old general turned diplomat right.

Q: If you did not foresee the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the GDR, what did you think would happen to East Germany?

JOHNSON: I thought that the wall would become irrelevant. In 1987 East German authorities permitted three million GDR citizens, in addition to senior citizens, to visit the West every year. Three million, plus thousands of senior citizens, out of a population of seventeen million, that’s a lot. The government of the GDR was cabling parts of East Germany to receive West German television because that was only the way to get people to stay in those regions. East Germans could subscribe to West German magazines. The GDR had changed from being a totalitarian society to an authoritarian society. The Communist regime couldn’t resist the influence of the reform movements in Prague, Warsaw and in Moscow. The rigid system was crumbling. It

crumbled a lot faster almost anyone anticipated. I am only sorry I was not in Berlin when the wall opened.

When I was a student I used to ask Germans when they realized that the war was lost. On trips back to Germany after the collapse of the GDR, I asked East Germans when they realized that their Communist government was doomed. I received many answers but nearly all the responses concerned the size of the anti-government demonstrations. Apparently once the protests reached a critical mass, the regime folded. An East German friend told me that he had joined a march in Dresden and when he crossed the Danube and saw protesters still crossing the bridge down river. It was then that he realized the days of the Communism in Germany were numbered. A member of the Bundestag (parliament) said that protesters in at least one city had made a deal with the Soviets that they could seek refuge in the local Red Army garrison should the police open fire on the demonstrators. Although I find this latter story hard to believe, the politician had never misled me.

Incidentally, during visits to East Berlin and to the GDR, I found it ironic that the complaint I heard most often from East Germans about West Germans was the same complaint I heard from West Germans about the Americans. The “Ossies”, as East Germans were called, said that the “Wessies”, the West Germans”, were excessively individualistic and lived in an “elbow society” i.e. where people elbowed one another aside to achieve personal advancement. I can’t count how many times West Germans told me that they were put off by what they perceived to be a predatory hire-and-fire job world in the US.

Q: You spent 12 years in Germany. How do you think Germans view their role in the 20th century?

JOHNSON: The trauma resulting from World War II and their defeat has clearly ebbed. Germans were no longer obsessed with shame, loss and anger. Unlike the Japanese and the Austrians, the Germans confronted their past. They have abandoned nationalism and embraced a new identity as Europeans. Germans have gradually distanced themselves from the United States and criticize American consumerism and disregard for the environment. While they love American westerns and gangster films they reject our macho culture of violence. For decades they took great pride in the “Wirtschaftswunder” (economic miracle) and combination of low unemployment and low inflation that continued. By the end of the 1980s Germans were increasingly concerned about their ability to work less and less while still earning fat pay checks and enjoying extremely generous social benefits. They know they are living beyond their means but apparently lack the will to do anything about it.

But returning to the legacy of the Third Reich, I don’t think even today many Germans fully comprehend the long term cost of their twelve years under Hitler. Even a united Germany will never gain the standard of living and quality of life that a Germany without Hitler would have enjoyed. It is not the loss of territory but rather the loss of talent that has hurt Germany. During that the years just prior to the outbreak of World War II Germany suffered a brain drain is unparalleled in history, a loss that can never be replaced. Most of the academics, artists and scientists came to the United States. During the Third Reich and in the chaos after the war German schools and universities either stopped teaching or taught at level far beneath their

potential. Look at Germany's portion of the Nobel Prizes in Physics, Chemistry and Medicine prior to and after World War II. I don't think Germany will ever completely recover from the insanity of the Third Reich.

Q: Do you feel at home in Germany?

JOHNSON: Not any more. Although I am still fluent in German and have close friends in a number of cities, Germany has changed. The Bush administration has antagonized even the conservatives, the traditional base of pro-US feeling. I'm not willing to live with the rejection an American has to accept in Germany today.

DALE V. SLAGHT
Commercial Attaché
Munich (1984-1988)

Mr. Slaght was born in Oregon in 1943. After serving in various capacities on Capitol Hill and in the Department of Commerce, he joined the State Department under the Commerce-State Exchange Program. As expert in commercial and trade policy, Mr. Slaght had assignments as Commercial Attaché and Minister Counselor at US Embassies and Consulates in Uruguay, Panama, Germany, Canada, Soviet Union and Mexico. He also served as Mexico Desk Officer at the Department of Commerce. Mr. Slaght attained the rank of Career Minister. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: Life is short. You took German for six months?

SLAGHT: Thirty...no, twenty-four weeks. That's six months, isn't it? That's right. It didn't seem that long. I think it's now thirty weeks. I did well. I came out with a 3.3 and went off what turned out to be the best assignment of my career.

Q: You were in Munich from when to when?

SLAGHT: '84 to '88. Summer of '84 to spring of '88. Not quite four years.

Q: Talk a little bit about the Consulate General in Munich first. What was his name, do you know?

SLAGHT: He was a pleasant man who had very little interest in the commercial side, allowed me to do my thing there which was focused mainly on the many trade fairs the Germans have. If I needed him to do a reception, he'd do it, but there wasn't the kind of close, personal relationship that I had certainly in Montevideo. I had less in Panama, maybe because it was a shorter period. It was only two years. I think it also was a function of the personalities. This guy was pleasant.

Q: When you got there, Germany was a very mature commercial country. They've been around. They've said a lot of things. They've got also a lot of rules and regulations. How did you find dealing with the German apparatus?

SLAGHT: I think my best experience with the Foreign Service was in Germany. I had a very good staff. The staff was made up of six locals and one junior officer, an American woman. German Nationals, three of which were older, had experienced the war or the immediate aftermath of it, and the other three were young. It was very interesting to see the work ethics of those two groups. The older group was committed to the United States. At the end of the war, the U.S. geographical region of control was southern Germany, so they were active in Bavaria. They knew what the U.S. had done for them. The younger generation only had read about this, perhaps, and were nowhere near as committed. I'm still good friends with the senior FSN. In fact, I saw her this past spring. I went over for the 20th anniversary of a church we helped start there. She is still involved in a program that I helped her get involved in in Munich in 1984. That is export control. One of our principal concerns with the Germans was the transference of dual-use technologies to eastern block countries or to communist countries. Germans are active traders, and they could care less sometimes about our rules. So we established a very...turned out to be a successful program to educate large German companies on the U.S. rules, so that if they used U.S. technology - and most of them did in one way or another - under what conditions could they then take their products that have incorporated U.S. technology and sell them to Romania or east Germany or Poland, whatever. We did a series of lectures to trade organizations that had a wide spectrum of industry members, and we targeted very specific firms. Siemens's headquarters is in Munich, for instance, and we spent a good deal of time with Siemens people. That program was very successful, very useful.

Q: This was?

SLAGHT: Co-Com.

Q: That's right, Co-Com which set the...was sort of the filter for the program.

SLAGHT: Yes. Co-Com were the international guidelines that we all had adopted, but they weren't necessarily equally applied.

Q: How did you find dealing with the various firms, I mean, Germany has an intricate set of relationships between their unions, and their companies and all. Did this get in your way or not?

SLAGHT: No. Our client base has multiple focus points. We're interested in the local agent or distributor that sells U.S. products. We're interested in the U.S. investor who has investment in the region, and we're interested in the large German company that uses our products, and maybe resells them. We did different things for these different clientele. Siemens was just making large investments in the United States in the mid-'80's.

Q: Siemens being sort of the equivalent of General Electric wasn't it?

SLAGHT: That's right. Very large, into all sorts of high technology equipment. At the senior

levels they wanted to be a good corporate citizen, wanted to abide by all the regulations on high-tech componentry that we sold them. I wouldn't say we were feared, but they were careful how they handled us. A report back from us that we suspect Siemens is shipping Digital Equipment, VAC computers to Poland without proper authorization would have done serious damage to their export interests. We were always well received, carefully handled. I wouldn't say there were very strong personal ties anywhere with these companies. On this visit back to Munich in March of this year, I had lunch at the senior FSN's home, and she was saying once in a while she runs into this one German -- at the time he was a mid-level manager -- he is now senior manager of the company, and he comments how helpful our office was to their long-term business interest with the United States.

Q: How could your office find out that maybe Siemens might be sending off equipment that shouldn't be sent off, or any other firm.

SLAGHT: Competitors are tough. This is part of the way that information is gathered. They just won this deal in Poland. Are you aware that they're probably using your computers to do this? Sometimes some levels of the firm wouldn't be as knowledgeable of our rules as they should have been, so we'd be talking about this that and the other, and somebody would casually mention some shipment of whatever, and we could go back to Commerce. Are you aware, did they get a re-export license to ship these 20 digital machines to Romania?

Q: Noooo, hadn't heard of that! I realize this was being taken care of in Brussels and elsewhere, but from your perspective, how were you viewing the commercial prospective. The European Union was getting bigger. Was it the union then or was it community?

SLAGHT: Community still, probably.

Q: They were drawing up all sorts of rules and regulations. Were you seeing within this inhibitors to American goals, the beginning more of a closed market?

SLAGHT: This was the mid-'80's, and I wouldn't say that that attitude was prevalent then. We were continually concerned about these Rules of Origin that prevented the use of some U.S. goods, technologies, because of the requirement for a certain percentage being European. Perhaps there was concern about some standards being written that might have had negative impact on our trade, but those issues really developed later as I recall them. Now again, I did less on the policy side in Munich than I had done in either Panama or Uruguay, so these things may have been going on in the economic section of the embassy in Bonn, and I was just unaware of them.

Q: When you were in Munich, did that cover all of southern Germany?

SLAGHT: Just Bavaria. We had an office in Stuttgart that handled Bonn, Brittenburg, then offices in the north.

Q: What sort of trade fairs were going on?

SLAGHT: Germany is known for its trade fairs, and the Munich International Trade Fair Authority had a plethora of trade fairs in different sectors: Sporting goods, firearms, pet supplies, apparel. They had a U.S. manager who lived in the United States who recruited for these shows, for the Munich Trade Fair Authority. Gerald Coleman. He and I became good personal friends. We remain good personal friends. His sons now run the company. They're still active in Munich and elsewhere around the world. They would recruit U.S. participants for these shows, and then we would go to the shows and give a briefing on how to do business in Germany, and he'd give us a booth in the U.S. Pavilion where we would help companies either do interpreting for them or take them by the hand and say this is a great distributor here, you ought to use this guy, or look into this guy, and don't use this guy, that sort of practical assistance on the floor of the show. I would guess a good 40% of our time was involved in trade show work. Then we recruited...cause Germans like trade shows and they know the efficacy of them...we would recruit German companies to go to U.S. trade shows. We had one man, Bernard Kietz, who spent 80% of his time recruiting German companies to go to trade shows in Chicago or Las Vegas, New York, etc. and he'd accompany them, and he'd function as the assistant to them, to the German companies at these shows, doing what we did in Munich for the U.S. companies that came to Germany.

Q: Was it hard to get American firms to come?

SLAGHT: No.

Q: Germany was a good market. By this time I had commercial experience earlier on, and there was a real problem in that American firms were looking at well, we can export but we've got a big market here in the United States.

SLAGHT: That remains a problem. Still, only a small percentage of the firms that could export actually do, and of those that export, most of them export to only one or two countries: Canada and Mexico. We still have a major educational job with U.S. companies to show them the benefits of international trade. They level off the peaks and valleys of our own economy when we're in a low. Perhaps Europe or South America or Asia have strong growth rates, and they continue to sell the same level of product, just not in the United States. You do it abroad. When they're down abroad and the United States is hopefully up, we can maintain employment. That's still a major problem for us as a country. We have such a strong, dynamic economy that it's hard for U.S. firms to look beyond the demand domestically. You've got to deal with foreign languages, strange currencies, and will I get paid, and all these issues that understandably are of concern to U.S. firms, small ones in particular.

Q: When you were there, up until '88, how did it look the other side of the Iron Curtain? Was that just a feeling that that was going to be there forever?

SLAGHT: Yes. We had a conference in Berlin -- Commerce did -- and I went up to Berlin and took an afternoon trip over to East Berlin across Checkpoint Charlie, and we saw what it was. The wall would fall less than a year later, but no one expected it. It came as a big surprise. No, there was no sense that that was an impermanent relation.

Q: The one entree that we had to that area I guess was the fair in Leipzig. Was it Leipzig?

SLAGHT: Leipzig had a big fair.

Q: Leipzig Fair. I realize this wasn't in your thing, but what were you getting back about the Leipzig Fair?

SLAGHT: I have no knowledge of anything. Leipzig, didn't do it. We recruited and took staff to the Hanover Fair. Large, high-tech exhibit in Hanover, the largest fair in Germany, probably still is, but we did nothing in the east. Nothing whatsoever. It was no-man's land as far as Foreign Commercial Service was concerned.

Q: Did your Commercial Officers, did you form sort of a team within Germany and get together much?

SLAGHT: Yes. We met I would say twice a year, usually in Bonn or Düsseldorf up in the north. That's where most of our offices were. The guys from Stuttgart and Munich would go north. These meetings would give us the latest from Washington and let the Senior Commercial Officer give us the new rules, whatever they might be, new programs that had been initiated. It was a good collegial relationship. I'm still friends with some of those people that were in Germany in 1984. Our Senior Commercial Officer in Berlin currently was in Düsseldorf and Bonn in that period, and our guy currently in Canada was the guy in Frankfurt.

Q: How did you feel by this time the Commercial Service? Did you feel it was a good thing to be in and a solid promotion impress you?

SLAGHT: Yes. Uniformly positive, I would say. We got very good feedback from the business community, the U.S. business community, which would ask us, "where were you guys ten years ago?" This was great. Strong support from U.S. based business, as well as businesses that had investments abroad. We still had our ups and downs with headquarters. The case I gave you on how I was assigned there was not atypical, and that's not a morale booster. So we had those sorts of issues. We had Director Generals who in my view were as much concerned about their next job as their current job. That was more the case later, I would say, in the mid-'80's than the beginning. But a positive thing. I was promoted to what amounts to an FSO-1 out of Munich, so I'd gotten a promotion recognizing that my work was regarded well. The personal situation in Munich was so pleasant for us. We were there when the dollar was over three to the mark. It was up to 3.4 at one point to the mark, so we didn't think twice about going out to eat or taking a trip to wherever, to Vienna or Salzburg. We went to Rome and Paris and all over Germany. Some weekends we'd just take off and go and really got to appreciate southern German countryside. We learned to ski as a family. Our two older boys learned to ski there. Our third son was born there. We still have very close friends there. We helped start a church as I indicated that had its 20th anniversary in March of 2005.

Q: What kind of church was this?

SLAGHT: It's an English speaking Evangelical Christian church, all sorts of Christian

denominations attend: Catholic, Episcopal, Baptist, Methodist. Two of the group were from the Episcopal Church there in Munich. It got started because my wife was active in Cub Scouts, and the Cub Scout Leader was a member of this Anglican church in Munich, and they got talking one day. We were attending the base chapel and weren't really happy with it, and he was unhappy with his church. Soon we had six couples who were unhappy with where they were attending, so we started having Bible studies in our own homes, and it grew to the point where we had enough people to put out a call for a pastor who would raise his own income in the United States and come over, and he did. He came in 1985. It is called the Munich International Community Church, and has grown to 350 to 400 people now. That was a very rewarding part of the experience.

Q: How did you feel from talking with your other colleagues in the Foreign Commercial Service by this time? Were there conflicts with the economic sections of the embassy or was this pretty much a routine part of the process?

SLAGHT: There were conflicts, I would say, where there were large economic sections. Where there were small economic sections, there weren't conflicts. In my view, the issue was that the nature of Foreign Service promotion requires you to have a strong annual report, and that requires activity and the ambitious State Department guys would fight for turf. Where there was plenty of work, this did not happen. There was usually more work than all of us could do. But there was less work in large sections and that usually caused problems. To the extent that there were personality issues between the head of the commercial section and the economic session, that would exacerbate the atmosphere. We had no problems with the consulate in Munich, but I know in Bonn there were issues to the point where when the Ambassador called...when the ambassador was told of an officer coming out of Canada where there had been problems, to Germany, he asked to see the commercial officer senior guy first and was told in no uncertain terms there'll be no internecine battles between you and your economic colleagues under my tour. Is that correct, Mr. Bligh? Jack Bligh was the commercial officer coming out of Canada, going to Germany. Jack had a very strong personality, and there were problems there as it turns out.

ROBERT M. BEECROFT
Officer-in-Charge, German Affairs
Washington DC (1985-1987)

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

Q: So, what were you doing in Washington?

BEECROFT: I was the Officer-in-Charge of Federal German Affairs.

Q: Okay, we'll pick it up then.

BEECROFT: Okay.

Q: Today is the 26th of October, 2004. Bob, you had something to say about Arthur Burns?

BEECROFT: Right. Since we're talking about federal German affairs, I mentioned earlier, when we were talking about Bonn, that Dr. Burns focused on young people and on the successor generation of politicians. Actually he was a role model for me in that regard. One of the things he did was to invite the head of the Green Party, Petra Kelly to a series of lunches. Petra spoke very good English. Sadly, she died in the late '80's – murdered by her lover Gert Bastian, a retired Bundeswehr general. I was included at these lunches, since I had made the initial contact with her and we were quite close. I'll never forget that first luncheon, in the Ambassador's private dining room at Embassy Bonn. Imagine: Dr. Burns, the pipe-smoking professor and former head of the Federal Reserve Board, very Socratic and analytical. Petra is his exact opposite -- impulsive, mercurial, emotional. She's declaiming about economics, which is something of a profile in courage, lecturing Arthur Burns on economics. She's talking about how all of these big factories were bad for the environment and we needed to get back to small factories, and she pointed to the Chinese model of steel mills in back yards.

Q: Oh, God.

BEECROFT: Burns, who spoke like W.C. Fields, looked kindly at her and said, "Miss Kelly, do you know how much pollution steel mills in back yards produce? Do you know how much it costs just to put a steel mill in a back yard?" Of course she didn't have a clue. This was just idealism rampant. She fumbled around, and he was very nice – he would have been less forgiving with his own staff, that's for sure. He was quite paternal with her. Anyway, that was the end of her spiel. He responded with a tutorial about the need to right-size any given industry in order to balance minimal pollution with maximum productivity, and so on. She actually listened, which was hard for her to do because she was a nonstop talker. After she left, Burns came back in. He had a sly smile on his face and he said, "She is not unintelligent, but she has an untrained mind." I thought: bingo. That was Petra. Burns was wonderful.

Q: Now, we come back to what, '85?

BEECROFT: '85.

Q: You went to Washington, which you say was an unknown country. I mean all of a sudden you find yourself; was there an adjustment learning to live in a bureaucracy, before we get to the actual German affairs, but just being effective and understanding who did what to whom and how the bureaucracy works.

BEECROFT: The only jobs I'd had in the State Department which were really full-time were '75 - '76, when I was Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary, and then in PM, when I divided my time between Washington and Geneva. In D, I was in this rarefied seventh-floor environment, detached from the bureaucratic game-playing of the building; basically, you could get whatever you needed from the bureaus. This was very different. Now I was dealing with all the players around town who had a stake in German affairs. That was a lot of players. This was the mid-'80s. If you asked any Germany-watcher how long it would be before the wall came down, the answer would have been decades. We didn't realize it, but we were approaching a historic turning of the page. We were at the very end of the Cold War period without of course knowing as much. We were still dealing regularly with the Treasury Department because of Germany's economic might; with Defense, naturally, because we had all those soldiers and all that armor and all those nukes, plus the recently-deployed Pershing- 2s IRBM's in Germany. It was also a multilateral NATO affair. And we were interested in the Franco-German relationship. And the list went on. You still had people like Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr who were pushing for more détente between the two Germanys.

Q: Schmidt?

BEECROFT: Helmut Schmidt was rather quiet. Schmidt was still in a state of shock and bitterness because he had seen his future greatness extending out as far as the eye could see. Now his tenure had been cut short by problems within his own party, so he was sulking, but there was no shortage of Germans visiting Washington. Karsten Voigt, Gert Weisskirchen, people like that who would come over all the time, touch bases on the Hill, give talks at CSIS and the like. We had a lot to do, but it was mainly political maintenance work. We kept things moving and helped keep the ship on course.

Q: You were there from when to when?

BEECROFT: I was there from '85 to '87, two years.

Q: Okay. Did you have a feeling that our relationship with Germany which is so based on the Cold War and the military, I won't say sour, just a shriveling or getting old. People had been dealing with do you lower the tailgate of trucks in Berlin six inches or ten inches, you know what I mean, and on and on and on.

BEECROFT: It was the latter. It was getting old. That's exactly what it was, and as I say we were in a maintenance phase. You had people coming up in the respective governments and militaries -- not Reagan himself of course, or Weinberger -- who were post-World War II. They didn't have that same sort of emotional tie to the relationship that their fathers had. This was just beginning to be a factor, but it wasn't considered a major problem because the Cold War was still going on. I remember though that great and somewhat novel debates were starting -- discussions in the think tanks about the long-term consequences of having two states in one nation? You had the FRG and the GDR, and we had recognized both. People were still deluding themselves into thinking that the GDR was a viable state. It's amazing to think that three or four years later, we discovered that the GDR was an economic and ecological disaster. But at this

point, in the mid '80s? No clue. No one had gone that far intellectually. Without knowing it, we were into a very late maintenance phase and it wasn't seen as all that interesting.

Q: I was wondering did you find, at one point we had a huge cadre of German hands. I think I mentioned before, my first post was Frankfurt and this was 1955. I think almost a third of the Foreign Service was serving in Germany during those years. Then all of a sudden it disappeared. I mean were you finding that the German hands was it harder to recruit them? Were they becoming too much a specific type? Was there anything that you might characterize about what was happening to the German hands at that time?

BEECROFT: They were getting old. There were a few younger ones. I think of people like Greg Thielmann, who since has also left the Foreign Service.

Q: I'm trying to get a hold of him right now. I've talked to him.

BEECROFT: A very impressive guy. I have a high regard for Greg. He had his share of turbulent moments later in his career. Greg was a young FSO at Embassy Bonn in the early '80s. But at the heart of the cadre were people like Walter Stoessel, Bill Woessner, Tom Tuch, Root Phelps, Dick Smyser, Marten van Heuven, Dick Barkley, Jack Seymour, Vlad Lehovitch, Bill Shinn -- a whole generation of brilliant people who really knew Germany and cared deeply about it. This was a wonderful group of people: the keepers of the German flame at the Department of State.

Q: In a way I would think this was part of the whole outlook towards Germany. I mean when you've been dealing with something for 40 years or close to 40 years you begin to think this is the way its going to be.

BEECROFT: Absolutely.

Q: I understand maybe I mentioned last time, I can't remember, but some people were saying that Arthur Burns was making noises about there might be something, I mean take a look, this isn't cast in concrete. Did you hear any of that?

BEECROFT: Yes. Burns was a very astute observer, and he intuited that change was coming. I think he sensed that the tectonic plates were shifting. This was a man who had lived through some pretty turbulent times. He was a political appointee, and seen as an economist more than a political observer. But Burns had made some comments about how nothing lasts forever and we'd better rethink how important Germany is to us. As long as we had the troops and the nukes and Germany was the front line of the Cold War, there was a feeling that no matter what the stresses and strains, the fundamental relationship couldn't and shouldn't be allowed to drift very far.

Q: Well, it was not something you could play with really.

BEECROFT: Right.

Q: When you were there, by the time you got out of the desk were you getting any feel about, you

were talking about the Fulda Gap, about Soviet intentions. Had it pretty well become a matter that unless there's a flash point they're not going to attack us and we're not going to attack them?

BEECROFT: Yes. The Cold War itself by that time had become a matter of maintenance. The nuclear balance was still in place. No one wanted that to change, because no one really could anticipate or predict what the consequences of a shift might be. You may remember when Reagan and Gorbachev met in Reykjavik in 1985, there was this huge panic: my God, he's going to give away the store. The nightmare scenario was what might happen if the nuclear balance became unpredictable. We had all grown very comfortable with it. It may have been illogical, but the balance of terror had become something we knew how to maintain and live with. So the watchword was: don't rock the boat.

Q: Going back to sort of the German hand court, were you finding the FSOs who were maybe coming up the ladder in a way some of the people, I mean the really aspiring ones were maybe looking at the Near East or looking at developments in Asia or something. If in a way Germany and relationships there would call for somebody who likes to wear a pinstriped suit and have a very comfortable life as opposed to a challenging life because so much is done at the political level and all that.

BEECROFT: I didn't find that. As late as the late '80's, there was a widespread view in the Department that we were the keepers of the flame, and that the core interest of the United States in strategic stability was focused on the German account, with NATO as the underpinning. The unspoken goal was to keep Germany quiet. Churchill's old aphorism -- the Germans are either at your throat at your feet -- was often quoted. We liked them at our feet. There were still a lot of people in Europe -- I think of my wife's relatives in Norway, or friends in the Netherlands, or the French -- who basically still were not sure that the Germans had truly accommodated themselves to being part of Europe and no more than that. That's why, even after France left the integrated military structure in 1966, they didn't remove their troops from Germany. There may still be some French troops there today; I don't know. In any case, we didn't seem to have any problem getting very good young FSO's to come on to the German desk.

Q: What did you find as you were pointing out? There were a lot of other players in the game? There's the Pentagon, there's the Treasury, there's the House, there's the Senate, there's the White House, then the media.

BEECROFT: The Intel community.

Q: The Intel community. Let's talk about some of these. How did you find the relationship at that point?

BEECROFT: Well, there was such a depth of German expertise scattered throughout the government that wherever you went, whomever you talked to, you would find yourself talking to somebody who had probably spent time in Germany, who may have spoken some German, or who at least had spent time in Brussels or somewhere else in Europe. So Germany was a prime account. Obviously, from an intelligence point of view, Germany was enormously important

because we had so many listening posts there. All that is history now. On the military side, virtually everybody had spent time in Germany. Of course, by that time they'd all been to Vietnam, too, but they wanted to come back to Germany because there was a widespread feeling in the military, even during the Vietnam War, that the real show was Germany. Vietnam was where the bullets were flying, but there were a lot of people in the military, and certainly at the State Department, who thought Vietnam was the wrong war at the wrong place at the wrong time, because the real fulcrum was Germany. Wherever you went in Washington, you found people who knew these accounts, and those were the people you dealt with.

Q: Did you find any particular group, I'm thinking of our relationships with Israel and you've got the AIPAC and I mean here is a group that is a very strong advocate.

BEECROFT: Good point.

Q: Was there any equivalent to that?

BEECROFT: There was AIPAC.

Q: What?

BEECROFT: Well, there was AIPAC. AIPAC was in touch with us regularly.

Q: For what?

BEECROFT: Because it was Germany. AIPAC needed to be able to say, and wanted to be able to say "We remember what happened not that many years ago. We are continuing to seek and receive reassurances from Washington that the United States will keep Germany in its place" or words to that effect. We also got funny little phone calls from places you'd never expect. I got a phone call one day from a guy who was the head of some airplane combat airplane fanciers' club in Ohio. There were, and probably still are lots of them, many are retired Air Force officers and enlisted men. He told me he knew that many the U.S. air bases in Germany, like Ramstein for example, and Rhein-Main in Frankfurt were old Luftwaffe bases. On that count, he was right. Then he said he had absolutely authoritative information that there were secret bunkers left on these bases that held one-of-a-kind planes like the Arado 234, the world's first operational jet bomber, two-engine, a beautiful plane. Only a few ever went operational. The Germans didn't have enough jet fuel and they were deployed much too late in the war, even later than the Messerschmitt 262, the world's first operational jet fighter. There are none left, at least none that we know of. He said he knew of one. Another one was the, the Heinkel 219, which was a push-pull fighter with propellers at each end. He was sure there was one of those around. So we would contact Embassy Bonn and ask the defense attaché and he would call the commander of Ramstein, who would tell him where he could stuff it. So you had comic relief once in a while, and when you're dealing with German affairs, a little comic relief is always a good thing.

Q: They're quite serious.

BEECROFT: Germans, yes, right. I'm just going to get a soda, would you like a soda?

Q: Yes. Were there any, God I was almost going to say the German-American Bund, but that dates me. Were there German-American friendship societies that played any particular role?

BEECROFT: No.

Q: Because you've got this German community in Middle America and all that.

BEECROFT: No, I can't remember anything like that. Again, there were so many relationships. They were so deep and so broad; they didn't need us for that. Once in a while, you'd get the CSU involved in Sudeten refugee issues, but those were things that were usually handled by the Embassy and they didn't need to come to us. Of course those issues have lingered into the post-Cold War era.

Q: How did you find the German Embassy? How did it operate and how effective was it?

BEECROFT: Superb. The Germans at the Embassy really knew their stuff. Still do. My experience has been that overall, the German Foreign Service is not all that strong. By the way, if you go back to the pre-World War I and pre-World War II periods, the Foreign Office was sidelined. Part of the reason, and we used to talk about this a lot, is that to be a German diplomat you have to be a lawyer. It's a requirement. They take a very legalistic, somewhat ponderous view of what diplomacy is all about, lots of emphasis on details and not enough on the big picture.

Q: There are a number of other Foreign Services that have this. As a practical Foreign Service Officer dealing actually in legal matters is often working as a consul. I found that law is probably more of a minus than a plus.

BEECROFT: Oh, I agree. The Germans sent the best of the best here. Their current Ambassador, Wolfgang Ischinger, was a first secretary when I was OIC on the Desk. He was a superb and subtle political officer. Just as we had our German hands, they had their American hands, who kept coming back and were easy to deal with. We were very comfortable with each other by that time. If there was a high-level visitor, Helmut Kohl or Johannes Rau, you worked with your Embassy counterparts. I do remember one time, probably 1987, when Willy Brandt came. He was sort of the paterfamilias of the SPD at that point. He had no official government role, but he paid a call on the vice president of the United States, George Herbert Walker Bush. I accompanied Brandt to the Oval Office. We had done very detailed talking points for Bush.

Q: I understand he really took a brief extremely well.

BEECROFT: Bush was very impressive, but once he'd deployed his talking points, he started asking about the Greens, and specifically about Petra Kelly. This surprised us; we knew nothing about his interest in her. Of course Brandt didn't want to talk about the Greens. He wanted to talk about the SPD, and about Willy Brandt and his place in history. Of course there was nothing we could do. Bush wanted to talk about the youngsters. This was not something Brandt was interested in. He was interested in number one, Willy Brandt, and number two, the Social

Democratic Party.

Q: How did Helmut Kohl and Ronald Reagan get along? They strike me as two back slappers, big men, good stories to each other. Did it work or not? How was the chemistry there?

BEECROFT: It worked in the Reagan-to-Kohl direction than vice versa. You're right, they were both very much people persons, loved the rough and tumble of politics and were very good at connecting with the common man, but Kohl of course spoke no known language, including German. He spoke Rhenish. I think Reagan needed somebody who spoke his language, literally and figuratively, to really connect. I never saw the two of them together, as I did with Brandt and Bush '41. They kept a cordial enough relationship, but again, even at their level it was more of a relationship of maintenance. They didn't have to work too hard at it.

Q: Well, did you find that as a desk officer that there was a certain amount of artillery fire is the wrong term, but communications above your head, you know, I mean secretaries of treasury are called ministers of finance and all this. I mean if you say it the relationship had gone on so long that I would think that you would find yourself way down and clearances and everything else were no longer necessary.

BEECROFT: Absolutely right. There was such a comfortable back-and-forth at so many levels that sometimes we would hear about things way after the fact, if at all. This was most awkward when the Embassy found itself in the same position -- and that did happen.

Q: I'm sure.

BEECROFT: If Rick Burt found out, for example, that the Secretary of the Treasury had been in touch with his opposite number and hadn't bothered to let the Ambassador know, then guess who heard about it first and usually in words of one syllable.

Q: Speaking of Rick Burt, I've heard it said that Burt came and sort of stripped away the German hands in Bonn and kind of started over again either deliberately or inadvertently so that you didn't have quite as strong an embassy. Did you get a feel for that?

BEECROFT: Yes, there was some of that. He came in with the kind of agenda that you sometimes find among political appointees -- a certain, let's say, skepticism about the motives and goals and objectives of the Foreign Service. I think that mellowed over time, but there was some real friction at the outset, including some cartoons that circulated in the Embassy that were pretty ugly.

Q: Were there any in the two years you were there, two plus years, were there any issues that sort of engaged you?

BEECROFT: Frankly, and maybe if I looked at my files I'd recall something, but nothing like the deployment of Pershing -2s that had so engaged us in the very beginning of the decade. As I say, this was the end of an era, not the beginning.

Q: Where stood the arms in Germany at that point when you got there?

BEECROFT: Well, we still had hundreds of thousands of Americans in Germany. The Pershing 2-s had been deployed. We never thought of them as something one might actually use, but there they were and the SS-20s were deployed in the GDR, so you had nuclear-tipped warheads with a warning time of about three minutes, which wasn't particularly comforting. I'm sorry, the question again?

Q: Well, the question was were there any sort of major issues that you had to deal with?

BEECROFT: No, no really cosmic issues. This is 1985 to 1987. Reagan had just been reelected. The focus was very much on Moscow and the future of the Soviet Union. Reagan was bound and determined, with Maggie Thatcher's support, to use Gorbachev to change the paradigm. No one expected it to happen as dramatically and quickly as it did.

Q: You as a German hand and other German hands had obviously been looking over the fence for years at the Soviets. What were you getting personally and others around you the reading on Gorbachev because I understand for a long time it was mixed. I mean was this guy for real or is this a cover plot?

BEECROFT: We didn't get a lot of that, but I think there was doubt, in Bonn as well as in Washington, that he could deliver. First of all, was he a true believing communist or a revisionist? There was a lot of debate about that. Second, assuming he was a true believing communist, could he deliver, and if he was a revisionist, what will happen to him? Now, as it turned out, at least up until say '89 or '90, there was no question that he was a true believer. He was trying to fix the system without renouncing Marxism. The Germans love this kind of theological debate and it was going on in spades. Actually, the ones who were really nervous were the East Germans because they saw it as nothing but trouble.

Q: Which it was.

BEECROFT: They were right.

Q: What about East Germany at that time?

BEECROFT: Whenever I went to Berlin which I did frequently I would go over to East Berlin and talk with our Embassy there. Dick Barkley was the Ambassador, and I had worked for him in Bonn. Outwardly, East Germany seemed to be the strongest pillar of the Warsaw Pact, along with Russia itself. Honecker was still very much in the saddle, and nobody – nobody -- saw the demise of the GDR as imminent.

Q: Was anybody questioning the fact that East Germany is considered the 10th largest power or economic power or whatever it was?

BEECROFT: No, it was one of these clichés that had basically become self-confirming. The 10th largest economic power, I can remember using this stuff myself. The 10th largest economic

power in a country the size of Ohio. We all or at least I don't know of anybody who really seriously challenged it.

Q: Did you find, I mean I realize there weren't any great issues, but on the desk did you find the product of the CIA interesting, useful or not?

BEECROFT: Much of it was useful, but it didn't challenge the conventional wisdom in any way where Germany was concerned. It was more reporting on personalities or conversations, things of that kind. We were all very comfortable in our ruts, including the CIA.

Q: How about was there a sort of a general feeling that the German government, West German government had a sizable number of East German agents in it?

BEECROFT: Yes, there were scandals having to do with Willy Brandt's secretary, Guenter Guillaume, and then Helmut Kohl's secretary. This kind of thing would kick up some dust for a while, but it wasn't seen as the sky falling. The Agency loved scandals. These did imply that a lot of what we thought were secrets were not.

Q: I have to say when you think about all the great tales about spies and what they did and the secrets and all that, its very, when you think about the results of all the efforts on both sides, very unimpressive.

BEECROFT: That's right.

Q: You know there was a game that was played and took immense amounts of money and skill and lots of fun, but actually what did it amount to?

BEECROFT: Well, that's right. I mean sometimes it can make a difference. I guess the classic example is the Ultra secret. We were reading the Nazis' mail from 1940 on. In the 1980's, there were, to my knowledge, no any huge breakthroughs that enabled us to deflect the course of history like that.

Q: Did you get any feel while you were there about the back and forth of Americans, particularly Americans going to Germany because the Germans coming to America because I sense now that Germany I think I may have mentioned this before had become sort of off to one corner. It's not a place. If you're going to go to Europe, you'd go to England, France, Italy or Spain.

BEECROFT: No, sad to say.

Q: I know, but it's not, in a way this lessens the ties. Was this a matter of concern?

BEECROFT: Not then. People would take boat cruises on the Rhine or go up to Garmisch or someplace like that, but I think Americans today would be as likely or more likely to go to Poland than to Germany. I would. I've never been to Poland. Along with Estonia, it's the only country in Europe I haven't been to.

Q: Yes.

BEECROFT: The ties were considered to be so natural that no one really thought much about them. That's changed.

HARRY JOSEPH GILMORE
Director, Office of Central European Affairs
Washington, DC (1985-1987)

Ambassador Gilmore was born and raised in Pennsylvania and educated at Carnegie Institute of Technology, Indiana University and the University of Pittsburgh. He entered the Foreign Service in 1962 and served at the State Department in Washington, DC and at the following posts abroad: Ankara, Budapest, Moscow, Munich, Belgrade and Berlin. He also served as Deputy Commander at the Army War College. In 1993 he was named United States Ambassador to Armenia, where he served until 1995. At the State Department in Washington he dealt primarily with Central European Affairs. The Ambassador was interviewed in 2003 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Well, turning to, at that time, the two Germanys.

GILMORE: Yes, there was always plenty of voltage, as I said, surging through the Office of Central European Affairs. Imagine the relationship with the Federal Republic. It was fascinating. Dynamic. Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher, who was already about to be the senior foreign minister in Europe, in terms of longevity in office, wrote numerous letters to Secretary Shultz. In fact, we used to say that Genscher writes Secretary Shultz at least once a month and sometimes every Friday. The German foreign office, of course, closes earlier in the day than the State Department. Often on a Friday evening, the political counselor from the German embassy would arrive at the State Department with a message from Genscher to Secretary Shultz.

The Office of Central European Affairs supported and participated directly in the ongoing quadripartite dialogue of the U.S., U.K., and France, the three Western Powers with rights and responsibilities pertaining to Berlin, and the Federal Republic of Germany. This dialogue focused on matters such as West Berlin's ties to the Federal Republic and the administration of the Quadripartite Agreement of September 3, 1976.

My previous service in Germany as Political Officer and the second-ranking officer at the U.S. Consulate General in Munich did not include Berlin matters, so I faced a steep learning curve in my efforts to get a grip on the basics of what veterans of service in U.S. Embassy Bonn and at the U.S. Mission in Berlin called "Berlinery". I traveled several times a year to attend regularly scheduled quadripartite meetings to serve as notetaker at some of Secretary Shultz's bilateral meetings with Genscher.

One important issue from the Reagan administration's point of view was the question of how

German companies could participate in “Star Wars” contracts. A number of countries with advanced technology, like the Federal Republic, wanted to be sure that businesses that flew their flag could participate in the competition for contracts. The participation of German firms was a little more complicated because a chunk of important German know-how and industrial prowess was in the western sectors of Berlin, and how Berlin-based industries might participate...touched on the whole question of Allied rights. So, when we negotiated that agreement, there was quite a bit of detail that had to be worked out. Secretary of Defense Weinberger was the signatory on our side. And, on the German side, they wanted to be careful to emphasize that they regarded participation in “Star Wars” contracts as a commercial issue, not a defense issue. So, Martin Bangemann, the Economics Minister, negotiated for them, and Secretary Weinberger for us.

During my time as Director of Central European Affairs the German Democratic Republic was still riding pretty high. Many people, including a few in our government, thought that the East Germans were doing very well in terms of their industrial prowess. They were, in a way, when compared to the other countries of the Warsaw Pact. But they were, as we subsequently saw, not nearly as successful as the images they tried to portray. But they were on a kind of a roll. The Embassy of the German Democratic Republic brought Katarina Witt, who was then the women’s Olympic champion in figure skating. She was a beautiful young woman and also very personable. GDR Ambassador to the U.S., Herter, a competent diplomat, put on a pretty good show in Washington. But we had a number of issues with his government where they were making trouble in our view, particularly concerning Berlin.

Perhaps the most significant issue on my watch was one that my deputy, Michael Habib handled. It was certainly the most exciting. I was out of the office one afternoon on business. When I came back, Mike was just finishing an urgent demarche to the East German Chargé d’Affaires, about evidence that we had of pending hostile activity originating in East Berlin against U.S. forces in West Berlin. And sure enough, it wasn’t but a short time later that we learned that the La Belle Disco was bombed in the wee hours on April 5, 1986. We didn’t know the target was to be La Belle specifically. A GI was killed and also a Turkish woman. I believe a third country national in Berlin, a resident of Berlin, died. The La Belle bombing was subsequently shown to be an act of terrorism. [Editor’s Note; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1986_Berlin_discotheque_bombing]

Q: It was tied to Libya, which we bombed.

GILMORE: Yes, but it was also pretty clear that the GDR played an enabling role in the La Belle bombing.

Q: What was the GDR response?

GILMORE: They just said they would get the message back to their capital as quickly as they could. I remember they never said much to us, at least in Washington, afterward.

Q: The fact that we were sending a demarche to the GDR, then the attack, and the administration responded by practically killed Qadhafi in Libya, all this sounds like an intelligence coup.

GILMORE: Well, we knew who was talking to whom, by the time we got all the intelligence sorted out. It was a whole question of protecting sources and methods. We knew very clearly -- I want to be very careful here, because it's probably still highly classified -- we knew from our very good intercept capabilities in Berlin -- and they were excellent for reasons you might guess -- that there had been such and such a conversation. We knew who was talking to whom.

Q: Well, with this, and our reaction to this, it certainly wasn't in the GDR's interests to be playing Qadhafi's game, you know?

GILMORE: And I don't think they would have wanted GIs hurt.

Q: Was there any indication later that the GDR said, "That's it fellas, no more playing around in our country." And this sort of thing. Were you getting any indication of that?

GILMORE: We weren't. If that happened, I didn't know about it. Since I subsequently moved from the position of Office Director for Central European Affairs to the position of U.S. Minister and Deputy Commandant of the American Sector of Berlin, I probably would have been aware of any such indication.

There's one other thing I should mention about our relations with the German Democratic Republic before we go on. Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Rozanne Ridgway had served as our ambassador to the GDR just before being named assistant secretary. She was seized with the issue of the return and restitution of property and assets of Jews by the Nazis from the part of Germany which had become the GDR. Working closely with the Conference on Jewish National Claims Against Germany, Ridgway had developed a concept for addressing the issue. The GDR had not paid any reparations. In fact, the GDR leaders, led by Honecker himself, maintained that the GDR represented the part of Germany that was anti-Nazi, had nothing to do with the Nazi regime, and was not responsible for its acts.

In any case, in layman's language, Ridgway's concept was to create the possibility for the GDR to earn the hard currency to pay the Jewish claims by giving the GDR certain specific export trade opportunities in the U.S. As ambassador to the GDR Ridgway had already worked on the return of paintings of German-American Lyonel Feininger which had been seized by the Nazis. Ambassador Ridgway may have addressed these matters much more authoritatively in her own oral history. Meanwhile, the issue of restitution and claims of Jews who had lived in what became the GDR was resolved with the reunification of Germany when the Federal Republic took responsibility for them.

Q: What was your impression of the GDR at that time? We didn't know it, but it was the last few years of existence. Was it dynamic? Ossifying? What was happening?

GILMORE: Well, their diplomacy in Washington was pretty competent. As I had observed during my assignment as Deputy Director of the Office of Eastern European Affairs, a number of the Warsaw Pact member states began to send capable envoys to Washington. These envoys worked to develop bilateral relations as best they could within the strictures of being loyal to the

Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union. Herter, the GDR ambassador, was one of those. My own judgment was always that the GDR was an artificial creation and wouldn't last forever. I want to be very careful to say I was not prescient and I didn't know the Berlin Wall would come down in a few years, etc. But the more I looked at the GDR, the more I saw it as increasingly in difficulty economically. By the way, that was probably a minority view among "Germanists" in the U.S. and other Western countries. Some of them would say, including some who had served in the GDR, "why, it's the sixth or seventh largest economy in the world". I was always skeptical. I had always found such assertions unconvincing. Basically, the GDR economy was quite heavily dependent on the Federal Republic economy. That being said, we didn't see any serious domestic unrest in the GDR at that point...that was 1985 – 1987. Now, that subsequently changed very, very substantially, but it really didn't change dramatically until 1989. We can talk about that more explicitly when I'm in Berlin.

Q: In viewing East Germany as economically viable was anybody taking a look at the product quality, rather than the statistics? Because it turned out that the products manufactured in East Germany were not at all up to the standards so that they could really be used by the Western world when they came....

GILMORE: There was an exaggeration in general, until well into the 1980s, of the economic potential of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact. Just think about how we overestimated the size of the Soviet economy. It was smaller than we thought...and of course the GDR economy was very dependent on Soviet and other Warsaw Pact markets for its products. They weren't up to Western standards, with very rare exceptions. Maybe some of the optical equipment by Zeiss, for example, was acceptable at the low end in certain Western markets. But the GDR did have very important markets in the Third World. Their prices...they had no idea what the real value of things was because they had no markets to determine the cost of inputs -- were administered prices. They imported successfully from, and particularly exported successfully to a number of countries in Africa and other places in the Third World. They also had extensive markets in Warsaw Pact member states. I think we maybe didn't look at the GDR economic situation hard enough. But I don't want to be at all critical of our embassy to the GDR. We had a series of very capable ambassadors. John Sherman Cooper, the first, was a former senator and a serious ambassador. And if I could just mention some of the others, Frank Meehan [September 1985 to November 1988] was one of the ablest Foreign Service people I ever worked with. Roz Ridgway [January 1983 to July 1985], another especially able person. Richard Barkley, the last ambassador, Dick Barkley [December 1988 to October 1990] went on to be the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey. These were all first-rate people. But I would add that in terms of the Washington analytical community. I don't think we put a tremendous effort into East Germany watching.

Q: We had this huge apparatus for looking at the Soviet Union. It missed the whole, the major picture. This is one of those things. I guess you get entranced by the Soviets and you can't see what it really is.

GILMORE: Right. And you look at certain things. The Soviet Union was a very successful producer of certain kinds of military goods...tanks, mortars, personnel carriers, automatic rifles, some aircraft. Some of the Soviet aircraft were very well made and their pilots well trained.

They had access to all the materials we had, all the miracle metals and everything else, they were able to produce excellent equipment. So you could be mesmerized by that and not focus on the extreme shortcomings in areas like public health and housing. The USSR economy was an abysmal failure in housing. The GDR was somewhat better, but lagged far behind the West. We used to always say that anything that the Soviet Union could do in the way of housing construction, the GDR could copy and execute more proficiently, and there was truth to that. But, when I got into the former GDR after the reunification of Germany, I was able to see how poorly many of the apartment buildings were constructed and maintained.

Q: Was this Stalin Alley and all that, that you see pictures of?

GILMORE: Right after the reunification of Germany and Berlin, I remember visiting Halle, Magdeburg, Schwerin, and of course new sectors of East Berlin like Hellersdorf and Marzahn. On close inspection, all the newer buildings were poorly constructed. There were blocs of apartment buildings six and eight floors tall, consisting of mini apartments, literally stacked on top of each other. They were not well engineered and definitely not designed to last the fifty and even one hundred years that some of the apartment buildings of earlier times lasted. But, in any case, the GDR, when I left the office of Central European Affairs in the summer 1987, didn't look like it was in massive trouble with its people. It was hard to judge the question of how much discontent there was. No one that I talked to or read about was forecasting the early demise of the GDR. On the other hand, all those of us who observed the GDR concluded there was a strong, widespread and growing desire for freedom to travel abroad, especially to West Berlin and the FRG.

Q: How did we look upon the GDR military?

GILMORE: We thought they were formidable. There was conscription. By and large, the army was pretty well outfitted, in terms of weaponry. It underwent constant training; lots of exercises. Some would say that, soldier for soldier, they were even more capable even than the Soviet Group of Forces in Germany, which was huge. There were approximately 400,000 Soviet military personnel in the German Democratic Republic when I got to Berlin in 1987. Most of them were land forces, although they had a very considerable air capability, which exercised all the time. So, you had to look closely. We would get reports from the U.S. and other allied military liaison missions in Berlin who were an enormous source of good intelligence on the Soviet forces in Germany, about how poorly the Soviet soldiers ate, how they only had one uniform which was made of wool, and how much they suffered in the summer with those hot uniforms. You could find anecdotal evidence that that Soviet Group of Forces was not the capable force it seemed to be on paper. I think we by and large thought the GDR army was capable, given the level of equipment it had. The Group of Soviet Forces, Germany however had better equipment. And as our military planners in the Federal Republic used to say, "The Soviet forces in the GDR have way more tubes than we have." What they meant by tubes was cannon, artillery, tanks with guns and all kinds of firepower.

But by the time I left the Central European Affairs office and went to Berlin, the GDR looked like it had serious economic problems, but it didn't look like it was about to totter. And of

course, an important factor in the GDR tottering just two years later was *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* in the Soviet Union and Gorbachev's own conviction of the urgent need for reform. In many ways, the most important reformer in the GDR was Mikhail Gorbachev. He pushed Honecker hard and you could see it. They were totally on different wavelengths.

Q: When you were dealing with East Germany from Washington, did you see this earthquake in the Soviet Union at that time with Gorbachev?

GILMORE: No, I began to see that once I got to Berlin. That's a very interesting chapter too, because I had a very close relationship with my Soviet counterpart in Berlin, who turned out to be a very capable diplomat and a very fine human being. And people may think I'm soft saying that, but it's dead true.

Q: Yes. Now, how about one of the issues that would come up quite often, and we'd get involved in that, and that is family reunification. We'd have Americans who had relatives in East Germany who are trying to get out. Did we have any cases of that?

GILMORE: We did, but our ambassador, Ambassador Ridgway, when she was there, her Deputy Jim Wilkinson, and Ambassador Meehan, who succeeded her pushed those cases hard. There weren't many of them, so the GDR resolved a number of them over time, not all of them, but resolved a number of them and earned points with us, so to speak. The real family reunification problem, of course, was between the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic where there were other mechanisms in place, including buying people out.

Q: Yes, I understand this was quite a trade.

GILMORE: Yes, it was done on a pretty extensive scale. I don't fault the Federal Republic for doing it, if it was the only way to get certain things done. The onus, in my view, was on the German Democratic Republic for selling people, in effect.

Q: Now, moving to the Bundesrepublik (West Germany), what were the issues that you were mainly dealing with there?

GILMORE: All the NATO issues, a number of trade issues, including, and as I stated earlier, the special issue of the Star Wars contracts. We occasionally had some differences, not major differences, over Berlin. While the Federal Republic in general understood the importance of maintaining Berlin status...Berlin, of course, was not part of the Federal Republic. Berlin, under international law, was an occupied city, and in the absence of a peace treaty, which there hadn't been, the Federal Republic was not sovereign in the Western sectors of Berlin. This was a sore spot to some German political leaders in West Berlin and Bonn. But by maintaining Berlin's status as an occupied city and refusing to sign a peace treaty which recognized the division of Berlin and Germany, the U.S., Great Britain and France kept the German question open until such time as reunification could be accomplished peacefully. The Federal Republic, of course, financed the Western sectors of Berlin from the federal budget. Subsidized it lavishly in terms of the arts. West Berlin was a mecca, particularly for opera and classical music. Of course, East Berlin was an art showcase too. In fact, I would argue that the cultural power of Berlin, the two

parts together during the 1970s and 1980s was unsurpassed by any of the other great cultural cities, New York, Paris, Rome.

But in any case, when it came to some of the specifics of Berlin status, our allies in the Federal Republic and West Berlin would sometimes get impatient. We'd see it at my level, at the office director level. And we'd see it at the level of the assistant secretary, Ambassador Ridgway, and also the level of Secretary Shultz. There seemed always to be some tension over the Federal Republic, and with Foreign Minister Genscher particularly, who after all had a home town in the GDR, Halle, which he cared deeply about. Genscher was extraordinarily capable, by the way. But on another level, we had good personal relationships with individual West German officials and diplomats. We became good friends and colleagues. That being said, they very much worked for Genscher. We always got the feeling, unless Helmut Kohl, who was Chancellor during that period, cared personally about an issue, it was Genscher's view that the FRG embassy in Washington was trying to push.

Q: Yes. Again, during 1985 to 1987, how would you say your office was evaluating Helmut Kohl?

GILMORE: I think we saw him as a strong leader, very much in control, and when the opportunity presented itself, totally committed to the unification of Germany and Berlin. We also saw Kohl as giving Genscher quite a bit of latitude at the foreign ministry. I think we also saw him as pretty staunchly pro-U.S., although very much committed to taking full advantage of Germany's economic strength. We always saw him as a leader who was a firm believer in the U.S.-German relationship and in the NATO alliance. He was also strongly committed to close Franco-German cooperation and the building of the European Community. But by and large I saw him as a very tough political leader who had built a tremendous power base in his own party the Christian Democratic Union, over a long number of years, taking care of those colleagues who were helpful by dispensing patronage accordingly. I personally was not surprised when we subsequently learned that some of Kohl's financial arrangements were illegal.

Q: I was wondering whether we were looking at this. Because both in Germany and France, it sort of came out that an awful lot of money was being dispensed.

GILMORE: My mentor -- I referred to him earlier in this interview, my mentor at the Munich Consulate General Foreign Service national Hermann Stoeckl -- understood these practices very well. He made it very clear to me how parties were financed in the FRG. He was a calm and careful observer. He had made it plain that he thought Helmut Kohl was very much involved in the fund-raising business including soliciting what he could get from industrialists, and doing favors in return. Here, I want to be careful; I don't want to cast more aspersions on Helmut Kohl and the Federal Republic than I would on the U.S. I mean that's how parties often help to fill their coffers.

Q: I was interviewing two days ago Robert Strauss, who was at one point our ambassador to the Soviet Union. But as a major figure in the Democratic Party, he was talking about how today in Congress, the collegiality has fallen apart because people on both sides are leaving their posts on Thursday, until late Monday, going back home to raise money. They don't see each other

since they are going back and raising money, which is not to the good of the Republic.

GILMORE: No, it doesn't look like they are focusing on their immediate responsibilities as legislators. But in any case, we saw Helmut Kohl as strong. We saw that when he cared about an issue, that he was very capable of advancing or defending German's interests. But we saw him as a stalwart ally, and also as one very much aware of German's need for a strong U.S., particularly in Berlin.

I remember going to a dinner...Kohl of course visited Washington during my time as Director of Central European Affairs. I remember the dinner that was given for Kohl in Washington was hosted by Chief Justice Rehnquist. For some reason, Reagan wasn't able to host it. The Reagan-Kohl relationship wasn't a real chummy one. But it was close, and I think the two of them saw eye to eye on larger world issues. They were comfortable with each other's leadership. It's clear they relied on each other. But they didn't burn up the telephone lines or exchange a lot of letters. In other words, if there was a close personal correspondence, it was run out of the NSC, not out of the Department of State.

Q: Well, Genscher was FDP (Freie Demokratische Partei – Free Democratic Party). He came from a small, but crucial party. He was sort of running foreign policy. But in a way, was Germany still hesitant about exerting its power on the world stage, would you say?

GILMORE: On some issues, yes. Economically, no. When we had to deal with the Germans on sticky issues, for example, German firms exporting dual purpose chemicals to Iran and Iraq, and similar issues, the Germans could be very tough. Very tough and persistent in protecting their economic interests. I remember we were particularly concerned about the FRG's export of certain dual purpose chemicals to Iraq and Iran, particularly Iran.

Q: Those two countries were at war at that time.

GILMORE: Right. And the other point was that although we had very good intelligence in some cases, as long as the chemicals were dual purpose, and unless we could be very specific about the end-use problems, the Federal Republic Embassy officials in Washington and their senior officials in Bonn would always say, "Under the German constitution, German firms have a right to export, and we can't interfere with that unless there are very, very specific reasons to do so." By and large, the Social Democrats, as a party, were more responsible on those issues, in my view. But there was always a hauling and pulling between us and our German allies, and there was a certain rivalry, a commercial rivalry as you would expect. Also the Federal Republic was dead set on building Europe. And, of course, whenever there were any differences between the European Community and the U.S., the Germans were right in there fighting hard for the EC position, and fighting well. But by and large I have positive memories of my diplomatic dealings with FRG and Berlin officials.

Q: Well, it's interesting. Some of the things you've been saying would apply to the French. Except, for some reason, the French, even today, were able to get under our skin and were seeming to talk one side and play...and I don't know if it was a difference in attitude or how it was carried out, or if it was a different policy. I'm talking about working to make France

paramount in Europe and selling anything to anybody no matter how odious the regime was; if you could turn a franc, they were doing it.

GILMORE: Well, the Germans, by and large, were operating very much like the French economically. Some critics of Germany in the U.S. called them “mercantilist.” In fact, some people called the Federal Republic the most successful mercantilist country in the Twentieth Century. I wouldn’t go quite that far. But there was some truth in that. Where the Germans were careful was on the big time political issues. They worked very closely with the French, and the French-German relationship was extremely important to whoever was Chancellor. The Chancellor and the French President, Mitterrand and Kohl, met regularly, as did Schmidt and Giscard. But the Germans would shy away from clashing with the U.S. on really central political issues. They might back France tacitly, but if they faced a choice between France and the U.S., they would usually duck and not offend the U.S.

But the other thing I should note about that office, the office of Central European Affairs is that “Berlinery” as we called it, constantly generated a major part of the office’s workload. The Berlin desk officer position was one of the most challenging middle grade Foreign Service positions I can think of. The officer was always dealing with some problem or another with Berlin, some access problem, some problem where we had to make a demarche to the Soviets. Sometimes we had much worse problems. People who tried to escape were still being shot at the Berlin Wall. So in the Office of Central European Affairs, Berlin issues were the most important and time-consuming issues the CE Director dealt with. Of all the jobs I had in the State Department, I think the CE Director, and of all things, the Yugoslavia desk officer, were the busiest. Although I should quickly add that the Deputy Director for East European and Yugoslav Affairs position was extremely busy too.

Q: There had been this constant pressure, going back to 1964-68, on Berlin. Codified minutia and there was a big book filled up about what you can and can’t do to make sure that your position in Berlin would not be whittled away.

GILMORE: Right.

Q: But now, here we’re moving towards, really the end game. But we didn’t know it.

GILMORE: Right.

Q: But did you find a diminution in pressure?

GILMORE: When I got to Berlin in August of 1987 I found focus on Berlin status concerns on the part of some West Berlin and FRG officials. Paradoxically, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Soviets mentioned their four-power rights on several occasions. Once the GDR had held free elections in March 1990, the GDR was no longer a willing ally of the Soviets. Four-power rights were one of the few levers the Soviets had left.

Q: But, during this time, 1985 – 1987, were there still attempts of the sort of what I would call nibbling tactics?

GILMORE: Air service to Berlin was a problem area. In accordance with four-power (U.S., USSR, UK and France) arrangements, the only countries whose designated commercial carriers could provide air service to the Western Sectors of Berlin were the U.S., UK, and France. The Western Allies sought to discourage carriers from friendly countries from seeking arrangements with the GDR to fly directly to East Berlin's Schoenefeld airport. For example, we sought to persuade Austria to dissuade Austrian Airlines from arranging direct flights from Vienna to East Berlin/Schoenefeld.

Q: Why didn't we want that?

GILMORE: Because it would build up East Berlin as a center of civil aviation and provide an alternative to air travel to Berlin. The Federal Republic, for its own reasons, didn't want Austrian Airlines to fly from Vienna to East Berlin either. But the Austrians, encouraged by the GDR, thought Vienna-Berlin would be a lucrative route and went ahead with it. And guess where their passengers went when they landed in East Berlin? Straight from Schoenefeld Airport in East Berlin to West Berlin. So Austrian Airlines did undercut the Allied carriers' providing service to Berlin. We made presentations to the Austrians, saying, "If you want to get passengers to Berlin by air, let them fly to Germany and then on to Tegel Airport in West Berlin on one of the Allied carriers. Although we were not able to dissuade the Austrians, in retrospect I still believe our efforts were appropriate given the situation in Berlin.

Q: Well, it kept things together.

GILMORE: The security of the Western Sectors of Berlin was not something the Federal Republic could do a lot about. When the Soviets put pressure on Berlin it was on us, the Allies, and the Allies were resolute in standing up to Soviet pressure. And, of course, the most notable instances of Soviet pressure in Berlin were the blockade of 1948, which triggered the Berlin airlift, the "Khrushchev ultimatum" of 1958 demanding that the Western Powers remove their garrisons within six months or else the USSR would unilaterally sign a peace treaty with the GDR and Berlin would become a free city, and Khrushchev's demands at the Kennedy-Khrushchev summit in Vienna in June 1961 which echoed the 1958 ultimatum.

And of course the Berlin Wall went up in 1961. Although Kennedy took several decisive steps in response, including sending General Lucius Clay, the former U.S. Commandant and hero of the Berlin airlift, back to Berlin, there were limits to what we believed we could do without risking armed conflict.

Q: I know that much of the time when I was in the Foreign Service from 1955 on, one of the concerns we had was there's going to be World War III and it will start over Berlin. One of the scenarios that one would think about would be somehow an uprising in East Berlin that would get out of hand.

GILMORE: It would be put down bloodily.

Q: And then somehow the West Germans couldn't stand aside and things could move out.

GILMORE: Right.

Q: Had that scenario, I take it by the time you were dealing with it pretty well, faded away...

GILMORE: The actual chain of events that led to the opening, or fall of the Berlin Wall, the first free election in the GDR and ultimately to the unification of the FRG, GDR and Berlin included the so-called “freedom prayers” (Freiheitsgebete) on Monday evenings in Leipzig’s Nikolai Church. Beginning with a small group on September 4, 1989, the number of participants grew rapidly each week until an estimated 500,000 people participated. We were concerned that the GDR leaders might decide to crack down on the Leipzig demonstrators, but we saw no evidence of this. We were also concerned that the participants in the burgeoning demonstrations avoid contact with the large numbers of Soviet troops stationed in the GDR. I was in almost daily contact with my Soviet counterpart, Igor Fyodorovich Maksimych, the Soviet nemesis and DCM in East Berlin. He indicated that the last thing the USSR under Gorbachev wanted to see was any conflict between GDR demonstrators and Soviet troops. In fact, the demonstrations were peaceful and orderly throughout.

Q: I remember, I was an enlisted man in Darmstadt in Germany in 1953, and there were riots in Berlin, in East Berlin. We were all confined to the barracks. I didn’t realize how, this could have been quite serious.

GILMORE: It was and the riots were put down with great bloodshed, or considerable bloodshed. Great is too strong. Considerable bloodshed. There was always concern throughout the 1950s and then in the 1960s that that could happen again. We were always worried about the Volkspolizei, the police that guarded the Wall, because they had orders to shoot. We were always worried about them mowing down citizens at the Wall trying to escape into West Berlin. Or mowing them down at the inner-German borders where the GDR had, at one period of time in the 1970s, installed automatic weaponry, that I recall was triggered by sensors. As we watched events in the GDR evolve, we were also concerned that Soviet troops belonging to the Group of Soviet Forces/Germany might inadvertently be provoked.

E. WAYNE MERRY

**Central European Affairs: Berlin, East Germany and inner-German relations
Washington, DC (1985-1987)**

Mr. Merry was born and raised in Oklahoma. He was educated at the Universities of Kansas and Wisconsin and Princeton University. After serving briefly at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium and in Washington, DC at the Department of the Treasury, in 1972 he joined the State Department Foreign Service. In addition to assignments on Capitol Hill, at the United Nations in New York City, and at the Departments of State and Defense in Washington, DC, Mr. Merry served abroad in Berlin, Tunis, and Moscow. A Russian language speaker, he was a specialist in Soviet Union affairs. Mr. Merry was interviewed in 2010 by

Charles Stuart Kennedy.

MERRY: After my two years in New York, I went to Washington, the second time I served in the Department. I worked in the Office of Central European Affairs in the European Bureau. Central Europe, in those days, meant Germany, Austria and Switzerland, a very different definition than a traditionalist would consider as Central Europe. I was in charge of a three-officer unit that dealt with Berlin, East Germany, and inner-German relations. Keep in mind that in those days Berlin alone received as much policy attention as a good-sized country. The United States was one of the three “protecting powers” in West Berlin, a role we took very seriously. The Cold War in Europe was still centered on the divided city of the divided country of the divided continent. That was the work of our unit, how the east-west competition played out in central Europe. I took this job in part because of a long-term interest in Germany, but also because I really wanted to get back to Berlin, back to East Germany, and I hoped this assignment would put me in a position to do so. It did not, because I was still one grade junior for the political counselor’s role at the embassy, and another officer, a personal friend at the right rank, got the job. He was in East Berlin when the Wall came down, where I would liked to have been. However, for these two years, I was in charge of the GDR and Berlin desks.

Q: The two years being?

MERRY: The two years being 1985 to 1987. This was a very good office. We had a marvelous assistant secretary for Europe, Rozanne Ridgway, who had previously been ambassador in East Berlin among other things, which of course meant she had knowledge and an interest in the GDR far beyond what would normally be the case for an assistant secretary. The head of the Office of Central European Affairs was Harry Gilmore, a guy with a lot of relevant experience and a wonderful human being. All the staff were excellent people and good colleagues. You couldn’t have asked for a better working environment, and I was working on issues of direct personal interest to me.

But, to a considerable extent, I was miserable. I was suffering from the kind of mild but prolonged depression which often accompanies extended recovery from a traumatic injury. Again, the working environment, the issues, the people were all favorable—everything about my assignment in the Office of Central European Affairs was positive. I had absolutely nothing to complain of, but I was going through a bad personal period. Although no longer on crutches or in a cast, I was in a long process of therapy and exercise and medication, which was very frustrating. It seemed to be accomplishing nothing. Even though I was in tip-top shape in terms of cardiovascular health, the orthopedic side was all pain and frustration. In retrospect I recognize this as a fairly normal, actually quite common, problem with a prolonged recovery period. I know this now but did not then. Unfortunately, my doctors were dealing with my leg or my spine or some other part of my anatomy, but none with my mental condition. None of them pointed out to me that some depression in a situation like this is not unusual. If I had understood it—maybe even taken a little medication—I think it would have helped a lot. Frankly, I was working too hard at my physical recuperation. I was up before dawn to swim a thousand meters every morning before I went to work, and doing other exercise and therapy. I really didn’t have much of a life other than the office and physical recuperation. In fact, I would have been better off doing less physical therapy. During this period, my mother suffered a severe and debilitating

stroke which obviously was an additional element of stress.

During this assignment I focussed on two important issues relating to the U.S. role in Germany. The first was the killing of an American Army officer in East Germany, Major Arthur Nicholson, a member of the U.S. Military Liaison Mission (MLM), an institution in Potsdam in the GDR, accredited to the Soviet forces. Major Nicholson was shot by a Soviet sentry at a facility he was trying to look into at night. The sentry obviously screwed up, and the Soviets never disputed that the sentry was at fault in shooting Major Nicholson. The real issue was whether the Soviets provided adequate and immediate medical care for Major Nicholson. He died. This became a matter of prolonged dispute between the United States and the Soviet Union. Secretary of Defense Weinberger chose to make it a big political issue, which the Army did not want to do, which the State Department did not want to do, and which the Nicholson family did not want to do.

This issue occupied much of my time for the first year in this job. As it happened, the commander of the Military Liaison Mission in Potsdam was an old colleague of mine, an Army officer from Moscow, and I was quite familiar with the role of the MLM and its need to maintain a degree of secrecy and to keep itself out of the newspapers if it was going to do its job properly. Having the Nicholson affair at a political-level between Washington and Moscow was not good for the MLM's operational role. Weinberger simply never understood the role and importance of the MLM. To him it was a relic of post-War relations with the Soviets, rather than an important component of American-Soviet communications in the final years of the Cold War. The issue slowly resolved, because the Soviets never pretended they were not to some degree at fault. What they disputed was the degree of fault and what they would say by way of apology.

As the Nicholson affair was receding, another affair replaced it, the terrorist bombing of a nightclub in West Berlin, the La Belle Discotheque, in which a number of Americans were killed or injured. This was traced to Libya, and to the Libyan embassy in East Berlin, which caused the United States to bomb Tripoli in Libya in retaliation. My role as director for GDR and Berlin meant I spent most of my second year dealing with the aftermath of the La Belle Discotheque attack. I had an excellent country officer for the GDR and an excellent officer who dealt with Berlin issues, so I focused on the two politically-sensitive issues, the Nicholson killing and the La Belle Discotheque bombing.

Q: If the Libyans arranged it in East Berlin, were we trying to stick the GDR with complicity in the case?

MERRY: No, but it did involve an embassy accredited to the GDR and four-power Berlin issues, as that embassy was in East Berlin, which we regarded as the Soviet sector of a single city. This incident had complications that would not have existed anywhere else in the world, because only in Berlin was there a sector of a four-power occupied city serving as the capital of another country. Which aspects of the case concerned the Soviets and which the GDR? These were important but not obvious issues, arcane and complex issues that existed only in Berlin during the Cold War. Very few people in Washington knew about or understood these questions. Even in my office, only the Berlin officer and I really appreciated them. It was our task to make sure that U.S. interests in Berlin were not compromised. I had to get tough with my own bosses on

occasion to make sure they adhered to policy positions they tended to forget.

Q: Before we leave that, how did the East German government respond to this?

MERRY: Their position was that they had no involvement at all. They certainly never acknowledged the GDR was in any way complicit. I see no reason to believe it was. If anything, relations between the GDR and Libya were in a difficult phase, and the last thing the GDR would want would be to have the status of its declared capital compromised. It would do the GDR no benefit. The GDR was a side issue for the United States; Libya was the culprit.

During this period I of course took a special interest in the GDR. After all, one of the main reasons I had taken this assignment was the hope it would return me to East Berlin. It's fair to say I was just about the only person in the State Department who really had much of a personal interest in the GDR. The country officer said candidly that his work could just as well have concerned some other country. While Assistant Secretary Ridgway had been ambassador there, it was not an experience she had enjoyed very much. We discussed this some years later. For me, being a second-secretary reporting officer in East Berlin had been one of the most enjoyable periods in my life, but as ambassador her years there had been boredom and tedium because she couldn't do most of the things I had done. She was a prisoner of her role.

Q: I was looking at an oral history I did with Dick Barkley, who was our ambassador.

MERRY: Our final ambassador.

Q: Our final ambassador there. In his oral history, he says in the spring of '89, he was talking to his wife and he said, "You know, this must be the most boring job in the Foreign Service."

MERRY: Yes, I think to be the ambassador in East Berlin was pretty boring, because it was a diplomatic relationship on the sidelines of the U.S. diplomatic relationships with West Germany and with the Soviet Union. As ambassador you couldn't get out and meet people and do things and have the freedom that I had had as a junior reporting officer. Rank has its privileges, as the saying goes, but it also has its limitations. In the Foreign Service, I think to be young with tolerant supervisors is the best.

In Washington, Ambassador Ridgway was knowledgeable about the GDR, but she was certainly not giving it any preferential treatment as assistant secretary. Far from it. God knows she had more than enough other issues to deal with. I think it's fair to say I was the only person in the building who had much of an engaged intellectual interest in the place at a time when the GDR was starting to change in very important ways, leading to the dramatic events two years later when the Wall came down.

We had a superb ambassador in East Berlin at that time, Frank Meehan, one of the most experienced American senior diplomats in central and eastern Europe. He was also just a prince of a human being; we all loved him. We received excellent reporting out of East Berlin, particularly on the developing crisis of the East German economy. There was a young economic reporting officer in East Berlin who was simply brilliant, named John Sammis, who sent in a

series of exceptionally fine fact-based analyses of the developing crisis of the East German economy. These were the best economic reporting I ever read in my quarter century in the Foreign Service and, remember, I was trained in economics. The only problem was that these cables, as near as I could tell, had exactly two serious readers in Washington: one guy at CIA and me. I read these cables so carefully and annotated them in such detail that I almost memorized sections of them, because they demonstrated in a very clear way that the GDR economy was approaching systemic crisis.

The East German economy, which had been quite successful in the late '70s when I had been posted to East Berlin, was, by the mid-'80s, pretty much shaking itself to pieces. It was running far beyond capacity. Capital stock was deteriorating at an alarming rate. Infrastructure was woefully inadequate. Energy usage was very inefficient; pollution levels were becoming simply catastrophic. The East German economy was being driven by the political leadership well beyond its capabilities and was no longer the great success story of the socialist bloc as it was normally portrayed. On the contrary, it was becoming a basket case and creating critical social and political problems, particularly due to horrendous levels of air, water and ground pollution that provoked a very negative reaction among the East German public, particularly among families with children. It was making East Germany unfit to live in – in some areas, quite literally so. I was very interested in these developments and in the other reporting, the political reporting, coming out of our embassy in East Berlin. My position allowed me to travel there fairly often. Because of my role supervising Berlin affairs, I could travel to Germany on what was called the “Berlin occupation budget” anytime I wanted, and the German government paid for it. Unlike most people in the State Department, who had very limited travel opportunities, I traveled on German money rather than our own.

In the spring of 1987, I made a fairly long trip to the GDR, part of which was escorting a member of Congress for a few days, but most was entirely on my own. I spent 11 days in the GDR over the Easter period, and visited with East German friends in different parts of Saxony and Thuringia and Berlin. I had conversations which completely challenged my long-held assumptions about the social dynamics of the place. The underlying tensions were all coming out into the open. The patina of fear of the police state was evaporating. The claustrophobia resulting from travel restrictions was provoking people to think about alternatives they would not have a few years before. A subject everyone wanted to discuss with me was “People Power” in the Philippines; how a few months before an authoritarian regime had been overthrown peacefully. They were not claiming they could do the same, but they were fascinated by this model on the other side of the world. This was kind of a “global village” phenomenon, that activity on the streets of Manila could have a profound impact on people's minds in central Europe.

That experience, combined with the analyses I'd been reading, led me to conclude that East Germany was approaching collapse, politically and economically. Obviously, this conclusion depended on the profound changes taking place in the Soviet Union and in Moscow's attitudes toward its external empire, especially Gorbachev's views on Germany. I returned to Washington—this was in the spring of '87—and I bandied these views about within the office, where they were treated with polite incredulity, because everybody knew the GDR was a great success story. I also made remarks at a seminar at the Woodrow Wilson Center, then in the Smithsonian Castle, where I predicted the GDR would cease to exist within five years. This was

a personal, not an official, statement. Most of the audience probably thought I was out of my mind, but at least one person who was there remembers that I predicted the GDR was approaching collapse.

My error was that it took only two and a half years, not five, but by the time I left this job in the Office of Central European Affairs it was clear to me that change was coming very quickly in this core component of the Soviet empire. By this time, of course, Gorbachev was in power and things were changing in Moscow, but also in Poland and in Hungary. Things were not yet changing in Czechoslovakia, Romania and Bulgaria, but they were certainly changing in the Soviet Union. I believed the GDR was going to experience dramatic changes, and they were going to happen soon. This was partly because of the crisis of the economy, but it was also because of changes in public attitudes in East German society, and the extent to which people were fed up with their aging, out-of-touch leadership. The Honecker regime, in the '70s, had been more or less in touch with their own society even as a communist, authoritarian system. By the mid-'80s, they were totally out of touch. They hadn't a clue what was going on, and the society knew their leadership didn't have a clue.

The society was increasingly frustrated, alienated from the power structure, and really worried by the ecological damage overtaking the country, which was quite frightful. You had to be in it to believe it. One close friend of mine was a pastor in a place called Lauchhammer, a not very important town between Leipzig and Dresden. This place had an old coking coal factory built in the early 1950s, and the pollution in this town was so bad, the water in the streams was actually black. The pollution level was so high that in the schools, the teachers gave the kids—starting in kindergarten—a daily tranquilizer, because otherwise the kids were uncontrollable from all of the sulfates and other crap in the air they breathed and the water they drank. This was not unusual. Many parts of the GDR were really not fit to live in. The forests were visibly dying, for example.

Q: What was the situation? Was the leadership just milking the country without any regard or what was happening?

MERRY: The leadership wasn't so much milking the country as flogging the country. They insisted on ever-increasing levels of industrial output. Industry was based mostly on the use of soft lignite coal, which is extremely polluting. It was the only kind of coal the GDR had domestically. Much of the GDR's export industry was in chemicals and things like paints. The chemical plants, particularly the Leuna and Buna plants, were based on facilities from before the Second World War. Hopelessly out of date; fantastically polluting.

Q: I take it using lead still?

MERRY: Using all kinds of crap. There were many places downwind of industrial facilities in East Germany where there was actual ecocide; forests that were dead; sand dunes where forests had been – I saw it close up. There were complaints from Poland and Czechoslovakia, because they were downwind and it was having a deleterious impact on their agriculture. This contributed to a very broad sense among the younger population of the GDR that they just could not go on this way. Applications to leave the country – which involved often serious political repercussions

– increased sharply among younger people, including some friends of mine. I had a very strong impression from my visits to East Germany that the population was losing its sense of intimidation, that people were no longer willing to remain passive, to accept that their situation was something they could not do anything about.

This was particularly true because they were watching real change taking place at the center, in Moscow. They saw the Soviet Union itself experimenting, opening up, at least being willing to talk about issues. That was not happening in their own country, in the GDR. For decades the generalized sense among people in East Germany was, “Our situation is the result of the Second World War and Germany’s defeat. Our occupation by the Soviet Union, the Cold War, and the division of Germany and the division of Europe, are essentially imposed on us, and are therefore involuntary.” Now they saw the Soviet Union itself beginning to experiment with new ways of, at least, talking and thinking. Perhaps not so much doing, but at least talking and thinking. They realized that, “No, the strictures in which we live in this country are not coming from the Russians. They are self-imposed by our own leadership. The problem is not in Moscow. The problem is in Berlin. The problem is not of Russian making, it is of GDR making and therefore we, as East Germans, ought to be able to at least follow the example of the Soviets. If they can make changes, and if people in Poland and in Hungary can begin to do things differently, why the hell can’t we?”

The East Germany leadership was totally out to lunch. They hated Gorbachev. The Honecker leadership feared and hated what was going on in Moscow. Margot Honecker later said—this was Honecker’s wife and also minister of education—“We never expected the counterrevolution to come from the Soviet Union.” That’s how they regarded Gorbachev, as a counterrevolutionary, whereas most people in East Germany regarded Mikhail Gorbachev as a long overdue breath of fresh air; as the kind of leader they would have liked to have themselves. They looked to Gorbachev as an example of hope. Then they looked at their own leadership and thought, “These old men are hopeless.” The tensions within East Germany resulted from a combination of things: the growing economic crisis the GDR leadership had itself created; the ecological crisis, which was a result of economic overproduction; the changing attitudes of young people toward what was or should be possible within their own society that were, in part, a product of Gorbachev’s reforms in Moscow; and an overall sense that the static, rigid situation in Europe had outlived its time, that the divisions and control structures that had existed throughout the Cold War, particularly in Germany, were brittle and beginning to collapse.

For me, this was difficult. I felt it and understood it but could not prove it. First, it was difficult to put these impressions, this understanding that I had, into words that would be persuasive or comprehensible. It was damn hard for me to explain why I was so sure East Germany was coming apart. Second, it was impossible to get anybody to believe it in Washington. I remember one of my superiors told me, “Look, we all understand you’re the Department’s leading authority on East Germany, but come on. Everybody knows East Germany is going to be the last place in the Soviet bloc where anything is going to happen.” I was the only person in the building for whom East Germany was not just a professional interest but a personal interest. I had been following it for many years, had recently visited the place several times, and actually knew something about East Germany society. But the dominant assumption was that East Germans were never going to revolt; they were both Germans and the other side’s Germans, so they will

never do anything. There was also the conviction, which I also had held till then, that the Soviets would never let anything happen in East Germany. The bedrock belief was that East Germany would be the last place where anything would happen. By God, when it did happen, Washington and London and Paris and Moscow and Bonn and just about everybody else were taken entirely by surprise. I say, with some degree of personal satisfaction, that I was not taken by surprise. I was delighted, but not surprised.

Q: I would like you to talk a bit about the end of your tour. How stood things—this is for next time—but how things stood when you left that job? But also, I want you to talk a little about—you had Austria and Switzerland?

MERRY: No. The way the office was set up, there was a unit that did West Germany. That was the big ticket unit. There was a unit, which I headed, which did Berlin, East Germany, inner-German relations, and then there was one guy who did Austria and Switzerland. He was quite busy, due to the scandals involving Kurt Waldheim in Austria. Normally, that was a quiet job, but not then. The Waldheim case was front-page news and the Department was deeply engaged.

Q: So we'll pick this up. You left that job in what?

MERRY: 1987, to go to Athens.

Q: Today is the 3rd of May 2010, with Wayne Merry. Wayne, I was going to ask: you left the German desk, whatever you want to call it, in 1987. How stood things at that time?

MERRY: In 1987 Gorbachev had been in power in Moscow for two years, and things were starting to change. Exactly how far they were going to change was still a matter of significant speculation. Attitudes within the various East bloc countries were certainly changing. I think this happened most dramatically in East Germany at the time of the Socialist Unity Party congress in 1986, where the leadership made it very clear it wasn't going to engage in any of this new thinking, glasnost (openness), perestroika (restructuring), any of that nonsense at all. One of the senior party figures reacted to Gorbachev's reforms by stating, "Just because your neighbor changes his wallpaper doesn't mean you have to." This was hugely important in East Germany, and I think also in the other East bloc countries, that the leash was no longer tight from Moscow. The source of each country's problems were the deadheads in each country's own leadership.

In terms of thinking in Washington, clearly Reagan, in his second term, was taking a very different approach after the end of the multiple transition in the Soviet Union. Brezhnev to Andropov, Andropov to Chernenko, Chernenko to Gorbachev. A lot of people in Washington, in the government and outside of it, were very skeptical of Gorbachev. Given his background within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, it would have been imprudent not to have been skeptical. But he was a younger figure, and he was somebody talking a different talk. For one thing, he could talk. He could actually give an interview. He could speak without having a prepared text. The problem with Gorbachev was not getting him to talk freely, it was getting him ever to stop. He was called the master of the 45-minute sound bite. A journalist or a congressman would ask him a question and he'd still be answering it an hour later, which was a huge difference from the very rigid, scripted character of his predecessors.

In Washington, at the level of Reagan and Shultz, there was an interest in seeing what could be attempted, what could be done. One event related to Germany and me. This was President Reagan's famous speech in Berlin in front of the Brandenburg Gate in June 1987, where he said, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this Wall." As it happens, I wrote the first draft of that speech, but under protest. I thought it was a futile exercise, because nothing prepared in the State Department would be used at all by the White House speechwriters. Reagan's speech would be written by his own people in the White House. To prepare a draft in the State Department was a waste of time. Nonetheless, I was assigned to do one, so I did, and very little of my draft made it into the president's actual address. What was, to me, interesting was that Reagan was in Berlin, in Germany, in front of the Berlin Wall, and yet he addressed his appeal to Moscow, to Gorbachev, to the Soviet Union. This demonstrated that neither he, nor practically anybody else, had any notion that the Wall would be coming down in a couple of years, not because of an order from Gorbachev, but because of events on the streets of East Germany, in Leipzig and Berlin and other cities. It shows the extent to which we were totally Moscow centric in our thinking, as Reagan addressed his appeal to Gorbachev without any reference to the people of East Germany. They noticed that, by the way, they told me so.

Q: Was there any reporting on the growing split between the attitude in the East German government and the Gorbachev government? Was this a subject of reporting, discussion?

MERRY: The key question was domestic reform, where most of the East bloc countries had sclerotic, aging, out-of-touch leaderships. East Germany was a good case of that. The East German leadership under Erich Honecker had been fairly effective during most of the 1970s, but by the mid to late 1980s they were hopelessly out of touch with reality. They had no idea what was going on in their own society. The official programs for youth were just farcical. They were a bunch of old guys living on their memories of street battles against the Nazis, and they didn't understand Gorbachev. Gorbachev, to them, must have been like John Kennedy had been to Adenauer and De Gaulle and Macmillan, a young man who doesn't remember the things they remember, a man whose formative experiences were not their formative experiences. They saw Gorbachev not as a reformer but as someone unwilling to confront the ideological challenges they saw threatening the integrity of the socialist bloc.

Q: I realize you were working on the Western side, but on the Eastern side, where there any new figures that seemed to be coming up?

MERRY: Certainly in Poland. My specialty was not just inner-German relations but East Germany. Clearly the one country that was the exception within the East bloc was Poland, and increasingly, Hungary. Hungary had reformed communism, sometimes called goulash communism.

Q: Hungary was sort of slipping under the radar in a way.

MERRY: A little bit, but the Hungarians had been doing that slowly since 1956. The country well above the radar was, of course, Poland, because Solidarity had come out of its period of imprisonment and was able to challenge the government in open, free elections and win.

Moscow had made clear it was not going to intervene, and the changing dynamics of Poland were seen as terrifying to leaders in places like Prague, Sofia, and East Berlin. What was most terrifying was that Moscow was so benign about it all. These other guys expected Moscow to do something, to put a stop to the erosion, and when Gorbachev and Shevardnadze were willing to let Poland be Poland, that was pretty scary to the rulers in the other East bloc countries.

Q: When you're looking at this thing strategically, the situation between West and East, you had two big armies sitting there. Poland sat astride the main communications of the Soviet army.

MERRY: Certainly. The Group of Soviet forces in Germany was composed of 22 armored and mechanized divisions with vast air forces, nuclear weapons, and everything that went with it, and it was almost totally dependent on railway lines and fuel pipelines crossing Poland. The Soviets had, for a number of years, ever since the beginning of Solidarity in Poland, been trying to develop alternatives: expanding land routes across Hungary and Czechoslovakia and sea routes across the Baltic. But Poland was the strategic hinterland of the Soviet position in Germany, and militarily, without Poland, the whole thing didn't make a lot of sense. This has to be seen in conjunction with the fact that Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had already come to the conclusion that the Cold War was a mistake, unwinnable, and that they needed to get out of it to release resources for Soviet reform. They were beginning the diplomacy that would lead to the treaty on intermediate-range nuclear forces, the elimination of all of their SS-20s and of all of our cruise missiles and intermediate-range missiles from Europe; that would lead to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, certainly the most successful arms reduction—not just arms control but arms reduction—treaty that has ever been. That treaty led to the scrapping of tens of thousands of battle tanks and armored combat vehicles and artillery systems and all the rest of this junk in Europe; it transformed a Cold War Europe that had been an armed camp on both sides for decades into a semi-demilitarized zone with extraordinary speed and consequences.

I think the senior people in Moscow understood something which didn't quite yet compute to us in the West, but was realized at the level of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze. I'm not talking about the Soviet general staff, who, of course, were very upset about this. The political leadership was less concerned about the changes in Poland because they were willing to accept a massive reduction of armaments, theirs and NATO's, throughout Central Europe. Given that the changes in Poland, which they knew they couldn't deal with other than by massive military intervention anyway, were something they had to accept, they might as well make a virtue of necessity. This was all very puzzling to the West, because everybody's assumption, my own as well till then, was that there were clear limits to what the Soviets would ever tolerate concerning Germany. In fact, in the developing relationship between West Germany and the Soviet Union, between Gorbachev and Helmut Kohl, there was much more understanding and basic agreement than there ever was between Erich Honecker and Gorbachev. Still, neither Gorbachev nor Kohl understood the speed with which political changes would accelerate nor that the dynamic would be driven not from above but from below, by events within societies. They did not recognize their own incapacity to control or direct these events. Not just in Poland, but in Romania, in East Germany, then in Czechoslovakia, and then, of course, in the Soviet Union itself. Nobody appreciated that this great incoming tide of history was going to move as dramatically and as quickly as it in fact did.

However, by 1987, things certainly were in flux. For example, about the future of Yugoslavia, could it maintain its internal integrity, how would it respond to a period of severe economic decline and political crisis—how would that fit in to everything else happening in Europe? There were also dramatic changes within the traditional political left in many Western countries. The Cold War roles of such stalwarts as the Italian Communist Party, the Italian Socialist Party and the French Communist Party—these parties were just crumbling. Younger voters in Western Europe saw the Cold War as a tiresome, irrational anachronism, and this was matched by their counterparts in the East, in Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania, who were willing to start pushing and pushing hard. This was a fascinating dynamic to behold and was why I really wanted to go back to our embassy in East Berlin. Unfortunately, I was one grade too junior for the position, and another officer, a good friend of mine, who was certainly superbly qualified for the job, got it.

Q: Who was that?

MERRY: That was Jonathan Greenwald, who was the last political counselor in East Berlin. He later wrote a fascinating book about the experience. We had an excellent embassy in East Berlin which I would have loved to rejoin. But 'twas not to be. Ironically, just as things in my part of the world—the socialist bloc, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Central Europe, the places that were of most interest to me and where I had already done two assignments, in East Berlin and in Moscow—were beginning to undergo their greatest changes ever, I was sidelined for an assignment in Athens.

This was a classic personnel issue. There just wasn't a job at my grade with my languages. I didn't speak Czech or Polish or Hungarian, and all the jobs in Moscow I would have wanted were, again, still one grade beyond me. I needed one more promotion before I could get the jobs I would want, and most of them were not available in terms of the rotation cycle anyway. Unless I wanted to spend another year in Washington, which, for personal reasons, I did not, it meant going off for a while in a different direction.

PIERRE SHOSTAL
Consul General
Hamburg (1985-1987)

Pierre Shostal was born in Paris in 1937. He graduated from Yale in 1956 and from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1958. His postings include Leopoldville, Kinshasa, Brussels, Lilongwe, Moscow, Kigali, Hamburg and Frankfurt. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 16, 1997.

SHOSTAL: I went to Hamburg, Germany as Consul General.

Q: You were there from '85 to?

SHOSTAL: To '87.

Q: How did you break back into the European Bureau? I mean, did they still feel that you were one of theirs?

SHOSTAL: I did know some people still in the European Bureau and learned in the Winter of '84-'85 that the position in Hamburg was coming up. I was asked if I was interested, and I told them that I was. So that's how it came about.

Q: At one point back in the '40s and '50s a third of our Foreign Service Officers served in Germany. Germany in many ways no longer has the same prominence. As seen by a Consul General in Germany in this '85 to '87 period, what was the situation from your perspective in Germany at that point?

SHOSTAL: Overall, it was a strong relationship that we had with Germany. We had been the protecting power for Germany for three decades at that point, four decades really, since the war. We had fostered an economic revival and a well deeply rooted democracy. Germany really was very much a success story. At the same time, by the mid-'80s there were definite elements of malaise that had crept into the relationship that had a lot to do with developments both in Germany itself and the United States. First in Germany, Germany had for some time been uncomfortable with its role as a front line state, that would be overrun and probably destroyed if there were a World War. At the same time that you had, beginning in the late '60s the rise, or let's say the return, of a considerable amount of pacifist and anti-military feeling, which was part of the generational politics of that time. Another factor that contributed to malaise was the really bruising political fight that had just recently concluded in '83 over deployment of Pershing missiles and cruise missiles to Germany as a counter to the Soviet deployment of the SS-20s that we talked about some time ago. That period had been characterized by violent street demonstrations, and much of the political left and even some of the political center in Germany were disaffected by what they saw as an overmilitarization of American policy. This, combined with some of the rather harsh anti-Soviet rhetoric of the Reagan Administration added to this feeling of disenchantment on the part of a considerable part of the German political elite and intellectual establishment.

Q: Who was your Ambassador when you were there?

SHOSTAL: It was Ambassador Arthur Burns, the former Head of the Fed and, before that, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors.

Q: Did you, either from him, from the desk, did you have any particular agenda when you went to Hamburg or was it just sort of go there and do your own business?

SHOSTAL: Well, I think there were a couple of things that the desk and the Embassy were hoping I would be able to do. One obviously was to report on what was going on in the northern part of Germany, because we were responsible for three of the then ten German states. During the time I was there we also picked up a fourth, Bremen. So, there was quite a bit of territory to cover and also what they hoped that I would be able to do would be to engage in dialogue with

some of the political elite and journalists, Hamburg being a big publishing center, to try to explain American policy and to foster a greater degree of its understanding for American policy.

Q: How did you find the German press, the media, during your time there? Were there problems?

SHOSTAL: There were quite a few problems, because many of the publications whose staffs I was in contact with were skeptical about American policy. They saw too much emphasis on the military; not enough emphasis on trying to dialogue with the Soviets. Keep in mind that a further factor that came on the scene at about that time was Gorbachev's reform program in the Soviet Union. He came to power in 1985, the year I arrived in Hamburg. As his reform efforts gathered steam, there was more and more pressure, more and more appeals on the part of the many Germans that I dealt with to take him at his word, to try to work with him on political dialogue, rather than rely so much on military responses.

Q: During this time were you finding that the American response was beginning to change as Reagan warmed up to Gorbachev?

SHOSTAL: Yes, very definitely. The 1985 meeting in Geneva between Gorbachev and Reagan seemed to change at least the psychological atmosphere quite a bit. Remember that this was followed by the meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, in which it appeared as if the United States and the Soviet Union had come very close to an agreement to abolish nuclear weapons. Some Germans blamed primarily the United States for the failure because of Reagan's refusal to give up the Strategic Defense Initiative. This was the kind of thing that these critics saw as an overmilitarized American response to the Gorbachev phenomenon.

Q: The Strategic Defense Initiative, SDI, also known as Star Wars, was greeted with an awful lot of skepticism in the United States. The experts said it can't be done. This was centrally an anti missile system. But, how did you view it and how did you deal with it when you were talking to the Germans?

SHOSTAL: Well, I saw a fundamental contradiction in the Soviet response to SDI. On the one hand they would argue that it couldn't work. I remember going to a lecture by a very prominent Soviet physicist, Roald Sagdoyev, in which he said at the University of Hamburg that SDI would never work. That was part one of his presentation. Part two of his presentation was how this was destabilizing to the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union and would lead to political tensions. When I heard that it seemed to me that something is strange here and there certainly was a contradiction. That sense of contradiction converted me from having been initially very critical of SDI, to recognizing that the Soviets were worried about it for other reasons that they really weren't stating. I think those reasons had much to do with the pressure and challenge that SDI represented to their economic system, to their scientific establishment and their fear that they simply wouldn't be able to keep up with American technology development that might result from the SDI.

Q: This brings up a question and I think I would like to sample. During this period, we're talking about '85 to '87. Within five years we saw the dissolution of the Soviet Empire. Did you have any

feeling that things were beginning to click in the United States, because we had talked about previously that there was this feeling that maybe the Soviets were on the move and all that. Were you seeing a real earth change or not or was this not apparent?

SHOSTAL: Not at that stage. I think that the mental picture that I at least had of the situation in the United States was that we really had not yet overcome some of our internal structural problems, for example with the economy. The weakness and fragility of the Soviet system certainly was not apparent at that stage. In fact, I must say that I felt that Gorbachev's arrival on the scene might really result in a revival of Soviet economic strength and their ability to compete with us.

Q: What about the German temperament? We talked about the media before. Did you sense the reporters, many of the media types tend to come out of the same basket almost in a lot of countries. One into being investigative reporters and the other one being of a fairly liberal persuasion and having kind of fun being anti-American.

SHOSTAL: To a certain extent. Investigated reporting, with only one or two exceptions, is not highly developed in Germany. It wasn't then and I think still isn't. There was a group of journalists who were trendy, anti-American, and increasingly infatuated with Gorbachev. Now, that wasn't universally true. There were certain publications, certain individual journalists, who were quite conservative, and who had really very friendly and understanding feelings towards the United States. Keep in mind that some of this generation lived through the period of American help to rebuild Germany and had feelings of real gratitude. Others, who also lived through that period seemed to have more of what I would call the kind of disappointed lover attitude towards the United States. For them, the United States, because of the Vietnam War, because of the domestic problems that emerged in the '60s and '70s, really no longer had the appeal that it once had. You saw with some of them a kind of overreaction and tendency to see overwhelmingly a negative picture of the United States.

Q: How about President Ronald Reagan, who had been a movie star and considered by many to be, certainly when he first came in, an extreme right wing President, and rather a lightweight because of the movie connection. Close to the end of his second term what were you getting from your Germans?

SHOSTAL: Well, there was quite a bit of the kind of view that you were just describing. On the other hand, some journalists and thoughtful Germans, particularly more conservative ones, said that Reagan had performed a very important role in restoring to America its self-confidence after the Vietnam War. So, there was a kind of a split image view of Reagan.

Q: What about the intellectual community? First, let's talk about the students. I must say I'm always impressed when I see German students somewhere. They seem to take their politics much more seriously than we seem to in the United States, but maybe this is the group that always turns up in front of the T.V. camera. Were you able to deal with the German students?

SHOSTAL: As with much of Germany you get contradictory pictures. On the one hand you get what you're suggesting. I think that German young people had absorbed an enormous amount of

influence from the United States. In their dress, the music they listen to, life styles, and travel. They love to travel in the United States, where they saw a freer society less bound by regulations and taboos. In terms of life styles a view of the Americans is a very appealing place to them. On the other hand, during this period I observed also a rather strongly critical element in what they were saying about American policy. So, on the one hand a positive view of American society, but a critical one of American policy. That characterized students mostly at that point on the left. Now, you also had during that period, '85-'87, what I would call the Boris Becker phenomenon. In 1985, Boris Becker at the age of 17 won a Wimbledon for his first time and he came to symbolize a generation of young people, younger than the ones I was just describing, who were more conservative, and more attracted to the idea of economic and other personal accomplishment and less ready to accept a view of the United States as being too militaristic. It's of course a phenomenon you begin to see about the same time in the United States of younger people becoming more conservative. So, as time went on, younger people became more sympathetic toward United States policies.

Q: What about the faculty and in the area you were talking about then, The Northern part of Germany? Was there a strong sort of Marxist type faculty? Has that developed as it had really in the United States and, to some extent, other places?

SHOSTAL: There was quite a bit of the phenomenon of intellectuals and university professors being influenced by Marxists theories and Marxists critiques of the United States. Perhaps less so in places like Hamburg and Kiel; more so in Bremen, which had quite a leftist faculty as well as student body. People who came of age in the late '60s to early '70s, younger faculty, tended to have those views more than older people who tended to be more conservative.

Q: Did you get into dialogues with them?

SHOSTAL: I had quite a few meetings with student groups and with professors which I found sometimes stimulating, other times frustrating, because it was difficult with some of the more strident critics to have much in the way of dialogue.

Q: With the Germans did you find a difference between say, the Germans and the French? I mean, one thinks of the French, particularly when you get into the intelligentsia of going in for theory, as opposed to the practical side of the Americans. Did you find theory versus practicality?

SHOSTAL: In the German environment it took a slightly different form. The Germans like to talk about what they call an overall concept, a Gesamtkonzept. I would often run into German journalists who would be dismissive of American policy because, as they saw it, it didn't have this over-arching concept to guide it. I think that they were wrong, but that was often the critique that they would see American policy moves as improvised and responsive to domestic pressure, not part of a grand strategy. You had about that same period in France a very important shift, intellectually. That was from the earlier love affair with Marxism, to a sharp reaction, by the late '70s, and it certainly continued into the '80s against Marxism and moving toward a more positive view of the United States. Although, it was less pronounced in Germany, I think there was something of that same shift going on in the mid to late '80s in Germany, as well.

Q: Did you find there was a good understanding of the United States, you know, history and politics and all from or brought about by visitors, by exchanges of professors and all that or was there still a pretty much of a, the United States was viewed by either the evening news or by the movies?

SHOSTAL: Again, with Germany you get a very mixed picture. There were certain people, certain journalists, policy thinkers, politicians, professors who knew the United States very well. They had spent a lot of time studying and working here, had a very good grasp. If I could just interject here, I think this was one of the major benefits of the exchange programs, particularly the educational exchange programs that we had, that we build up a cadre of Germans who really, not only spoke our language in a literal sense, but also understood our way of thinking, understood our domestic politics and how it reflected itself in our foreign policy. Now, on the other hand you had by the '80s a lot of other German students and others who had traveled to the United States, but had spent shorter amounts of time here and gathered some superficial impressions, many of which were critical, some of which were of course fed by young Americans whom they would meet and who would feed their rather negative picture of America. So, you had a somewhat contradictory picture of all that.

Q: Was there a feeling with German students, faculty, that the American students weren't serious?

SHOSTAL: I think to a certain extent there was that. But, increasingly I think in the '80s and certainly now through the '90s there has been a recognition that, whereas some aspects of the German educational system are very good (secondary school education, vocational training, technical training), universities are really in very bad shape for a variety of reasons. Many well-informed Germans think the American university system, particularly private universities, are superior in many respects: in scholarship, superior in many kinds of education that American students at that level get. So, increasingly I have seen a growing respect for the American educational system, especially at the university and post graduate level.

Q: How about the America House, had they reduced their role or were they still important?

SHOSTAL: Well, the number had been reduced considerably and has since then continued to decline. That was certainly a net loss in terms of our ability to establish contact and influence Germans, particularly younger Germans. But, keep in mind during the early postwar years, which I think you're familiar with, we were trying to get Germany back on its feet and build a democracy. By the '80s Germany had done those things and the need for a very large information and cultural presence was not so great.

Q: Were you sort of keeping a watching brief on concerns about racism and this sort of thing?

SHOSTAL: Well, yes. But, interestingly enough that wasn't a major concern of the Germans that I was in touch with. What came up more often was a sense that the American society was unfair to the poor and favored the rich. This, I think was partly a reflection of very different social systems, welfare systems, also a reflection of some of the rhetoric and policy decisions of the

Reagan Administration. So, you got more of that kind of criticism of America as an unfair society than a racist society.

Q: How about the side that used to be the predominant one. I'm talking about back in the 19th century and that's a commercial side. What were your commercial responsibilities and problems and doing this in this very wealthy and busy area?

SHOSTAL: The basic problem that we had, at least in the mid-'80s was an over-valued dollar, which made selling in Europe and in Germany very difficult. There was also, at that time, a somewhat negative view of the quality of American products and especially toward the attitude of American companies toward after-sales service. Over and over again I would hear from the German businessmen that American companies really weren't serious, weren't committed to exports to Germany. They allegedly would show up once in a while when they thought they needed some extra sales, but they really weren't committed for the long run, and that Americans didn't have a long term strategic approach, a strategic concept to do business in Germany. It was on a bit of a parallel of the critique of our foreign policy.

Q: I was somewhat earlier in the '70s getting the same complaint in South Korea, because the United States is a huge market and it obviously had priority. I mean, for many firms they wiggle up to Europe as a place to take care of it. They wanted to make short term gains, but they weren't willing to make that full commitment.

SHOSTAL: I think that one thing to recognize about our economic relationship with Germany is that the major American companies, big corporations, have been established in Germany for many, many years. General Motors, Ford, IBM, Dow Chemical, they've all been in Germany and really increasingly, this was an interesting development for me to watch, had become German firms. The executives of the companies were Germans, there were very few Americans in top positions any more.

Q: What was your role on the commercial side?

SHOSTAL: We had a commercial section that I worked with and it was primarily for me to be kind of a spokesman for American products. I would frequently go to Trade Fairs. For example, in Hanover which is a major Trade Fair. It was within our Consulate District and I spent a lot of time going to Trade Fairs and talking to German businessmen and giving speeches. So, rather than being a salesman in direct sense, I would try to be a spokesman for American companies, give speeches talking about the American economy to try to correct some of the misconceptions that Germans had.

Q: You were sort of doing this at the beginning of the information explosion. We are talking about the word processor computer. Did you find that the United States had a, I mean was this a market we were trying to develop and how were the Germans responding?

SHOSTAL: Very definitely we were trying to develop it. In fact, we were to a large extent dominating already at that point the computer market in both hardware and increasingly in software, as well. There was only one relatively successful German computer company which

later went broke.

Q: Were there any other developments in Hamburg in this '85 to '87 period?

SHOSTAL: Well, I think the big change was the beginning of an improved U.S.-Soviet relationship and the influence that was beginning to exercise on our relations with Germany.

Q: One last question on this. By this time was it pretty well the idea that the Soviet Union was a threat to Germany, had that pretty well dissipated?

SHOSTAL: To a very large extent it had because of the conviction that Gorbachev was interested in peace and that he might really be able to reform the Soviet Union and make it a very different place.

Q: How about NATO? Was that being challenged at all from your perspective within Germany?

SHOSTAL: Not as an institution, with some exceptions on the far left. But, the public opinion polls at that time and the bulk of the journalist establishment really all favored the existence of NATO. They were critical, as I said, of certain aspects of American policy, but were not challenging the need for NATO.

Q: Were you able to deal with the communist party of Germany?

SHOSTAL: No, we didn't have any contact.

Q: Was it of any...?

SHOSTAL: That's what I was trying to say. It was of no significance and was even considered a subversive organization by the German government and closely watched by the German Security Services.

Q: How about the unification of Germany? Was there any thought, I mean, we're talking about three or four or a couple of years down the road that Germany was unified. But, was this even a gleam in anyone's eye?

SHOSTAL: It was something, I think, that many Germans would think about, but wouldn't talk about. When anybody would talk about it, notably Ronald Reagan in a speech that he gave in Berlin in June of '87 where he appealed to Mr. Gorbachev to tear down the Wall, the Germans largely felt that this was not helpful, that this was provocative toward the Soviets and would not promote the kind of quiet, step-by-step very gradual sort of improvement of the situation in East Germany that they were hoping to see.

Q: Were you getting any reflections about the East German economy or the society there or the feelings of the people?

SHOSTAL: I think there was a view on the part of many Germans that even though the East

German economy was much weaker than that of West Germany, still these were Germans and that they were doing the best they could with a not very good political and economic system. In other words, there was definitely a tendency to overestimate the strength and vitality of the East Germany government among some intellectuals who, for example, wrote for the German weekly Die Zeit, which is headquartered in Hamburg. Some of their senior people spent several weeks touring East Germany and came back and wrote articles about how they had discovered in East Germany, the true Germany. They saw it as an older type of Germany, one that had not been subject to American influences. There was a certain strain of anti-Americanism in that feeling that East German society was probably a pretty good place, because it was really much more German.

GEOFFREY W. CHAPMAN
Deputy Political Counselor
Bonn (1985-1989)

Geoffrey Chapman was born in England and raised in England and Boston. He became a naturalized American citizen in 1957 and attended Bowdoin College and Princeton. He later entered the Foreign Service in 1971 and served in Germany, the USSR, and England. He also held several positions within the State Department. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: You left Moscow in '85. Whither?

CHAPMAN: Bonn.

Q: So you went to- and you were in Bonn from '85 through when?

CHAPMAN: Through '89.

Q: Through '89. You had seen lots of changes wherever you were. What job did you have in Bonn?

CHAPMAN: I went there as the head of the political military unit in Bonn and then moved up after a year to be deputy political counselor. I got the assignment through Rick Burt, whom I'd worked for in the PM bureau.

Q: And Burt was ambassador?

CHAPMAN: Burt arrived in Bonn in late summer of 1985. I had known his DCM, Jim Dobbins, for a number of years as well. Frankly a lot of people had a hard time working with Rick Burt, although I managed to get along with him reasonably well.

I: I've heard that when he came in he was sort of in a way busting up the old German club and bringing some, I mean, at least I've heard people say he was trying, you know, coming in with a

different crew. And you, I mean-

CHAPMAN: I guess I was one of them. Although I'd served in German affairs before, I could hardly qualify as a charter member of the German club. I remember when I got to Bonn that some people were murmuring that I had gotten the assignment simply because I was one of Rick Burt's people, not because of my qualifications, background, and experience. Jim Dobbins as I recall had not served in Germany before but he was certainly very knowledgeable on the international security issues that were a huge component of our relations with the Germans at that time, as of course was Burt. Burt was still relatively young and had his own ideas of how to run an embassy, and he did not have a smooth relationship with the foreign minister at the time, Hans-Dietrich Genscher. On the other hand, he had served as Assistant Secretary for European Affairs and had good ties to the White House, and was effective at getting Embassy views across in Washington. Frankly, I think that the German club had become too inbred at that point, and that what Burt did was probably good for the service.

Q: Oh, absolutely. Well, when you got there what was, with political military, what was the issue? In the first place, had you gotten any, I mean, by the time you got there, how had the SS-20 versus the Pershing missile, cruise missile thing, had that settled?

CHAPMAN: No. Negotiations had only resumed in March in a new three-part format of strategic, intermediate range and space negotiations. The major decisions had already been taken about the deployment of Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles in Germany, but we were still in the process of implementing those decisions. I was the co-chair with a German MOD counterpart of a working group dealing with all the fine details of implementing the deployment decisions. There was a tremendous amount of public opposition in Germany to the deployments, and to counter that we had an active public diplomacy campaign. I remember doing a tremendous amount of public speaking at the time. The Germans loved to invite American diplomats to talk to local party organizations and university groups, and a frequent tactic of theirs was to invite both an American diplomat and a Soviet diplomat to the same session and have us both speak, in the anticipation that we would be at odds with each other and then the German hosts, mirroring the role the German government often saw for itself, could step in a build bridges between us. Interestingly enough, it sometimes turned out that the Soviet and I would agree and the Germans would take a different position entirely. SDI was of course a big issue at the time because the Europeans-

Q: Strategic Defense Initiative.

CHAPMAN: Yes, the Strategic Defense Initiative. The Europeans and the Germans in particular were just not convinced about its validity, viewing it not as a defensive move but rather an effort to gain superiority over the Soviet Union, effectively ratcheting tensions up even further. I myself was not a strong believer in SDI but obviously I had to go out there and defend the policy and argue for it, sometimes in solid left wing environments. But even in those environments the discourse was always at a fairly rational level. There was little in the way of invective, vituperation, or insults. It was all very much on an intellectual plane. My experiences with the right wing in Germany were somewhat different. During my second, third and fourth years in Bonn, when I was deputy counselor, I worked closely with Dobbins and Burt on international

security issues. We had umpteen visits by Paul Nitze and other major administration officials who came to consult with the Germans on arms control -- Mike Glitman, who was in charge of the INF component of the negotiations, and John Tower, who was head of the START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) strategic side of the negotiations. I ended up doing a lot of speechwriting for Burt on international security topics. This was tough assignment initially, but after a while I got to learn his style and to anticipate his needs and thoughts. There were definitely some rough angles in U.S.-Germany relations at that time, a lot of this irritation stemming from what we saw as efforts by the foreign ministry and Genscher personally to take what we thought was too much of an equidistant position vis-à-vis the United States and the Soviet Union. Germany was, after all, a NATO ally, and the expectation on our side was that they would support us and work with us rather than trying to set themselves up as sort of a third entity midway between the United States and the Soviet Union. This rubbed a lot of people the wrong way.

Q: What about, how about Kohl? Where did he fit in this?

CHAPMAN: Kohl was instinctively more pro-American than Genscher, but Genscher really ran the show in foreign policy. It was intriguing to watch as Washington, thinking that the U.S. model of a powerful White House/NSC role in foreign policy applied to Germany, would send somebody over to see Helmut Kohl and more or less ask him to bring Genscher into line. But the German cabinet system did not work that way. The answer was never satisfactory: Kohl would go on talking and talking but you'd never get a very clear line out of him. There was no chancellery apparatus that was any way as powerful as the NSC apparatus. The chancellery foreign policy staff consisted mainly of diplomats seconded from the Foreign Ministry whose careers largely depended on Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

Q: And Genscher had been there forever.

CHAPMAN: Yes. Horst Teltschik, who was the equivalent of our national security advisor, was not a strong political figure. Kohl was a frequent interlocutor for us, but the man who ran foreign policy was Genscher. The defense minister, Manfred Woerner, did not play much of a foreign policy role. He was solidly pro-American and enjoyed his contacts with the U.S., but within German government circles he was not a dominating figure like Genscher was.

Q: Well did, how did, while you were there, how did the confrontation work out as far as, you know, intermediate missiles? I mean, was it more or less, reach an equilibrium or something or were- during the four years you were there, were there lots of demonstrations?

CHAPMAN: U.S.-Soviet relations certainly improved considerably during the second half of the '80s, coinciding with my time in Bonn. There were summit meetings between Reagan and Gorbachev, and the INF treaty was concluded. Improvements in superpower relations made for far fewer disagreements between us and the Germans, who were very happy to see progress on INF in particular. With the zero option adopted in the INF agreement, this meant that the Pershing IIs and ground-launched cruise missiles would disappear from German soil, thus ending the political difficulties that deployment had caused for the Kohl administration.

The zero option originated, incidentally, with the Pentagon and personally with Richard Perle, who was generally seen as somewhat to the right of Genghis Khan. It was purely a political ploy from the start. The Defense Department essentially wanted to remove any pressure from the Europeans and others to adopt a more forthcoming arms control posture so they pressed for adoption of the most forthcoming arms control posture imaginable -- elimination of the weapons on both sides. But they reasoned that the Soviets would never accept zero, which meant that our INF deployments could go ahead as planned. You would think that the Europeans would accept the zero option as it would eliminate the Soviet threat and cancel out deployments on European soil. But they opposed it on the grounds that it was non-negotiable; the Soviets, they claimed, would never accept zero. So the German position for many years was that we should try to negotiate reductions down to a minimum level sufficient to deter Soviet use of the SS-20; but that a zero option was not serious.

Q: When we're talking about the zero option we're talking about the intermediate ones, not the intercontinental.

CHAPMAN: Yes, right. But even with the elimination of this class of missiles, the Germans still had concerns about the Soviet nuclear threat to Europe. Clearly the SS-20s were their primary concern, but even with their elimination the Germans, given their geographical position, were uniquely vulnerable within the Alliance to shorter range Soviet missiles forward deployed in Eastern Europe. So they put on a strong push for reducing or eliminating what were called short-range nuclear weapons concomitant with acceptance of zero to zero in intermediate range forces. Again this was area where there was a major asymmetry between the Soviets and NATO, in that we had very few of these shorter range systems -- some older LANCE systems that went back I think to the late '60s or early '70s but nothing that was modern and in the quantities the Soviets had in Eastern Europe.

Q: Were we concerned during this period you were there with someone under the push of Genscher of Germany making a deal and sort of opting out of NATO to be neutral and getting closer ties with East Germany or anything like that?

CHAPMAN: I don't think we had any concern at that time about Germany opting out of NATO as such. That was never seen to be really in the cards. I think there was a bit of concern about the Germans adopting more of a neutral stance. As I mentioned, one of their hopes was to try and set themselves up as sort of a third force between the Soviet Union and the United States and positioned to help the two superpowers come together for the benefit of all humanity. We were concerned when the Germans adopted this tack rather than behaving as we hoped they would as stalwart members of the Western Alliance. This ran the risk, as we saw it, of Germany adopting a more neutralist position on the issues.

As to ties between West and East Germany, this gets into the reunification question which, while historically ever-present, was starting to come to the fore in the last year or so that I was in Bonn. The long-held West German position on reunification, going back to the time of Brandt and Schmidt and Egon Bahr, was that this was a long-term process that in many ways depended less on overt moves to improve ties with the East German regime than on trying to open up the GDR and to build up people-to-people ties, to construct a network of ties between the two states in the

expectation that, together with a new generation in East Germany, this would bring about different political culture more attuned to the West and accustomed to dealing with the West. This went back to the slogan of “change through coming together” as coined by Brandt and Bahr: the Quadripartite Agreement and the follow-on agreements between West Germany and East Germany and between West Berlin and the GDR fitted very much into this Brandt-Bahr concept. Increased visits between Germans on both sides of the divide and increased cultural exchanges would serve to help build up this whole network of ties. This continued to be the basic German approach through to the time of Kohl and Genscher. If you asked the average politically-aware German in the spring of 1989 for his views on reunification, he would have replied that this was still a desirable goal that German politicians should keep in mind, but that it was something for the distant future and would not be achieved in his lifetime. At that point in time people had actually dropped the “re-“ and were talking about unification rather than reunification, recognizing that the two parts of the country had been separated for so long and had grown apart, so that you couldn’t really speak of just bringing them back together again -- they were two different entities that had to be merged in a more complex process. With the benefit of hindsight, we can now see that the Kohl government handled unification too much as a reunification, in the belief that the two parts of the country would easily meld back together again, and not enough as a unification, implying a more long-term and thought-out process in which the real differences between the two parts would have been taken fully into account.

Vernon Walters, who succeeded Rick Burt as ambassador in the spring of ’89, was much taken by the whole unification issue upon his arrival. So he asked the political section to do an in-depth analysis of thinking in the Germany body politic on the issue. Basically we came back with much the same answer that I’ve just described, that people were talking about it and saw it as a desirable goal but a long-term one that was not going to be achieved in their lifetimes. Walters thought somewhat differently, sensing that more rapid change was in the offing. And of course he was proved right. A couple of years later I asked Walters why he was so far ahead of the rest of us in the spring of ’89. He told me that he had been encouraged to believe that German unification would soon be a real possibility as a consequence of the Soviet decision to pull out of Afghanistan and to cease propping up the communist regime there. He had felt that this decision had immediate implications for Soviet policy in Eastern Europe, in the sense that, once a decision had been taken to let one communist regime fail, it would be harder politically to prop up deteriorating communist regimes elsewhere. With the political and societal ferment brewing in 1989, serious challenges were bound to come soon to communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Putting down such challenges might require substantial application of Soviet military force and would probably be a dubious proposition anyway; and it would go directly counter to Gorbachev’s policy of engagement and cooperation with the West and with what he was trying to achieve domestically.

Q: You mentioned earlier on, said, you know, the left wing was a problem but the right wing, that’s another story. Tell me about your experiences with the right wing in German politics.

CHAPMAN: One episode comes to mind from about February in ’89. I was invited to speak, again with a Soviet diplomat, in Bavaria, before a right wing organization. The discussion got around to reunification, with the question being posed to me as to what the U.S. had done recently to promote this. This was at a time before reunification became a hot topic, and I

essentially answered with the standard U.S. position that we supported reunification but that this was something that was a matter for the Germans themselves to decide, as part of a political process between West and East Germans. This was not something that the United States could instigate, and we weren't about to make a huge push with the Russians or with the East Germans in favor of unification. We would support reunification, indeed, but we were not about to get out in front and lead. This response was met with a chorus of boos on the part of my audience. One member of the audience maintained that by the terms of the 1954 conventions by which the FRG achieved full sovereignty the U.S. was obliged to work actively to overturn the regime in East Germany and reunify the country, not necessarily by brute military force but something close to this. Of course the language of the conventions did not require anything like this, but simply support for reunification. So my message did not get across very well and my Soviet counterpart in fact got more applause than I did at the end of the session.

Q: What about the Green Party? How did you see that at the time?

CHAPMAN: I don't think at the time anybody was particularly concerned about the Greens. They were represented in the Bundestag, but they were few in number and there was still a major conflict going on within the Greens between the Realists and the Fundis, the Fundamentalists, for control of the party. The CDU-FDP coalition was firmly entrenched, and if there was to be a change of government what we saw as most likely was the FDP changing sides as it had done back in 1982-3 when Kohl came to power. It was considered highly unlikely that the SPD could come to power on its own, and an alliance between the SPD and the Greens viewed as out of the question. The Greens were an irritant but were not seen as a potent political force. We had contacts with them, including with Joschka Fischer, later foreign minister in the Schroeder government, but we didn't see eye-to-eye on anything really.

Q: What about France? What the German-French connection a force that concerned us or we felt was great or how did we view that during the time you were there?

CHAPMAN: There was obviously a very close relationship between Kohl and Mitterrand and the two governments worked very closely together. They prided themselves as the engine of the European community. But there were areas of friction, on a practical level, in the Franco-German relationship. One such area had to do with the deployment of French forces in Germany: the French, much like us and the British, chafed under the increasing tight restrictions that the Germans tried to impose on troop and low level flying. This got to the point where much of the training for U.S. air force units stationed in Germany was conducted in British airspace, not over the territory that those units would be called upon to defend in the event of hostilities with the East. The French with their own nuclear force de frappe remained largely aloof from of what was going on in the arms control arena out of concern that if they got too engaged their own forces would be brought into the equation somehow; this didn't always sit very well with the Germans. Of course as you move up higher in the political hierarchy on both sides and addressed issues of European policy and European unity, the disagreements at a lower level were papered over. There was this tremendous belief on both sides that they had to do all they could politically to ensure that Franco-German disagreements not return to the level they had during the first half of the 20th century and that the two countries work in unison. My own feeling at the time was that this was something the Germans wholeheartedly embraced that but it seemed to go somewhat

against the grain for the French, who had always prided themselves on their national independence, independent foreign policy, and independent military and nuclear policy. Perhaps the French felt that they could better contain the Germans within a more unified European structure, and that folding them completely into Europe would prevent any future German aggression. Perhaps the Germans felt that given their size and economic strength they could effectively dominate a unified Europe and spread their political influence that way. They managed to work together, even though their ultimate aims may have been different.

Q: While you were there, did you see any shift in the situation in East Germany at that time?

CHAPMAN: Not to my recollection. Erich Honecker was a quintessential a hard-liner and a resolute supporter of the Soviet Union, and had very little or no tolerance for internal dissent. He sought to control the unrest and ferment that were beginning to swirl within East German society, particularly in the churches, but with limited success. Actually, my impression from what limited travel I had done in the GDR was that the society was not as tightly controlled and regimented as some in the west would have believed. I remember getting into discussion when I was in Berlin in the early '70s as how to characterize the East German regime. There some in the mission in Berlin at that time who simply characterized it as a dictatorship, but my own view was that it was more of an authoritarian than a totalitarian dictatorial society. It certainly was not a totalitarian society the way Nazi Germany was. The political process, right up until the downfall of the regime, was controlled by the communist party; but rigid controls did not seep down that deeply and were not all-pervasive. East Germany was economically the showcase of Eastern Europe, although when you went over from West Berlin to East Berlin the contrast could not be more marked. But compared to Poland, Rumania and certainly the Soviet Union, the East Germans were economically well off.

Q: What about, I mean as just recently having been a Soviet hand, what were you, how are you seeing the Gorbachev thing? Were you seeing that, you know, we've got to get ready for real changes or how were you doing, what you were getting?

CHAPMAN: I continued to follow events in the Soviet Union fairly closely for at least two or three years after I left Moscow. My sense was that in the '85-'86, early '87 timeframe Gorbachev was continuing to build his strength within the party and the bureaucratic apparatus and to put his stamp on Soviet society and policy; but there were fairly clear indications that he was not having his own way entirely, that there was a fair amount of internal opposition within the party to what he was trying to do. His opponents feared that any opening up of the society would jeopardize their and the party's dominant position, that it would be very hard to put a stop to reform when things went too far. I think a bit of caution on our part was justified at the time. Although perestroika and glasnost were the watchwords of the moment, and the Soviets were taking a more pragmatic and cooperative tack internationally, this did not mean that Gorbachev's ultimate success was assured or that U.S. and Soviet goals in international affairs were converging. The hardliners in Moscow could still influence policy. Their sway diminished as the years went by, but the events of 1990 proved that there was still life in them. Moreover, even in the late 80's Gorbachev's foreign policy aims were by no means identical with our own.

Q: Well then, well you left in the spring of '89?

CHAPMAN: Summer.

Q: Summer of '89.

CHAPMAN: July, yes.

Q: You didn't, there was no sense of après moi le deluge or anything like that?

CHAPMAN: No.

Q: I'm told that people came out and talked, were making presentations about how the split between East and West Germany was going to be there for a long time and in November practically.

CHAPMAN: By my recollection the sense in Bonn, both in the government and in the political class generally, was that the division between the two German states would continue for many more years. I don't think anybody really had any inkling that things would happen so fast.

Q: Well, one last question on this topic. When you were talking to, I assume you would talk from time to time to British, I mean German Foreign Service officers and all, did you find them at all restive under Genscher?

CHAPMAN: Restive?

Q: Well, I mean, you know, feeling that, I mean, did there seem to be a separate course or were they both disciplined and seemed to go along with how Genscher was running foreign policy?

CHAPMAN: German diplomats generally recognized that Genscher was a very powerful figure in the government and was very much in charge of foreign policy, and that this accordingly elevated the importance of the foreign office bureaucratically and their own role. Certainly there were some who in private conversations would express reservations about Genscher's policies and adopt what one might call a more pro-American stance, and who felt that Germany should not have this sort of in-between position between West and East and should be more firmly anchored in the Western camp. There were certainly people who would express those sentiments. I don't recall hearing of any open dissent within the foreign office. From time to time some of the diplomats who went over on temporary assignment to the Chancellery would articulate views somewhat different from Genscher's, but the Chancellery was not a powerful force in foreign policy.

Q: Chancellery being where Kohl was.

CHAPMAN: Yes, right.

Q: But anyway, I just want to say the chancellery was where the chancellor was.

CHAPMAN: Right.

Q: Kohl.

CHAPMAN: The foreign policy shop in the Chancellery was small but attracted some of the best people from the foreign service ranks. Among the senior people in the foreign office there was a powerful group of out-and-out Genscherites who had been his protégés going back to the mid-70's many years and whom he had promoted quickly through the ranks.

Q: Who'd been there long enough to really develop a-

CHAPMAN: These senior officers owed their rapid rise almost entirely to Genscher and they were intensely loyal.

JAMES DOBBINS
Relations with Russians
Bonn (1985-1989)

Ambassador James Dobbins was born in Brooklyn, NY and raised in New York, Philadelphia, Manila, Philippines and Washington, D.C. area. He attended Georgetown University and served in the US Navy before entering the Foreign Service in 1967. He served in France, Germany and England. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.

Q: Well, then, you went to Germany in '85?

DOBBINS: Right.

Q: And you were there from when to when?

DOBBINS: Eighty-five to '89.

Q: Where stood things in '85 when you were in Germany at that time?

DOBBINS: Helmut Kohl had been governing for I think about three to four years at that time, of what eventually was a 14-year period of government. Genscher was the foreign minister, from a different party, rather powerful, different ideological persuasion from Kohl. The coalition was not under any pressure or any real danger. The SPD was down in the polls. There was no real prospect of Kohl's losing power. The U.S.-German relationship was continuing to evolve. There were still lots of residues of the postwar relationship, including U.S. responsibilities in Berlin and other legacies of an earlier era. The American ambassador was still by far the most important non-German figure in Germany, and maybe the third or fourth most important figure including Germans, in terms of press, media attention and perceived influence, whether or not that was fully deserved. Big embassy, maybe the biggest in the world if you counted the constituent posts

– I think six or seven constituent posts, including the mission in West Berlin, which was bigger than all but, say, 10 or 15 embassies around the world itself and was under the ambassador in Bonn. So it was a big management job, as well as a pivotal policy post.

Q: Over the years, by being as big as it is, at one point in the '50s, I think, a third of the Foreign Service was actually in Germany. My first post was in Frankfurt from '55 to '58. Was there a good, solid core of experts on Germany at the embassy?

DOBBINS: There was a fairly healthy corps of German experts. In fact, there was some resentment that neither Rick nor I were drawn from that cadre. But, yes, we had substantial German language capability in our political and economic sections, and quite competent people to rely on in that regard. Most of the principle officers in the other posts spoke German well. There was a cadre, a considerable depth of expertise.

Q: I was talking to, and the name escapes me, he later was ambassador to East Germany.

DOBBINS: I don't remember the name. Ambassador to Turkey, as well, right?

Q: Yes, he was ambassador to Turkey, too. He said something about when Burt came in, he cleaned out the German expertise and that left most of the German experts in the mission in Berlin. I'd just like you to comment on that.

DOBBINS: I think the only job in which Burt put someone who wasn't a German expert where there had traditionally been one was mine. I didn't speak German when I got there, although I did by the time I left. Other than that, he may have replaced one German expert with another. The community was sufficiently ingrown so that people would say, that somebody else who might be a native speaker of Germany, but he'd only served in Austria, so he didn't count. I think our political counselor was Olaf Glovel, whose wife was German, who spoke perfect German, but who had I think not served in West Germany before, and so therefore wasn't considered part of the club, although he was eminently qualified.

Then one person, at least, two people left who were there, both voluntarily at their own accord. One sort of left in a huff because he couldn't get along with Olaf. I never quite understood why. It wasn't that they had been working together. It was a feeling that this person had expected to be promoted and wasn't, or something, but sort of left, sort of saying, "I just don't feel comfortable here." Another left because he got a better job offer. But they were replaced by other people who spoke German and were competent to do the job.

I think that it was a sufficiently sort of ingrown community, so that it took itself more seriously than need be. I think it's sort of symptomatic of a group of people who had more leisure time and less to worry about than maybe they shouldn't have.

Q: So it was a thing where the experts are considered, what is it, the son of a bitches from out of town.

DOBBINS: I think also they had had a series of fairly low-key ambassadors, political appointees

like Arthur Burns, who was very prestigious but also very low energy and senior career people like Marty Hillenbrand and all, who were very traditionalist in their orientation, and suddenly they got an ambassador who was still in his 30s, when he got there, who was young, telegenic, ambitious, imaginative, and willing to try new things, shake things up, but be much more activist, or much more obtrusively present in the German media, and who was prepared to make a much higher level of demands on the embassy staff to do things that were not traditional and some of them were uncomfortable doing.

Q: Well, what about the relationship with Berlin, because, in a way, I have never served there but it seems that over the years we developed sort of a priesthood and a dogma about Berlin, what you can and can't do. There's always been this sort of separation between Bonn and Berlin. This must have been a problem.

DOBBINS: Well, first of all, of course there were two Berlins, and there was an embassy in one and a mission in the other. The mission was a separate diplomatic mission. The chief of mission in Berlin was the American ambassador in Bonn, but the mission in Berlin was not a constituent post in Bonn. It was a separate diplomatic mission, and then the ambassador's deputy there was the minister. It was even more complicated because, in fact, the ambassador's deputy was the commandant in Berlin and then his deputy was the American minister. So, theoretically, the American minister's chain of command went through the commandant to the ambassador. That was more nominal than real.

The mission in Berlin liked to think of itself as independent. On the other hand, the rating officer for the Minister in Berlin was the DCM in Bonn, which meant that in sort of the Foreign Service hierarchy of who rates whose performance, it was a fairly clear subordination, although one that the Minister there was never entirely comfortable with and tried to evade whenever possible. But Rick and the embassy in Bonn had established fairly effective management controls, including over the budget. Berlin had a budget that was derived from the German occupation budget, so it had a very generous budget, extraordinarily generous, but Bonn had taken over administering that budget and controlling its expenditures, which was another source of unhappiness. There was a gradual regularization of the situation and a gradual subordination of Berlin to the embassy in Bonn, which Berlin was never comfortable with and which was never complete, but which was always a source of minor tension.

There is a certain preserved-in-amber quality to all of the arrangements associated with Berlin, derived from its rather unnatural status as this Western enclave in the middle of East Germany, under nominal allied sovereignty, with ties to West Germany, operating in many respects as state in the West German Federation, but with West German sovereignty quite limited. These arrangements, because they were so arcane and artificial, needed to be preserved with some care. One couldn't be too cavalier about them, because the security and the stability tended to rest on these arcane arrangements, going back to the late 1940s.

It was a kind of last outpost of empire. I remember either the Ambassador or I could get a plane to fly to Berlin on two-hours' notice. The U.S. Air Force, no question, no bills. Ambassador and DCM want to fly to Berlin, any time. You could also get a train. You needed a little more time, because there was only one, but if you asked for it and booked it, you could actually have your

own private train, which would take you to Berlin. It wasn't a very efficient way to go. I only did it once because I thought my children would enjoy driving on their own train, and it was a rather extraordinary legacy of the postwar era, that we still maintained a private train, mostly used by our military, but available to the ambassador and DCM to whisk them off to Berlin, as if it was still 1948.

Q: What was the situation vis-à-vis the Soviets in '85 to '89, as regards Germany. Was the missile crisis still out there at the beginning?

DOBBINS: It was, largely. The first deployments occurred, I think, in '84, or early '85, in any case, before I got to Germany. I think they hadn't put any missiles into Germany at that stage, but they had begun to deploy them in several other countries, and Germany was next on the list. Once the missiles started being deployed, the issue became less prominent, among other things, because it was something of a *fait accompli*.

There were still demonstrations, but the large-scale demonstrations were largely over in Germany. They were earlier, in '83, '84. One of the Pershing missiles, the Pershing I, rather than the Pershing II, actually exploded when I was there. Fortunately, nothing happened to the warhead, but the missile exploded, which caused a good deal of nervousness, which we had to tamp down, as one could imagine. And there were lots of little *contretemps* of that sort, but by and large, the issue was quiescent.

Relations with the Soviet Union, of course, once Gorbachev got into power were steadily improving. There was a lot of debate how meaningful this was, how sincere he was, the longevity of the process, but by and large it was a period of improvement. The East and West Germans were negotiating various sort of *détente*, *ostpolitik*-type things all of the time. Our contacts with the Soviets were minimal. There were a couple of spy exchanges where Rick went to the Glenica Bridge to pick up Nathan Sharansky, for instance. We conducted these negotiations. We did a couple of spy swap negotiations. Again, reminiscent of an earlier age.

Q: Well, I would think that dealing with the German government at this time, foreign embassy, would have been a little bit peculiar in that you had Helmut Kohl, who was a great power and was going to be a power for some time, but you had Genscher, who was the foreign minister, who was a power and continued to be a power unto himself. Was there air between Genscher and Kohl? Did you find yourself having to check with one to make sure you weren't getting just the Genscher side, but you had to get the Kohl side on?

DOBBINS: We of course tried to play one against the other to our advantage and had some limited success in that regard. Kohl was more conservative, more in tune with Washington's preferences, although not entirely, but he tended to be more responsive on issues than Genscher would be. Genscher was more interested in *ostpolitik* and *détente* and negotiating improvements in East-West relations. He gave voice to a softer version of German policy, but was influential and under the German system had a good deal of autonomy and ability to pursue policies without much interference from the chancellor. We worked closely with the chancellor's national security adviser, Horst Teltschik. But Teltschik had limited influence when Genscher felt strongly in an opposite direction. Sometimes, we'd get caught between the two and it would become

uncomfortable to us, never to a severe degree, but there were occasions when Genscher was clearly unhappy with our effort to maneuver him out of some position he had taken. But, by and large, the Germans accepted Washington's preeminence within the alliance, their dependence on the alliance and the United States for their security. They wanted to work closely with us, and by and large it was very pleasant. Both Rick and I had extraordinary access within the German government. So, basically, quite rewarding, quite professional in our relationship. We had a lot of friends there, and probably closer friends than any other post, partially because we were there so long. The German officials tended to be very professional and very accessible.

Q: Did you find that there was sort of the Reagan card? I would think Kohl and Reagan would have gotten along well. Was there any duplication of the Thatcher-Reagan?

DOBBINS: Not really. First of all, Kohl didn't speak English and never really made any effort to learn it. He and Reagan were very different personalities, and Kohl, while he was a conservative in the German spectrum, was far to the left of Reagan on issues like East-West relations and relations with the Soviet Union. So, no, they weren't soul mates the way that Thatcher and Reagan were. Kohl wasn't leading a conservative revolution in Germany. Even on social policies, the Germans had their social market economy, and Kohl was not challenging that.

Q: Did the close relationship between Thatcher and Reagan, the British and the Americans, did that bother the Germans at all?

DOBBINS: No, I don't think so, because the relationship between Germany and Washington was quite close, in some ways, more so, because there were just more issues on which Germany and the United States, because we had so many troops there and so many issues that tended to involve them. The real relationship was, I think, equally intimate, if perhaps less ...

Q: Personalized?

DOBBINS: Well, at the level of president and prime minister, you didn't have the same soul mate qualities, and there was probably an even greater degree of mutual confidence between the British and Americans, simply because of a commonality of language and history, but the relationship with the Germans was quite close, and I don't think there was any perception on their part that they were second-class allies.

Q: Were the French playing any games that you noticed with the Germans, using the Germans to further French causes that we didn't want to see furthered or that sort of thing?

DOBBINS: Not much. The French mostly in this period were not – it really wasn't until the '90s until the French began to interest themselves more seriously in NATO, military and security issues. They largely opted out of the issues that were at the heart of the German-American relationship. Now, they had their views on détente and that sort of thing, and there were difficulties negotiating the communiqués over this or that sentence, but no, the whole idea that the European Community should somehow have a defense identity had not taken hold, and the French had simply opted out of large amounts of the trans-Atlantic relationship, but they weren't being particularly helpful. They were just pursuing their own policies.

Q: This is a time before we made the big drawdown, which was I guess in 1990 or so, but what about our troops there? Having a lot of young men running around with armored cars and all this, this can cause problems.

DOBBINS: Not much. They had been there a long time and they were well accepted by the population. Their maneuvers had to be carefully controlled and there would usually be guys with bags of money that would run around behind the tanks and pay the farmers if they crashed through their gates. So that was not really very controversial. The only area of their activity that became controversial was low-level flying, which tended to annoy people, particularly when the airplanes crashed, but even when they didn't. "You have to do it on Sunday, why do you have to do it during naptime? Couldn't you stop from 12 to 3:00 so you don't wake people up?" That kind of thing, so we got in the middle of a lot of these status of forces-type issues, but they were quite limited. By and large, the Germans were quite happy to have the Americans there. They made a contribution to the economy. They were accepted socially as non-obtrusive. They kept to themselves, largely, and to the extent they mixed in the local societies, they were quite welcome to do so. There were really no tensions, even during the missile crisis and all. There were no real tensions.

Now, there was a terrorist threat that was fairly active, and it was directed in part against Americans and in part against German officials. There were several American soldiers who were killed in terrorist – Red Army Faction was the German equivalent of the Bader-Meinhof Gang. There were terrorist threats to the embassy and terrorist attacks on the embassy. The German political director, who I knew pretty well, was assassinated. Bombs went off in Berlin. Soldiers were killed in West Germany as well, so a major preoccupation was security and counter-indigenous German terrorism. There was some Middle Easterners in the bombing. There was a Libyan bombing, and the Pan Am 103 bombing. That bomb was put on in Germany.

Terrorism was a major issue for us, and the Germans occasionally would respond less vigorously than we would hope to some of these incidents. That led to basically short-lived tensions in the relationship. Managing the troop presence was certainly a focus of our attention, and I had committees and spent a lot of time with the U.S. Army and others there. But by and large, it was a positive aspect of the relationship, not a negative.

Q: You had all these posts, consular posts. How did you find them, their value?

DOBBINS: Well, yes, we had them. I think there was some value. It's a federal country, the local politicians felt it important that there be a presence. It maintained relationships with these people, it performed consular services for a large community of Americans, including the American military and dependents. It provided some commercial access to the region. In terms of the U.S.-German relationship at the national level, other than the mission in Berlin, the contribution was fairly negligible. Frankfurt was a regional post. There were people there, it was convenient because of the airport, and there were people there who had relatively little to do with Germany and were conducting rather specialized operations all over Europe from there. All the pay and leave records for everybody in Europe, the regional finance center for the State Department, I think, if I remember correctly, was in Frankfurt. And there were other kinds of regional support

operations from there. But the consulates were not major players in terms of the German-American relationship or the core of the embassy's responsibilities. But still, it was a much larger establishment of constituent posts than any other country in the world had, and managing them was an important part of my job.

Q: At one time, we blanketed the place, this is right after the war, with the Amerikahäuser, America houses, telling about America, essentially libraries and cultural centers, but it certainly made the Germans well aware of the United States. By this time, I assume there wasn't much.

DOBBINS: It was diminishing. I think we still had them in Berlin and Munich, maybe one or two others. They were slowly being integrated with the consulates and scaled back, and the personnel were scaled back, but we still had fairly significant USIA (United States Information Agency) presence in Germany, including outside Berlin. So, again, it was still larger than in most other countries, but diminishing over time.

Q: Was there any concern that we were beginning to neglect Germany, as opposed to ...

DOBBINS: Well, there was periodic hand wringing about the new generation doesn't know America as well as the old generation, and the people who were grateful to America and remember soldiers distributing chocolates are leaving and they're being replaced by people who can just remember protest marches and that. I tended to dismiss those as somewhat exaggerated. The opinion polls didn't show that great a divergence in opinion between the older and younger generations, and it showed that the younger generations tended to become more conservative as they got older anyway on these issues, among others. Support for the United States remained strong. Numbers of Germans visiting the United States was higher than ever. Numbers of Germans going to school in the United States was high. With the soldiers there, of course the number of Americans who had an experience with Germany was also very high. So at that stage, there weren't any real alarm signals, although it was a subject for occasional speeches and conferences.

Q: When did you leave in '89?

DOBBINS: Probably summer.

Q: What were the readings on what was happening in East Germany before you left?

DOBBINS: Rick was replaced by Vernon Walters. Rick left in maybe March or April. He became our strategic arms negotiator in Geneva. I stayed until the summer and was Vernon Walters' deputy for his first maybe three or four months. Interestingly enough, when he had been named ambassador, was asked in some interview what he thought of German reunification, and he said, "I think it's possible in the next 10 years." Rick and I looked at this and thought this guy had lost his senses. Everybody just laughed at the naïve and unrealistic assessment this was.

In the context of early 1989, it seemed pretty naïve. He didn't repeat it for a while. But clearly, while I don't think German reunification was in the air as a realistic short-term prospect, I remember Rick and I urging on George Bush's first visit there he at least allude to American

support for reunification, not because it was going to happen any time soon, but it was an important element of the German overall political consensus and one that we ought to continue to foster for reasons having nothing to do with whether it would ever occur, but in terms of positioning ourselves within the German political debate. We were disappointed when Bush steered away from any mention of it and took a more cautious line and didn't actually endorse it. I think he visited in April of '89, on his first international trip as president. So I think German reunification had become a little more current in the debate, but only a little bit more at that stage, and nobody was thinking that it was something that was on the agenda for the next few years.

Q: As things were moving while you were there in the Soviet Union and sort of the whole Gorbachev impact, glasnost and perestroika, the view from Bonn, what was it? Had we seen this as really going to make a difference?

DOBBINS: Rick and I obviously were reacting largely to the sort of same newspaper reports everyone else was as to what was going on in the Soviet Union. We weren't directly involved in the discussions. I don't think we were particularly prescient about how far this would go, or how fundamental it was. There was a good deal of debate as to whether Gorbachev really meant what he said, and if he meant what he said, was he going to be able to deliver on it?

The German focus, of course, was more on their relations with East Germany and the prospects for further amelioration of that relationship – not directed toward unification, but just toward more easy access and improved conditions for people in East Germany. My own view was that at some point that would lead to a destabilizing of the East German system, and the West German politicians and bureaucrats essentially didn't want to accept that intellectually, because if they accepted it, they would have to accept that there were inherent limits on how far the East Germans could reasonably be prepared to go in these kinds of arrangements.

Q: Were there in Germany at the time the equivalent to the British chattering class, the French intellectuals, a group of people who had more influence through the media or publicity or something, but sort of outside the regular government system?

DOBBINS: Well, to some degree, although the dialog tended to be conducted between the government and the opposition as opposed to a large class of influential academics. There were some. There were some media and some academics and think tanks, but smaller than the American or British. The debate tended to circulate around old issues on arms control and détente rather than sort of more fundamental issues like collapse of the Soviet Union or German reunification or liberation of Eastern Europe. It tended to be focused on the nuances and details of maintaining or maybe slightly ameliorating the existing situation. I don't think anyone was suggesting that the existing situation in which they'd lived for 40-some years was going to change rapidly, so the focus on Gorbachev was really to what degree could we expect incremental changes of significance in the existing relationship. And nobody really was suggesting that something more tectonic was about to take place.

Q: You left – were there any other issues in Bonn that you might want to ...

DOBBINS: No, I think that's ...

PHILIP C. BROWN
U.S. Army Russian Institute; Russian Language Study
Garmisch (1986-1987)

Mr. Brown was born in Massachusetts and raised primarily in Pennsylvania. He was educated at College of Wooster (Ohio) and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. After serving with the Voice of America, in 1965 he joined the United States Information Agency Foreign Service (USIS), where he served several assignments at its headquarters in Washington DC. His foreign posts include Dakar, Douala, Yaoundé, Paris, Vienna and Moscow, where he served twice. At these posts his assignments ranged from Assistant Branch Public Affairs Officer to Counselor for Information, Press and Cultural Affairs. Mr. Brown was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2012.

BROWN: But I'm getting a little ahead of myself because I still had this year in Garmisch before I went out.

Q: Let's talk about what you were doing there.

BROWN: I flew to Paris, picked up the car, said goodbye again to my friends in the press office and drove to Munich. Munich was the consulate that would handle administrative affairs.

Garmisch was a very different experience this time. In 1977, it was the first time I had ever lived in Europe and I was a newcomer to Europe. This time, we had no children with us. Our daughters were a freshman and a junior in college. No dog; the dog we had taken on so many walks through the beauties of Garmisch, we had buried in our backyard in Paris. We did not live in Breitenau, that little enclave in Garmisch where the most Americans lived. We were living on the economy on Hauptstrasse, the main street of town. It was still a beautiful town but Hauptstrasse, across from a car dealership, was a noisy place to be living. So that was different.

The other thing that was different was I now had spent the last eight years in major embassies, including three years in Moscow, which gave me certain credentials. People are always interested in talking to someone who has actually had real life professional experience in Moscow.

I learned also somewhat to my embarrassment that my grade, whatever it was then, was the equivalent in the army to a brigadier general; I had to whisper that. I didn't want special treatment. The first time around, my friends jocularly called me colonel because I had some equivalent rank. But I did not want people running around calling me general. They did know I had a relatively high Foreign Service rank and there were certain perks that went with that.

As far as the academic program, I was pretty much invited to write my own ticket. I didn't have to go to any particular classes. I didn't have to take certain exams. The teaching staff at Garmisch had changed in the almost ten years since I had gone there the first time. In 1977, many of the people teaching there were the original cadre who had been recruited as displaced persons after the war in the Munich area, in Bavaria. They were then quite elderly.

By 1986, very few if any of them remained and a new group of people had come in. Some of these people were recent émigrés from the Soviet Union. They brought a newer, younger outlook on things although, since most of them were émigrés, in some cases forced émigrés, it was still a very unsympathetic approach to the Soviet Union. They were yet to be convinced that Gorbachev meant anything.

I was able pretty much to pick courses and not just courses but to have one-on-one work with individual staff members. Much of that concentrated on conversation, reading the press and preparing myself for the Moscow assignment.

Q: Were you getting from any of the people you were talking to that this was a different Soviet Union in a way?

BROWN: No more than we already knew, I think, because what the Reykjavik summit will ultimately be remembered for was the Sunday negotiation between Reagan and Gorbachev. I don't remember the details but Gorbachev made an extraordinary proposal on arms control, something like getting rid of all nuclear weapons. Reagan apparently went back and forth and finally did not accept it.

I have this distinct memory of waiting with this very large press corps and particularly with the guys from Newsweek and Time magazine as they calculated how much was costing per hour to hold the cover, to hold the magazine open. They would normally go to bed and print on Sunday but they were keeping it open for this great news that never came.

We were talking about the last Sunday and the anticipation. What was going to happen? Was this going to be the big breakthrough on arms control? Ultimately it wasn't. George Shultz came out looking grim. His press conference put a damper on this. The Soviets had made a proposal we could not accept. Reykjavik would not be remembered as the great breakthrough.

I stayed for an extra day and took a nine-hour bus tour of the island. That was my Reykjavik experience. It did wonders for my bona fides back in Garmisch. Everybody wanted to know about my experience. I was invited to give a lecture and I did so one night at the institute to a rather large audience. I began with a few words in Russian but since the audience included spouses and because I simply could not do the entire lecture in Russian, I went into English. The title was "Soviet and American Approaches to Public Diplomacy: Personal Impressions of a Press Office Spear Carrier," which is what I was. I was just one little guy there on the ground but I did have the first-hand experience.

I talked about the Daniloff arrest as a downer and Reykjavik as an up. Within days, there was an announcement of reciprocal expulsions of Soviet diplomats from the United States and American

diplomats from the Soviet Union. Since they had so many more diplomats here than we had there, the Soviets also withdrew all of the Foreign Service national employees from our missions so that there would be similar numbers. We had these precise numbers of people at the embassies in Moscow and Washington and the consulates in Leningrad and San Francisco.

While some people thought it was just great and cheered it, I felt depressed. I remember seeing a picture in the Herald Tribune of the ambassador's wife, Donna Hartman, serving at a reception at Spaso House. Associated with it was this bravado, "oh, we can get by without foreign service national employees. We really didn't need them anyway. They are just a bunch of spies; cost us a lot of money." Well, that was not my impression at all. I knew that Foreign Service national employees are vital to the way USIS operates. We operated everywhere in a very public situation so our foreign service nationals didn't have access to classified information. It depressed me.

The other issue for my wife and me during that year as we went through the various ups and downs in relations with the Soviet Union was where we would live. The first time, we lived in a 14-story Soviet apartment building, quite a long drive from the embassy. The question the second time was whether we would live on the new embassy compound, the NEC, or in a similar situation to the first time.

In the midst of all this, we learned about the scandal, the Lonetree affair. Sergeant Lonetree, the Marine guard who had allegedly allowed Russians into the embassy and sold secrets to the Russians about the embassy design and all the rest. There are books on this subject. It led to the withdrawal of Soviet laborers from the new office building

As it turned out, we would live in a very nice, three-story townhouse on the compound; it worked out extremely well. I was within easy walking distance of my office. Our townhouse had extra bedrooms and it was often more convenient to house Washington visitors with us than to put them in a hotel. And most importantly, it allowed us to do representational entertaining.

We were literally a stone's throw from the NOB which was being taken apart, piece by piece, to try to find the microphones. This was frustrating, even maddening. We were not able to work in a modern office building. We were confined to the old office building which was dirty, a fire hazard and worse. It was very difficult to work under those conditions. So that was the other issue that hung over us all during the year; the new office building, where we would live, etcetera.

Another facet of life during that year in Garmisch was travel. One is always impressed by the resources that the army has. In September, before I went to Reykjavik, they put together an observation trip to Yugoslavia. I don't recall if they called going behind the Iron Curtain but at least you were going to a communist country to see what life is like.

So we took off by bus for ten days. We went down to Bled, Maslenica, Split, Dubrovnik, Sveti Stefan, Sarajevo and Zagreb through what was then Yugoslavia -- what is today Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Even today, as I listen to the news and hear about trials in The Hague, it is hard to believe what happened. At that time, in 1987, if anyone had told you that in less than ten years, there would be a brutal civil war and that places like Sarajevo and Mostar would be in the news for the death and destruction, it would have been hard to believe. This was September and we were going down the coast of Croatia amidst all the vacationers. It was idyllic.

In December, we took a trip to East Germany. This wasn't idyllic at all. We went through some grimy little towns but there were also cities that were full of history. We were breathing in the coal dust. It was an eye-opener, a learning experience. Our itinerary included Eisenach, Erfurt, Weimar, Leipzig, Wittenburg, Torgau, Dresden and Meissen.

During that trip, I spent a lot of time with Captain Peter Huchthausen, a Navy captain who was himself en route to an assignment in Moscow. We shared a lot of cultural interests -- literary, artistic, musical -- and we found opportunities to visit some of the great art galleries and hear some of the music that was available.

Most memorable was a trip that my wife and I took in April, 1987. I went down to Munich on Good Friday and heard Bach's St. John Passion performed there. Bobbi met me there and we took the train from Munich to Leipzig and another train from Leipzig to Dresden where we rented a car. We went out to a place that a lot of people in Germany had never heard of called Herrnhut. It's near the border, close to where East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland come together.

This was a really important trip for my wife because this is where the Unitas Fratrum, the unity of the brotherhood, has its roots. My wife is a Moravian, born and raised in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, which is one of the two cities in the United States along with Salem, North Carolina, where the Moravians have their largest presence. They came from Herrnhut. My wife is descended from Nicholas von Zinzendorf, the founder of the Moravians. And this is where it all began for the Moravians in the United States.

On Easter morning, before the sun had even come up, we were awakened by the sound of the brass choir and on foot, we went to the cemetery to hear the brass choir play. It was a very moving experience for my wife. And for me too and so unlike anything else we associated with East Germany at the time. It was a truly spiritual experience. We met the bishop and stayed with people there, Johannes and Jutte Kluge. We went back later after the collapse of East Germany. The old East German cars had been replaced by Mercedes and the roads had been paved but Herrnhut maintained its significance.

We retraced our steps back to Dresden and to Leipzig and as we waited on the train platform to go from Leipzig to Munich, there were huge crowds of people. I don't remember what we were carrying in the way of suitcases but we could barely get onto the train standing, let alone sitting. There were large numbers of young East German punks with their wild hairdos and their music and their rather obscene language and behavior. I thought they don't have absolute control over what's going on in this country, that's for sure. These kids got off at various spots along the way. Finally we got a place to sit but the contrast between what we had experienced on Easter morning in Herrnhut and the train that Monday night was rather shocking.

In June, USARI put together a three-week, multi-country trip through the Balkans that took us to Ljubljana, Belgrade, Nis, Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Bucharest, Brasov, Cluj, Budapest and Vienna. Again, it was an opportunity for these intelligence officers to observe life in Eastern Europe. It was more substantive than the September trip to Yugoslavia which went down the coast. In this case, we saw Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, the ethnic diversity. We had some briefings by embassy officials, including one in Sofia by a USIA officer, Jocelyne Green, that made me very proud. We saw poor areas and we saw some that looked quite well to do. It was a wonderful opportunity presented to me by my year in Garmisch. My traveling companion was one of the USARI faculty, Jacob Hentov.

At the end of that trip, I came back to Washington. A year earlier, I tested in French and had a 4/4+ and felt really confident; this time I tested Russian. They came out and said you are right on the cusp. Would you mind taking a little more test? And so I went through another test. I think I was tested close to three hours but finally came out with a 4/4 which was probably generous. My Russian was very good. I was able to do business in Russian but I also knew my limits and that would always be on my mind as I went back to the Soviet Union.

Once again, I had those multifaceted consultations and came back to Garmisch. We packed, drove down to Florence where our daughter was on a summer program and from Florence we drove in a highly choreographed trip from Florence to Garmisch to Lubeck. We saw friends there, went out to the island of Fohr in the North Sea, took a boat from Travemunde in Germany over to Helsinki and then drove from Helsinki to Leningrad. We spent two nights there, meeting with people at the consulate, before heading off again by road. And late on a Friday afternoon, July 17, 1987, as was my design, we got to the embassy in Moscow where we would begin our three years back in the Soviet Union.

There was nevertheless a great deal of continuity from the first time. One cannot go to Garmisch without being impressed by the natural beauty of the area. We did endless hiking and skiing (I bought a season pass) and took full advantage of the cultural life. My wife got into scuba diving and did her test to become a certified scuba diver in a lake in Bavaria in the dead of the winter.

It was also an opportunity to meet some people with relatively prominent names at the time. Vladimir Voinovich was a writer, a satirist who had come out. I am not sure voluntarily or been expelled. He came to the institute. We attended his lecture and got to know him and his wife quite well. They were living in the Munich area and this was an opportunity to get to know some of the creative intelligentsia.

Also Americans. A man named Murray Feshbach who worked for the Census Bureau and was an expert on Soviet demographics. He was typical type of the Americans who came out to lecture. We could take advantage of that.

We also went as an institute from time to time to RFE/RL headquarters in Munich. In addition to broadcasting in many languages, they had a whole research wing there and they gave periodic lectures and seminars on Soviet matters. So all in all, it was an opportunity to prepare both language and substantively.

Q: Were we broadcasting through Voice of America the disquieting statistics about whether the Soviet Union population, health wise and all that?

BROWN: I can't tell you specifically but certainly, VOA and RL, Radio Liberty, were broadcasting that type of information and as dramatic as that situation is today, we were aware of it back in 1986-87. Male life span, declining numbers of children. If that information was available, I am sure it was being broadcast.

This was still a time of jamming. Later on, when I was in Moscow, there was that day when I turned on the radio and there was Radio Liberty broadcasting clear as a bell. They had ended jamming but even before that, there were still ways to get around jamming.

Q: We will pick this up your first impressions of the new Soviet Union.

Q: Today is the 22nd of May, 2012 with Phil Brown.

Now you are practically a member of the faculty of Oberammergau. What was your judgment of its effectiveness and did it mold officers, including not just State Department but military officers going to the Soviet Union?

BROWN: I was not a member of the faculty even though I was back for the second time. I was there as a learner. I went both times to Garmisch but old timers did refer to it as Oberammergau because that is the village where the institute first operated. People in the Foreign Service who were older than me referred to it that way. For me it was Garmisch both times.

Yes, it was an extremely useful assignment for people who were able to take advantage of it. I didn't have a military background and people said "well this is not typical military; you are dealing only with officers" but you had a cross section. You the tank driver – that's what he called himself -- who I don't think was going to get much out of it. Here he was trying to learn Russian without any background in foreign languages, probably not much of an aptitude. He wasn't going to have direct use for it.

But I encountered in Garmisch some really outstanding individuals, officers who went on to play extremely important roles in U.S./Soviet relations. There are three who come immediately to mind beginning with then Colonel Roland Lajoie. I call him Colonel because that is what he was the first time I went to Garmisch; he was the head of the institute and later became General Lajoie. The others were Major Greg Govan who went on to be General Govan and a Marine, George Connell, who retired as a Colonel in the Marine Corps.

All of them served in the Soviet Union, all of them were highly regarded. Roland and Greg were also in Berlin, which was another onward assignment for people who studied in Garmisch. And they served in high positions in the Pentagon and CIA. They were also part of that group who went out to Votkinsk in the Soviet Union to monitor the missile production. They were really and literally on the front line of U.S./Soviet relations.

They were all outstanding military officers who took full advantage of what Garmisch could offer to become even more proficient in their trade and I think that was also the case with the State Department people who went there. I certainly feel that I benefited greatly from the experience.

Q: One of the great benefits of the Foreign Service with the various defense war colleges is intermingling with the military and learning military attitudes and basically gaining a much greater respect and in how they think and also to spread the Foreign Service story.

BROWN: I don't have first-hand knowledge about the war colleges but clearly, one of the benefits of Garmisch was acquainting me with the military. I didn't do military service myself so exposing me to these people and to the environment in which they operated was beneficial.

In turn, it was good for them to learn about the Foreign Service. There were two of us the second time. Outstanding Foreign Service officers went through Garmisch. The back and forth certainly was profitable.

When I was in Moscow and needed to get some information or do something that involved the defense attaché office, it was extremely useful to have that contact.

Q: Were there ever discussions there by people who both served there or going out there about the Soviet military and their outlook?

BROWN: They had regular talks on that. They'd bring people in from everywhere to talk about Soviet military, various aspects of it. I used to be fascinated by how they always phrased it. It wasn't "if" the war begins. It was always "when" the war begins. I learned the expression Fulda Gap, the spot on the border where the Russians would cross into West Germany. I don't know how many times I heard that. So yes, in addition to the regular programs, there was a lot of discussion about Soviet military intentions. Many of these people felt they would be in the front lines when the war began.

The last time, I explained how going to Garmisch a second time – I may be the only Foreign Service officer who actually went to Garmisch twice -- was a very different experience. In the first place, I had three years experience in the Soviet Union working at the embassy under my belt. I had been promoted to senior Foreign Service and while I never thought much about it, the army is always interested in rank so I had the equivalent rank of a brigadier general.

I was invited early on to go to Reykjavik and was there for the Reagan/Gorbachev meeting. That added to my bona fides. I gave a talk to a rather large audience about my experiences there. It wasn't anything highfalutin. It was how a summit meeting takes place, the planning, the press work, that kind of thing.

I felt as though I gave as well as got during my second year.

I did mention very hurriedly some of the trips that I took during that year. One was early on within old Yugoslavia. Another was a trip through the Balkans. That was late in the year. Another was a trip to Berlin. And a fourth was through East Germany.

In each case, we traveled as a class on a bus but the people who got the most out of it were the people who really went well prepared, observed, got out at night, walked around and talked to locals. I had companions on those trips -- Navy Captain Peter Huchthausen on one and one of the Garmisch faculty members on another -- that helped me extract a lot of impressions and observations.

Against the backdrop of this comfortable life in Garmisch, studying Russian and then going out skiing and hiking and coming back and having a conversation with someone in Russian, we were very conscious of news from the Soviet Union.

One of the first things that occurred after my arrival in Garmisch was the arrest in the Soviet Union of Nicholas Daniloff of U.S. News and World Report. Nick Daniloff, whose ancestry was Russian, was picked out for some reason in a tit-for-tat retaliatory way, arrested, held by the KGB and delivered to the American Embassy. There is a whole story; Nick has written a book on it so I won't go into that, but that was a real damper, that kind of thing. Just when you think relations were improving, post Geneva summit, you have something like the arrest of Nick Daniloff; it's pretty disconcerting.

No sooner did that news come across than one day the phone rang and it was the consulate in Munich. The person calling me said, "Have you heard the news?"

I can remember to this day; my knees buckled. Had I heard the news? No, what? The news was that Reagan and Gorbachev would be meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland. That was September 30. I had been there barely a month and the word was that USIA had checked it out with the White House and sure, Larry Speakes would love to have Phil Brown go to Reykjavik to help out with the press program.

It was late at night. I said, "If you guys can buy the ticket, I will get myself to Munich." I did and the next day I was down in Munich and flew somewhere, I think it was Copenhagen, and from Copenhagen on to Reykjavik. I was there before anybody; I think I was the first outsider. I reported to the PAO who had no idea what to anticipate.

For a little while after the first White House advance team arrived, I was a part of that small group. I went out to this place called Hofdi House which was eventually chosen for the site of the Reagan/Gorbachev meeting. It was a White House decision that the Soviets went along with. They thought it had character, class. It was kind of place that would be remembered so much more than some office building or some other facility.

So for two weeks, from October 1 through 15, I was in Reykjavik. Because hotel space was at a premium with all these people coming in from outside, I ended up staying with an Icelandic family which was in itself an opportunity. Ottar Halldorsson was a professor at the university

with a wife and a couple children. At the end of the day, I would often go back to the house and talk to them about what I had experienced in Iceland that day.

Director Wick came out and I was assigned to brief him particularly on Soviet activities, what they were doing in preparation. I also set up a meeting between Larry Speakes and his Soviet counterpart, Gennady Gerasimov, and briefed Speakes on what to expect.

As an aside, there was a fellow on the White House staff named Dale Petrovsky, a political appointee. Like me, Dale was an avid baseball fan. This was the end of the baseball season. We went one night to one of the American TV network trailers and in the wee hours of the morning, we watched the Red Sox-Mets World Series game. Dale went on to become director of the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

ANNA ROMANSKI
Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS
Bonn (1986-1987)

Born in England, Ms. Romanski was raised in England and in New Jersey. She was educated at Stanford and Yale Universities, as well as Middlebury College, where she studies the Russian language. Joining the State Department in 1974, her assignments both in Washington and abroad were primarily with USIA, serving in Public and cultural Affairs capacities. A speaker of Polish, German and Chinese, she served in Germany, Poland and China. Ms. Romanski was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: Today is the 11th of July, 2006. You are off to where?

ROMANSKI: Off to Bonn.

Q: You were in Bonn from when to when?

ROMANSKI: I was in Bonn for only one year, as it turned out. I had an assignment as Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer in Bonn. However, the position of America House Director and Branch Cultural Affairs Officer in Berlin unexpectedly became vacant in 1987 so I stayed in Bonn for only about a year.

Q: And you were your usual.

ROMANSKI: I had my usual position of Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer for the third and final time.

Q: In 86 and 87, how would you describe the situation of German-American relations at the time?

ROMANSKI: Relations were good. They were probably on the upswing. Of course, I was working in my own little area of specialization, which was not a good place to get an overview. The embassy in Bonn at that time was one of the two or three largest in the world. It was a very large embassy and very centralized. Everybody had his own little niche, with few of us having access to the big picture.

Q: We cannot look at 86 and 87 period and see a sudden upward blip in German-American relations because your time there . . .

ROMANSKI: No. Certainly not. Certainly nothing like that. Although I like to think that I did my little bit. Since Bonn was so large and specialized, I administered the country-wide speaker program. At that time, Germany still had a number of America Houses and German-American Institutes, some of which were destined to close fairly soon, within the next few years, but, for the time being, they were still open. If you have a facility, you need to have some activities taking place in it in order to attract audiences and get press attention. In order to keep the houses lively, we recruited American speakers, sometimes also embassy officers.

One of my initiatives was starting the Embassy speaker program. It would serve a dual purpose: providing relatively low-cost programs to the centers and giving Embassy colleagues a chance to travel outside of Bonn. One could also assume that they would be on message, i.e. have a good understanding of foreign policy. It was a way to better utilize resources. Not every officer was eligible for the speaker program and some who would have been good were too busy to participate. Although I arranged the travel of the speakers, I almost never got to travel with them because someone had to mind the shop back in Bonn. I did manage to attend most of the speaker programs in Bonn, which was the capital of Germany at the time. It was perhaps not a fascinating assignment, but I enjoyed it. I felt I was doing something useful to foster U.S.-German exchanges, i.e. to promote mutual understanding. At that time, we were also allowed to program speakers who did not always espouse official U.S. Government policy. There was a little more leeway in those days. We valued our credibility more, a credibility we could demonstrate by presenting differing views.

Q: Can you think of any of the speakers or types of speakers you were getting, outside of the embassy ones?

ROMANSKI: I can't really remember that far back. Most of them were not big names. Many were academics. On the cultural side, we would occasionally program American writers. This kind of program would be popular with German audiences, especially with students and teachers, but even with ordinary German speakers who wanted to practice their English.. They would often turn up to hear this type of a speaker. I cannot remember a writer that we programmed in Bonn. When I got to Berlin, we programmed a number of American writers including Toni Morrison, who was our big name. She gave readings from her book, Beloved. She was a wonderful reader -- her work really came to life as she read it. I had lunch with her and her agent. The foreign service is wonderful about providing once-in-a-lifetime opportunities like that.

In the area of foreign policy or economics, we tended to recruit professors. Germans complained that, in the field of economics, we would get too many theoreticians and too few practitioners.

The USG couldn't afford practitioners. The honorarium was very low in those days. I think it was only 75 dollars per day plus per diem. Neither a top of the line economist nor a business person would come for that kind of money.

Q: Well, basically, weren't you relying on people on either a business or a vacation trip?

ROMANSKI: Well, yes. Or, in the case of academics, on Sabbaticals. Often the best speakers were those with their own reasons for coming, whom we would program time and time again. They would come to know the country and their audiences and regard it as an enriching experience, although not necessarily in a financial sense. We also used a lot of the Fulbright professors who were in country. I believe that Germany has always had the largest Fulbright program in the world. So right off the bat, there were a few hundred people one could potentially tap into as speakers. Fulbrighters in Europe were often available as well -- although not all of them were useful as potential speakers since they were in relatively obscure or very specialized fields. In addition, some Fulbrighters would want to research German topics, which would not be of much interest for us to program. We had to look for people working on American fields or with expertise on Country Plan-related objectives. This was never a very high percentage.

But to answer your question about the kind of people who would go on this program, often it would be people who developed a liking for the program, sometimes in other countries. We often managed to put together a good audience and have a stimulating discussion. One advantage of arranging events at an America House was that we could invite people from diverse circles and milieus, so that the speaker would be exposed to not just a university class, but would also encounter businessmen, government officials, academics, graduate students, etc. -- that is when the program worked well. Most programs were by invitation only and limited to a select audience. Some, such as art exhibits or large lectures on popular topics, were open to the general public. In the early days, most programs had been public ones. By this time, we tried to target both our resources and audiences more carefully.

We also arranged programs for journalists. However, they preferred exclusives or one-on-one interviews. If we were fortunate, we could perhaps arrange an article about a speaker, although obviously not every speaker. Even though they didn't make money on it, some people considered the program a valuable opportunity to establish worthwhile contacts.

Q: And also, for a certain number of people, it's good on their resume.

ROMANSKI: Yes, I'm sure it was.

Q: How did you find the audiences? I take it there was no great hostility. Sometimes with the younger audiences twisting the eagle's tail can be a pastime. Did you find much of that?

ROMANSKI: Not really. Most Germans who had no interest in the United States or its positions would not bother to turn up for a program. The only times that I might run into anti-Americanism in Germany would be at an international forum. I can recall one time sitting at a diplomatic dinner and being seated next to a Green, or someone who was not very thrilled to find themselves next to an American diplomat, as if I might carry a contagion. Nonetheless, we made

the best of it and had an interesting conversation, although I don't think anyone's mind was changed.

Q: This was the time, or close to it, when we had the debate over the SS-20s, the Soviet intermediate range missiles, and our response was putting in our own intermediate range Pershing missiles.

ROMANSKI: You are right. I don't remember that specific event, never having much expertise in arms control, but we were working on a number of arms control issues.

Q: It was more than arms control. The Soviets had introduced intermediate range missiles, the SS-20s, and were trying to say to the Europeans, "You are the target" - particularly the Germans - "and so you better get neutral because the United States isn't going to protect you." And we were saying, "To hell with you. We are putting in our own intermediate range missiles and then let's negotiate." And this was sort of the last offensive of the Soviet Union in Germany.

ROMANSKI: I remember that. It was the intermediate nuclear missiles. I remember the discussion that you are talking about. I'm quite sure we had speakers on the topic to try to persuade the Germans that it was in their interests to have intermediate missiles based in their country. I can't remember that we made tremendous headway, but it was an active topic of discussion. I think we were more conscious of a Soviet threat than the Germans were, so that was another area where we would have disagreement and where we would perhaps want to bring in experts.

Q: The embassy in Bonn was huge at the time. Did you feel like a very small cog in a huge machine? Was it fun? How did you feel about it?

ROMANSKI: As I've already said, I was not in Bonn very long, so I enjoyed the brief period of time that I was there. I was just a very small cog in the machine. One of the things that was nice about Bonn -- or perhaps not so nice for some people -- was that we lived in a housing compound in an area called Plittersdorf. I found out that one of my colleagues walked to work rather than undertaking an unpleasant drive in rush hour traffic or riding the crowded Embassy shuttle bus: everybody left and returned at the more or less the same time. Encouraged by his example, I began walking to work at the embassy. I found it very relaxing and a beautiful way to start the day.

Both the housing compound and the embassy were located on the Rhine. It was a beautiful walk. I later found out that crime went up and it was no longer considered safe to walk. Some people rode their bicycles, which would have been safer. I didn't enjoy riding a bicycle nearly as much as walking because it was not nearly as relaxing. It was a wonderful way to start the day and I very much missed it when I moved on to my next post.

I was separated from my husband -- not in any legal sense but by assignment. My husband was in Warsaw at the time because we could not get a tandem assignment together. The closest I could get was Germany while he served in Poland, but I made friends, got to know people and led a relatively satisfying life for that one year.

The U.S. ambassador to Germany at that time was a political appointee: Richard Burt. Needless to say, at a large embassy like that, I had almost no contact with him. I remember him largely for two reasons. The first is that on Shrove Tuesday (the day before Ash Wednesday -- the beginning of Lent), there is a tradition in Cologne (which has the reputation of being a fun-loving city located in the Catholic part of the country) that women can cut off men's ties. (I won't go into the symbolism.) In any case, the Ambassador had heard of this tradition but his DCM -- Jim Dobbins -- had not. So, the Ambassador, who had purposely worn an expendable tie on that day, encouraged his secretaries to cut off the DCM's tie. They didn't want to do it, but he made them. The DCM had worn quite a good tie that day and was obviously displeased, but didn't say or do anything. It was the Ambassador's wish after all, if a somewhat mean one.

The other thing that I remember about Ambassador Burt was the July 4th reception. In Germany, the Fourth of July receptions were quite a big deal and anyone who was anyone wanted to get an invitation. I was quite surprised, therefore, to attend the reception and discover that it had been catered by McDonald's, Dunkin' Donuts and similar American vendors. Apparently, the Admin Officer leaned on various American food chains to provide free fare for the event as publicity and, remarkably, they all did it. It created a rather bizarre menu, but the high-level Germans seemed to enjoy it -- probably more than I did. It was the one time of year when I knew I would ingest (and hopefully digest) junk food.

This event provided quite a contrast to the 4th of July reception in Warsaw, where as in Germany, it was a much sought-after invitation. Since these were commie times, there were no American vendors to recruit and the Ambassador's representational fund had to cover everything. The Ambassador's residence was not nearly as large as the one in Germany, but the invitation was at least as coveted. The result was that all Embassy officers had to work three two-hour shifts on that holiday. By working, I mean that we had to stand the whole time and chat up the Poles (who were invited in three shifts, although many overstayed their welcome). I would get so tired of standing the whole time in my high heels that, in the later hours of the event, I would practically drag any woman I could find to come sit with me inside just so that I could rest my feet a bit. I grew to resent our national holiday when I was in the foreign service. It was anything but a holiday.

Poles in those days, and perhaps now, tended to overstay their welcome at the Ambassador's because there was free booze. Of course, the bar would close down when it came time for guests to leave, but this was often not enough of an incentive. Each of the two ambassadors I served with had his own way of signaling the end of the party. Ambassador Richard T. Davies would flip the lights on and off which was the signal for us to start escorting the guests out as efficiently as we could. Ambassador William Schaufele, on the other hand, had an even more effective signal. He would simply unleash his large German shepherd who would bound down the stairs, barking noisily, and start mingling with the remaining guests, who would generally not remain too much longer.

ROBERT A. MARTIN

**Political Advisor
Frankfurt (1986-1990)**

Robert A. Martin was born in 1931 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He received a bachelor's degree in international relations from Yale University in 1954. He then entered the U.S. Army. Upon completion of his military service in 1956, Mr. Martin entered law school and the University of Pennsylvania. His Foreign Service career included positions in Washington, DC, Belgium, Vietnam, Iran, and Germany. Mr. Martin was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on September 8, 1994.

Q: Then you went to Frankfurt where you were political advisor from 1986-90. What did being the POLAD involve?

MARTIN: I was asked [inaudible]...decided that it would be judicial to have the capability closer to hand for the European problem, for the North African problem, for the Middle East problem, etc. So I agreed that I would take it and went off to Frankfurt in late 1986 and continued with this from there until the latter part of the summer of 1990.

It was a most entertaining experience involving very close relations with the ambassador and the DCM in the embassy in Bonn. I had close relations with the US military around the European theater which covered all of Europe and all of Africa and verges on the Middle East including Turkey, the eastern part of NATO. I also had close dealings with the specialized aspects of the US military and, of course, close dealings with the Central Intelligence Agency which was heavily involved in that equation. It was thoroughly enjoyable. I got to travel around quite a bit and had close relations with a number of interesting people throughout those several communities that I just mentioned. Unhappily from the perspective of many of my colleagues, but frankly in all candor I was never displeased as to the situation, we never did get actually launched to go and cope with an actual incident. We were on alert a number of times but never got beyond that. However, in between times we carried on a very vigorous and very, very useable training schedule, including a lot of exercises of various sorts to try to replicate an actual incident and how it might fit in, and that was always fascinating. The capabilities that we could draw on, had available to us, were really quite fantastic.

One of the things that I did in the interagency group, including the military intelligence side as well, did go on a number of briefing trips to embassies in Europe and the Middle East and Africa and as far a field as South Asia to brief the ambassadors and the key advisors on the capabilities that were available and in terms of the ambassador, himself or herself, privately had a session to make known that help was closer at hand than suggested by our general briefing of capabilities.

Another thing to do was to work out problems in advance of actually being called and had to work with several governments in the area to work out arrangements that would permit us to be facilitated in the event of an actual event. That was very interesting and most enjoyable dealing with governments in that way.

JAMES ALAN WILLIAMS
Political Advisor
Berlin (1986-1990)

Mr. Williams was born in Wisconsin and raised in Virginia. After graduation from Princeton University, he joined the Foreign Service in 1965 and was posted to Ankara, Turkey. During his career Mr. Williams became a specialist in Greek/Turkish/Cyprus affairs and served as Special Coordinator for Cyprus, with the personal rank of Ambassador. His foreign assignments include Ankara, Nicosia, Bonn, Berlin and Athens, and he had several tours at the State Department in Washington. Mr. Williams was interviewed by Ray Ewing in 2003.

Q: And what was the job?

WILLIAMS: The job was political advisor which is a misnomer. It did indeed give political advice, but essentially it was the number 2 position in the State Department component of what was basically an occupation regime for Berlin, or for the western sectors of Berlin depending on how you look at it. We had a large mission in Berlin with a very large budget, funded by the bundestag, the so-called occupation cost budget, and the mission was subordinate to its chief of mission who was in Bonn. I did not know much about Berlinery as we called it when I went to Berlin. I had spent a lot of time in German affairs, and when I was in Bonn, I guess because I was so taken with the small town in Germany approach of Bonn, I deliberately stayed away from the big city of Berlin. I only went up once for an SPD convention which I enjoyed. I had been in Berlin before as a tourist, but I found the city too big and just not to my liking. Certainly not with a family. Well it turned out I was wrong on that as I was on many things. Berlin was a great place for a family, especially when you had the resources available that the American sector did. As I said, these were all, except for salaries, almost all paid for by the bundestag through a budget that was passed each year for the Allied occupation, or the Allied at cost expenditures in Berlin. The French, the British, and we were subsidized that way. Both the civilians and the military components, to a very high degree. We were also part of, as I said, an occupation regime, formally speaking. The army ran the American sector of Berlin. We were in the chain of command there to some extent. And to some extent they were in ours. For example, the senior army person in Berlin had four hats, one of which was DCM of U.S. embassy Bonn in Berlin. Now it was a hat that had not been worn ever as far as I knew, certainly not in recent memory. But he was the senior military official in Berlin. He was the commandant of the American sector in Berlin, senior army official in Berlin, and the deputy chief of mission in Berlin. That took some getting used to.

Q: Why don't you come then to where the United States mission in Berlin fit in, both in terms of the military and vis-à-vis the embassy in Bonn.

WILLIAMS: Our job essentially was to advise the commandant and his staff on a whole range of issues, political, economic, and public safety which meant security. We had counterparts in the military. There was also a large air force component there, mainly at Tempelhof Air Force Base which had played such a key role in our victory during the Berlin blockade in '48, '49. But we

liaised with the army and the air force, mainly with the army, and with Berliners on intelligence collection, security, economic development, handling refugees, debriefing refugees from the east, running operations against the Soviets in the western sectors of Berlin. The Soviets had a large presence in Berlin. Both the embassy in East Berlin and certain Soviet missions that were authorized by the Quadripartite Agreement in West Berlin. We and the British and French were very diligent in working to confront whatever mischief the Soviets would carry out from the other side. Those missions, those establishments. We had a liaison also with our chief of mission in Bonn and there was as we discussed last time a Bonn group staffed down in the embassy which dealt with Berlin. So-called Bonn group. It was our counterparts from the British and French embassies, plus the German government through the foreign ministry that comprised the Bonn group in Bonn. And we were frequently in touch with them. I would say, obviously because we were physically located within the U.S. commandant's headquarters, obviously our daily exchange was far more intimate with the U.S. military in Berlin and with the Berlin authorities than with Bonn. But we had to keep both informed. And this sometimes required a bit of delicate dancing.

Q: And you also had to do a fair amount of liaison with the other two western powers in Berlin and perhaps with the Soviets as well, in Berlin?

WILLIAMS: Exactly so. We had a lot of interaction with the British and French. There was a whole network of message traffic classified up to the secret level which we used. We exchanged notes, opinions, gossip; we met for lunch once a month. We saw each other on our national days. There was intimate exchange with the British and French. To my great surprise the exchange that each of us in our own capacities had with our Soviet colleague who was an official of the Soviet embassy in East Berlin was almost as intense. We shared a responsibility; the four powers did, for the safe management of Berlin as a whole, in particular for the management of the access routes and the air routes to and from Berlin. Nobody wanted to have any trouble in Berlin, that had been very clear since the Quadripartite Agreement had been signed back in the early '70s. A big part of my job, my British and French counterparts' job and my Soviet colleague's job, was to make sure there was no trouble in Berlin, so that when, inevitably, there was an incident at the border, somebody got shot or something encroached, a concrete truck smashed against a building, or there was a complaint about a waterway or a dam, or a plane crashed or whatever, we would consult about it and if necessary the Allied chair for the month, we rotated chairmanship among the three western missions, would talk to the Soviet counterpart about it and see if we could smooth things out, and that worked pretty well.

Q: And to what extent were there four power quadripartite meetings?

WILLIAMS: There were no quadripartite meetings of any consequence until after the wall fell and German unity started approaching very rapidly. The days I'm speaking of, '86, '87, '88, even most of '89, there were no quadripartite meetings, but the four of us, so to speak, would get together at the annual ball of the Berlin air safety center which was a quadripartite-manned air traffic control center for the Berlin air corridors and the column of air around Berlin. They gave a lovely ball every year and we would inevitably with our wives in our formal wear, talk shop, the four of us, about what was going on. But it was not a meeting per se, there were no notes kept for example.

Q: When you refer to the four of you, you're really talking about the other political advisors, or the number twos in the respective missions of the four powers, and the number ones would also interact with each other at these events and others.

WILLIAMS: They would interact too in more or less a similar way. There was an amazing harmony of interaction at all levels. The three ministers would interact and meet occasionally with the DCM of the Soviet embassy in East Berlin who was Igor McSimichev for the whole time I was there I think. Brilliant man. We always spoke in German and he was always very well-informed. Below that, the political advisors would meet, monthly at lunch, more often as needed. We would exchange inter-Allied messages on a whole range of issues every day. Our economic advisors would meet the three of them public safety advisors and so on and so on. There was a whole range of Allied coordination mechanisms, often involving military counterparts as well, and often involving liaison with the Berliners, so by the time we got there this had been fleshed out over almost four decades and was well along.

Q: Your title was political advisor, but you also were the number two in the mission, at least on the State Department side.

WILLIAMS: Number three. Actually, number four. It depends on how you count. Unfortunately, for whatever reason, the hierarchy was that the chief of mission was the ambassador in Bonn. The deputy chief of mission was the military commandant, at least on paper. And that led to a problem which we can discuss. The number three was the minister in Berlin who was the actual guy in charge of the mission day by day, and the number four was the political advisor. That was I. In practical terms I was the number two. In theological and protocol terms I was number four.

Q: So, on a day-to-day basis you were the executive officer. You were the deputy for all practical purposes. Did that mean that a fair amount of your time was basically helping the minister manage the mission, or could you do political work much of the time?

WILLIAMS: I started by doing political work much of the time because John Kornblum was so brilliant and so engaged and so knowledgeable about German affairs that basically he could run USPER, as we called the mission, out of his back pocket. So I had a learning curve to go through and I did. And spent a lot of time initially learning about the political realities of working in Berlin. Later in my tour, and this continued through the rest of my foreign service career, I dealt increasingly with the management issues, including budget and personnel, and for the first time realized how much fun I'd been missing all those years when I thought the political work was the end of all things in the foreign service. But initially it was political. John, perhaps deliberately, perhaps not, sort of threw me into the cold bath without a whole lot of preparation. He was gone at one time. At several key points he was gone from Berlin, from Germany, and I was the acting minister. And the first time this happened was in November of '86. We had an issue before the Allied Kommandatura. This was the governing body of Berlin created at the end of World War II from which the Soviets had withdrawn in '48. The AK met on a monthly basis; this was ministers. And the issue before the Kommandatura was how to implement a German court decision that had found the Libyans responsible for a particularly grievous act of bombing. I think it was Labelle disco or something else. I forget the specifics.

Q: Which happened in 1984 or thereabouts.

WILLIAMS: It happened early in '86 in Berlin. The Allied Kommandatura had to deal with the issue of what to do about a German court decision that had put in public record the fact that Libya was responsible for the bombing of the disco in West Berlin in which a couple of people had been killed. This was at the Labelle disco which had been frequented by American military. This bombing occurred a few months before I got to Berlin in '86 and by November of '86 the issue had come up to the Kommandatura. Our legal advisors, every mission also had a legal advisor or two, and others concluded that the only way you could react to that in a meaningful sense since our writ did not extend to East Berlin, would be to issue a formal order expelling the Libyans from Berlin. Realizing that the practical effect of that order would be to affect only their presence in the western sectors of Berlin. They would still be able to circulate freely in eastern Berlin since the Soviets were not about to expel them from their sector. This raised a whole lot of issues including West Germany's desire to maintain good relations with Libya. Genscher the German foreign minister at the time was particularly involved in that effort. And that meant that at the end the ambassador in Bonn, Rick Burt, was also much interested. And without having ever been briefed by anybody on how the Kommandatura worked, without having ever attended a session of the Kommandatura, I found myself as acting minister not only going, but presiding over the meeting since it was the American month. We met over a series of five or seven days. It was a difficult exercise for me because I did not know the protocol of the Kommandatura meetings. There was definitely a protocol. You addressed each other a certain way, you had to follow something like Robert's rules of order. I was corrected a number of times by my colleagues who were real ministers, the British and the French, the British in particular. But since we all wanted the same thing and there really was no dissent on that, the question was how do you get there in the most correct way. And we got there, and we issued the order and expelled the Libyans from Berlin, realizing that we were in effect expelling them only from the western sectors. Now the coordination that I also had to learn on the fly was to keep the military commandant informed because there were implications for the security of West Berlin because he had to make sure his people, Berliners, would carry out this order. If a Libyan tried to come into West Berlin he would not be allowed and so forth. And Rick Burt was on the phone with me about every two hours or hour, asking what in the hell was going on because the Germans were asking him. What are you Allies about to do in Berlin to our Libyan relationship. So it was a delicate dance. We got through it. I was able to keep, I think, the commandant and the ambassador satisfied although two times I had to keep Rick Burt waiting while I finished telling the commandant what was going on and I don't think Rick Burt liked being kept waiting, but you have to make choices in this life. It was quite an education, and after it was all over I realized how much I'd learned, and I felt the Kommandatura had done a very good job and I was grateful that John had given me that chance. I just wish I'd had a little more preparation for it. Ironically enough, this was in November of 1986 when all this happened. I must say it didn't make much of a blip in the papers. The real blips were behind the scenes with the Germans in particular. The same issue rose again in the summer of '87. Once again there was no minister. I was acting, and once again we were in the chair so I was chair in the Kommandatura. And the issue came up with Iranians. The Iranians had done something particularly egregious involving terrorism. A German court had conclusively issued a report, the German authorities had, that the Iranians were guilty of terrorism in Germany, or in Berlin I forget which. So once again, having done it to the

Libyans, we decided as the Allied Kommandatura we would do it to the Iranians. And we did. With exactly the same type of to-ing and fro-ing. There was a little more concern that the Iranians might do something crazy because we didn't know much about them compared to the Libyans. Nothing did happen, but there was some concern based on intelligence reports that there would be untold reaction. But we expelled the Iranians who were based in West Berlin from Berlin. That is, from the western sectors of Berlin, acting as the Allied Kommandatura. Once again, I was the one who kept the commandant informed and kept the ambassador in Bonn informed. I felt pretty good expelling people.

Q: In addition to the challenge of coordinating with the ambassador in Bonn and the commandant in Berlin, did you have to coordinate pretty carefully with the State Department in Washington or were you pretty much on your own in working these things out?

WILLIAMS: The State Department by this point had given USBER a pretty long leash on this sort of thing. I did not talk to the State Department colleagues, but Don Kogritz our legal advisor I'm sure was in touch with his colleagues back in L. Deputy Political Advisor Brass Smith and others were talking to people back in EURCE so Washington was certainly witting to what was going on. We also sent cables back telling them what we were doing and what we planned to do, but there was really not a whole lot of input on that, as I recall, from Washington. I don't recall any input. No complaint about what we did, but also nothing particular.

Q: Now, as political advisor, to what extents were you engaged, involved, reporting on West Berlin politicians, political developments, parties?

WILLIAMS: Well quite a bit because we dealt of course with a lot of Berliners. At my level we dealt with the governing mayor. So we dealt with the governing mayor and his immediate staff in the senate as it was called which was the government of Berlin. Dealt with other politicians. When I came there the governing mayor was CDU, Christian Democrat, but we dealt with the Social Democrats as well because we realized that at some point they would succeed the CDU as indeed they did. We did that at a fairly intensive level so that we would report our conversations, our discussions. Sometimes we would have business to do, I would just transact business with the governing mayor, and usually the minister would do that, more often I would deal with his deputies in the senate. The Greens came on our screen at this time also. In Berlin they were called the Alternative List, the AL, but they were an offshoot of the National Green Party in West Germany with which I had some experience from my time in Bonn. They were initially very allergic to people who wore suits and ties and suspicious of the Allies who had been occupying their city for so many decades and what we stood for and this and that. But their concerns were I think more economic and ecological than anti-imperialist so we could have a discussion with them. They would accept our invitations to come to our house. I had one of the so-called representational houses and a staff and a budget to use it. And so we would often have large functions there with a lot of folks from the mission, some of the military and some of the Allied and the Berliners including the Greens, the Alternative List. I won't say they ever became close friends, but they did come and we got to know each other professionally which was useful.

Q: What sort of functions did you have? I know, never having served in Berlin, there were some kind of unique types of representation functions that seemed to work very well.

WILLIAMS: We had large receptions on a number of occasions. Obviously whenever a visitor came through or a CODEL (Congressional delegation) or an FBI team or whatever it was, we would use my residence or the minister's residence, sometimes the commandant's for large functions.

Q: Smoking evenings? Herenaben?

WILLIAMS: Yes, that's a German tradition which we had in Berlin too. Basically that's an evening for men. Since Beth Jones and others were members of our staff didn't take kindly to the designation of herenaben which would seem to exclude them. But we got around that. In fact, an increasing number of women staffed USBER in my time there, so I think the term fell into disuse. But essentially when I got there it was still in vogue with an evening where men of influence from the Allied missions from the Berlin government, from the military, from the economic sector of the Chamber of Commerce would get together and discuss things of great moment over very good food with cigars at the end. A noble tradition.

Q: You mentioned that Beth Jones was on the staff, what was her position at the time? She's now assistant secretary for European affairs.

WILLIAMS: Indeed she is. Beth was the economic advisor with counterparts in the Allied missions and I think certainly in the Berlin city government she dealt with the Chamber of Commerce quite a bit, the fairgrounds people since the fairgrounds is a big part of the Berlin economy. She was very much involved.

Q: Now there was of course an American embassy in East Berlin at this time, accredited to the German democratic republic. To what extent were you involved with that embassy and how did you share responsibilities? Because you did have some responsibilities for Berlin as a whole including the eastern sector.

WILLIAMS: Formally we were responsible for Berlin as a whole as were the other Allied missions in West Berlin with the Soviet embassy in East Berlin. The minister, whether it was John Kornblum or Harry Gilmore, his successor, I think as a matter of routine met with the ambassador in East Berlin whether it was Dick Bartley or Frank Meehan, at least once a month, maybe more often. There were a number of issues to talk about, but most of the issues that we dealt with at USBER did not involve the embassy in East Berlin because the embassy did not deal with Berlin per se except to the extent the East German government was there which it was to some extent very limited with the East Berlin government. But our folks in the East Berlin embassy were accredited to the German Democratic Republic and took their responsibility primarily in the field of the bilateral relationship leaving to us Berlinery with all of the niggling issues involving waterways and canals and borders and sewage systems and security that entailed.

Q: Air access?

WILLIAMS: Air access too. We ran the air access. We had a program to exercise the right of

military access in East Berlin or the Soviet sector of Berlin as we called it, on a daily basis. And on a daily basis we would send military convoys through Checkpoint Charlie who would travel around in East Berlin and come back. They were always followed, they were always checked through with the correct procedure and checked out in the correct way, but that was deliberately designed to show that we were not going to give up our right of access to Berlin as a whole. In this case, the Soviet sector. And occasionally these vehicles would be involved in a fender bender or a pedestrian would get hit, or they would render aid to somebody who had gotten hurt or fallen unconscious. There were a few cases where essentially a humanitarian incident arose or they would have to go to the hospital because one of them got sick very quickly, it was an emergency, and we had to get them back. And this was handled strictly by the missions in West Berlin. Occasionally the consular officer at the embassy in East Berlin might get involved, but more often than not they would come straight through the Soviet channel to the respective Allied force in West Berlin. It was convoluted to be sure, but it worked pretty well, because as I said at this point in the late 1980s we'd been doing it for over forty years. Nobody wanted trouble in Berlin and when there were problems or incidents or whatever all four sides worked to make sure that we settled it as quickly as possible. Another example, this also extended it to East Germany where we had a different set of access rules, each of the three western Allies had a military liaison mission in Potsdam. The Soviets had one based in Frankfurt, reciprocal. And the purpose was to stage military liaison missions which were actually overt spy missions on what the respective forces were doing in East Germany in the case of the Soviets and in West Germany in the case of the Allies. And so our Soviet hands at the Potsdam military liaison mission had a frequent period of travel through East Germany to the Soviet encampments, not East German places, mainly to see what they were doing, because the Soviets at that time had a huge presence still in East Germany. A year before I came to Berlin, there had been an incident where Major Nicholson, who was one of the members of the military liaison mission, had been shot and killed while doing his duty at a Soviet cantonment somewhere in East Germany. He'd been shot by a sentry who'd been told to shoot anybody who got near the tent. The major was near the tent, he was shot. He was still alive. But as the Soviet soldier had no further instructions he kept everybody else at bay with his rifle and the major bled to death. This led to a huge incident between us and the Soviets, between the Allies and the Soviets, because the British and French were just as concerned that it could have been one of theirs. We were not in the reporting chain on these things, but we did hear about them when they came back through Berlin because we were in close touch with our MLM friends. They kept the USCAB the army intelligence folks in Berlin informed, but they had a separate reporting channel, their own stovepipe. And I forget exactly where it happened, but in the wake of the Nicholson story and the bad blood over that, steps were taken to reduce the likelihood of that again. Allegedly the Soviets instructed their sentries to be more careful and we took some steps to have some extra communications capability in case something like that happened again. I forget how it happened, but at one point in the fall of whatever year it was, just about the time Secretary Shultz was going to sit down with his Soviet counterpart, Gromyko. A member of our mission in Potsdam was driving one of these Mercedes galandewagen, it's like a hummer, off-road vehicle, on duty, they flag was flying. It was clearly a U.S. military vehicle, and for whatever reason he was shot through the arm. He wasn't killed and he wasn't seriously wounded, but the bullet went through the flesh of his upper arm. And that was reported back through channels. What happened was we short circuited the process. We heard about it through normal liaison with our military colleagues in Berlin and realizing the significance of it, and knowing the secretary was getting ready to sit

down with Gromyko, we sent a cable back. We cleared it within the military in Berlin, sent a cable back saying, look, the Secretary is going to meet with Gromyko. He should land very heavily on the Soviet because this just happened. We weren't trying to poach on anybody's territory, but we were on a time constraint because the meeting was a few hours away and we knew if we communicated the other way it would just take too long. Well there was a huge blowup over that within our sector because we had short-circuited the process. The reporting chain for the MLM went to Berlin, to Heidelberg, to NATO I think or to SHAPE and then back to the Pentagon and then to State. That's the way they liked to report things, and that's the way the military chain of command goes. And in effect we did this and Secretary Shultz raised it with his counterpart before the Secretary of Defense ever found out about it. So he was not pleased, the Secretary of Defense, and naturally his unhappiness was visited down the chain of command. So that was a lesson for all of us and me particularly as a civilian in how the military chain of command works. I won't say I learned the lesson perfectly, I certainly didn't, but it made us a little more sensitive to it. On the other hand, I think given the circumstances we did exactly the right thing.

Q: You mentioned previously that there was a problem with the chain of command, the commandant. Was it this incident you were referring to, or was there another one?

WILLIAMS: No, it's part of a piece. For years, I won't say forever, but for a long time the practice had been that the commandant in Berlin was always an army two star, was the supreme American official resident in Berlin who took political advice from the mission. The U.S. minister was the supreme political advisor in Berlin who reported directly to Washington and to Bonn and did not take directions from the commandant on matters within his domain as the commandant did not take direction from us on matters in his domain. To be fair, I think many members of USBER and I'll include myself in that, probably had a somewhat too civilian an attitude about some things and not a respectful enough position towards some of the military sensitivities. And this incident about the chain of command and MLM may indicate that. There was some resentment there. Some of it may have been personal based on how earlier ministers had reacted or not reacted to things that the military considered important. For the military, for example, ceremonial things are very important and you go to ceremonies and if you don't go to ceremonies that tells them something about how you feel about them, their culture, their way of life. I'm generalizing crudely without trying to give too many specifics here. So when John Kornblum left after a very successful tour as minister he was in our generation Mr. Germany. Kind of the Martin Hillenbrand of American foreign service officers. Nobody came close to John in terms of expertise and depth of experience. Real wisdom in how the Germans function, how they think. When he left, Harry Gilmore followed. Also a very competent German European hand with a lot of eastern experience that John had not had. But more significantly what happened was that the commandant changed a little later. John Mitchell had been commandant when we got there, hale fellow, well-met, very good at ceremony, at presiding over meetings, very deferential to our collective political expertise as we were deferential to his military expertise. His successor, the last commandant in Berlin, was Ray Haddock, also a two star army general, who came to Berlin with a very different agenda in mind. He had been one of the commanders of the deployment sites for the P2s, the Persians, in southwestern Germany. Married to a German, spoke pretty good German, and had done some very delicate and successful negotiations with the local officials in Dadenvertenberg, southwest Germany, when

the fight over the deployment of these Persians was being waged. And they were deployed and from all that I heard and read and was told he did an excellent job in helping prepare public opinion for that event. And he may have been encouraged to some extent by the other members of the staff of the USCAB who had gone through the Mitchell era and wanted to right the balance a bit. I'll put it that way. So he basically saw an opportunity in this fourth hat that the senior military person wore in Berlin, and tried to exercise authority as the DCM in Berlin over U.S. mission in Berlin, USBER. Now we of course did clear cables with each other. We were very correct about that. Whenever we had a major assessment that went out on the political scene in Berlin or the coming elections in Berlin or a visit by the governing mayor to Washington which always involved some face time in the White House with the President, we would clear that with either the commandant or his staff, as a courtesy. We didn't think we should skip them. Ray Haddock cleared it himself. As I recall his initials in bold print were on there. And I forget what precipitated, but basically he made a pitch to Ambassador Walters, a retired three star general, among other things, that he as the commandant in Berlin and the deputy chief of mission in Berlin should be in the chain of command substantively over USBER when it came to cables, recommendations, decisions and so forth. He really wanted to eat our lunch. And he made a very strong case for it. Harry Gilmore, to his credit, made a very strong rebuttal, but he was always rebutting the very aggressive outreach by the commandant and it went to Ambassador Walters in Bonn. At one point, Harry Gilmore, the minister, and the commandant Ray Haddock went down to Bonn and met with Walters separately, and essentially, Walters, who hated this issue and did not want to decide it, affirmed the traditional way of doing things. He told Harry to go back and not gloat over it and told Ray to go back and do his job, as I understand it. I was not in those meetings, so I'm giving this to you third hand, so that's basically what happened. But throughout my time there and I think it continued throughout Ray's tour, he stayed there a year longer than I did, there was this tension. It was not as collegial. It had not always been collegial. I did look into the history of this when I was in Berlin and there had been times before when very brilliant and aggressive and ambitious military folks had asserted authority over USBER on certain issues. Sometimes successfully, sometimes not. This is inevitable in a bureaucracy. It's nothing unusual. But it was unfortunate in the last phase of the occupation in Berlin that our sector had this problem. In earlier years the British had had a commandant who was a bit off the range, and I think the French at one time did too. But we had extra coordination problems in this last phase. That said, it never really got out of hand. We always worked very carefully with each other on very sensitive intelligence matters, on the whole issue of how to deal with the realities created by the fall of the wall on November 9, 1989. The refugee problems. Cooperation really never broke down anywhere as far as I could tell, and I would have known about it. But it was just not as much fun as it should have been. I think it was basically because he wanted to be in charge of us and we didn't want him to be in charge of us.

Q: You've mentioned several times that this was the last phase of the occupation period and the Berlin wall came down on November 9, 1989 which is five days short of being 15 years ago today. Do you want to talk some about that, and how early did you anticipate that something momentous like that was going to happen? I think it would be very interesting if you could talk through that.

WILLIAMS: I don't think anybody on the scene in Berlin and perhaps even in Bonn who was following this issue as it developed in the summer and fall of '89 anticipated what happened. In

retrospect, it looked so clear, and you wonder how we missed it. But if anybody anticipated such a thing he didn't report it, or at least I never saw the report. We were all too close to it I think. There had been concern for several months that the East German regime was getting wobbly. A lot of its young people were leaving or trying to leave and this accelerated in the late summer and early fall of '89 when Hungary opened its border with Austria. There was as I recall regime change in Hungary. They decided to open their border with Austria and take the barbed wire down and this was broadcast as straight news in the West German and East German medium. East Berliners got both. And they quickly realized that as Hungary was still a communist country, formally speaking, they could go there as tourists and then very easily cross over into the West through Austria. And so a number of them started doing that. Numbers of East Germans were leaving East Germany through Hungary to Austria to West Germany in effect. We were monitoring this through various channels; this was not an overt stream. Refugee groups were processing these folks at various points. But the desire to get out was particularly acute among the young people, married people, single people, students, who just saw no hope in their society and saw tremendous opportunity and wealth in West Germany. Numbers started going out through Czechoslovakia as well. There was a time when the West German embassy in Prague was inhabited by several thousand East German refugees who had gotten into Czechoslovakia, another communist country, legally as tourists from East Germany but had not been given visas by West Germany, yet nevertheless they climbed over the fence and camped there. In September or October this led to another highly publicized situation in which the living conditions on the grounds of the German embassy in Prague became so acute that people were afraid folks were going to start dying of plague or dysentery or various things because it was just an impossible situation and more and more folks were coming. It was acting as a magnet for more and more East Germans. So finally the West Germans negotiated a so-called one time agreement with the Czechs and the East Germans to let these East Germans go on trains, sealed trains that would pass through East Germany into West Germany from Prague. That was how they came as I recall. The Czechs wanted them out of there; the East Germans wanted the issue to go away. They wanted the East Germans back, but for whatever reason they agreed. So the East Germans left. That was the second thing. And then the third thing that happened, in October, was the East German national day, and for this one Gorbachev came. It was a state visit as well as the national day with all the pomp and circumstance of which German military bands are so capable. We watched it all on T.V. of course and we had a lot of people in East Berlin at the site where the parades occurred, the torchlight parades as well as the military parades. But essentially, Gorbachev said in public to the East German regime, those that cannot change to meet the demands of the present are doomed. In other words, we're not going to help you. His message was somewhat veiled, but it was interpreted both East and West to mean if you get in a real situation here the Soviet troops are not going to bail you out. There was also a lot of pacifist church led groups in Leipzig in particular in East Germany and other cities, in Dresden, which grew and grew from candlelight vigils to mass demonstrations where at one point there were 100,000 or more East Germans chanting in the streets of Leipzig, "We are the people, we want some change". It was peaceful. These were not mutinous citizens, they were far more peaceful than West Berlin demonstrators were when they would demonstrate for something. These were anarchists we had to deal with in West Berlin, but in East Germany, not in East Berlin but in the big cities of East Germany largely pacifist, well-behaved, but huge groups of people. We had reported all this, we had internalized it, but we had not connected the dots to that meant the regime was tottering.

So was the East German politburo had a meeting I guess sometime on the ninth of November. On the evening news the government spokesman for East Germany read a decision by the politburo. It basically said as of tomorrow morning any East German citizen who wants to leave East Germany may do so with proper documentation. It looked as if he couldn't quite believe what he was reading as he read it. Nevertheless he read it, and this was one of several news items. This was not the big story, there was no follow-up, but that was just one of the announcements. I was with Ann in a movie theater that night. Around nine or nine thirty they stopped the film, turned on all the lights and asked Mr. Williams to come to the desk if he would. This was an American military theater on one of the bases we had in Berlin. This had never happened to me before. It was Harry Gilmore on the phone saying he had just gotten a very puzzling message to the effect that crowds of East Germans were spilling into West Berlin at one of the checkpoints. He said he wasn't quite sure what this meant, but maybe I should come down to the office and see. For the next four days I lived at the office and we kept watch and informed Washington of what was happening. Essentially what happened was when the East Berlin population heard that news report they went down, even though they didn't have documentation, that meant an exit visa, that's what the East Germans required, you're supposed to get an exit visa stamped into your passport and with that you would be allowed to leave to go to the West. They didn't have that documentation because the offices weren't open, but they nevertheless went down to the checkpoints where you would normally cross. More and more of them gathered and there were thousands and then tens of thousands and the pressure got quite high because people were getting afraid folks would get crushed. The guards at the checkpoints, the East Germans, had absolutely no instructions on this point. Fortunately they decided to take the easy way out and not to use deadly force to keep the crowds back. When it got too bad they simply lifted the turnstile and the folks were allowed to come through. And that's basically what happened. The wall was breached at several points when the guards lifted the barrier and the crowds swarmed through. The people couldn't believe they had gotten through without being shot and what they saw when they got over there. And then the West Berliners soon heard what was happening and amazing numbers of them rushed down to the wall. Berlin itself is a huge city in terms of area. We lived within the wall the whole time we were there and rarely saw it all and we traveled a lot. It was lakes and canals and vast expanses. It's a very large area in terms of square miles. So the West Berliners from all areas of the city would rush down to the wall. This would sometimes take them a half hour, an hour to do, to see for themselves what was happening. And many of them spontaneously invited the East Berliners home for dinner, for the night. We heard this again and again from friends who did it. Apocryphal stories of West Berliners giving cars to East Berliners. There was a huge surge of good feeling here, brotherhood, German to German. No violence, even against the guards. The East German guards were still there standing at their posts letting the masses go by. No violence against them. Tremendous happiness, euphoria in fact, lots of honking of cars. Tremendous consumption of alcohol. The bars and the pubs didn't shut that night, or for the whole weekend. In fact the city ran out of booze I think, probably Sunday. And even still no brawls, no rowdiness. It was a very unusual, intoxicating moment. Literally intoxicating, where people acted sensibly and yet with this enormous joy. I have to say, we were swept up in that, even those of us like me, stuck in the office. Ann went down; a lot of my staff went down. I finally got down there on Saturday or Sunday to see it, but by that point the party had peaked. People were starting to come down off the high even though it continued through Sunday. So that's essentially what happened. Then the

question was, well, since most of those East Berliners went back, they said we just want to come visit. They went back to their homes, crossed over again. And then they wanted to come back. It quickly became apparent that this whole idea of exit permits and entry permits and visas was absurd and the whole edifice was going to come down. It was only a few days later that the first sections of the wall started coming down. We as allies from the first moment were very closely involved because of our responsibility for security in Berlin. With the West Berlin authorities, but also with the Soviets. I think the most nervous people in this whole event were the Soviets who didn't know really what was going to happen with this huge number of Germans surging around, drinking. Given the history of Soviet-German relations, particularly with the way Berlin had been taken and the way East Germany had been occupied, the Soviets had reason to be concerned that there might be brawls or violence attempted against some of their units somewhere in East Germany or around Berlin. Didn't happen. One reason it didn't happen I think, or one reason why the Soviets didn't overreact, which was perhaps a greater danger, concern they would preempt to do something stupid that would trigger German violence, was the Allies at the minister level, also at the ambassadorial level were able to tell them in Berlin that the Berliners had the situation under control. The Allies had it under control; we were not going to let things get out of hand. We spent a lot of time, we had public safety advisors who were essentially our diplomatic security people, but working with the German police authorities to keep the crowds under control. They never had to deploy force as I recall, but there were a lot of meetings on where the problems might occur. Public safety folk were very, very busy. The military had their own contacts and we did this together. It was USBER and the military in this operation and the Allies also, civilian/military worked hand in glove with this with each other, with the West Berliners. This jurisdictional fuss I mentioned earlier with the commandant and so on really was meaningless in what I'm describing, fortunately because we all worked very closely together. One of the issues that came up, for example, was since this never happened before and since we never war gamed or game planned for something like this, we didn't really know how far it would go or where it would go, but there were lots of points of concern. One was for example the part of the wall that was in front of the Brandenburg gate. It was old concrete and apparently the older concrete gets the harder it becomes. Much harder if it's 20 years old than if it's 10 years old. When it's 30 years old it's even harder and so on and so on. It's a progressive thing. And it was very thick, and nobody quite remembered how the wall had been built there, but the concern was that within this enormously thick concrete wall were reinforced bars, steel girders and taking it down, which the crowd wanted to do, might require heavy equipment. If some West Berliners got the heavy equipment to take down the wall there they might turn around and direct that equipment to the Soviet military monument which is right next door and that would really get the Soviets engaged. And so the fear was disorder which Germans dislike anyway, civil disorder, but particularly civil disorder directed against official Soviet presence like the military monument which had Soviet guards 24 hours a day and so forth. Or other Soviet buildings in Berlin. So a lot of effort was spent to work those issues, to make sure that if heavy equipment had to be used that it was put to civilian use and not to inappropriate use, and that the Soviet missions and presence always had due protection and were respectfully treated. And we were very up front with the Soviets about that. I think those reassurances played a useful role because they had never dealt with this either and they as I said had some reason to be concerned. I don't know of any untoward acts against the Soviets either in East Germany or East Berlin during this period. Or in West Berlin. There may have been somebody who threw a rock, but it would be that low level. That was not the agenda, fortunately, and I think this general

euphoria sort of swept people along in another direction, they didn't want to wreak vengeance on folks.

Q: You were coordinating pretty closely with the American embassy in East Berlin during this particular period, or were your issues...

WILLIAMS: I don't think they had much of a role in this. I mean no disrespect, but I honestly cannot recall dealing with them. I was dealing with my Allied counterparts, our Soviet counterpart; we had one of these impromptu quadripartite chats at USBER one day. The Soviet, Vladimir Grinin was his name. Very fine fellow. He drove over with a colleague from the Soviet embassy and met with I guess the three Allies in our office, just for a chat. They had to take a huge detour because the large crowds were blocking the normal routes of access and they had a car that had Soviet diplomatic plates on it. It was a Soviet car, and they were a little nervous to be honest about it, because they had no protection. They were just there, the two of them, but pleasantly surprised it was going as well as it was. They had not been hassled on the way over. We talked about things, what we were hearing from the Berlin police, and what the projection was. So there were a number of meetings like that, and I think it was handled well, although as I say we had no master plan, we were sort of operating by the seat of our pants, but it came out alright.

Q: You mentioned earlier the statement by President Kennedy during his administration on his visit to West Berlin, Ich bin ein Berliner. There's another famous quote by President Reagan. I'm not sure what year; I think it was also in Berlin.

WILLIAMS: 1987, yes. "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall."

Q: How significant was that do you think, or that posture on our part?

WILLIAMS: I think it was very significant, although at the time..

Q: You were there when that...

WILLIAMS: Yes. He came for the 750th anniversary of Berlin. This was a huge birthday party that the city wanted to throw for itself. The Reagan administration was heading to elections in a few months and they wanted to throw it to showcase Berlin, to showcase their leadership of the city. And the Allies were very happy to participate, because as I said most of our expenses, certainly our birthday party expenses were paid for by the Bundestag. So we had lots of resources for a tremendous birthday bash. Reagan came; he was in Berlin I think for less than 12 hours. He flew into Tempelhof, he came to the B hall which was the original civilian passenger terminal of Tempelhof for the American birthday for Berlin. Just a little humorous aside. This was 1987. He had been shot six years before. He was in Germany, in Berlin, surrounded by Soviets, the Secret Service went a little goosey, but we got him in there. The B hall was full of people. There was a balloon drop because Mike Deaver liked balloon drops and the President loved them. There was a huge number of balloons in nets waiting to be dropped at the right moment of Reagan's speech. They were apparently close to some source of heat, I guess lights, so Reagan is giving his speech and it's a very charismatic speech, very uplifting, and midway

through a sentence is this loud boom that goes off. We didn't know what to make of it, it sounded like a gunshot. We thought, oh my god, somebody is shooting the President, and the Secret Service and everybody else is very nervous. Without missing a beat, Reagan said, "Missed me," and then went on with his speech. Huge roar and cheer from the crowd. It was great showmanship. But his best showmanship was in front of the Brandenburg gate, outdoors, with a very carefully screened audience of Allied civilians mainly. This was the British sector, but all three sectors were represented. The backdrop was the chancellor of Germany and the ministers of the three Allied powers, the ambassadors and so forth, and that's the speech at which Reagan said "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." And there were several sentences addressed rhetorically to Gorbachev in the first person, but "tear down this wall" was the most dramatic one. That made quite an impact apparently among the population to whom it was really addressed, that is the East Germans and others of the east. I think, at the time, I felt and I think a lot of my colleagues felt it was melodramatic, it was too much showmanship, it just wasn't statesmanlike, but I think we were wrong. Looking back on it, if you look at how that sentence is played in retrospective histories of it post-wall it's quite an important event that the head of the free world, the head of the United States government thought it important enough to say to Gorbachev in Berlin, "Tear down this wall," very principled position. So I would say it was quite famous and more influential than Kennedy's proclamation that he was a jelly-filled doughnut.

Q: Should we stop at this point and then we'll pick up next time?

Today is the sixteenth of November, 2004 and we're resuming our conversation about your service as political advisor at the U.S. mission Berlin from 1986 to 1990, and I think in our previous conversation Jim, we pretty much talked about what happened before and during the coming down of the wall in November 1989 and maybe we can proceed and talk about the rest of your assignment to Berlin and how much you were involved in the reunification of Germany and the diplomatic negotiations that went on to that goal, of course things specific to Berlin.

WILLIAMS: When the wall fell that November 9th, it quickly became more and more porous as more and more pedestrian and vehicular traffic crossed over in both directions. So it was rapidly clear to everybody, including the Soviets, that the reunification of the city and of Germany was a matter of time. Some of the Allies wanted the time to be longer, some shorter, but nobody disagreed about reunification, to which we were all formally pledged, including the Soviet Union by the way, that it was coming much more quickly than any of us had imagined a few weeks before. After the new crossing points were opened, basically by removing large hunks of the wall so that people could go through it unimpeded and drive through it also, more so than they had been able to do for almost 28 years, there was a lot of traffic back and forth. Seeing East Berliners in West Berlin became normal and having West Berliners look around East Berlin was normal too. Now formally the quadripartite status of the city remained and the responsibilities of the three western Allies and the Soviet Union were unchanged. We continued our regular meetings, the three westerners and then at various levels the ministers and the political advisors would meet with their Soviet counterparts to conduct business, to exchange notes, basically to reassure the Soviets in many ways that this process of rapid change which makes any status quo power nervous was working peacefully and not likely to lead to their detriment, physical or otherwise. I think we mentioned in our last conversation that there was initial concern by some of the Soviet leaders in Germany, particularly the military leadership that these surging crowds

of happy Germans might for various reasons turn suddenly on the Soviet garrisons that were all over East Germany. As far as I know that never happened. There was no retribution visited on either the Soviets as an occupying power or on the East German authorities who had been perceived in the West as their puppets for many, many years. There may have been some score settlement at a very low level, but it never came to my attention in Berlin. So we were very pleased that and I think we can take a slight amount of credit for that, making sure there was no overreaction by either the Berlin authorities or by the Soviets camped around the city and throughout East Germany. The calendar of events then became dominated. The Christmas season of course was approaching, but there were other things that had to be done. One was to open the wall at the Brandenburg gate. The Brandenburg gate, next to the Berlin bear, is the symbol, historically, of Berlin. It had been closed since the wall had been constructed. In fact, there was a massively thick and tall wall right in front of the gate. The gate was on the East Berlin side of the city, in the Soviet sector as we called it, and had been the backdrop for many events, including President Reagan's 1987 address to the German people. And Mr. Gorbachev whom he implored to tear down this wall. So the Brandenburg gate had tremendous significance. It was really a question of engineering and working out how best to safely remove some of those huge partitions, and then letting the crowds come through in an orderly way. As I recall, the word went out that the gate would be open. That is, that the wall would be lifted near the gate on December 22, 1989, a very rainy, overcast day as is typical in that part of Europe in the winter, throughout the year for that matter. Crowds amassed, including the commandants and the POLADs and the ministers and a whole lot of other people on the western side. And then I forget how the signal was given, but at some point around three that afternoon the crowds surged forward and for the first time ever most of us foreigners at least, found ourselves walking under and through the Brandenburg gate and looking at its decorations. We'd only seen them from afar because it had not been accessible from the eastern side either because of its special significance in proximity to the wall. That was quite an exciting event. It was also the day, as I recall, when Leonard Bernstein dramatically showed up in Berlin. He had been, as millions around the world had, moved by the sudden surge toward German unity, and decided to come and conduct a concert in the Berlin philharmonic hall which is also near the wall, of Beethoven's ninth, and he did. And it was quite a concert.

Q: You were there?

WILLIAMS: I was not there, but I saw it. It was a great success. Well-attended, and we have parts of it on videotape, so vicariously we live that experience from time to time. Particularly the fourth movement, the choral movement, where they speak of joy that makes all men brothers. And indeed that seemed to be the feeling that the Germans had themselves, as well as everybody else. It was a time of great joy, jubilation, embracing one's fellow man. That all has passed now and the euphoria dissipated fairly quickly, but at that time, those first weeks and months after November 9 it was undiminished and the crowds that surged toward the Brandenburg gate that December afternoon were certainly strong witness to that assertion. There was a huge celebration on New Year's Eve at the Brandenburg gate with lots of fireworks and drinking and shouting and yelling. People actually climbed on top of the Brandenburg gate which was dangerous because it's fairly high. It was a stable structure but it had not been built for drunken revelers to climb around. I don't think anybody died that night, but there were some injuries from minor falls. Anyway, more jubilation, more goodwill, more celebration of what was coming. And the next

months of 1990 were basically an unfolding of further steps as the wall continued to be dismantled. Dismantling the wall was a huge undertaking because the total length of the wall, because of the size of the city of Berlin, in particular the size of the three western sectors which had significant lakes and canals as part of their territory, or the border, to put a wall around that required a structure of I think about 120 kilometers. Not the whole city, the Soviet sector, East Berlin, was not part of it, but ringing the western sectors of Berlin including the lakes in the southwest and the north took a lot of doing, and dismantling that thing. A lot of volunteers helped, including tourists, my wife, my daughter. Everybody got a hammer and chisels and went to work, and they earned themselves the nickname of wall woodpeckers because you could hear this *chink, chink, chink* noise up and down the wall, day and night. It was like the locusts here every 17 years, or the cicadas. It just was on and on and on. But still it took a long time. This was old cement, it was well-built, and it was massive and very, very long. Parts of it stand today, but mainly under historical protection for reminding future generations.

Q: There are small chunks in living rooms all over the United States, all over the world.

WILLIAMS: We shipped back several hundred pounds through the pouch of genuinely harvested parts of the Berlin wall. The demand seemed insatiable because everybody wanted some, and the pieces that had parts of the murals or the frescoes or paint on them were particularly prized because they were the outside part of the wall. Interestingly enough, the murals were only on the side pointing toward the west because that was the only side that was accessible to the graffiti artists and the others. On the eastern side the East German authorities kept people away. They didn't want them approaching that wall so there was virtually no graffiti on that side at all. Huge chunks of the wall, as you know, were lifted away and ceremoniously given to the Bush library, to the Reagan library, to other prominent libraries and institutions around the world, and today very little remains. The formal structure of the quadripartite status of Berlin and the occupation regime had not yet changed. We decommissioned Checkpoint Charlie shortly before our tour ended in the summer of 1990. Checkpoint Charlie was the main crossing point in the American sector at the wall that was created after the wall was built. The decommissioning involved the lifting by crane of the house where the guards had sat for decades to another site, and then giving away pieces of the large gravel that underlay it. The foreign ministers came, Secretary Baker was there, Douglas Heard was there, the French foreign minister and quite a few others. It was a major ceremony in which we were at the mission involved heavily in preparing the way logistically. There were other events of that kind. There was a quadripartite meeting of ambassadors for the first time in many years. Vernon Walters was our ambassador in Bonn and he and the two Allies met with their Soviet counterpart from East Berlin for a general review of how things were going. This happened about February, March as I recall, of 1990. I was not at the meeting; Harry Gilmore was involved as an advisor. The meeting was in Berlin at the old Allied control council building, which essentially had been vacant since the Allied control council stopped meeting after the Soviets walked out of it in the late 1940s. But with unity coming, with so much changing so rapidly and given the stakes the decision was to hold a meeting. As far as I recall it only met once, in a somewhat formal sense as to reassert visibly the authority of the control council for Berlin with the four power controlled council, and I don't believe it ever met again at that level.

It seemed to me that our meetings with members of the Soviet embassy in East Berlin remained

at a much more frequent rate for the balance of my tour there. We always met with them regularly, as I said in earlier sessions, at my level, at the minister's level, and when the ambassador would come up from Bonn he would almost always meet with the Soviet ambassador from East Berlin in a bilateral where I would take notes.

Q: And the meetings at your level were also generally at a bilateral level with the Soviet embassy?

WILLIAMS: Usually. We had a rotating system among the three western Allies where one of us was the Ally in charge for the month, so to speak, and one of our months was November. So we were in charge when the wall fell, and Harry Gilmore had the duty and the honor to inform the other ministers and the ambassador in Bonn and the commandant and coordinate our response to that first frenzied activity. So usually the chairman of the month would meet with the Soviet counterpart. All of us had the same Soviet counterpart in these years; his name was Vladimir Grinin, a real German expert, about our age, very attractive man with a very attractive wife, spoke excellent German. We conversed in German because that was the language that we all had best. Some of my colleagues knew Russian, I didn't know a word. But we socialized a bit with them at the quadripartite Allied festivities such as the ball of the Berlin air safety center which would be held each winter. There were other events that were celebrated by Soviet entities in West Berlin where we would see Grinin informally from time to time. We got to know each other fairly well. He proposed early on that we converse using the informal German "you". Which was quite a step. He was, to my surprise, very comfortable with that, we certainly were, and he was Vladia, I was Jim, and Roland and Jeane-Paul. There were four of us. I would say we had a good time. It was always professional. We could joke around with each other. We got business done pretty quickly. We continued the rotation of Ally of the month and that person had the main responsibility for being in contact that month with Grinin, either in West Berlin or in East Berlin at the Soviet embassy. We met in both places.

Q: To what extent were you involved during this transition period with the U.S. embassy in East Berlin? I think we had talked about that a little bit before, but obviously their days were coming to an end and I don't know at what point the embassy and the mission began to in effect come together.

WILLIAMS: That really happened after I left in August of 1990. We always had regular meetings with the ambassador and the DCM at the embassy in East Berlin. But even though we were all in the same city, our missions were almost entirely different. They never had any responsibility for the quadripartite issues, for dealing with the Soviets about Berlin that was our bread and butter. They dealt with the East German government which for us was an illegal presence in East Berlin and we never dealt with the East German authorities unless it was an emergency when somebody had to receive first aid in an auto accident on the Autobahn in East Germany or in Eastern Berlin. So there was almost total division of labor, but after November 9 I think there was more regular contact between particularly Harry Gilmore the minister in West Berlin and the ambassador Dick Barkley in East Berlin. Personalities aside, there was I think institutionally a bit of chafing between an embassy which was accredited to a government but not responsible for the capital city of that government and a mission which was responsible for the whole city which included the capital city of the government whose authority it did not

recognize in the city and there was from time to time inevitably some friction. And some duplicate reporting which I think on the whole was a plus because there were different sides of the elephant to report back to Washington. But in terms of coming together, that was a matter of great sensitivity which our chief of mission in Bonn handled because as German unity was coming it was quite clear there would no longer be a need for an embassy in East Berlin because the GDR was going to be melded out of existence into the larger Germany. The decision was made essentially in Washington to have embassy Bonn coordinate the coming together of mission Berlin, USBER and embassy Berlin. And that inevitably meant some people would go and some people would stay, and that decision was made ultimately in Bonn by George Ward the DCM and Vernon Walters the chief of mission. And inevitably there was some resentment and great disappointment by some of the members of the embassy in Berlin. More so than my members of mission Berlin. There were more of us, not that we were better, and not all of us say it either, but this all happened after I left and I only know this from hearing it from a lot of people.

Q: One of the procedural innovations I suppose in the diplomacy of German reunification was the four plus two, the quadripartite powers, the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union, and the German Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic. Did that all start after you had left, or did that really not affect Berlin as such.

WILLIAMS: It didn't affect me. It started before I left, but I was not involved. Harry Gilmore was tangentially involved, but most of that diplomacy was run out of Bonn by all three of the western powers, and then working with the Soviet embassy, in East Berlin, not the Soviet embassy in Bonn. But I don't recall aside again from the logistical responsibilities we had for setting up the venue for some of these meetings, I don't recall any major role by USBER in that time. And of course, after we left there was a lot more of it because we left in August and German unity came about a year later, so there was an intensive negotiation from '90 to '91, but it really didn't involve me.

Q: I don't mean to plug a book particularly, but I might just note for the record a book that I've read that I think was really quite excellent by Condoleezza Rice who perhaps today will be named Secretary of State and her coauthor is Philip Zelikow who is well-known lately for being the executive director of the 9/11 Commission and it really discusses the four plus two talks, what Secretary Baker's involvement, all sorts of aspects. It's fairly detailed. I don't remember the title, but it came out about 10 years ago, eight years ago, something like that.

WILLIAMS: Harry Gilmore wrote an op-ed piece in the Baltimore Sun that came out on November 9 this year. This is the fifteenth anniversary of the fall of the wall. It was a short piece, but it recounted his, he was the Allied chairman for that month, November. His experiences dealing with the governing mayor of Berlin, Walter Momper, social democrat, and the commandant Ray Haddock, and the Allies and Ambassador Walters that night. And it's quite an interesting vignette. The main issue that night was the Berlin police, the West Berlin police, wanted authority to approach the wall and maintain order and restore it when necessary. And the issue was, and the reason they came to us was, the wall was off-limits to them. It stood on the territory of the Soviet sector or of East Germany, depending on where it was located, but they had no legal right to touch it. In fact we had been very firm in telling them to stay the hell away

from it, that it was our responsibility as the occupying powers for many, many years. But given the extraordinary circumstances these tens and tens of thousands of Germans surging forth, there was a correctly perceived need to maintain order lest things get out of hand. So in a period of an hour or two, Harry gave Momper the authorization as soon as he called and then back-briefed the French and British ministers and the commandant and the embassy in Bonn. Things were just going too fast to hold a formal meeting in the Kommandatura and decide this issue. Momper was very happy to get that authority. And the Berlin police, working very closely with the Allies, made good use of that authority. They didn't climb all over the wall and they kept people off the wall as long as they could. It wasn't entirely possible as we know from the pictures, but it was just an indication of how closely and well we worked together in those turbulent days.

Q: Ok, anything else you would want to say about your assignment to Berlin before we go on to your next posting?

WILLIAMS: There are three things I just want to highlight very briefly from my four years in Berlin. As I said before I was initially very surprised as to the comity that existed between the Soviet Union whom we were still calling the evil empire in those days and the Allied powers in Berlin. The surprise was my own lack of background in Berlin when I got there, but it reflected a general desire by all four powers not to have any trouble in Berlin. With the signing of the quadripartite agreement in the early 1970s they had taken that step that they no longer wanted Berlin to be a flashpoint of the Cold War. And so sometimes there was trouble given the circumstances of the division of the city, the division of Germany, the garrisoning of West Germany and East Germany by large numbers of Allied forces and Russian forces, and the spying by one side on the other that was also sanctioned as part of the post-war agreements. Inevitably there was friction. I mentioned last time Major Nicholson was shot and allowed to bleed to death because a Soviet sentry kept first aid from being rendered. Another MLM, military liaison mission, person was shot when I was there. But every time something like that happened it was quickly handled through channels and never escalated to a crisis over Berlin. Nobody wanted any trouble. Whenever refugees, East Berliners or East Germans, tried to cross the wall and got killed or shot or whatever there was a lot of public outrage, political concern, but it never escalated to the point of crisis simply because we had learned a lesson in the '40s and '50s we didn't want one. So from the management of the Berlin air regime, to handling incidents at the wall, or even more trivial things such as when an Allied military vehicle would break down in the eastern sector of Berlin, the Soviets could be counted on to be helpful within reason. They wouldn't do everything, but they generally would be helpful because it was in their interest to do so. Even when Reagan came in 1987, this was my baptism into this, the decision was made to have him speak in front of the Brandenburg gate and to walk up close to the wall and even stand on the area next to the wall where the footing was placed. This is what the Germans called the untabaugabe. Once again, this is technically, legally, juridically part of the Soviet sector of Berlin and this would be a violation. But I told Grinin our Soviet counterpart what was going to happen. I said he was going to walk up there; this was a visit, that's all it is. I wasn't asking permission, I was simply telling him, and his reaction indicated there was not going to be any problem from the Soviet side.

Q: Did you tell your counterpart what President Reagan was going to say?

WILLIAMS: I didn't know, I did not preview the speech. But this could have been a delicate thing. The Secret Service had sharpshooters posted on top of the Reichstag which is very close to the Brandenburg gate and on other points of high ground nearby to protect the president. As I recall also brief greeting on that simply as to let him know there would be armed personnel with sniper scopes up there just in case something untoward happened. As I recall, the day of the visit itself when Reagan was there, there was no Soviet to be seen, the East Germans were out of sight. It was as if it was a dead man zone on the other side of the wall. And fortunately everything went off very smoothly. I think that's sort of informal or formal discussion to put them on notice so we could reassure them and also make sure they did the right thing, or didn't do the wrong thing in anticipating something that didn't happen. So Soviet-Allied cooperation in Berlin was extraordinary, even to the personal level, the whole time I was there. And that was a very big plus in managing the issues.

Q: And that continued through the very turbulent period of 1989.

WILLIAMS: It did. Walters would meet with the Soviet ambassador regularly. As I said, Kotchamasov was the first one. Smirin I think was the second ambassador. They always spoke Russian, sometimes we used German, Walters spoke all these languages, and fortunately for me he did a lot of his business in German so I could take the notes, otherwise Harry would have had to take the notes because he spoke Russian.

The second issue I wanted to mention very briefly is the question of budget. I think it's important to note that the bundestag, the German legislature in Bonn, approved a huge budget for the three western Allies each year. Aside from salaries and all other expenses, all of our operational costs in Berlin, military and civilian, were born by the occupation cost budget approved by the bundestag. Now it went through the normal internal control channels in Bonn. There was a liaison system set up in Berlin and in Bonn, between the embassies and the bundestag, but it didn't go through the congress and it didn't go through our OMB or OPM or any of the other American alphabet agencies. So it was a sui generis arrangement. We had very stringent budgetary years in this period in Washington, so it was a generous budget for us. The missions in Berlin, military and civilian, were very well-equipped. Deliberately so. Not only did we want to showcase Berlin as a city of freedom and success, we wanted to make active use of those assets. So we had created over the years extraordinary training facilities for the military to use, and extraordinary conference facilities for the mission to use, so whenever there was a chiefs of mission conference in Germany or in Europe, they almost always came to Berlin because we had the facilities, we had the personnel, we had the assets and the infrastructure to support it, and we did. Many of the military units, army units in Europe, mainly USEUR, U.S. Army Europe, came to Berlin for specialized training in inner city warfare which is now so topical with the battles raging in Iraq and other things, and the standard of excellence they achieved there was really quite extraordinary, because once again the equipment was first rate and we had the space to do it. We also didn't have, quite honestly, as many environmental concerns in Berlin as the army was facing in West Germany. There were some, very articulately and loudly sometimes, but ultimately we had the upper hand in Berlin, we didn't in Germany when it came to that.

Q: I think that's an important point you're making. Let me ask you though, to what extent did you exercise some restraint, and were there controls in place. Was it sort of sky's the limit

unlimited, tennis court in every backyard?

WILLIAMS: First of all, we had requisitioned when the army first came into Berlin in July of '45 some very large and well-preserved properties. The Soviets had beaten the hell out of the city when they took it. So what became the Soviet sector of Berlin, and these lines of division had been drawn in the years before the war ended, the heart of the city and the eastern sector were pretty well obliterated. By the luck of the draw we had a sector that went down to the southwestern sector of the city, which was not the direction from which the Soviets advanced on the city, although they had enveloped the whole thing. There were a lot of properties still intact in our sector, the British sector, and the French sector. And these were expensive to maintain. They were requisitioned so they formally still belonged to the German state or to the German families who had once lived there, but their maintenance was expensive and that was considered a legitimate expense by the cost of the occupation budget. Restraint was used, but it was a different kind of restraint. We wanted to maintain a certain level of excellence and the Germans wanted us to have that excellence. It wasn't that this was rammed down the throat of the bundestag, although inevitably questions were asked about it in the bundestag. These questions became more and more pointed as decade after decade after decade went on and the war became a rather distant memory. So every year we had more questions to answer as to how this money was being spent and why so much money was needed for the three Allies. The embassy in Bonn handled that liaison with the bundestag, but in order to better handle it, and frankly to give a better image of our commitment to serious internal controls, the embassy created something called the Berlin budget management office, BBMO. This was run by Dan Tholl I think, a recently retired FSO with admin and bookkeeping credentials that were quite significant. And they reviewed the budget for the American sector before it was submitted as part of the Allied budget to the federal authorities who submitted it to the bundestag. And that was a much more serious review when the BBMO came in.

Q: Was that in Bonn or Berlin or Washington?

WILLIAMS: It worked out of the embassy in Bonn but they came up often to Berlin and they had an office in the mission too as I recall. And that was necessary because quite honestly there had been inevitably some excesses. There had been a scandal some years before that the British were running a stable of polo ponies in the British sector near the Olympic stadium and paying for it out of the occupation cost budget. So when the polo pony scandal hit the ponies were quickly retired, sent back to Britain, taken off the occupation cost budget. We never had ponies, but we had morale and recreation welfare type things. Large boats that were floating around the Wannsee, motorized for the morale of the troops, and the troops used them, and the commandant had a private yacht which he shared with the minister and POLAD (political advisor) occasionally. For essentially representational activity, but also recreational activity. So there was a lot of that and one could quibble about how much of that was excess and how much not. The difficulty for us in the American sector was we had so much more than our colleagues at the embassy in Bonn. Again the constraints of the United States federal budget meant that the embassy in Bonn was living on a very short leash. At one point, the first year I was there '86, '87 they had to give up a lot of subscriptions to professional magazines, newspapers, because they just couldn't afford them it got that bad. Although it was strictly speaking a violation of the budget we I think wound up buying some subscriptions for them, we had the money, we thought

that was the right thing to do. Needless to say, it did not endear us to our colleagues in Bonn because they knew we had the capability and resented the fact that they didn't. And they were right to.

Q: To what extent was their budgetary coordination with the other two Allies? You mention the Berlin budget management office dealing with the bundestag, or with the German finance ministry. Did you all try to make sure you were kind of in sync a little bit with the French and the British?

WILLIAMS: I think we did, but I don't recall any intensive coordination in Berlin. Certainly it never was done at my level. None of my discussions ever involved budgetary coordination and I don't think the ministers did either, either John Kornblum's or Harry Gilmore's. I think this was handled through the embassies in Bonn, working with the finance ministry and through the ministry the bundestag. But a subset of this, and it's the final point I want to mention because it's historically relevant, is we had in the American sector some enormous, historically significant buildings that were in very bad shape. One was the Prussian Supreme Court which was the locus of the Berlin air safety center which had a very small part of a cavernous building. One was the building where the Kommandatura met; it was originally an insurance building, later a bank, but a historically significant building. One was Tempelhof Airport, huge airport built by the Nazis, surrounded by the city, but with large areas. There were various residences and there were other buildings too. Most of the buildings had been public buildings under the Prussians, then under the Nazis, and were used by our people. We, late in the occupation era, that is we'd been maintaining the buildings all along, or trying to. But they reached such a point of general dilapidation in the 1980s that a very imaginative admin officer at the mission, Mike McLaughlin, came up with the idea of seriously reconstructing these buildings to preserve them for posterity against the day when unity came. At this point we didn't know that unity was right around the corner, but to fix the leaky roofs, to repair the hazardous wiring, to make the plumbing stacks operate again, to really upgrade these buildings and make them useable if not by the Allies then by somebody else, perhaps by German authorities when unity came. So this was done, as I recall, primarily in the American sector, and it involved a massive increase in our budget allocation which went roughly from '85 to '90 from five million dollars to 20, 25 million marks maybe per year. It went up five fold because of this building maintenance and upgrade program. The historical facades were maintained, when necessary they were renewed, the internal workings were gutted and replaced, and we basically tried to make those buildings fully functional and useable when the time came. We didn't have immediate need for it, and Mike was in retrospect clairvoyant that the need would be coming very soon, but we had a huge part of commercial real estate and public real estate available for German authorities to use when unity came. It was a huge operation. Mike basically ran it, keeping the embassy informed using German contractors, German material, so it was done to a very high standard, and that was impressive to see because nobody had either thought of this before or had the bureaucratic fortitude to put it through. Mike seized the opportunity and made the most of it, and it's quite a credit I think to the American and indeed the Allied occupation there at the end at least, that so much of that real estate was ready when unity came.

G. JONATHAN GREENWALD
Political Counselor
East Berlin (1987-1990)

Born and raised in Pennsylvania, Mr. Greenwald earned degrees for Princeton University and Harvard Law School. His first government assignment was General Counsel in the Department of the Air Force. He later transferred to the Department of State, where he served as legal advisor as well as Political Officer, both in Washington and in various assignments abroad. His foreign posts include Germany (East and West Berlin), Yugoslavia, Hungary and Belgium. He also had assignments concerning anti-terrorism. Mr. Greenwald was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 1998.

Q: That was the year '86-87, and then in 1987 you went again to Europe?

GREENWALD: I did. Again I wanted to go back to Eastern Europe. The first suggestion of the Department was that I go to Warsaw and spend a year learning Polish and then run the Political Section in Warsaw.

Q: Did you actually study Polish in Poland?

GREENWALD: No, it would have been at FSI, but I did spend the year 1987-88 learning Polish and then in 1988 was to go to Warsaw. I was excited by that and very much interested and wanted to do it, but after initially accepting it, I went back and asked for reconsideration because my wife, I think I may have mentioned, is a Berliner. Her mother had not been well, and for personal reasons it would have made a big difference for us to go to East Berlin, so I asked for that change of assignment. The State Department, the people in the European Bureau, were sympathetic to that and wanted to do it. They broke the assignment to Warsaw and were ready to make the assignment to East Berlin. At that point the security people in the Department stepped in and said they had an objection. The objection was twofold actually. One element of it was that I had had so many contacts in Hungary, a number of them had raised questions because some of those people, of course, were Hungarian intelligence officers and they thought that was perhaps not so good. That was dealt with rather easily. It was pointed out by a number of people that often the people that you have reason to have contact with and you get some of your best information from are people who have contacts with the intelligence services in Eastern Europe. Those people have a certain amount of protection, have a certain amount of self confidence. What they tell you has to be taken with some grains of salt and has to be assessed carefully, but that's true of anybody's information. You have to always ask why is this person saying this, what are his motives, what are the possible nuances that are there. That's not in that sense different from somebody who is an out-and-out dissident or somebody who works in government or somebody who works in the government and has connections to Hungarian intelligence. Those people whom they were speaking of were people who were in the Hungarian establishment and who were thought or known to have intelligence connections. That is, they were people who were foreign service officers in the Hungarian government or other types of officials but who were known to have friendly contacts with the intelligence services. That didn't mean that everything they said, 100 percent of what they said, was written out in advance for them as

instructions by somebody, but you had to take into account what possible additional motives they might have other than just to speak the truth. So that was dealt with to, I think, everyone's satisfaction. The second part of the problem was that my wife was a Berliner. Like most Berliners, part of her family was in the West and part of it was in the East. Her mother's sister was living in East Berlin. Gobby's cousin, the daughter of that woman, was living in East Berlin. We didn't have close contacts with them. Gobby had not been able to have close contacts with them for most of the time after the wall went up, but the question was raised, is it proper for somebody who would be in a sensitive position in the U.S. embassy to have family connections that could have pressure put upon them. Is it fair to those people, is it fair to the government to go in that kind of situation. I really am very grateful to the people in the security services in the State Department, particularly the one individual who made the decision that they could trust us. If a situation developed that somebody was putting pressure on those members of Gobby's family or pressure on us, that we would be correct and proper enough to go immediately to the right people and tell them about it in the U.S. government. It wasn't an easy decision for them to make, because there had been lots of things that had caused embarrassment in the immediate preceding years, the incident at the embassy in Moscow, for example. It would have been easy for the security people to have said, "No, let's just not take the risk. Let's not assign him." Then I would have missed out on the assignment to East Berlin that led to the opening of the wall and all of the excitement and professional interest that that involved. In fact, I don't know where I would have been assigned, because all the other good assignments were gone too. So I really owe a great debt to that person who had the courage to take a gamble on us. As it turned out, there was, I think, no effort made on the part of the GDR services to put any pressure on that old sick woman or upon the daughter, whom we didn't have contact with or very little contact with. So there were no problems, but it took some courage on the part of the security services to make that decision.

Q: I would note at this point that you have published a book entitled Berlin Witness: An American Diplomat's Chronicle of East Germany's Revolution, published in 1993 by Penn State University. I was going to suggest that it would be hard not to cover some of the same things that are in the book, but I think anybody that is particularly interested in that period should look at the book and buy the book, of course, if possible, or look in a library. I think, since I haven't read the book, you need to kind of keep that in mind and certainly shouldn't hesitate to refer any potential user of this transcript to the book. In any event, your assignment was worked out. You went in the summer of 1987. You were there three years. This was a fascinating period, I guess. Did you realize that at the time you arrived, that it was going to be as dramatic as it turned out to be?

GREENWALD: No, I certainly didn't realize. I think one of the good reflections on human nature is there are rather few people who claim even today to have seen what was coming and to have said that they knew it all along. I knew it would be a fascinating experience. I expected it to be a period of great political ferment, because at least Glasnost was in full swing in the Soviet Union. Perestroika was already being started. It was clear that something major was happening. I expected to be observing a period of movement toward reform and perhaps the beginning of reform from above in the GDR. The general view was that there were certainly limits to what Gorbachev could allow in the way of reform in any part of Eastern Europe. Those limits were more restrictive in East Germany than anywhere else, because there was truth in the old saw

about it being the most heavily armed and most dangerous border in the world. It was the point where the two great forces, East and West, came together and where there was simply more to be risked and more to be lost by reckless policy. We assumed there would be a more cautious approach to reform in East Germany than anywhere else. That said, I didn't accept when I went the idea that a number of people had that the East German Communist Party was simply a repressive organization with no internal combustion of its own. I talked to people who had served in East Berlin, like my colleague Wayne Merry, for example, who at that point was also the desk officer back in the European Bureau. He and others who had written about the country said that there is in the East air that is beginning to rise, there is reform potential, there are changes that will come. I felt my job was to look for those changes, but what I was looking for, to be honest, was change that would come from above, directed, guided, controlled and to some extent limited from above. It was a period when we arrived of considerable optimism, official optimism, in the GDR, because the long-sought visit of Erich Honecker, the leader of the GDR, to West Germany had been agreed upon. In September of 1987, just two months after I arrived in East Berlin, Honecker visited West Germany. For many Germans this was seen as a tantamount acknowledgment by the West German government that there going to be two states in Germany for a very long time. The GDR had made it as an accepted, permanent part of the international scene. At least the way in which the West German concept of unification would have to be carried out would be through a very long, protracted period of interaction with the GDR, not through isolation and hostility, which had been the original policy. For Honecker the visit to Bonn in September of 1987 was seen as the culmination of the effort to establish the legitimacy and the permanency of the GDR. There appeared to be no reason to believe that this was a wrong calculation. His own health seemed good. He was 75. He celebrated his 75th birthday just before going to Bonn. He seemed spry and without any particular problems. Much of the first year that we were there was a period that could be characterized by the title of an article that one of my academic friends wrote, an article whose title at least he still doesn't like to be reminded of. It was "The GDR at 40: The Problems of Success." There were lots of problems in the country, but they weren't mortal problems. No one thought so. No one who believed in the GDR within the leadership, no one who was GDR's enemy believed they were mortal. So we weren't looking for that kind of problem. We were looking for the kinds of problems that would lead to reform, to changes from the top, the kinds of changes that it was seen that Gorbachev was trying to institute in the Soviet Union. Another impression I had upon arriving in Berlin was how different the German-Allied relationship was. When I had been there in the 1970s, the Allies were still very much a major factor in every calculation about the Berlin issue. The Quadripartite Agreement had just been negotiated. It was still uncertain how well it would work, whether there would be a new Berlin crisis. By 1987 the Quadripartite Agreement had proven itself and worked very well. The idea of a new Berlin crisis was on nobody's mind. The Soviet Union clearly wasn't interested in provoking such a crisis. There had been a pattern of interrelationships worked out between the GDR and West Berlin and the Western Germans, which was quite enormous. I tried to write a long telegram about that in early summer of 1989. I did a fair amount of research. There were thousands of East Germans, for example, working in West Berlin on day projects, something that was unheard of, unthought of ten or 15 years ago. In all of this, the Allies were there as a safeguard, as an ultimate guarantor of stability, but were increasingly, one could feel, seen as not terribly relevant to the day-to-day operations in the city. The Zenot in West Berlin would keep the Allies informed more or less of what was going on, because that was expected, but there was no longer an operational necessity. They did things that they thought they needed to do. The

government in Bonn did things that they thought they needed to do without feeling that they have to negotiate for acceptance from Washington and London or Paris. There was a certain feeling that the Allies were much less relevant than they had been and that German-German relations were beginning to drive the Berlin situation, to drive the inter-German relationship. One knew that that would have certain consequences, but what those consequences would be and when they would mature were things that were very, very difficult to make any prediction about. The timeline that certainly I thought of was still decades not months. Just one anecdote: I remember going home one afternoon in the early spring of 1989 and laughingly telling my wife about having overheard a conversation while I was shopping for a new stereo system at the stereo shop at the Tempelhof Air Base in West Berlin. I heard two young American military people chatting about what they were going to do when their tour ran out, and the one fellow said, "I really like it here in Berlin. I think I'd like to stay and catch on and maybe work here in this audio shop, but I here that they're going to give Berlin back to the Germans in another year or two, so there's no future in it." He had his rationale a little bit off, I think, but his timeline was a lot better than mine and just about everybody else's.

Q: I have two kinds of questions at this point, and I'm not sure which would be the most useful to pursue. First, we talked about the German-German relationship and maybe the lesser importance of the three Western Allies vis-à-vis Berlin at this particular time compared with the earlier period. My question is, well, what exactly, as far as the German Democratic Republic, was the U.S. role or interest in the period before things began to change. My second interest is when did you and others begin to see that change was likely to occur at an accelerated rate and what was it that got that started. So which way do you want to do, assuming that both of these are interesting?

GREENWALD: Well, I'll try to touch on them both. I'd start with the first, the importance of the GDR in the American scheme of things. It was minor. There was never any questions that the American interest in Berlin was primarily on the Western side of the city. That was where we had our commitment of honor and heart and belief. We yielded priority to Bonn in everything with regard to the GDR for all the obvious reasons. We tended to be a little bit suspicious from time to time that maybe the dream of German reunification would align the government in Bonn, whatever that government was, to the need to be cautious and careful and would cause them to make a concession on this or on that that they should not make. So when we thought of the GDR, it was more in terms of it maybe too much of a temptation for our good friends, our essential friends in Bonn, than anything else. We believed in the old ideological stereotypes and clichés even more than the West Germans believed in them, perhaps because we were further away. For us as a country and as played into us as a government to some extent, the GDR was always just the wall. For the people in Bonn it was Germany, and they had an easier time understanding that the people on the other side were people, Germans just like them, with mixes of good and bad and all sorts of nuances in between just like everybody else. We tended to see them in the stereotype of those few pictures that went around the world in 1961 of the folk jumping across the barbed wire or Peter Fechter, the one would-be escapee, bleeding to death in the no man's land. Oddly enough, I think, this played out in a different way after the wall went down. The Western Allies, not just the United States but France and Britain, had said dozens and dozens and dozens of times, at least at every opportunity to sign a NATO communiqué, that we supported the reunification of Germany. When it became a potential reality, there was a certain amount of

skepticism and caution that immediately became apparent in Paris and London. Even Margaret Thatcher, as firm an anti-Communist as she was, clearly was a little bit concerned about a rush toward German reunification, what that would mean in Europe. There wasn't any doubt in the United States. We acted from the first day as if we believed -- and we did believe -- what we'd been saying for all those many years. Again I think it was because we were further away from the complexity of the situation. We were also further away from the horror of the Second World War, and it was easier for us to believe in our straightforward and simple beliefs, and so we supported Helmut Kohl and his efforts to move quickly toward unification. We won a lot of credit with Kohl, with the government in Bonn, because of that. But it was the other side of the coin of having a rather straightforward and simple view of the GDR, a side of the coin that would question the transfers 1987, 1988, 1989. In that period it meant treat these guys unlike all other Eastern Europeans, unlike all other Communist governments within the Warsaw Pact. Stay at arm's length, whereas there was a willingness and a desire for us to find ways to deal more effectively and come closer to even the ex-martial-law government in Warsaw, certainly the government in Budapest, certainly the government in Prague, even the government in Moscow. There was an ideological, I would say, unwillingness to do much with the GDR. We didn't like them. We had people running our policy in Washington who had grown up with all the memories and all of the experiences of the wall and the post-wall period. For them the German problem, the Berlin problem, was seen entirely from the West Berlin side and for whom the GDR was a nasty stereotype, the Doberman pinchers of the Warsaw Pact. So it was difficult to do those things that you would normally try to do in Eastern Europe: build ties; build relationships; identify the people with whom you might be able to work better and try to establish connections and ties to them and solve problems; solve those existing bilateral problems we wanted to resolve so that we could move on to a better relationship. There was an effort from Roz Ridgway, who had been ambassador in East Berlin and then became Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, who developed a package concept trying to resolve several interrelated issues at the same time so that we could get a relatively clean slate and then move on. She never got very far, partly because there wasn't enough imagination on the East German side, and partly she got really nowhere because there wasn't a lot of imagination or will on the U.S. side. There was a feeling too people had -- and I heard it expressed -- that, well, if we move fast with the GDR, it will upset the people in Bonn, which may have been believed by the people who said it. I don't think it was ever true, because what I would hear people in Bonn say was, "We want you to move fast. You're going to make it easier for us to do the things we want to do." It was a frustrating period if what we were trying to do was advance bilateral relations. It was a fascinating period if what we were trying to do, which was certainly a big part of what we were trying to do, was to understand what was happening.

Q: But all of this, these attitudes in Washington, and the general framework of our political relationship for you as Political Counselor probably also meant that you were not encouraged to have the wide ranging contacts that you had in Budapest, for example.

GREENWALD: No, we were certainly encouraged. No one ever discouraged us from having contacts -- well, one exception, one special exception but that wasn't particular to East Berlin. For years the AFL-CIO had a very strong policy against contact with Eastern European trade unionists. They argued that these weren't legitimate trade unionists but they were controlled from the top. They were part of the power system, and one shouldn't legitimize them by having

contacts with them. There was one slight exception, and that was with regard to Hungary. I was actually able to make a contribution to establishing that connection, because there was a conference of labor reporting officers in Eastern Europe in Vienna in early 1983. The man who was the inspiration of this policy, a great old AFL-CIO veteran, Irving Brown, who had fought battles against Communist-dominated trade unions in Western Europe right after the Second World War, was there, and we debated this. He accepted the argument that, well, in Hungary things were a little bit different, and he said, "All right, as far as I'm concerned, you can talk to the second line trade unionists in Hungary as long as you make it just a cup of coffee and not in their headquarters." So I was able in Budapest to make as many contacts as I could as long as we didn't do it in a trade union building. But everywhere else in Eastern Europe, and certainly in East Berlin, U.S. diplomats weren't allowed to have dealings with trade union people. That actually meant something for the first time in 1989 when things began to bubble, including in East Germany. Part of the bubbling was workers having meetings in previously tame and suddenly no longer tame trade union halls and putting out resolutions and asking questions. It took a while before they were able to get the policy changed to go talk to those people. Other than that we were encouraged to talk to people, because people wanted to know what was happening. It was important to know how people reacted in East Germany to Gorbachev and all of that. It's just that you couldn't easily turn it into something operational in the sense of now let's resolve our claims problem, let's figure out a way to get most-favored-nation status to them, and let's figure out a way to make a package of items where tariffs might be reduced, let's come up with a package of exchanges. Those kinds of things that you would try to do in other parts of Eastern Europe were not very much encouraged.

Q: Who was the ambassador to the GDR when you got to East Berlin?

GREENWALD: The ambassador was Frank Meehan, who was one of the truly great area specialists and great people in the Foreign Service. He had served in Bonn, he had served in West Berlin, he had been ambassador in Warsaw, ambassador in Prague, I believe, too, ambassador in Vienna, and a delightful person who spoke very, very good German.

Q: Was he ambassador to Austria, or was he DCM?

GREENWALD: Maybe he was DCM, probably just DCM, but in any event a person with enormous experience in Eastern Europe. He had served as a younger officer in Moscow. He had dealt extensively over the years with a remarkable East German named Wolfgang Vogel, who was/is a lawyer, a lawyer who had played an enormous role in the exchange of spies and exchange of political prisoners, in resolving and facilitating all sorts of East-West arrangements over the years. Frank had dealt with him first, I believe, in the return of Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot who was shot down in May of 1960 over the Soviet Union. Frank developed a very close personal relationship with Vogel, whom he came to respect. In fact, he was the godfather of one of Vogel's children. Over the years whenever there was a need to use Vogel's special services for something like the exchange that led to the release of Sharansky, the famous Soviet dissident, Frank would play a role. He would be brought in to deal with Vogel even if he was in some other capital or back in Washington. While he was in East Berlin, of course, Vogel became for him a wonderful source of information. I spoke earlier that people with intelligence can actually just sometimes want the best contacts. Vogel is a marvelous example of that. Obviously

he had his intelligence contacts. I think it's still uncertain whether he had a rank in the GDR's security services. He had his personal connections to Honecker; he had his special political protection; and he was also a devoutly practicing Catholic, one of the reasons that Frank and he hit it off so well; a person of some real integrity; a person who when he said he wanted to see a more humane Communist system in the GDR, you could believe it. Things are always much more complex than black and white in dealing with Eastern Europe, were always more complex, and Vogel was a wonderful example of that. Frank was the ambassador when I got there and stayed until I believe it was December of 1988. The man who came after him, Dick Barkley, who had been a good friend of mine in West Berlin in the four years that I was there in the '70s, picked up that connection with Vogel. In fact, he had begun to pick it up some years earlier when he was in Bonn as the Political Counselor. In the earlier '80s he was used to do some of the things that Frank Meehan had done in dealing with Vogel. Roz Ridgway didn't speak German, and Vogel didn't speak English, so Dick was the first to establish that connection, and then for him the Vogel relationship continued during the time he was ambassador, which covered the period when the wall opened up and all of that period. Vogel was a wonderful contact, because he had his very, very good sources of knowledge. He had his own personal opinions that were strongly expressed. He was frustrated with Honecker but could see some of the things that Honecker was good at as well as what he was bad at. He had his strongly expressed disagreements with Mielke, the head of the Stasi, the secret service. He was a marvelous source of information, somebody one could talk to and learn a lot about what was happening within the country. That was the ambassador's contact. I dealt with a different level of people, mostly people and certainly people in the Foreign Ministry on normal Foreign Ministry business, but also a range of people in the many institutes that existed in East Berlin and in Potsdam, the Foreign Ministries Institute, the economic science policy center, and several others where you had a lot of people who were quite intelligent and quite knowledgeable, who had a certain amount of leeway because they weren't in the government. Obviously there were party members -- were they reliable members of the SAD, the party -- but who were interesting people who would say things which always had to be weighed against where they were coming from and what the particular axe they were grinding was, but who would tell you things. The burden that was there, perhaps partly because it was what we wanted to hear but partly because I'm sure it was true, was there are more would-be Gorbachevs or Gorbachev supporters in the GDR than you'd think. There are more than there are in the Soviet Union, and we know how to make it work once we're given the green light. There was a feeling that reform Communism, which was what Gorbachev was trying to create and make work, was something which could be done in the GDR much easier than in the Soviet Union, because Communism was a German idea, it was deformed in the Soviet Union, and Germans knew how to be reform Communists. They knew how to pick up the mantle of Rosa Luxembourg and make it work. That was the general thrust of so many of the comments. There was in it a certain amount of wishful thinking. There was in it a certain amount of national stereotyping, but there was a belief in it. In fact, something which sounds very odd today but is really quite true is that there was the period from the fall of Honecker, which was October 18th, 1989, to the opening of the wall, which was a few weeks later, in which there was an enormous enthusiasm, optimism, confidence among this wide group of people that I had been talking to for two years, that now their time had come, now they would have the chance to do the things that they believed needed to be done to make the system work in the GDR. They would pull out of the drawers the plans that had not been usable in the past, a belief that in the GDR, if anywhere, reform Communism could be made to work. Now that didn't

fly. They didn't have much opportunity, much time to make it work, and it all looks in retrospect unrealistic, but that was the intellectual atmosphere that one sensed in 1987 and then increasingly experienced until it burst out in the fall of 1989. One of the themes of my reporting throughout those first couple of years was there was more here, at least in potential, that's about to burst forth than you think. It's going to become very interesting here. And when it becomes interesting in Germany, it will become historically important. I mention this in the introduction to my book, but if you'll let me repeat: In late 1988 just before Frank Meehan left, I tried to sum up the impressions I had that there was a lot that was there under the surface just waiting to burst forth. I wrote a long cable which concluded with some speculation in the last paragraph about what would happen when it does break forth, what would it mean that there was an East German Gorbachev. If the West Germans from the government to the people were as fascinated as they were with the Soviet Gorbachev, what would their reaction be to an East German Gorbachev? What would that mean for East German-West German relations and the kinds of things that the West Germans would like to do with the East Germans that we might be traditionally hesitant about them doing? We should start thinking about that. Frank sent the telegram, but he cut the last paragraph off. When he did, I scribbled on the top of the telegram as it had gone out, "Why did you cut this last paragraph?" He wrote me back a note and said, "Well, you've given them a lot to think about in this telegram, but you have to dose the SOBs back there carefully."

Q: He thought it was too much?

GREENWALD: Yes. But those of us in the embassy certainly felt that there was much more of a story here than people quite recognized. You always have a certain amount of that feeling in an embassy that they don't understand us back in Washington. It was a little stronger in East Berlin because of all of the layered history of the German problem and the feeling that in the ranking of the posts East Berlin, West Berlin and Bonn, East Berlin ranked way, way down, and we felt that there was a potential to be fulfilling some American interests there that wasn't quite yet being recognized. Having said all that, nobody at the embassy, and certainly not me, expected the impact to unfold the way it did in 1989. You asked when did one begin to feel that there was a whole new ball game about to be played. Traditionally the assigned date is when Hungary opened and snipped the barbed wire at the Hungarian-Austrian border, and that was at the very end of April of 1989. There was no immediate impact in East Berlin except for some estrangement between the two governments, Hungary and the GDR, but it was felt that this was something that would be worked out and was manageable. I remember the Hungarian DCM in East Berlin telling me, "Oh yes, they complain to us, but it will be worked out. There will be ways in which before you get to the border, the police will check was going into the border area and citizens of fellow Warsaw Pact states who don't have appropriate papers will be turned back, and nothing much will happen." That was the assumption, that there would be some way in which the effect would be limited and there wasn't any immediate major effect. In Hungary itself, though, a lot was happening, and in Poland a lot was happening, because you'd had the Polish election in which the non-Communists won and the Jaruzelski government accepted that. Preparations were being made in the spring and early summer of 1989 for the first non-Communist government in a Warsaw Pact country, and the Soviet Union was accepting that. In June of that year in Hungary there was the reburial of Imre Nagy, and the death of Kadar came symbolically almost at the same time. There was one evening on television an enormous demonstration in the central square in Hungary, hundreds of thousands of people marking the

fact that there had been such a change in Hungary. The next night in that June there was a reception at the home of the Press and Cultural Counselor of our embassy for a glee club -- I think it was the Yale glee club -- and we were out in the garden because it was a lovely June evening. The head of the U.S. desk in the GDR Foreign Ministry came up to me. He was a fellow we had good, friendly relationships with. Besides the normal business, we chatted about football. He was always a very nice, intelligent fellow, and we liked his wife, who was a Polish-born woman. In fact, since then we've become quite good and close friends. We've kept up that friendship over the years. But he had always been very cautious in all of his comments to me, very prim and proper, buttoned down tight like all GDR diplomats and he came up to me in the garden and said, "Do you see what's happening in Poland and Hungary? Exactly the same thing is going to happen in the GDR in the next two or three years, because we have exactly the same problems." That shocked me, because I thought that if somebody who had always been that cautious became that uncautious, then maybe there really was much more of a crisis developing internally than I thought.

Q: When was this again?

GREENWALD: June of 1989, just at the beginning of the holiday season. Within a few days of that, Honecker fell ill. No one knew how serious it was, but he was taken off to the hospital for an emergency operation, and he dropped out of sight for a considerable period of time. Then the holiday season began and, if you recall, there were several developments. There were lots and lots of East Germans who even more than usual took holidays in Hungary that year. I think quite a few of them were using the opportunity to go across the border. There were others who went to Prague. The only country you could travel to, if you were an East German, without getting special permission, without getting a passport, or exit visa, was Czechoslovakia. You could travel to Czechoslovakia on the basis of your ID card. People began to go in large numbers to Prague and knock on the door of the West German embassy and camp out in the garden of the West German embassy by the thousands demanding the right to go to the West. As the summer went on, there was a growing sense that something was building up. There was no reaction from the government. Honecker was incommunicado. No one knew how ill he was. Nobody else was saying anything, doing anything. Something you knew was happening, but you didn't know how big it would be. I made an effort to write a major telegram. I'd have to check the exact date, but I think it was about the first of August. I put together the various indications of major things going on, particularly the numbers of people who were leaving the country, trying to leave the country, and the increasingly frustrated tone of conversations that we were having with people. "What do you think of the situation?" Frustration, pent-up frustration was bubbling out. I said in the telegram, "The last time that anything like this was seen in East Germany was in the summer of 1961, and that boil was lanced by the building of the Berlin Wall. No one thinks that anything as dramatic as that is in the wind, but something big is happening." Of course, that qualification was quickly overtaken by time, and it was proven to be even bigger than that, but that was an effort to alert people in Washington to what was going on. I think it did come as a warning that suddenly caused people to begin to look carefully, because it was summer in Washington and everyone was thinking about other things. They were thinking about Eastern Europe. They were thinking about the drama in Hungary and Poland and what Gorbachev was doing and not much about what was going on in Germany and what it would mean, what it could mean. Then, of course, the situation just continued to get worse throughout August. Honecker made one brief appearance to

receive the first I think it was a megabyte chip, electronic computer chip. The GDR had made a major effort to get into the computer business in a big way. Honecker had traveled to Japan a few years earlier and had felt that he had seen the shape of the future in robotics and computers, and he wanted the GDR to be a leader in that, so he put a tremendous amount of resource effort into it, which was a sensible thing to do but probably, in terms of what was feasible, wasn't the best use of resources. But there was this moment of success when the megabyte chip was ready and he came out of the hospital to take part in it. You could see he was terribly pale and didn't look well. Then he went back in the hospital, which led to more speculation and there were rumors that began to develop that it was cancer and it was serious, and how quickly he would come back was unknown. There was full paralysis within the GDR government. The question that can never be answered but I think is worth raising is what would have happened if he had been healthy or if he had been so unhealthy that he was clearly not going to come back and they'd have to make a personnel change at the top earlier. There would have been action taken to deal with the situation. Whether it would have been successful or not, nobody can say, but one of the causes that led to the full crisis in the fall was simple inaction while the situation festered.

Q: One thing you haven't talked about yet, I don't think, except maybe indirectly is to what extent was the economic progress and development of the GDR, which was quite significant and substantial, certainly not compared with West Germany but compared with most of maybe all of the other Eastern German states: How significant was that in fostering some of these things that you have been talking about?

GREENWALD: Well, the general presumption when I went to East Berlin was that the GDR was doing well economically. It was listed as one of the ten most developed countries in the world, one of the ten highest producing industrial countries in the world, and it was thought to be in reasonably good shape. There was some evidence, and the evidence grew over the next couple of years, that the statistics weren't always entirely accurate and that the economy was not as well off as it was after the wall was opened or even before the wall was opened after Honecker fell, and the government began talking openly about its economic situation. It was clear that in fact the economy was in much worse shape than had been thought. [end of Tape 4, Side A]

Q: Okay, we're talking about the economic situation in East Germany.

GREENWALD: It was clear after the government began to deal more honestly with its situation in the fall of 1989 after Honecker had been deposed that the economy was in seriously deficient shape and that there was a great need for Western help, for West German support, to prevent something close to an economic collapse. The reason for the economy being quite so bad was the normal inefficiencies of the command structure, Communist command control structure, but partly because the government tried so hard to provide a standard of guaranteed lower middle class comfort for its people. It basically succeeded in that. It provided a very nice lower middle class standard of living. That meant an apartment, it usually meant a summer place, a little summer dacha or at least a scrapendachen, which is a very German institution, a plot of green sometimes within the city itself or on the fringe of the city where a worker could grow something and spend the weekend during the summer, a car, color television set, no fancy things, no luxuries, certainly not much foreign travel, but a guaranteed comfortable existence, which to Honecker and the people around him seemed like a wonderful achievement. You have to

recognize where they came from. They came from a Germany, pre-war Germany, where the major influence on their lives was the Depression. It was a worker situation which was much, much worse, where you didn't have a job or you were on the dole, where you had very little state support. They felt they had created something quite remarkable. They had enormous difficulty understanding that, while that was a great achievement, if you compared it to what the Kaiser's Germany was or even what the Weimar Republic had lived with, it was irrelevant for most of their people, who were living for eight hours a day in whatever their job was and then for the rest of the day lived substantially in West Germany in their minds. They turned on their televisions and saw that life, which of course wasn't necessarily the real life of West Germany but was the somewhat idealized picture you get from television, and for whom mostly it couldn't be seen because they couldn't get there, they couldn't visit. It wasn't enough to say, "Well, you've got 1.3 television sets. You're an average family, and the average Pole may have only 0.8; and the Pole has to wait eight years for an apartment, and you've got your apartment." That didn't mean anything, because they were thinking about their real or their imagined cousin in Hamburg.

Q: Or in West Berlin.

GREENWALD: Or in West Berlin. The gap between the world that the old leadership was living in and the world that their people were living in had become enormous. They didn't understand each other. Leave out of the picture for the moment all of the presumptions about good-bad, Communist-capitalist, Stalinist-Democrat, whatever; you had a group of old men who for the most part had probably started off as idealists and had got that in their record. Honecker spent ten years in a Nazi prison. Of course, [inaudible], who was the President of the Volkskammer, escaped from a Nazi concentration camp and carried a fellow prisoner, a non-Communist prisoner, on his back out. But by this time, by 1989, they were 75 and 80 years old, they had been in power for 30-plus years, they had been living in Waldsiedlung, which was their own little compound north of Berlin. It wasn't a terribly luxurious place. People thought it was. The belief in the country was that they were living in great luxury, and as soon as the wall fell, one of the first things the crowd did was break into Waldsiedlung to see what this living was. It was sort of nice middle class German stuff, but it wasn't Ceausescu palaces. These people had been living in an isolated way for so long. The last GDR leader, it was said, whoever had a beer and knife was Wilhelm Beek, who died in the early '60s. They were simply out of touch, and they were fossilized, and they were old and sick and couldn't move, couldn't adjust, and they saw Gorbachev talking about all of these new ideas. To them he was a young whippersnapper who didn't know what he was talking about and who was calling into question the icons that they had built up in their lives. When you look back on it, there was no way probably for Honecker to have made an adjustment, tactical change, that had caught the tide. I'm not sure that it wouldn't have been possible if he in one way or another disappeared from the scene even three months earlier. It would not have been possible for some of the younger people in the party to have caught that tide for a while.

Q: If there had been a German Gorbachev?

GREENWALD: Yes. The person who was talked about for that role was the head of the party in Dresden, Hans Muldrow, who clearly had good connections in the Soviet Union. He was liked by Gorbachev. He was exiled to Dresden. Not in the Politburo, only in the Central Committee, he

was thought to be too liberal, too close to Gorbachev, and was kept very much at a distance by Honecker. If he had come to power in July of 1989, I think the next six months would have been very different. I don't mean that all of world history would have been very different, but the idea that it was possible to control change from above for a while at least, I think, is a real one. But it wasn't possible for Honecker and the people around him, and it was made worse by this physical incapacitation and what happened. One of the most interesting experiences I had was in the late summer of 1989. A fascinating book that came out. Actually two. In the GDR in the spring of 1989. One was written by Markus Wolf, who for many years was the head of foreign intelligence in the GDR. He had retired a couple of years earlier. Rumors were he had had a falling out with Mielke over policy. He came out with a book called Troika in the spring of 1989, and it was the story of three young men who grew up in Moscow in the 1930s, a true story. One was his brother, Konrad Wolf. The second was the son of an American, a professor named Fisher, Louis Fisher, who was actually a professor at Princeton of Russian history when I was there. He was a famous man who had chronicled the Russian Revolution, had been an intimate for a brief while of Lenin, and was a correspondent in Moscow in the '30s. The third, whose name I've forgotten, was the son of a prominent German Communist. Louis Fisher had broken with Stalin over the Hitler-Stalin Pact, packed up his family and went back to the United States. The Wolf family was living in Moscow, because their father was one of the leading German Jewish novelists and playwrights, and they took refuge in Moscow after Hitler came to power. The third family was broken up because Stalin purged the father when he purged a lot of Eastern European and German Communist leaders in the late '30s. So when the Hitler-Stalin Pact was signed and it was possible for a German Communist to go back to Germany, the mother took that young man back. The book is about those three men growing up in Moscow in the '30s in their teens and then coming together for a brief time in 1945 again in Berlin, Konrad in the uniform of the Red Army, Louis Fisher's son, George, in the uniform of the American Army, and the third boy in the tattered remnants of his Laufbahn uniform; and for a brief period they dreamed of the world that they grew up in being reestablished and friendship being reestablished in a new age, and then they're broken apart by the Cold War. Konrad Wolf became the best movie maker, director in the GDR, did a number of excellent movies; Louis Fisher's son is an American academic today; and the third boy eventually went off to West Germany and lived a normal life and left the GDR. Konrad Wolf had wanted to make a movie of that, but he had cancer and died. Markus had been a politician and spy master and all of that, and made a promise on his brother's deathbed to tell the story. He said, "Well I wasn't a director. I didn't know cinema, so I wrote a book." It was a fascinating book because not only was there this human side but in some ways Markus Wolf, an insider's insider, who spoke Russian as well as he spoke German, was writing about things which weren't written about in the GDR. Stalin's purges, what had been done to German Communists, some of the very things which were beginning to be written about in the Soviet Union, were being sat upon in Honecker's GDR, demonstrably as Honecker showed he would have nothing to do with the reforms in the Soviet Union. In fact, he had even banned a Soviet historical magazine called Sputnik, which had written stories about that period, as a demonstrative way of showing that he won't have that kind of Glasnost here. And suddenly here is Markus Wolf with this book, who then goes out on a speaking tour around the GDR giving readings from the book. It was a German custom to give readings from a book. My wife is doing it now with her book. We don't do this in the United States. In the U.S. when you would go on a book tour, you talk about the book and you go on a talk show, but in Germany you actually read a chapter or so and then they ask you questions. Of course, the interesting thing was they'd start asking questions of him like

"What do you think of Gorbachev?" and he would begin to say things which nobody else in the GDR could say publicly. So we were fascinated by Markus Wolf and wanted to talk to him. I still have the letter that I wrote to Dick Barkley -- well, what I mean is I have the answer to the letter I wrote for Dick Barkley asking him if we could come and see him. I got the letter back from Wolf saying that he just didn't think it was yet timely for him to be seen talking to the American embassy. The other fascinating book that suggested there were currents going on -- there were two others. I'm sorry to make this even longer, but one was suggested to me by my friend in the Foreign Ministry who had shocked me by talking about the living problems. He put me onto a novel which had just come out which was about an East German diplomat, who was assigned someplace like Nicaragua and who has to come back to the GDR because his daughter committed suicide. The book is about him discovering what was wrong in a society that caused his daughter, an idealistic Communist, to commit suicide. He as an outsider was living abroad, he comes back with foreign eyes and in effect suddenly begins to see his own society. A lot of it was in code, a lot of it was carefully phrased, but it was a shocking book in its own way. It came out that summer. Then the third book was a book called Da Afsta I. It was reportage by a man named Randolph Shatza about the First Secretary of the party in a provincial town on the West German border about 20 miles from the West German-Bavarian border. Shatza had followed this man around for a couple of months and had been in all of his meetings, and what he wrote was a book on the day-to-day life of a First Secretary of the party. That was a fascinating book because it talked about things which weren't talked about: for example, the fact that a daughter of the Second Secretary of the party in that county had tried to escape across the border. Why did she do it, what do you do with her, how could this happen, how could one of our children do this, and lots of real-life governmental political decisions. For example, there was only so much money that was available to be spent at a factory which was very important to the economic life of that community, but it was spewing all sorts of environmentally poisonous stuff into the Vaira River. Should the money be used to build a facility that would purify the waste before it went into the Vaira River, or should it be spent for building another smelter to increase production? In the book it is shown that money was spent to increase production, and the First Secretary is saying, "Well, this was a tough decision, but we're in an economically difficult situation and we need to produce. Eventually we'll be able to do both, but we have to do this now." That book created something of a sensation, and again the author was going around the country giving readings from it. It was quickly sold out, and you couldn't get copies. You couldn't buy Markus Wolf's book at all. That was sold out in the first day, and they didn't print any more. I had a chance to meet the Minister of the Environment in the GDR in September 1989, and he was making a presentation about how everybody takes the environment into account in everything and it's high priority, just as high as it is in West Germany or your country. I said, "Well, what about this incident in this book?" Bud Zaltzimen had this real choice, and the decision was to build another polluting smelter. He was shocked, first of all, that I had read the book and, secondly, very embarrassed and upset. This was the kind of fact that the population was being armed with by a few greens, a few dissidents. Suddenly you had a book which was actually published in the GDR -- a limited edition, but still it was published there -- which was beginning to be talked about. So these were signs that things were beginning to change even in the GDR, that the iron hand of the past in the party, the Honecker group, was loosening, had to be loosening. So in late summer of 1989 I worked very hard to get permission to meet both the author of the Da Afsta book and Da Afsta himself, the party Secretary, who was presented as a decent man who wanted to do better and do well and was trying to make political decisions that

were fair and all that. You had the impression that he was favorably portrayed, which you would have to do if you were writing a book about the First Secretary, but he was somebody who was a different generation than the Honecker people and who was perhaps an interesting political personality. So with the help again of this fellow from the Foreign Ministry whom, as I say, I had become friendly with, who I realized increasingly was worried about where things were going in his own country much more than he had let on for a couple of years, I got permission to go down to the town. Well, you didn't need permission to go. The GDR didn't have travel restrictions. You could go anywhere you wanted without making a prior request, unlike the Soviet Union or some other countries in Eastern Europe. But to get an appointment to meet the First Secretary, that obviously required permission.

Q: From, through the Foreign Ministry?

GREENWALD: Yes, if you were making an official appointment of any kind, you had to go to the Foreign Ministry. We got the permission and drove down there in late August. We had just been in Prague. We had taken a couple days off for a long weekend, and we had seen the West German embassy, seen the thousands of people in the garden, knew what was going on. The whole country was in a sense of state of growing tension. You could just feel it. A day or two before that we had been to a wedding in Kupwus southeast of Berlin, the wedding of a pastor who had become a friend. One of the people at the wedding reception was another pastor whom we had gotten to know. He was telling us how he had gotten a call that morning from Vienna. His own son had just crossed the border. Another pastor we spent some time with in the same late summer was Friedrich Shollemur, who was very much a politically active fellow. He was a very charismatic younger pastor who lived in Martin Luther's home, Wittenberg, and preached from the church in Wittenberg. When we talked with him, we met in Luther's rose garden where some of the bushes had been planted by Luther. He told us about what his little group, a dissident church group, was trying to do and their concerns, how desperate many people were and how his own family, his daughter, had said, "I know what it means to you, Father. I don't want to leave." But he had told her just the night before, "If you feel you have to, go." This was what was going on in thousands of East German families. This was the background as we went down to the town and had a conversation that lasted about three hours with the First Secretary. It was the author and it was the head of the government of the county, and there was always a parallel structure of the government and the party. The party was more important.

Q: Did the author live there?

GREENWALD: No, he lived not far from there. We visited him in his home when we went back to the area the next summer. But we met just outside of the town in a retreat house that was run by the party or the government. It was a fascinating conversation. So often what was most important was what the First Secretary didn't say, but he said it with his body, with his body language or his face, his grimace or his smile. Of course, when we went back a year later after everything had changed, we visited the party headquarters. He was no longer the party leader at the time. People there remember the visit and, of course, they laugh and say, "Well, naturally before when you were there, the Stasi were all over the building and put microphones everywhere," and we were sure that was the case. So you could see where he was being very cautious in what he said, but he was letting a lot out by the way he acted. It was the frankest

conversation I had ever had in the GDR with anybody official. We were talking about some of the things I had spoken of a few minutes ago about the generation gap. Was it possible for Honecker to understand what was going on? Was it possible for the party to take the leap of faith forward and make real changes and trust its people? Why didn't the people trust the party? Nobody doubted in the conversation in the way it went that he recognized that the people didn't trust the party. He didn't say it, but you could see it from his reaction. The fact that you could have that kind of conversation, even as careful as he was not to say anything incriminating on the tape, was another sign of how far things had gone and how near some kind of precipice everything was. But the reaction that all of us feared was more likely than what really happened was a crackdown of some kind. Force had been shown to work in China just a few months earlier, and the GDR leadership had praised what happened in China. The power question was something that was always fundamental to an old-line party leader like Honecker, and it was a real expectation that if things got grim enough, the power ministries, the Stasi and the army, the police would be called out and all this ferment would be squashed. It could be bloody, it could be very nasty, but there wasn't any real sense that the system, the regime, was mortally threatened, at least mortally threatened with something they couldn't handle. The question was always would reason, would good sense, would compromise somehow find its way through so that the change of leadership in time and the new leadership would loosen up enough and make enough changes and get on the Gorbachev track fast enough so that you would have change controlled from the top. The idea that change could be controlled from the bottom and it would not lead to physical repression and disaster was something that frankly I never had until very, very far along. There was always this growing tension that was so thick you could cut it figuratively with a knife, with expectation that something very dramatic was about to happen and fear that it could easily become very, very, very bad.

Q: I'd be interested in maybe backing up just for a second, Jon, and talking a little bit more about the role of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev obviously was a very important figure in this period and in what happened. What about the role of the Soviet embassy? Were you getting a feeling that the Soviets were worried about what was happening in East Germany, were encouraging the use of a crackdown of force? What about the Soviet angle?

GREENWALD: Clearly the Soviets were extraordinarily important in the GDR. The traditional line was expressed at the time the Quadripartite Agreement was signed by the Soviet ambassador, a man name Nebrossimov, who is supposed to have said to our ambassador, Ken Rush, "All right, we have this agreement. Now we'll control our Germans, you control your Germans, and make sure it works." And there was no doubt that for a long time the Soviet embassy controlled the GDR, that Nebrossimov, who was ambassador there for many, many years, was a pro-consul. In fact, one of the books that came out in 1990 was a memoir by one of the early leaders of the GDR, a man named Herrnsstadt, who was purged in 1953 in the very dramatic events just before and after the June 17 workers' rebellion in East Berlin. Herrnsstadt was one of the people who was trying to lead a reform movement at the time, which was ultimately pushed aside by Walter Ulbricht, and he was exiled to nowhere within the country. He was an archivist for the rest of his life, didn't go to prison but had no more political future. He wrote a memoir of that period which only came out posthumously after 1989. He describes Politburo meetings in 1953. It wasn't the Soviet ambassador who was attending the Politburo meeting; it was the Political Counselor. He was more than a political counselor at an average

embassy; he was a de facto, ex officio member of the Politburo at the time, and it was his word that ultimately people were looking to rather than Ulbricht. That had been changing over the years. There was no question that GDR leaders, certainly Honecker, had much more freedom than that, and it was demonstrated for all to see when Gorbachev came in and went off on a reform course that Honecker opposed, to the point where he was banning Soviet publications. His wife was saying at cocktail parties, "Who had ever thought the counter-revolution would come at us from the East?" But there was still enormous influence in the Soviet embassy, obviously information, sources that we could only dream of, of all kinds, I'm sure, overt, covert. They knew what was happening much more than we did, and to the extent we could talk to them, we tried to talk to them because we were interested in getting their take. I had good relations, my office, with the Russian Political Counselor, a man named Greneem. I would go to lunch with him about every month. We talked fairly openly. We talked more openly as we strolled the street and went back to our embassies. I remember very well in the summer of 1989 at one point when we had been talking about whether the GDR would ever have the nerve to make reforms. As we were strolling back he stopped and looked at me very hard and said, "Mr. Greenwald, do you really think that if they make those reforms, they could hold together?" That was clearly the question that was being asked in Moscow. I think they were emphasizing the need to do things, make changes. But I'm sure there was a caution, there was a feeling that maybe the regime was more brittle than we thought it was. Maybe it was as brittle as it proved to be. What they didn't do clearly was intervene the way a lot of East Germans hoped that would do, which was simply one day to call Honecker in and say, "Your time's up. It's time for you to go," basically what they did do in 1971 with Ulbricht. Ulbricht was in a somewhat similar situation. Ulbricht was opposed to the course that had been started. Willy Brandt was working very hard to establish a new relationship with the Soviet Union. The younger Brezhnev wanted that new relationship, wanted the sort of things that led to the Berlin Agreement and then CSCE and MBFR for his own reasons, and Ulbricht was suspicious of it all. At one point basically the Soviets said to Ulbricht, "It's time for you to retire." And there were a lot of East Germans who were hoping that would happen again and that Honecker would be told it was time to go and somebody, probably Modrow, would be tapped as the East German Gorbachev. I think there was caution in the analyses that were coming out of their embassy in East Berlin and undoubtedly from their think tanks and whatever else in Moscow. Gorbachev seems really to have believed in what he had said, that decisions in East Berlin were to be made in East Berlin just as decisions in Warsaw are to be made in Warsaw and we'll accept a non-Communist government. He was not willing to use the old stiff arm to make the change in East Berlin. But it was certainly clear that the Soviet embassy had a lot of knowledge about how much dissatisfaction there was in the country, how brittle things were, and the need to make some changes. I don't think they were out-and-out on the Gorbachev line; they were partly traditional, partly cautious. The DCM at the Soviet embassy was a man named Max Simichek, really a great German expert and spent his whole career on German matters both in Bonn and Berlin. He has written a book, which unfortunately hasn't been translated out of Russian, about that period. He clearly is a rather liberal person who was basically sympathetic to change, but I think they were cautious about how fast that change could be made without destabilizing the situation. We did have a lot of conversations and a lot of talk about that summer, and then as the revolution picked up speed, we continued those contacts.

Q: Again, I don't want you to feel like you need to give chapters from your book, but do you want to talk a little bit further about the embassy's role, your role as events of the fall of '89 went on?

GREENWALD: Sure. We had a very good Political Section, and unlike Budapest, where I was alone, I had several excellent officers helping me. One officer in particular had the task of following the church, a quite remarkable junior FSO who in many ways wasn't junior. His name is Imre Lipping. Imre was born on the very same day I was born, January 3, 1943, so you can see that as a junior officer in East Berlin he was 46 in that year. It was his second career. He was born in Estonia. His father was in the German army in the Second World War. They fled Estonia and went west as the tide of war shifted. His father was Estonian, but the Estonians were fighting against the Soviet Union because of the takeover of the Baltic states. He grew up in a refugee camp outside of Munich, came to the United States as a teenager, got a Ph.D. in medieval history, a specialist in medieval church history, joined the U.S. Army and became a colonel, retired after 20 years as a colonel, and joined the Foreign Service. After a brief consular tour in South Africa, he showed up in East Berlin as our junior Political Officer. He was obviously the ideal person to cover the church because he could talk about theological issues as well as the political issues, and was a wonderful person. He just did a terrific job in meeting everybody in and around the church movement. Of course, that was the part of the society which in September of 1989 began to coalesce as a political movement. It had been the closest thing to a political movement, to an alternative movement, all through the first several years that I was in East Berlin. But when nothing was being said anywhere else in society in that summer the crisis was happening, it was the church that began to speak out ever more publicly and groups within the church began to form the first incipient political parties. It was Imre's contacts with these people that let us know very quickly who was doing what, what was happening, who got the first copies of the manifestos that were coming out. I should say that it was the church and there was one other group in society that spoke out very quickly. The other group was rock-and-roll singers, rock musicians who, of course, were close to the kids, close to the young people. They were some of the first quasi-establishment artists who suddenly began to sign petitions and demonstrate.

Q: You had a political officer with a unique church background. Did you have one who had a rock music background?

GREENWALD: Well, we had two who were into that to some extent. One, Janice Winer, was actually a very good classical musician, and she joined the Foreign Service a little bit late after Princeton and Stanford Law School and then practicing law in California for a few years. She came in with her first assignment being East Berlin, but with a lot of music knowledge and a lot of good German and tremendous capacity to work. She is actually the German desk officer right now after having served a tour as human rights reporting officer in Ankara for three years. Then Heather Troutman, who was another Princeton graduate, who had good contacts to the rock scene and, in fact, had written a very good telegram about a movie that was made about one rock group that summer of 1989, picked up the story. One of the other political figures in whom there was a lot of interest was the party leader in Berlin, a man named Shebosky, who later became famous as the person who actually announced the opening of the wall at a press conference in November of 1989. Shebosky who gave out some emanations of reform and optimism. One of the indications we had Heather picked up from one of her rock singers who told her that she had been in Moscow that summer and she had bumped into Shebosky on the street. Shebosky had seen that this girl was wearing a Gorbachev button, which she could wear in Moscow but you'd

probably get picked up if you were wearing it in East Berlin, and Shebosky pointed to the button and said, "Good girl, we need more like you." Just these little pieces of straw from which one would try to build bricks writing about what were the personalities of people in the Politburo and what were their real inclinations. What would they be like if they came to power? But as soon as those political movements began to form in September around people like Nan Sholimer, whom I had mentioned, we were in very quick, close contact with them and had very good sources of information to them and from them.

Q: You were dealing with a very fast-moving, very fluid, sometimes chaotic situation with very dramatic events occurring, whether it was in the West German embassy in Prague or on the border of Hungary and Austria as East Germans went across or ultimately then in November the Berlin Wall coming down. There was obviously enormous interest not only at the desk level in the State Department but at high levels all over the U.S. government but also in the American public, the press following it closely, television and so on. Therefore, you didn't necessarily have to report everything, because a lot of things were on front pages, so to speak, or on CNN. How did you deal with all that?

GREENWALD: Well, very little was reported in the American press until very late. There would be an occasional columnist, a reporter, who would come through, and we'd chat. They'd always come to the embassy and we would talk to them, but there was nobody stationed in Berlin. All the reporters were somewhere else. There was simply no American press presence in West Berlin or East Berlin, so you'd get an occasional story of somebody who'd come and write about what was going on. For the most part, well into the summer it was East German Communists stuck in the mud, nothing happening, last redoubt of old-style Communism. Don't look here for news, look to Warsaw, to Moscow, somewhere else. That changed, of course, in October but not until then. It took us a while to realize things had changed as much as they had. For example, the day after the wall had opened up, I remember calling up the operations center to tell them about what the Mayor of West Berlin, Momper, Willy Brandt and other West German politicians were saying at the wall that day. The guy in the operations center said, "Oh, yes, we're watching it on television." But it wasn't until quite late that that began to happen. The relationship with the press was a very good and mutual one, because when they did start to come in numbers, they came to us for comment, thoughts, and they also told us what they were hearing. We shared a lot of information. It was a good working relationship. But compared to the West German press, which was all over East Berlin, there was nothing much in the American press -- really rather shocking, this lack of coverage for quite a while.

Q: The West German embassy was very active, informed, the Soviet embassy.

GREENWALD: Yes, and, of course, we kept in very close contact with them. They were informed, and they were very friendly. They were good professional and personal friends in many, many cases, and their sources were obviously far, far better than ours for the most part, but not always. There were some people that for various reasons they wouldn't talk to. One in particular I can think of is a remarkable old man, Jurgen Kujinsky, who died just last year at the age of 90-something after having written about 90 books. He was a legitimate scholar, world-renowned scholar who had written a multi-volume history of the German . . . [end of Tape 4, Side B]

Q: This is the continuation of a Foreign Affairs Oral History Interview with G. Jonathan Greenwald. It's the 28th of April 1998. I'm Raymond Ewing. This is being conducted at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center under the auspices of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. Jon, I think when we finished a week or so ago, you were talking about one Jurgen Kujinsky, a scholar and person who, I guess, came to play a political role in the events of 1989 and thereabouts.

GREENWALD: Well, Kujinsky was an extraordinary man. He died only last year well into his 90s, by which time I think he had written roughly one book for each year of his life and within just a few months before his death, in fact, wrote a book which became a best seller in united Germany, one of his several autobiographical books. He was a person who wasn't very well received in West Germany for many years, because at the height of the Cold War he had been a leading polemicist from the East German point of view. As a result, he was somebody that our colleagues in the West German mission in East Berlin simply didn't see. As an example, there weren't too many but there were a few of the kinds of instances in which we had better access, broader access, or at least in specific instances better access, than even our West German colleagues. Kujinsky was a man who was at least an economic if not dissident at least would-be rebel. He tried very hard in his many years in East Germany to encourage a more intelligent approach to the economic policy in the regime, and he believed devoutly that at some point in the future the political liberties would be widened. He was a convinced, I'm sure to the day of his death, Communist, but he was one who believed at least considerably more in the ideals of Rosa Luxembourg than most of the leadership of the party did. In fact, in his own diary of the year 1989, which in some ways parallels the diary that I put together and published in that we both appear in the other's book, in my case my call on him and in his case his impressions of that call, at the very end of that book he talks about his conclusions of that year. He said that, in fact, he regarded what happened as basically positive even though it brought an end to the Communist regime in East Germany. He said he regarded it somewhat in the light of another tumultuous experience that he had which was the end of the Tizareich and the Weimar Republic. He said the Weimar Republic had great weaknesses, great problems, but it was fairly better than the Kaiser Reich which had proceeded it. There was counter-revolution involved in it. There was certainly counter-revolution when the Weimar Republic fell. He believed that there was an element of counter-revolution in the unification of Germany which had been directed from Bonn, but he believed that it was going to be a better Germany than the divided Germany that he had been living in for the last forty years. He believed it wasn't the end of German history and that, in fact, there would someday be a socialism which was more worthy of what he believed it should be. That was the kind of person whom one met quite often in outer party circles, more often than one might have expected -- someone who had a certain position within the society, who was committed to it in its basic principles but who had a great deal of difference with the way it was implemented. One who believed that at least in that brief period in the fall of 1989 they would have a chance to make their own kind of European Communism work and work better than the Soviet-style Communism they had been living with for forty years. History wrote over them very quickly, but there was definitely a moment for I would say two months, October, November and into early December of 1989, when that was the dominant spirit one met when one talked to party people and people who were involved with the effort to establish the post-Honecker GDR government.

Q: Was there a widespread hope at that time among these circles that you're talking about that there would be a new form of a German Democratic Republic, and at what point did unification become a goal?

GREENWALD: This is a very interesting question and one that, of course, we were looking at at the time. We were looking constantly for any sign that this was a real question or a real issue in the fall of 1989, and ever since I've been asking myself what was there that we missed, was there something that we missed or did it simply come up very late and very, very suddenly. I tend strongly toward the latter view. I still remember vividly the largest demonstration in East Berlin just before the wall opened. It was the fourth of November, Saturday, just five days before the wall opened. It was in Alexanderplatz. There were anywhere from a half a million to a million, depending upon whose estimates you take, people crammed into Alexanderplatz in East Berlin carrying every imaginable sign and banner, all self made with certainly no central direction for those banners and those slogans that were on them. I walked around the square, walked around with Pierre Shostal, who was visiting and was at that time the Director of Central European Affairs in the European Bureau. We were looking, of course, for any sign that there was a unification theme. Everything was on those banners from "Party Leaders Are All Rascals -- Arrest Them" to "Free Elections" to really anything you could think of with one exception: there was nothing about unification. The only sign I saw that had even the slightest hint of it was carried by a very old man, a hand-lettered placard, not a stick, that said something in German like "My name is Heinz Kuhn. My address is 16 Eisenleutestrasse, Pankow (which is a district of Berlin), Berlin, Germany, The World," nothing else. As I said, it was kind of unorchestrated. It couldn't have been that somebody sent out word that said nobody could put something about one Germany or we are all brothers again, the Germans, or anything like that on these signs. It simply wasn't there, not that it might not have been in people's hearts but that there was a strong belief that there were certain things that simply couldn't be raised, were not raisable because there were red lines beyond which if you went you'd be back to the days of 1953 when Soviet tanks were rolling in East Berlin to put down a workers' revolt. I may have touched upon this last week, but I believe that even after the Berlin Wall had opened, there was still a period of some weeks in which that belief remained very strong and that, had Gorbachev so indicated that there was in fact still this red line, people would have pulled back and that there would have been a substantial waiting period before demands for German unification were put. As it turned out, the first demands, as you know, came from the crowds that were around the church in Leipzig that was holding every Monday large services that became then political demonstrations and spilled out in the street. Those demonstrations in September and October were very important in putting enormous pressure upon the Honecker government, pressure that finally led to its fall. But those demonstrations themselves had not touched on the unification theme until the second half of November, some weeks after the wall was opened, when a few people began to put up signs which raised that theme. Until then the motto of the crowd had been "We are the people," "*Wissen das folk*," which meant in effect "We are the people of this republic, and the leaders should listen to us rather than the other way around." Remember the old line of Brecht, who said sarcastically about the party's response to the 1953 revolt that the people had failed the leadership and the leadership should elect themselves a new people. That "We are the People" chant slowly changed to "We are One People, Germans are One People." Once it was spoken, once it was brought out in public and there was no cough from Moscow, very quickly it became

a crescendo. I really think that in September, October and into mid-November, it simply wasn't there, because people had internalized the belief that that would be too dangerous and that would bring down all of the hopes that the fall of 1989 seemed to be developing.

Q: I can remember studying German here at the Foreign Service Institute in 1958, and we talked some about the reunification of Germany, and it always seemed to me that it was kind of a language exercise. It was a way to use the language. It wasn't something that was realistic or achievable in my lifetime or career, but it did happen. I guess you've talked some about the very important role of Gorbachev and the Soviets and certainly the role of the East German people, the government of the Federal Republic. What about the role of the United States and the embassy in East Berlin in this period? Were we playing a leadership role, the embassy, or was it basically observing and trying to figure out what was going on?

GREENWALD: Well, as far as the United States goes, I think you have to distinguish two periods. You have the period throughout the whole history of the GDR in which the United States played a very secondary role for reasons I tried to explain last week. The United States wasn't interested in the GDR as the GDR, unlike our interest in Poland as Poland or Czechoslovakia as Czechoslovakia. We never accepted that there was something legitimate and permanent in East Berlin. If it proved to be permanent, we thought it wasn't for us to be first to say that, that it was really Bonn's call in how one dealt with East Germany. In fact, if anything, our concern was to be a bit of a caution or a bit of a break upon Bonn, because we were always a little worried that at some point perhaps German romanticism would take hold and Bonn would become too entranced with reestablishing relationships with East Berlin, German-German relationships that might not take account of what we would see as tougher Cold War realities. So we were never a leader in developing ties to the GDR. At most it was a somewhat cautionary semi-brake upon the desire of the West German government to expand or accelerate its pace at ties. There was a certain almost commonality of viewpoint that haunted periods in the 1980s between Washington and Moscow in that, because you will recall that at the time of the dispute over the stationing of short-range or medium-range missiles in Europe with Washington putting missiles into Western Europe in response to the SS20s that the Soviet Union had put into Eastern Europe and into the western part of the Soviet Union, there was a German-German dialogue that developed that both Moscow and Washington regarded with a little bit of suspicion. This was in some ways, you might call it, Erich Honecker's finest moment, because he clearly was concerned that a serious escalation of the Cold War would put at risk the kinds of economic relationships that he had established with West Germany, that his regime had a life interest in seeing that things didn't get so bad. Bonn clearly felt that it didn't want to lose what it had achieved in German-German relations over the decade and a half of Ostpolitik, and the two came together to at least talk about ways to limit the slide into a tougher kind of Cold War. That created a certain distress in Moscow and at least a certain caution in Washington. So that was the nature, I think, of the U.S. view of the GDR. It stayed that way basically until after the wall had opened. Once the wall had opened up, a few weeks from that point at least, when unification suddenly sprang up and suddenly everyone realized that, as one said, the German question was again on the agenda of the world, on the agenda of Europe, then Washington did play a very important leadership role and played it in regard to our Western European allies. I think I mentioned or we touched on this last week, but we had all been saying that self-determination of the Germans was our goal, by which we meant, of course, eventually unification of Germany. This was one of the

basic human rights and so on and so forth, that NATO was meant to protect and create conditions that would allow unification. None of the leaders who made these statements probably thought that this was any more realistic than perhaps you felt when you were going through language exercises at FSI. Suddenly we were all faced with the need to put up or shut up. At least in London and in Paris there was a hesitation to what the response should be. Mitterrand made a trip which was rather controversial, I think as far as Bonn went, to East Germany shortly after the wall opened, in which he at least seemed to be toying with the idea of giving support to the post-Krenz government. Krenz was the man who came in immediately after Honecker and tried to capture control of the reform process and maintain control but was swept aside shortly after the wall opened.

Q: Who made this trip?

GREENWALD: The trip was Francois Mitterrand's trip, the French President. The government then at this point was in the hands of Hans Modrow, who had been the hope of reform-minded East German party people before the events of the fall, the person who they believed could be a Gorbachev-like leader in East Germany. Modrow was the Prime Minister. There was no longer party control in December of 1989, and Mitterrand seemed to be toying with the idea of giving political support to Modrow. Margaret Thatcher also had her doubts. She called a conference of British historians and experts on Germany to consider what should the British answer to the German question be. At that point of hesitation in both London and Paris, the position Washington took was, well, we said it for forty years and we mean it. We support self determination, and we support the process which is being pushed by Helmut Kohl in Bonn. That sign of leadership within the Western alliance was decisive, I think, for making it clear that there would be a quick process toward unification. We could have put some brakes upon it, and we chose not to, for which we certainly gained a degree of appreciation from Helmut Kohl and from the government in Bonn. I suppose history is likely to be generally favorable toward that attitude. I say likely because there are all sorts of what-might-have-beens and could-have-beens, none of which would have involved a permanent division in Germany, but there is at least seriously raised in Germany today in both East and West the question of whether the Kohl policy of pushing for very quick unification and pushing everything aside to do it and to do it in a way which promised an ease of accomplishment, that has turned out not to be correct, was in fact the right policy and is today in East Germany. One saw another side of it in the election in Zaksnunhaus on Sunday a great deal of distress, and some of that is related to excessive expectations that were built up at the time, excessive expectations that the people in East Germany were all too willing to have built up but which were built up by the government in Bonn, and a lack of appreciation of the difficulties, so that a slower movement toward German unification has a certain after-the-fact rationale which seems in some ways quite strong. The real question, I guess, was whether it was possible to have a slower process. That's an impossible question to answer with any certainty. I think what was decisive, if I can guess what was in Kohl's mind -- I certainly heard it expressed by West German diplomats in Bonn -- was that the window is open and that window could be closed, unpredictably but at any time, basically by a change in Moscow policy, and that as long as the window was open, one had to go through it and take advantage of it, because the window could close quickly and perhaps there wasn't enough time to go slowly. That may be correct; it's just impossible to know.

Q: I've read the book by Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice on the diplomacy of the unification process, the negotiations involving the United States, United Kingdom, France and the Soviet Union plus the two German states. I'd be interested in what you think of that book but also what role you and the embassy in East Berlin played in that process if any.

GREENWALD: Well, I confess I haven't read the book yet. I have to read it soon, because it will be useful for a course I'll be teaching next year, but I bought it and I bought it for the selfish goal of looking through the index to see how many footnotes to mine it had. After I counted those, I put the book aside, and I'll get to it soon.

Q: You could check the index too.

GREENWALD: The Two-Plus-Four Process, which is what the name of the negotiating process was, was a very carefully chosen title, of course, because there had been a whole series of four-power meetings on Germany which ultimately failed in the '40s and '50s, failed to produce a solution to the German question. There was talk, of course, in the fall of 1989 about having a four-power conference on Germany. I remember even before the dramatic events of October of 1989, just as the process of fermentation was becoming clearer in the summer, I was visited in Berlin by an academic friend, an American academic, who said, "Look what's going on here. There has to be a four-power conference to get a handle on this and prevent it from spinning out of control and becoming a danger to world peace." Well, it was clear that you couldn't have a four-power conference, you had to have something that gave the two German states a different kind of role at the table than they had ever had. I think there may have been one four-power conference just before that process broke down in the '50s where there were actually a couple of side tables at which German experts, West and East, had sat, but basically it had never been something that the Germans had a seat at. The world had changed, and certainly Bonn would demand a seat, rightfully so, at any four-power conference, so the name Two-Plus-Four, which I think was devised at a meeting in Canada -- it might have been in very early 1990 -- was meant to show not only that it was different from the four-power conferences of the '40s and '50s, that there were two German states, two were before the four. It wasn't the four plus two, it was the two plus four. It was the self determination of the German people expressed through their representatives in the two German states plus the four powers that had residual rights to Germany. That process began in earnest after the one free election that was held in the GDR, the election for the Volkskammer of the 18th of March. The embassy had a major political reporting role for the months leading up to that March election, to simply advise Washington on how it was going. There had been a very dramatic visit in December of 1989 of Secretary of State Baker to Berlin. He had given a speech in West Berlin about the new architecture, security architecture of Europe, and he had decided rather quickly on short notice that he would go to Potsdam to meet both some of the political leaders of the GDR and some of the unofficial church leaders and dissidents. He had met with Hans Modrow and had given an indication of American support for keeping stability in East Germany during what was a potential highly unstable period provided that Modrow kept his promise of free elections. One of the tasks we had was to monitor that movement toward elections and to indicate to Washington whether there was any backsliding. I recall, for example, at one point when there was a small fuss over some incident. I don't recall what the incident was. Secretary Baker telephoned Ambassador Barkley immediately and said, "Is Modrow still keeping to his word? Is he trying to get out of it?" There was, of course, great

suspicion that there would be an effort by the Communist leadership to reestablish control. It was beyond the party's ability, and it may well have been beyond the desire of the new leaders of the party that had come in after the old Politburo had been thrown out in December of 1989, but it certainly wasn't within their power to do it. The Two-Plus-Four negotiations that began then after there had been a free election and the establishment of a non-Communist government under Hoyer-Abbate in the early spring of 1990 was a process that floated about with negotiating sessions in Bonn and one time in Paris and one time in London, and in East Berlin. It was rather tightly controlled by principals from the capitals. In our case it was controlled from Washington. There was very little in the way of negotiation that was done by the embassy. We facilitated the meeting in East Berlin. We reported between meetings on what was being said by various people in East Berlin. Our access, of course, to the political leadership increased astronomically; that is, it was possible to talk to Hoyer-Abbate at a moment's notice. It was possible for me to wander around the Foreign Ministry from floor to floor in a way that was undreamed of in the previous year. I recall one morning when the Deputy Foreign Minister, who was a former pastor and former dissident, invited me to a breakfast at seven o'clock in the morning in the Minister's private dining room to discuss whatever the issue of the moment was. I recall just thinking to myself as I went up to that meeting how fast indeed things had changed in that building. But our process was to facilitate and to report the intricacies of the events rather than to lead. Facilitation could sometimes take strange twists and turns. I remember a visit in I believe it was May of 1990, just about a month after the new Hoyer-Abbate government had been sworn in, a visit of Bob Zoellick and Ray Seitz. Zoellick was the Senior Deputy to Baker who was charged with essentially carrying out the negotiation for him except for those sessions that Baker himself attended, and Seitz was the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs at that time. They decided that they particularly wanted to meet the Minister of Defense of the GDR, who was himself a very interesting figure. He was a pastor. His name was Eppelman. Eppelman had been one of the leading radical political pastors in the GDR for years. Before 1989 he had organized an arms control forum in East Berlin, which was looked upon askance by the authorities and was always the target of great interest by the Stasi, by the secret police. I discovered just how much so when some transcripts of various meetings were published in Stern Magazine, the West German equivalent of Life Magazine, a few years ago. I and other people from the embassy were featured prominently for our visits to him and our discussions with him. I discovered that my Stasi code name was Caesar. Another fellow at the embassy had a code name Rock Band. He told me the reason for that, and it was that he had always liked that rock band and he played its music on his stereo at home so much that obviously the people who listened in at his home decided to give him that name. Eppelman had become the Minister of Defense, which was a rather remarkable appointment because he was a pacifist and a pastor, but his job as Minister of Defense was basically to take whatever teeth it was believed the GDR army might still have out and to insure that it didn't become a threat to the process of negotiation and unification. Very quickly it was apparent that they had no desire to pose such a threat, and it became more a matter of negotiating the turnover of weapons and the disposition of stocks and bases and so on and so forth. But early in that process Zoellick and Seitz wanted to go out and meet Eppelman. Well, there was a problem; it was an old Berlin problem. While the Soviets and the GDR had done a great deal over the decades to carry out their proposition that East Berlin was an integral part of the GDR and they so proclaimed, there were certain things they did or certain things which they did not do which still maintained their respect for the Quadripartite status of the entire city. Oddly enough, one of the things they did was never to put the Defense Ministry into East Berlin. One of the

elements of the Quadripartite status of East Berlin was that it was a demilitarized city. The only military force in the city was the four-power force, American, British, French, Soviet troops. Well, there was actually a small contingent of GDR soldiers stationed in East Berlin and GDR soldiers that could be seen in East Berlin from time to time, but they never put the headquarters there, they never put the Defense Ministry there. So Eppelman was off in the woods 20 miles outside of Berlin in a compound near a small village. Zoellick asked, "Could we meet him in East Berlin?" We high priests of Berlinery said, "Gosh, you know, we've been maintaining the demilitarized status of the city for forty years through thick and thin, and at the last moment should we risk it? We ought to go out and see him in his headquarters." Zoellick and Seitz said that would be fine, work it out. We had rather tight parameters, because they had to make a flight from the West Berlin airport by a certain hour in the afternoon and they were tied up in the morning. Another aspect of Berlinery was that you couldn't go, shouldn't go from East Berlin into the GDR, because there were no controls between the East Berlin border and GDR proper. You should only go into GDR, true GDR, from West Berlin. So, for example, all of the time that I was in the embassy, if we wanted to take a visitor to Potsdam, we would have to take him from West Berlin rather than take him from East Berlin and drive out the normal way. This applied also to Zoellick and Seitz, so we made arrangements to meet them in West Berlin and drive from West Berlin into the GDR proper and go to the Defense Ministry. Because time was so short, we thought we would do a very clever thing. We asked the GDR police to provide an escort to meet us at the crossing point from West Berlin into the GDR and provide us a police escort on the autobahn so that we would be sure to get to the Ministry and back in time. Well, they met us. We had expected they would go rather fast on the autobahn like everybody else did, but you should know that while West German autobahns traditionally had no speed limit, East German autobahns were safer and more sensible. They had 100-kilometer-an-hour limits, approximately 62 miles an hour. One always, I always at least, felt a lot more comfortable on the East German autobahn than the West German autobahn.

Q: Probably there weren't as many cars either.

GREENWALD: There weren't as many cars as well. But the two police cars formed up, one in front of us, one behind us, a convoy, and we were the only cars on the autobahn that were going 100 kilometers an hour. Everybody else was passing us, but this was the new GDR with police that were determined to prove that they were indeed law abiding and they were not going to break the law, so we rumbled at 62 miles an hour down the autobahn being passed by everybody. At one point a policeman pulled us over and said, "Gosh, you know, we've never gone to the Defense Ministry, and we're lost." So to make the longer story a little bit shorter, after a while we eventually found our way to the Ministry. We drove in the front gate just as the Minister's car drove out the front gate, and we proceeded up the path to the steps of the building. The Minister's aide said, "Gosh, terribly sorry," but we were so late, he was late now for an appointment in East Berlin, and he had to leave for it. He gave his apologies. So we then got in the car and drove Zoellick and Seitz back to the airport.

Q: In West Berlin?

GREENWALD: In West Berlin, somewhat embarrassed and somewhat nervous for our careers. As we dropped them at the airport in West Berlin, I'll never forget the gratitude I felt when

Zoellick said with a smile, "Be sure when you get to Washington to look me up. I'll take you on a nice drive around the Beltway."

Q: At the speed limit.

GREENWALD: So we facilitated as best we could.

Q: Let me skip ahead for just a minute. If you can remind me, when did you actually leave East Berlin?

GREENWALD: I left in December of 1990. It was connected with the question of what would happen to the embassy, what would happen to the U.S. diplomatic missions that were in Berlin. Throughout the summer and early fall of 1990, there was a great deal of discussion about how the American diplomatic presence would be organized and really how everyone's diplomatic presence in Berlin would be organized. The West German government had reaffirmed that at least formally the capital of the new Germany would be Berlin. There was considerable debate that was still to go on over the next few years as to whether or not the government would truly move, how much of the government would move, and particularly how fast it move. Of course, eight years after unification, it still hasn't moved, though it was supposed to be imminent. But it was clear that at least formally the capital would be in Berlin, and one expected that at some point the capital would actually be in Berlin. Before the unification of Germany, there were two types of diplomatic missions in Berlin. Of course, there were those in West Berlin which were evolutions of the original military missions that had been established after the collapse of the Third Reich in 1945. Some of those were military missions, and some of them were called consulates, depending on what the relationship was of the country to the anti-Hitler alliance in 1945. In East Berlin, of course, there were the embassies to the German Democratic Republic. The Bonn government gave all countries two options for being represented in Berlin after unification. One would be to have a consulate; another would be to have an office of the embassy to the Federal Republic of Germany, that is, an office of the embassy that was in Bonn. We and most countries chose the latter. It was really more a symbolic gesture than anything else. It was a statement of belief that in fact there would be someday an embassy in Berlin. So we had decided that we would merge our two existing diplomatic representations into the Berlin office of the embassy in Bonn, but how it would be done was a matter of considerable debate. The assumption had been that there would be for some time at least a substantial quasi-independence of the two elements, that there would still be a need for something in West Berlin to deal with all of the city-type questions and there would still be a need for something in East Berlin that would deal with the political process of merging East German institutions into West German institutions, that they would be both under the embassy in Bonn and formally linked together but there would still be two more or less separate entities with more or less separate purposes. We learned, in my case literally the day after unification and in the case of the ambassador, I think, the day of unification, of what the final disposition was going to be. It was somewhat different. It was a more rapid and absolute merger of the two than we had been led to expect. What that meant was that essentially by various formulae you had two Political Counselors, one in West Berlin and one in East Berlin; you had two consular officers, one in West Berlin, one in East Berlin; two Economic Section chiefs, one in West Berlin, one in East Berlin. One would be made the head of a joint section, and one would be redundant. There were various formulae for the way this was

done, but for the most part the effort was to roll up the embassy in East Berlin and do away with it as quickly as possible. So I found myself on the morning after unification surprisingly with no work, with nothing to do on the grounds that I was the head of a Political Section who was scheduled to leave earliest anyway. I would have left on the normal rotation the following summer, and my colleague in West Berlin had another two years, I believe. So the question was what to do, where to go, and what way to leave. I left as soon as I could find a useful thing to leave to do, which was complicated in our case because personally my wife's mother in West Berlin had become older and more ill, less well, and no longer able to fend for herself in her own apartment. My wife had the task of bringing her to that conclusion, which was apparent to us but not immediately to her, and then to actually bring it about. She needed to stay in Berlin for a number of months, as it turned out for another half year basically. We couldn't go back to Washington that quickly, so I had found a temporary job in Frankfurt, which led in fact into my next assignment.

Q: What was the date of unification?

GREENWALD: The third of October.

Q: Of 1990?

GREENWALD: Of 1990, that's correct. We spent it, I should just say as a footnote, I thought, in an appropriate way. The second of October was, of course, a very dramatic day. That was the last day of the existence of the GDR, and there was to be a huge event at the Reichstag, which is on the old dividing line between East Berlin and West Berlin. All of the political leadership of both German states was to be there at midnight. There would be solemn speeches and fireworks and so forth. There had been huge crowds in East Berlin all of that day and that evening, and we had a farewell party at the embassy in which we celebrated with some bittersweetness both the achievements of the embassy and the fact that it was being disbanded. I felt particularly badly for our German national employees, East German employees. There were, of course, quite a number of them. All of them were to be fired, which I thought and still think was very unfair of the U.S. government. The reason was that, of course, the files, police files, the secret police files, on all of them had been made available to the West German government in the last months to the unification, to the walk-up to the unification, and they were then made available to the U.S., and all of them were seen to have had various degrees of cooperation with the East German secret police, which was absolutely unsurprising to anybody who knows anything about the way things happened in Eastern Europe. I have no doubt that that was exactly the case in Warsaw and Budapest, in Prague and Bucharest, everywhere in Eastern Europe. The different was in those places the files weren't made available. But the security people said, "You can't possibly hire to work in our new diplomatic post these people who are compromised." There were degrees of compromise. There were people who were out-and-out employees of the Stasi, and there were people who in order to keep their jobs occasionally would be interviewed and answer a few questions, and I think there should have been differentiation between them and they should have been treated the same way as the people in other Eastern European posts, but none of them were. They were all fired, so it was a particularly bittersweet evening to say goodbye to all of them, because they were obviously going to have a tough time. But around six or seven o'clock in the evening, Gobby, my wife, and I left our party and went off to a party which was held in what

was called the House of Democracy, the building just off Unter den Linden. We attended the party there which for many of the people who had made the revolution, the leaders of Noyus Forum, of Democracy Now, the first, small, brave political parties which had been pushed aside in the interim. They were the losers of the free election in March of 1990, the one free election to the Volkskammer. That election, you will recall, was won by the Christian Democratic Union, SADU, which was the party of Chancellor Kohl. That party had always existed in the GDR version. It was a controlled version, but the GDR, unlike most of Eastern Europe, had maintained a number of technically non-Communist parties, block parties, which gave their support to the leadership of the Communist party. They were always loyal support, but there had always been an Eastern CDU just as there had been an Eastern version of the Free Democrats and a couple of other small block parties. The very top leadership of that Eastern CDU had been thrown out with the revolution in the fall of 1989, but to a considerable extent the party structure, the party organization, was retained and was used by the West German CDU to compete in the election of 1990. That plus the personality and the prestige of Kohl and his promise of a painless, quick unification that would produce, as he put it, a flowering landscape in East Germany with no losers had made for a successful election. The Social Democrats started from a disadvantage in that election. They had been ruthlessly expunged from the political landscape by the Communists after 1949, because the great fight on the left had been, for many years in German history, would the left be represented by the Communist party or by the Social Democrats. The Social Democrats were seen as the threat to the Communist party, so one of the decisive moments in East German history after the war was the forced unification of the Social Democrats and the Communists, which then became a complete domination within the new so-called Socialist Unity Party. When the revolution began in the fall of 1989, brave young pastors basically started the Social Democratic Party from scratch. They got a lot of help in the spring in the election from the West German party, but they were without an organizational base, which put them at a disadvantage. Then the loss could probably also be explained by one little anecdote. I recall meeting a couple of East German workers on a train who were talking just before the election about how they would vote. I asked them how they would vote, and they said basically, "Well, we're going to vote for the CDU, Kohl's party." I said, "Why? You're workers. You're people traditionally who would vote for the Social Democrats. You come from an area in Eastern Germany which before the war was a Social Democratic stronghold." One fellow said, "Well, because Kohl has the power and he has the money." They were practical people who said, "Let's tie our horse to the power in Bonn, not to the opposition in Bonn, but to the power in Bonn." Then it was still a very close election if you read the polls. In the morning of the election of March 18, the polls were showing a virtual dead heat. Basically, of course, both parties were speaking for unification, but CDU was saying, Kohl was saying do it tomorrow, and the Social Democrats were saying do it the day after tomorrow after we look at a lot of the i's that have to be dotted and t's that have to be crossed. Be careful. Move slowly. I personally am convinced that the reason for the landslide, maybe not for the victory of the Christian Democrats but for the landslide, that simply overwhelmed the Social Democrats and completely submerged the parties that had made the revolution like Noyus Forum, the Greens, and Democracy Now, which had an ever slower approach than the Social Democrats, was that it was a beautiful day that day. The weather was superb. It was like it is right now, the temperature in the 70s, sun shining, blue sky, which is very unusual for Eastern Germany in the middle of March, and I think with many, many people torn between their optimistic and their cautious sides, it was the kind of day that simply encouraged people to believe that they should take that jump into the unknown as fast as

possible. Be that as it may, the parties that truly lost were the parties that had first gone out into the streets. To generalize, a lot of those people, certainly their leadership, were people who would not have been sorry to see the GDR last a lot longer, believed in a strongly socialist state, not a totally socialist state, not a unitary political state but one in which the political spectrum, while it covered a wide area, would be substantially more to the left than what one was used to in Bonn. These people met the third of October with a certain bittersweet reaction as well. They had won and they had lost, and we wanted to spend some time with them. In fact, I felt honored to be called up to the front of the room at one point and asked to say a few words to them. While one tries to keep a reserve throughout the professional career and you're observing, you're analyzing, you're commenting on, you're not participating in politics of the country, I felt that that night, that time, when that country was going to disappear, when that state was disappearing and our embassy was disappearing, I could speak a little more personally and I tried to, saying to them that I thought they had very, very much to be proud of that evening, that they had made history and they were the ones who had made this moment. It wasn't anybody in the United States who had done it. It wasn't really even anybody in Bonn who had done it. They had facilitated certain things, but it was these people that had gone out into the streets, they had taken the risks. While they had been rejected at the ballot box, pushed aside as not being people who had the power and the money, maybe even people who had some crazy ideas at times, they were the ones who had in fact brought democracy to their part of Germany, and that was what history would show and they should be very proud of that moment.

Q: Does your book cover the period up until October third, October second of '90, or did it stop earlier?

GREENWALD: It covers it. It covers it in two different ways, though. Basically it's a day-by-day journal until the wall falls. By odd coincidence I was scheduled to go on home leave immediately after the wall fell, that weekend after, and we did go back on an abbreviated home leave which partly was taken up with consultations in Washington. I was never so popular in Washington as I was when I showed up in the State Department on the Monday morning after the wall had just fallen, because I was basically the first person who was back in Washington who had been in Berlin at that time. So it was easy to see anybody you wanted to see, because everyone wanted to know what went on. I gave them all the wrong answers, because, of course, I didn't think it was going to happen as it did. I thought it was open to question whether the end result would be unification, and I thought if that was the end result, it would take a good deal longer than it took. I didn't see that tremendous change of opinion that happened almost overnight, in the blink of an eye, within a couple of weeks. But we got back to Berlin in early December. At that point, from the Washington trip onwards, the book becomes not a day-to-day account but a couple of chapters with a more coherent and traditional narrative approach as opposed to a daily diary.

Q: But it does take it up until ...

GREENWALD: It takes it up to the third. In fact, I was sidetracking myself. After that emotional experience at the party of the sort of alternative politicians on the night of the second of October, we wandered out just before midnight and tried to make our way to the Brandenburg Gate and to the Reichstag, but it was impossible to move really. The streets were packed. You never felt in

any danger. It wasn't like a football crowd that had gone crazy, because everyone was in a very happy and peaceful and happily sober mood for the most part, but you simply couldn't get to the Brandenburg Gate. You were trapped in the middle of Bundeninlinden, so when that moment came, somewhat symbolically, as I put it in my book, we were still east of the Brandenburg Gate. But the next day, which was a holiday, the third, the first day of unification was a holiday, and we took it by driving out to a little town called Sarensdorf south of Berlin, which is where my wife's parents had built a little summer place, a summer dacha. They had bought the land about 1930 and had built this place in the early '30s. My wife's father was a soldier who died in the Second World War. He had been a Social Democrat and had spent some time in jail as an intellectual opponent of the regime but was a soldier in the war and died in the last days of the war. My mother-in-law, with Gobby as a six-month-old child after the war, lived for part of that immediate post-war period in this little town of Sarensdorf on this small property in this little house. Then each summer until, I believe it was, 1952 the family would go there and spend the summer. It was very important to them, because they raised their own food on that small property, and at that point, the post-war period, that was vital for a family in Berlin. But in 1952 the GDR passed a law which said that people living in West Berlin could no longer use those properties unless they decided to live in the GDR and become citizens of the GDR in effect. So my wife's mother had to give that up. We had visited it once or twice during the couple of years that we were in the embassy just for old time's sake, for Gobby to see it again. She chatted with the family that was using it, a nice couple that had been there at that point for 30-odd years and were using it as their summer place. During the summer of 1990 when unification was on its way and all sorts of people were beginning to explore claims for return of property, Gobby wrote a letter to the mayor of the little town and said, "What's the status of this property? My mother lost use of it in 1952." She discovered that she had never lost title to it, that, as sometimes happens and sometimes didn't, there was really no true unified practice. Instead of the title being vested in the state and then the state giving it to somebody else for use, title remained in her mother's name. The town of Sarensdorf had been keeping an account book and charging rent to the family that had been using it for all of those years, a couple of marks a year rent applied against repair costs, taxes and whatever. It always came out minus, but it wasn't a very big minus. The mayor basically said, "Gee, we had wondered where you had been for all of these years, Mrs. Shreetzel. Welcome back. It's yours again." So unlike a lot of people who went through many years of claims process, sometimes successfully, sometimes not, to get property back, Gobby's mother got it back immediately, not that Gobby wanted to use it, because we had no use for it at that time certainly, so she immediately told the family that was there that they could continue using it and paying the same rent. But we thought we'd go out there and spend the day walking in the woods behind and around that house. We spent hours picking mushrooms. To Gobby's delight, she found that the same mushrooms that her grandmother had taught her to identify in the woods were still there, and we came back with many pounds of them. But the next day it was back to work and back to normalcy, and that was when we discovered that there had been a change in the way in which the U.S. would organize itself in Germany, so it was clear that we had to make arrangements to leave as quickly as possible.

Q: Before we go on to your next assignment and continue, is there anything else that you want to say about your time in East Berlin? You've covered, I think, a lot of ground.

GREENWALD: Well, it's all been done episodically and there are a hundred different things that

could be said and could be added, but I think I have been using up enough tape on this for the moment, so we should probably move on to something else.

DAVID J. FISCHER
Consul General
Munich (1987-1991)

Born in Connecticut and raised in Minnesota, Mr. Fischer was educated at Brown University, the University of Vienna, Austria and Harvard Law School. He joined the Foreign Service in 1961. His various assignments abroad took him to Germany, Poland, Sofia, Kathmandu, Dar-es-Salam as well as to the Seychelles, where he served as US Ambassador from 1982-1985. His assignments at the Department of State in Washington include those dealing with the US relations with China, with Public Affairs, and with Arms Control issues.

Q: Directly then to Munich from AF/E.

FISCHER: Yes.

Q: Tell us a little bit about what was Munich, why was it important, how big, etc.

FISCHER: Munich was a huge Consulate. I think the second or third largest in the world. Like many of the State Department offices in the eighties. Now it's a shell of what it was in those days. But, we had representatives of the Department of Justice, not the FBI. We had Department of Justice people litigating civil cases. We had immigration. We had the IRS, the FAA all sorts of government agencies. Why? Because Munich of course had been in essence the headquarters of the American military occupation in that part of Germany? Although the capital of Germany was in Bonn, nonetheless Bavaria was the headquarters of really the U.S. military administration and occupation of Germany up until 1955. And so a number of government agencies had set up offices in Munich during the occupation period. As people know in the Foreign Service, once an office is established, it is virtually impossible to get it closed. We had in Munich for example an office which was run by the Defense Department. When I arrived one of the first things, I did was to ask to meet with the heads of all the agencies there to get a sense of what their offices had been doing. This was an obscure office with four people in it, most of them in their sixties. It was run by the Defense Department, and it wasn't an intelligence operation, it was assigned to a very obscure military command and I couldn't really get a sense of what it was this office was doing. So since it had some intelligence functions, I called in the head of the CIA one day and asked what are those guys doing down at the end of the hall? He said, funny you asked that, I can't figure it out either. It turned out this was an office which had been established in 1945 whose purpose was to find ex-Nazi's. Through the years, that function changed and they began then to try to find Communists. They did this by reading newspapers, by clipping, it was the most strange, funny bunny, "intelligence" operation. It was an oxymoron. You had people sitting in the office, liaison with the German police force "looking for Communists." I tried to get that office closed.

Q: Military or civilians?

FISCHER: Civilians. They were civilians, but they were working for the Department of Defense. I tried to get that office closed, and I tried and tried to no avail.

Munich in those days was important partly because the political leader of Bavaria, who was a giant figure in the German political scene, was Franz Josef Strauss. He was very conservative. He was a man who had a worldwide impact. One of the reasons it was attractive that I be sent to Munich was because of my knowledge of Africa.

Strauss was a man who provided covert financial support to the white government in South Africa. They were providing covert financial support to Frelimo, a rebel group in Mozambique. They were deeply involved in a number of very conservative causes around the world. Strauss had been the major supporter of Ian Smith who had been the white leader of Rhodesia. He had impacts well beyond Germany, well beyond Bavaria. Strauss was in those days in his seventies, an intellectual giant.

I arrived in Munich with a very strong dislike of Strauss. Strauss was far to the right of what I believed. I had heard all sorts of stories. This was a guy who'd been corrupt, who'd been involved in shady dealings when he'd been the German Defense Minister, he'd been under investigation for kickbacks, selling submarines to South Africa, all sorts of strange things. But, I got to know Strauss. One of the things, I think the only thing that made me successful as a Consul General in Munich was that my German was thought to be much better than it actually was. I have a gift of languages in my ability to speak fairly unaccented languages. Whatever language I learned, I had a good ear. I had an atrocious vocabulary. But I discovered that, frankly, when people converse and there's a dialogue, a conversation, they're much more interested if you can appear natural and appear almost a native. A certain empathy is created, and frankly, you don't need that kind of large vocabulary. I didn't speak academic German. I also used the mythology frankly that my grandfather had come from Bavaria. I didn't have the vaguest idea where my grandfather came from in Germany. But Strauss and others believed that I was one of them. I was a Bavarian.

One thing that I think is important, I learned in the Foreign Service from some Ambassador. The most important thing before you arrive at a Post is to make certain you understand what kind of person you want to be at that Post. One of the great benefits of the Foreign Service of course is that it's a *tableau rasa*. When we arrive at a new Post we are an unknown quantity. He said, "Think very carefully what kind of persona you want to show before you arrive at a new post." I decided Munich was a place that was fun-loving. Bavarians have a reputation for live and let live although they're very conservative politically, they're very liberal socially. I decided to basically play the role of one of them. As much as I could to make inroads. I must say I was very successful. Probably the most successful Consul General there for twenty or thirty years. I ended up invited to the inner circle of the Christian Social Union (CSU), the coalition partner of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU.) I remember once a month there was a meeting held in a basement of a very strong political backer of the CSU, Christian Social Union, which was Strauss' party. The was really the inner circle, a kind of a kitchen cabinet.

Strauss would come and like everywhere else in Bavaria, beer was flowing. It reached the point where I was accepted as a member of that inner circle. As a result, I got a much better understanding of the inner working of the Bavarian political system.

Q: CDU was in power?

FISCHER: CDU was in power. But in order for that coalition to work, Strauss had to be satisfied. Strauss had all sorts of irons in the fire. For example, we used Strauss as a vehicle to go P.W. Botha who was then the President of South Africa, basically to carry the message that apartheid is over. You've got to change. The Americans are no longer going to fight sanctions. P.W. Botha would not accept that from hearing that from the Americans. Chet Crocker and others had been carrying that message, he trusted Strauss. So when Strauss carried that message on our behalf, it was much more effective.

Q: So you could go to Strauss and say we'd like you to carry this message. You trust us, this is what I, Fischer, believe, this is what we're going to do...

FISCHER: Yes. Obviously, I did this under instructions. I wasn't just winging it out in Munich.

Q: These instructions were coming from Washington not from Bonn. Who was the Ambassador in Bonn?

FISCHER: Well I had two Ambassadors in Bonn. I had Rick Burt who had been Assistant Secretary of State for Europe, and I can tell all sorts of anecdotes about Rick. I went to Munich with a very firm understanding that I would be reporting separately to Washington, that I would not send my telegrams to Bonn to be cleared.

Q: On all issues?

FISCHER: All issues. Burt didn't like that. But we worked out some accommodation that it was fine. I contributed I think there was a kind of round robin cable once a week that was sent from Bonn about local politics, we contributed to that cable. But on anything else we reported directly to Washington, whether it was economic cables or political cables or whatever. Munich was important enough place, the Consulate was big enough that it was accepted.

One example of how Strauss was helpful to us. We had intelligence that Frelimo, which was this rebel group fighting the government in Mozambique, was about to blow up the major hydroelectric dam which supplied power to northern South Africa to the mines. We were trying to get a message to Frelimo that this was unacceptable. This dam had in fact been built with German aid money. Big impact. So the way we finally got the message was to Strauss. I remember going to see Strauss at his private home, and I said we've got a crisis. We cannot allow this to go forward and so Strauss got on an airplane if I remember correctly. Strauss is a pilot he loves to fly. He had his own jet. I think he flew down to South Africa or Mozambique. He also liked to hunt. He went to Africa quite a bit.

Strauss, one of the most interesting things, this must have been the winter of 1988. Strauss wasn't

a Nazi and he wasn't of the crazy right-wing fringe, but he was the leader of the legitimate conservatives of Europe. This was a man who had always been seen as a bastion of anti-communism. He was the equivalent, if you will, in American political terms of Barry Goldwater. In Christmas of 1988 I believe he was invited to go to Moscow to meet with Gorbachev. He flew his own plane. I can remember that he arrived back from Moscow on New Year's Eve and en route I got a telephone call from the aircraft asking that I meet Strauss upon his arrival. It was snowing to beat the band. It was one of the blizzard conditions. Strauss flew this plane right through. This was a guy who weighed two hundred and eighty pounds. Brings the plane in, parks in his hangar, jumps down off the steps and says, "I've got to talk to you."

We didn't know what was going on. So we went off to Strauss' house. Beer flowing, that's the way Strauss did things. He unburdened himself if you will in a five-hour conversation basically saying, "all my life I've fought Communism and I realize now that I might have been wrong. Communism is evil, but I've just met the head of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; Mikhail Gorbachev and this is a man that I can do business with." He proceeded to talk about what an incredible figure Gorbachev was, that there were enormous business opportunities. Strauss, by the way, had been instrumental very much under behind the scenes already covert business dealing between east and West Germany. He came back from Moscow absolutely convinced, Gorbachev had convinced him, Communism did not want to dominate the world. Gorbachev's problem was to reform Communism in the Soviet Union; it did not constitute a threat. Perhaps it was a function of Strauss' age. As people get older, they look back on their career. It wasn't that he was so convinced that what he had done in the forties, fifties, and sixties had been wrong because he was confronting people like Stalin and others. But, suddenly he thought Gorbachev was the greatest thing that ever happened. He began to be much more liberal in his outlook. I tell this story because he was also very helpful to us visa-vis other countries in the world where in the past he would have rejected our policy as being liberal, fuzzy minded, not tough enough. Suddenly, as a result of that Moscow visit, he became much amenable to do things that were very contrary to his image and what he had done for the past few years. Let me say this about Strauss.

Strauss without question was one of the smartest men I've ever met in my life. He had the ability to cut to the heart of the issue. He was a lot of fun to work with. I remember he was on the board of Airbus, and in Germany this is quite common where you have politicians who are on the boards of directors of major corporations. So you have this internecine kind of what we would now call crony-capitalism rampant in Germany. Strauss had been the father of the Airbus. He had promoted the Airbus; he developed the idea of a tri-lateral European consortium. One day we got word that he had, Airbus, not Strauss, had provided a leader in Africa a twenty-five million dollar bribe, to purchase Airbus over Boeing aircraft. So I went to see Strauss. I was sitting with him, we were having lunch. I said look this isn't on, we can't do business this way. I remember Strauss, who was this huge beefy man, hit me in the shoulder so hard he almost knocked me right off the chair. He said, "What do you mean twenty-five million dollars? Let me tell you about Boeing!" He proceeded then to tick off every sale of every Boeing aircraft for the last three years. I mean he knew it. Just off the top of his head. He was a smart man, a wonderful guy. He died, unfortunately, of a heart attack and that was that.

Q: Did he want to become Chancellor?

FISCHER: He certainly regretted he never made it. He'd run for Chancellor and lost the election. Now he became President of Bavaria as result of that defeat. He wouldn't give up that job for love of money. To be President of Bavaria in those days was the closest thing to being King of France. You ran a huge state, the largest state in Germany, the most prosperous state in Germany. He made an enormous amount of money. That's another story I can talk about. Strauss made a lot of money. He was treated as what the German's called a "landesvater" the father of the state. Of course, don't forget that Munich had been a monarchy up until 1918. It was important for Bavarians that they always have that kind of figure. Franz Josef Strauss who was the first man since Mad King Ludwig of Bavarian who captured and encapsulated everything that Bavarians wanted to believe about themselves. He was enormously successful.

Q: Wasn't Hitler a Bavarian?

FISCHER: As someone once said Austria's greatest success was convincing the world that Hitler was a German and Beethoven, an Austrian. No, Hitler was an Austrian, but he came to power in Bavaria. Although the Bavarians always say that Munich never voted for Hitler.

Q: Is Berchtesgaden in Bavaria?

FISCHER: Berchtesgaden is in Bavaria. That's another interesting anecdote. When the wall came down in 1990, I was still in Bavaria and we had in Berchtesgaden army hotels which were in fact, the old Hitler's headquarters buildings. For legal reasons, it isn't the government of Germany, the Federal Republic of Germany which was the successor state to the Hitler regime, in terms of property ownership, it was the government of Bavaria. Complicated occupation politics. So the issue became we wanted to get rid of these things. We no longer had a huge military presence there, and we wanted to downsize. I remember one day, Strauss's successor as President of Bavaria, Max Streibl, called me up and said is it true that you're going to give up these military facilities, these hotels. I said, yes we are if you know a buyer let me know. He said well we would be interested in taking those over. I said you mean the government of Bavaria? No, the CSU political party. I said has it ever occurred to you that it wouldn't be a good image for the CSU to be taking over as it's party headquarters the former headquarters of the Nazi party? He said, oh I never thought of that. To make a long story short, I think we finally dynamited most of those places. I have a great interest in German history. One of the interesting things, in Berchtesgaden below Hitler's what's called a "berghof" where Hitler had his eagle's nest. But in the town of Berchtesgaden the Nazis had established an office complex to allow Hitler to rule from there as easily as he could from Berlin. I was prowling around one day in an old Nazi building we had taken over in 1945 and which was being used as a U.S. army switchboard. And there on the switchboard panels were the names of the entire Nazi hierarchy, from Hitler all the way down to Eva Braun, Hitler's mistress.

I went into this building one day, and I met someone, it was a U.S. Army headquarters, and I said this is fascinating. They said would you like to meet Hitler's secretary? I said what do you mean? She's still alive, and she lives in Berchtesgaden. I spent three hours with her. I've forgotten what her name was. She was ninety-two-year old woman. Very talkative, very open. She was not a great critic of the Hitler regime. She was clearly like many secretaries, in that she admired her

boss, worked for him for many years. She was an interesting person.

I got to know a number of children of senior Nazis. Herman Goering's daughter for example lived in Munich. She had taken a different name. She worked as a nurse in a cancer ward. She was really an extraordinary woman. She was doing this if you will to expiate the sins of her father. But, there were still a number of those people still around.

Q: Is the Munich consular district more than Bavaria? And if so, did it border on East Germany and if so did you have any role in the strategic planning or anything else as Consul General?

FISCHER: The Consular district is Bavaria only. It was, however, the major basing area for military forces in Germany. I guess when I went to Munich in 1987, we probably had, I think, three hundred and fifty thousand Americans in Bavaria. They were under the unified military command NATO in the first instance and then Strategic Command Europe. But, the major U.S. military training facilities and other shooting ranges were in Bavaria. I think we had stationed, as far as U.S. troops, about a hundred and sixty-five thousand uniformed military. We serviced those people in the Consulate. We had a huge Consular Section. I think we had eight or nine visa officers and birth registration officers and floor people working in social security and all the usual things that Consulates provide.

Q: But you had a responsibility for other issues, like intelligence, as the State Department representative?

FISCHER: Munich was the area where we had liaison with the German Intelligence Service. Germany is a federal republic and unlike the United States when the federal republic was created, they dispersed government offices throughout the states in Germany. So the Supreme Court for example is not in Bonn, the capital city, it's another place. The German Intelligence Service was located in Munich. So we had a very, very large CIA presence. It was also a worldwide headquarters for certain operations that were undertaken in Munich. So it was very large. Although that is where frankly, I, as a Consul General, had a role to play in terms of intelligence operations that were being run. I had always had good relations with the Agency people who worked with me in various postings, and Munich was no exception.

In terms of policy, in 1988, Vernon Walters, Dick Walters, became Ambassador in Germany. Dick, and it is true I was present in the meeting, in his first staff meeting of the senior staff, he invited the Consuls General, looked around and said what are we going to do when the wall comes down. You could have heard a pin drop in that room. Dick Walters you have to understand was a man who had been educated in Switzerland right after World War I. His German was excellent. One of the reasons I got along so well with Dick Walters was that he was convinced that my German was better than his. This was a person who claimed to speak seven languages, and he had the utmost respect for anyone who spoke German very well.

But, Dick knew Germany and he knew the German psyche. The gist of his remarks in that staff meeting were "I understand, of course, that it is policy not to promote reunification of Germany in any rapid way. But don't you ever forget that when a German goes to sleep at night, the last thing he thinks about before he falls asleep is a unified Germany."

I was the only person I think on the entire senior staff in Germany who agreed with him. I felt too that as we could begin to see that the system in Eastern Europe was beginning to erode, Gorbachev, Perestroika and Glasnost, nobody understood what the consequences were going to be. We did begin to see, of course, in the summer of 1989 this enormous exodus of people from Eastern Germany who were going to the German Embassies in Prague and in Hungary. It was beginning to collapse.

I think it would have been October 21 or 22, 1989, there was a Chief of Missions conference in Berlin. Dick Walters invited me to dinner with Eberhardt Diepgen who was then the Mayor of Berlin, the Lord Mayor of Berlin and Mr. Mompa who had been the Socialist opposition in Berlin. Harry Gilmore who ran the U.S. Mission in Berlin was the fifth guest. This was a dinner on a Friday night. We knew there were to be demonstrations the next day in East Berlin. Gorbachev had been in Berlin the week before. Crowds had gone through the streets shouting "Gorby, Gorby, Gorby!" It began to appear as though the East German regime was beginning to lose control, and it was also apparent through CIA reports that the Russians had given orders that their troops were going to stay in the barracks. No matter what happened, the Russians were not going to save this State. I remember the four or five of us sitting around this table saying the demonstrations in East Berlin tomorrow, there may be as many as two hundred and fifty thousand people in the streets. What are we going to do? Are we prepared? Is the U.S. military prepared to defend if people begin to start attacking the wall or whatever? Well, I tell this anecdote because even those of us that thought we knew the situation, grossly underestimated what happened. Instead of two hundred fifty thousand, there were two million people in Berlin on the streets that Saturday. Dick Walters and I the next day, it was Sunday, after the demonstration, we took a little boat. The Ambassador had a yacht in Berlin which we could drive on the lakes in West Berlin - another hangover from the days of complete military occupation. I remember I said Dick how long do you think the system is going to last? He said, I can almost guarantee I think the wall will come down within a year. The wall came down 10 days later. So I tell this story because although he was essentially correct, he was correct in terms of what would happen, all of us underestimated the rapidity with which these events took place.

Q: Going back to Bavaria where you were the Consul General and this great world event had an impact, what was the impact on your job in your area of this historical event, the wall coming down? What did it do to your role as Consul General?

FISCHER: Frankly, not a lot in terms of day to day operations. Bavaria was the receiving point for refugees from East Germany. Initially, in the summer of 1989 as thousands upon thousands of East Germans fled through Czechoslovakia and Austria they ended up in Bavaria. A very wise decision on the part of the German government was that these refugees would be dispersed equally among all the German States. Otherwise, Bavaria was going to be burdened with thousands upon thousands of refugees. So in that regard we had very little impact.

Very few people in East Germany had relatives in the United States so they were not prospective immigrants. They were in the first instance fleeing only from one part of Germany to another they were not seeking to go to the United States.

Q: Very few as opposed to West Germans who all had relatives in the United States?

FISCHER: Right. But to the extent that East Germans had relatives in the United States, they'd been cut off from contact with them for years and years. It increased our political reporting. We certainly did a lot on this. But, as for day to day operations it had little impact.

Now, when the wall came down, I argued and Dick Walters again, I think we were the only two who agreed on this; we believed that there would be a very rapid movement towards a unified Germany. Most people believed that East Germany would continue to develop as some sort of an independent state, and ultimately unification would happen but the Germans were not prepared to absorb this area. And it would take two, three, four or five years. I disagreed, and Dick disagreed.

Dick got into some trouble because he was promoting that idea in Washington that we'd better get our act together because all of a sudden we were going to be confronted with the issues involving a unified Germany. He wrote a number of telegrams, and I did as well. Jim Baker was Secretary and did not take kindly to what he felt was Walter's "rushing the process." Baker very much wanted to control events and from that point on, the Embassy was totally cut out of the process.

This isn't unusual in a situation as fast-breaking and critical as was the unification of Germany. U.S. policy had less to do with Germany than the Soviet Union. Baker and Thatcher were concerned that Gorbachev would be overthrown in a coup and that we would lose an historic opportunity. Those were real fears at the time, although in retrospect I think we underestimated Gorbachev's determination to get out of Germany.

That was frankly, the issue from 1989 when the wall came down until the unification of Germany in 1990 which dominated I suppose what I did in Munich. As you know, the United States, when it appeared that Germany would in fact unify and it would unify very quickly; the United States was the only one of the four powers that believed in German unity. The French were for obvious reasons reluctant. The British certainly did not look forward to having a large strong united Germany. The Russians were opposed. I must say the probably central foreign policy success of the Bush administration was the way in which the United States managed the unification of Germany. And its thanks largely to Bob Blackwell, a guy that a lot of people don't like. But, Bob understood Germany very well. They worked very closely. They made it a small working group. They cut out a lot of the American bureaucracy. Again, I think that proves that when you really want to accomplish something important and you want to accomplish it rapidly, centralize the process take the bureaucrats out of it and drive home the bargain. One day the history of this will be written. I think the United States was central in achieving a goal that early on most people thought could not be achieved which was a unified Germany within NATO. Chancellor Kohl also deserves a great deal of credit. Kohl was always underestimated as a politician. But, he had an enormous sense of what the German body politic could bear. He was certainly aware of British and French concerns about a unified Germany, so he did two things. First, he preempted the process by issuing a set of 10 principles which formed the basis for subsequent negotiations. Secondly, he agreed that a future German state would be tied to western institutions. Not only NATO. The price the French wanted for their support was German

agreement to a European central bank and currency. Kohl agreed to the creation of the EURO as one of the prices he was willing to pay.

The other major issue that happened on my watch was the Gulf War. As I was leaving the Foreign Service, in the summer of 1990, it was clear that I was going to leave the Foreign Service for personal reasons. One of my children had a medical condition that I frankly couldn't deal with overseas so I was looking to get out. So I remember on a Sunday - rarely did I ever go to the Consulate on a Sunday, but I did for some reason. I guess I was called in by the Duty Officer. I received a telegram/flash whatever that we needed immediate liaison with German authorities because Iraq had invaded Kuwait.

As a result of the preparations for Desert Storm, the overwhelming number of troops, the majority of troops, ninety percent of them that took part in the invasion of Iraq came out of Germany. This was a God-send to us. In the summer of 1990 it was pretty clear that we would begin to draw down the enormous numbers of U.S. troops in Europe, the vast majority of which were stationed in Germany. The Gulf War presented us an opportunity to do so at minimum cost. The Germans paid the transport costs and we were able to move out rapidly large numbers of soldiers. Their families were repatriated, in most cases to the United States. It served two purposes. One, it provides the military forces that ultimately were successful in Iraq. Two, it allowed us draw down in a rapid process something that would have taken us years to accomplish. One of the issues again as Germany became, even before it's unification, the Germans were becoming much more self-confident and were no longer willing to accept some of the costs, large scale military operations and occupation, we were not longer the occupying power. But, every German city had a large American military base. We had forward based large armored divisions which had tanks which rumbled down German villages at three o'clock in the morning. The major issue was also low-level fighter aircraft because we had to defend the Czech and the East German borders. That required training of helicopters and fighter aircraft flying fifty feet above the ground. That became a major problem. More and more mayors of cities in Bavaria were asking that the American troops withdraw. But it was interesting, because when withdrawal finally took place, every mayor would then come in to see me and ask how can we keep the American military base. They suddenly realized that these were enormous economic benefits, as well as liabilities. The other thing of course, although it's easy to exaggerate this. The American military presence in Germany, most GI's stayed within their barracks, very few GI's spoke German, very few GI's I suppose participated in civilian civic life in Germany as much as they had. But, they were always welcome there. There were friendship societies. The Germans being very efficient and organized beginning in the late 1940s felt that they owed a debt to the United States. This, as we speak today, I think this week is the fiftieth anniversary of the Berlin airlift. But, the American military presence in Bavaria allowed a certain level of friendship, trust, and confidence which was I think unique in military operations overseas. So that was an interesting time.

Q: Looks to me like almost everything you said and the things you talked about, are sort of unique for a Consul General. It was a unique place, a unique job, at a unique time. I want to look at a couple of aspects of that. One, it sounds as though you were very close advisor of Ambassador Walters in the sense that I must say serving in Mexico with its twelve Consulates, in most cases the Ambassador never wanted to see a Consul General. Just go do the visas and leave

me alone. That seems to have been different. Was that the case with other Consul General in Germany. Was it you or was it the size or was it the way Walters ran the place?

FISCHER: Well, a combination of it. Every American Ambassador that I ever knew to Germany envied whoever was the Consul General. It was a nice city to live in. Don't forget the American Embassy was located in Bad Godesberg, a little tiny village on the Rhine. Dull as dishwater. Munich is a thriving, vibrant city with great culture all the interesting things that happened in Germany, tended to happen in Munich. So that was part of it.

Every Ambassador came to Munich at a minimum of once every two weeks. Partly to meet with business contacts and partly just to have fun. If you wanted to have a good meal, you couldn't get one in Bonn. I shouldn't say every two weeks, once a month. They would also go to Berlin. West Berlin: the Ambassador always had a residence in West Berlin. He would go back and forth to underscore American commitment to Berlin. So that was part of it.

It was a huge Consulate. We had fifty or sixty Americans, other people through intelligence agencies for whom I was not directly responsible but of whom I was cognizant. We provided them housing, cover, things such as that. So that was part of it.

Dick Walters and I just hit it off. Dick and I share a great interest in German history. I think Dick respected the Germanist I was not a Germanist, but I knew the language, I knew the history, and above all, I had great contacts. There had been a whole generation particularly in the sixties who had been steeped in German history and culture and had served in Germany very often. When I arrived in Germany in 1987, that generation had died off. There were not that many people left who had specialized in Germany in their career. I had not, but Dick trusted me. He also developed relations with other people. Harry Gilmore for example who was head of the Berlin mission. Dick had a lot of respect for Harry and certainly would not hesitate to talk to him. Dick would not hesitate to call me on the phone or whatever.

Finally, Bavaria was politically and economically important. It was the Silicone Valley of Germany. It was the headquarters of the Siemens Corporation, BMW, Messerschmidt-Boelkow-Blohm. All the major Germany companies had major offices there so that in many ways it was seen as the center of high-tech, modern industry.

One anecdote I will tell in terms of Desert Storm because I think that this is sometimes misinterpreted. In the fall of 1990, it was clear that one of the issues we were going to have to do was to get a hold of the targeting information for military targets in Iraq. The Germans had a long business relationship with Saddam Hussein, and various German companies had built legitimate, in most cases, buildings. Siemens, for example, with putting in the electrical systems in what were clearly military installations and bunkers. Other German business had provided equipment which was used for the production of germ warfare, biological agents. So one of the tasks that I had in Munich, and indeed the CIA's major task in the fall of 1990, was to get as much information as we could about what was going on in Iraq based on what the Germans had done. I can remember a meeting I had with the Chairman of the Board of Siemens Corporation who was a friend of mine. German businesses (and I have to say for understandable reasons) were reluctant to provide this, because these were things that they had developed legitimately

and on a commercial basis and they were reluctant to provide us information, including blueprints. I can remember a very difficult, one and half hour conversation with the Chairman of the Board of Siemens in which I made threats, he made threats but the upshot of it was I ended up carrying out a box of blueprints of Baghdad military headquarters. So it was fun a Post in that regard. It was not an isolated visa mill. Obviously, what went on in the Consular Section...

Q: How much of your time was taken up in the Consular Section?

FISCHER: I did virtually no consular work. Although I tried to spend a day a month in the Consular Section, it was to boost morale, not to interfere in the day-to-day operations of the consular section. I've always managed by wandering. I went into the Consular Section everyday without questions. I knew everybody. But again, one of the unique qualities of Consulates in Germany (and we had a big Consulate in Frankfurt, as well) a big Consulate in Munich we had smaller Consulates in Hamburg and Stuttgart. For forty years we had German local employees who had worked for the U.S. government who frankly could have served as Secretary of State. They were extraordinarily dedicated people who, for example, knew the Consular Foreign Affairs Manual backwards and forwards. I had worked in my first job in the Foreign Service in Frankfurt as a Visa Officer, and I immediately recognized that every German employee working in the visa section knew that visa law far better than any American possibly could. Why? Because Americans were cycled in and out of these jobs. The maximum time you were there was a year or two. These people had been there for forty years. One of the problems that happened in Germany in the late eighties and early nineties was that this generation of employees was pensioned off, and they were retiring. So that by the time I arrived in Munich, we probably had in each key section, the Administration, Budget and Financial, Visa and Citizenship you probably only had one employee left of that generation who had dedicated their lives to serving the United States. In the old days you would have had ten, but we only had one. But that local employee in a very gracious way tolerated the presence the of an American officer, usually a junior officer and trained that officer in how to do things. And they ran those places like a Swiss clock.

When I lived in Germany, when I worked in Germany you didn't have to be concerned with fraud. These people were extraordinarily ethical. I don't know of a case, frankly, of fraud that existed in any of the German Consulates. So that was not a concern. I think the biggest management problem that I had - and I know my colleagues in Frankfurt and Hamburg had it as well - was usually that some head of a Visa Section, middle grade officer who decided to come in and they were going to teach these people a thing or two. So you had to reign that in.

Q: What about, you didn't have problems of sheer volume?

FISCHER: No.

Q: You didn't have to give non-immigrant visas?

FISCHER: Initially we did. The first years that I was there we were issuing about a hundred and fifty thousand visas a year, but it was done by mail. Travel agents would simply mail in bag loads of passports, and it was a mechanical operation. Then of course, we had the visa waiver

program which was put in 1988 or 1989 I think, so that Germans no longer needed non-immigrant visas. Immigrant visas were centralized when I was there. We initially did them in Munich, and then we centralized them in Frankfurt. We had a very, very good Consul General by the name of Jones whom I think was the person who introduced the idea of centralization of functions. Then we had social security - thousands of checks but again it was a mechanical operation.

Q: What about you relations with some of the other agencies? We talked about the military and intelligence, what about someone like Commerce? I suspect Commerce had a huge operation there. Did that run well? Did they have a trade center there?

FISCHER: Yes, Commerce had a huge operation. We did not have a trade center there, but again the Commerce Section had one local employee, one woman, and my central task as far as the Department of Commerce was to make sure that this woman who had worked for the U.S. government for 30 years did not accept another job. She was offered them on a weekly basis at two and three times the salary we could pay her. This was a woman who frankly knew the German commercial scene, U.S.-German relations better than anyone else. The Department of Commerce was smart I think in Germany because it divided up its operations in Germany based on industry. So that in Frankfurt, the Department of Commerce the people there were specialists in publishing, in food stuffs and financial services. In Munich we had responsibility for electronics, computers and for those industries were specialized and headquartered in Munich.

My major headache was an operation over which we did not have direct line of control. It was perhaps the largest civilian operation in Bavaria; Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty had been a CIA operation up until the 1970s when it was ostensibly privatized. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty employed at one time about fifteen hundred people in Munich. By the time I got there, it was down to about eight hundred. These were Czech, Romanians, and East Europeans and former Soviet citizens who were broadcasters and technicians. It was run by a Board of Directors that were very politicized. William F. Buckley's brother at one time had been the Chairman of the Board and run Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. The line of authority between the U.S. government and what was in fact, a private corporation, funded; however, ninety percent from U.S. government funds, was very murky. When I went to Munich, I had long briefings, and I met with people on the board on International Broadcasting.

Our responsibility in Munich was to see to it that what the radio stations were doing was consistent with U.S. policy. We didn't have a day-to-day oversight. We didn't have oversight for the financial operations, their personnel, or anything else. But, we were supposed to make sure that what was being broadcast was in line with U.S. foreign policy. But, it soon became apparent to me that we had no way to control the content of the broadcasts to ensure they didn't violate U.S. policy. They were broadcasting twenty-four hours a day, in languages, some of us understood and knew, Polish and Hungarian these were languages that were common. But in Radio Liberty's case they were broadcasting in Tadjik or Uzbek, languages of Central Asia. There were very few people in the U.S. government, and certainly no American in a policy position who could read and understand the scripts that were being broadcast.

The way Radio Liberty and particularly Radio Free Europe had a check on this, they were broadcasting live but they at random, the American management, would take tapes of a particular broadcast and give them to someone to be translated into English. Then they were given to the Consulate for review. It became apparent early on that the people who were translating the documents were precisely the same people doing the broadcast. One of the things that developed and never really explored, this is a good Ph.D. thesis for somebody. Radio Europe had performed a very valuable function although I think the radio had always exaggerated the number of people in Eastern Europe that was listening to their broadcast. In fact, I, having lived in Eastern Europe, knew how difficult it was. By the late 1980s although these countries were still Communist, these people had access to Western media. People were no longer sitting in Warsaw twiddling their short wave radios. They were watching television. There were American tv programs which the Poles had purchased. But that's another issue.

But Radio Liberty had always operated with scripts. So you had people reading the news broadcast. But, as Glasnost and Perestroika opened up, Radio Liberty soon discovered that you could make a phone call from Munich to Bishkek or Leningrad to a dissidents home and talk to him directly on the radio. Dissidents were in those days because of Glasnost willing to go onto radio stations, and we had no control over what these people were broadcasting; these were live call-in shows. Although I can't prove it, but it wasn't anything that we really investigated, a lot of the émigrés particularly working at Radio Liberty were people who came from very conservative backgrounds who were from obscure political parties, there were Czarists, monarchists, people who believed in greater Turkic or Islamic empires, and these people were broadcasting whatever political point of view that suited them. So what they had to say and what went on in the radio stations I frankly don't know.

Q: What role in the two radios did USIA have?

FISCHER: None.

Q: But you did have a USIA mission?

FISCHER: We had a big USIA mission, again a hangover from the occupation days. One of the great things that Americans did, if anybody ever wants to study a successful military occupation, just look at the United States occupation of Germany. We created initially in virtually in every city in Germany over a hundred thousand population in the 1940s, reading rooms and libraries. They were called Amerika Hauser. By the time of the 1980s all these little reading rooms had been closed down with the exception of major American facilities where there were Consulates. The Amerika Haus was a very important cultural center. It had a theater, a great library, it operated an exchange program for the thousands upon thousands of students Americans studying in German universities and Germans studying in American universities, high school exchanges. Again, it was an example where we had some key German local employees who had worked for that operation for thirty years. We had a man in charge of the press section, Hans Peters who was on a first name basis with every editor in Bavaria, every major journalist. Wonderful operation. Unfortunately with the reduction in resources those places are being closed down. So it was a big operation.

Q: This is sort out of the blue, having these huge agencies there, headed by very high ranking people some of them, how many of those people should have become or people of their stripes should become American Ambassadors, even though they 're from Commerce or USIA? Were they qualified? In the jobs they are doing, were they broad enough to be U.S. Ambassador?

FISCHER: I can only talk to this issue as far as USIA is concerned. I served with some very good USIA officers. I worked for USIA and was seconded to them in Poland in my early career. I saw two kinds of officers in USIA. Those people who had the broad political skills who were interested in economic issues, interested in American business, who had the kinds of skills required to be an Ambassador. They were a minority in USIA. Then we had people who were very good at what they did. They could run libraries, film festivals but they took they attitude that politics was outside their jurisdiction.

In Commerce, I met the people who also had the kind of broad political skills and ability to get along in international affairs, but they were a small minority. But, State also had very few people in the Foreign Service with the requisite skills for dealing with the private sector. I watched a lot of people in the Foreign Service at senior levels; American businessman would come through town and want to talk about foreign investment, and the mistake that was made by virtually every Ambassador was "oh, this is a great place to invest," promoting whatever backwater they were assigned to, when in fact, if you were a stockholder in this man's company, the last thing that you would want to invest is in this hell hole.

Foreign Service officers are not good at speaking the language of private American business, and they're not good at understanding the issues that the business community is concerned about. So I think it's a trade off.

HARRY JOSEPH GILMORE
US Minister and Deputy Commander of the American Sector
Berlin (1987-1990)

Principal Officer, US Embassy Office
Berlin (1990-1991)

Ambassador Gilmore was born and raised in Pennsylvania and educated at Carnegie Institute of Technology, Indiana University and the University of Pittsburgh. He entered the Foreign Service in 1962 and served at the State Department in Washington, DC and at the following posts abroad: Ankara, Budapest, Moscow, Munich, Belgrade and Berlin. He also served as Deputy Commander at the Army War College. In 1993 he was named United States Ambassador to Armenia, where he served until 1995. At the State Department in Washington he dealt primarily with Central European Affairs. The Ambassador was interviewed in 2003 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Yes. Can you talk about what your job was and what the situation was in 1987 in Berlin. Sort

of set the picture.

GILMORE My title was U.S. Minister and Deputy Commandant of the American Sector, Berlin. I was the senior State Department official resident in West Berlin. The U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, who, of course, resided in Bonn also had the title Chief of Mission Berlin. (The British and French ambassadors to the FRG were also chiefs of their respective establishments in Berlin (West). The Commandant of the American Sector, Berlin, a two-star U.S. Army general also had the title Deputy Chief of Mission in Berlin. I also had the title Assistant Chief of Mission.

My main tasks were: leading and supervising the work of U.S. Mission, Berlin, including such special institutions as the Berlin Air Safety Center; liaison with the Governing Mayor of Berlin and his cabinet, the Berlin Senate, and Berlin's parliament, the House of Deputies; working closely with the Commandant of the American Sector, Berlin, and our British and French counterparts to coordinate our efforts to protect the security and promote the welfare of the Western Sectors of Berlin; and finally, to serve as the primary U.S. channel of communication with the Embassy of the USSR in East Berlin on Berlin matters.

When I arrived in Berlin in August of 1987 I saw no palpable indication that fundamental change might soon be in the offing. While the overall atmosphere of East-West debate and the practical improvements fostered by the Quadripartite Agreements of 1971 and the related inner-German agreements had diminished Berlin's potential as a flashpoint of East-West conflict, fundamental differences in the positions of the Allies and Soviets remained, and both sides vigorously protected their positions from perceived encroachments. Meanwhile, the GDR Volkspolizei still had orders to shoot anyone trying to escape over the Berlin Wall.

Q: Who were some of your top people there?

GILMORE: At the time of my arrival my deputy, the Political Advisor and DCM, was Jim Williams. Later he received the title of as our special envoy for Cyprus [Ed: Williams has an oral history interview on file with ADST]. Elizabeth Jones was the Economic Advisor. She subsequently served as our ambassador to Kazakhstan and as Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs. The Administrative Officer at the U.S. Mission was Don Hayes, who went on to some of the most senior managerial positions in the Department of State. Our Legal Advisor when I arrived in Berlin was Donald Koblitiz. He was replaced by JoAnn Dolan.

The staffing pattern of the U.S. Mission included several positions which reflected the Mission's special responsibilities. They were: Legal Advisor; Senate Liaison Officer; Protocol Officer; and Public Safety Advisor. The legal advisor's duties included checking FRG legislation for possible inconsistency with allied rights in Berlin before it could be adopted in (West) Berlin. The Senate Liaison Officer was responsible for liaison with the "Senatskanzlei," the staff of the Governing Mayor and the Berlin Senat. The Public Safety Advisor was the Mission's liaison with the West Berlin Police, a vitally important function. In the absence of a peace treaty ending World War II, the allies were sovereign in the western sectors of Berlin, and the West Berlin Police operated under allied authority. This meant that if the West Berlin Police were to take any action which might touch on the Four Powers' area of responsibility, they needed a green light from the

western allies. Each month, on a rotational basis, one of the three western allies was the chairman ally, and the relevant minister served as chairman. The Protocol Officer was our day-to-day liaison with the Soviet Embassy to the GDR. The British and French establishments in Berlin had analogous positions.

Q: Let's start off with relationships. What were your relationships, first with the Soviets?

GILMORE: My Soviet counterpart, who was also the counterpart of the British and French ministers, was Igor Fyodorovich Maksimychev, the deputy chief of mission at the Soviet embassy in East Berlin. Maksimychev was a senior Soviet German and West European specialist who spoke fluent German and French. He was an extraordinarily capable diplomat, and I grew to admire him quite a lot. I believe it was mutual. By the time my four years in Berlin were over and Berlin and Germany were unified, we had become friends.

The British Minister was Michael Burton, now Sir Michael Burton. I had two different French counterparts. The first one, Jean-Marc Voelckel, who departed before the Wall "fell." The second was Francis Beauchataud. I had a close relationship with all of them, particularly with Michael Burton, who was the senior allied minister in terms of service. He'd been there about a year before my arrival and stayed on well after my departure.

I would emphasize that I also had close and productive relationships with the two governing mayors of Berlin during my tour of duty. The first was Eberhard Diepgen, a Christian Democrat. The second was Walter Momper, a Social Democrat. Diepgen's coalition lost the election of March 1989, and a new coalition of the Social Democrats and Greens headed by Walter Momper took office. Diepgen again became Berlin's governing mayor near the end of my tour. I had good personal relations with both, although there were some difficult moments relating to issues on which the governing mayor and Senat sometimes got impatient with us.

Q: Can you give some examples, or an example?

GILMORE: Some would have to do with very sensitive issues that we couldn't talk about in public at all. I will be careful how I describe this. The Allies were responsible for the security of the Western Sector of Berlin. We made no secret that we took that responsibility very seriously. There was a long history of provocations by the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic, so we had to be careful. One of the things the three allies did was conduct surveillance in Berlin. Here I'm talking about surveillance of mail, telephone communications as well as signals intelligence. We couldn't divulge any of that to anybody, except especially cleared people in our own establishment. But those very few Berlin officials who knew or surmised that we were engaged in surveillance sometimes displayed resentment or disapproval.

Also there was a feeling sometimes on the part of Berlin officials that we Americans might be giving priority to projecting our own global concerns with Iranians or radical Arabs. For example, some Berliners seriously questioned the connection between the bombing of the La Belle disco in West Berlin and President Reagan's decision to bomb Libya.

Some Berlin officials felt that the allies' concerns with status issues were an anachronism. I

sensed this more on the part of the Christian Democratic-led government when it was in power than the Red/Green Coalition -- the Social Democrats and the Greens. That may be counter-intuitive, but it was the case. But in any case, some officials in the Federal Republic and Berlin felt they had proved themselves good democrats, and they were, and capable administrators, and they were, and that therefore, they should be given even more scope to conduct their affairs in Berlin. The problem was international law, and the Western Allies' right to be in Berlin. That right had been challenged frontally by the Soviets for example by Khrushchev in his ultimatum of 1958 where he basically told the Allies to close their military missions in Berlin and go home close their military establishments, close their military operations in Berlin, unilaterally. We never considered that. We always held the Soviets to what we saw as legal commitments we'd all made in 1944 and 1945 and afterwards, concerning Berlin. In any case, the whole question of Berlin status and what rights status reserved to the Allies could become sensitive to members of the Berlin Senat and the Berlin governing mayor.

Q: So often, in my interviews with people who dealt in international things note that the French often veer off in a different direction. Did you find this happening here?

GILMORE: Less. One of the most pleasurable things working in Berlin was the very close relationship we had with the British and the French. The French were very careful about their sovereignty including their sovereign rights in their sector of Berlin. Their sector hadn't been provided for in the original Berlin agreement, which was concluded by the Americans, British, and the Soviets. The French sector was subsequently added at the expense of the other two western sectors. I emphasize that the French were very careful about their Berlin obligations. The French had a very well-staffed establishment in Berlin. They always chose a very capable commandant, and also a very capable brigade commander. Our brigade commanders were usually one-star U.S. Army brigadiers, very carefully chosen. Both brigade commanders I served with went on to bigger things in the Army. One of them went on to earn three stars, the other, two. In fact, the Berlin Brigade commanders went farther in the Army than the commandants, who were already two star generals and very capable as well. But, in any case, the French were careful about how their sector operated. They could be very jealous of their rights should anybody challenge them, but we had no reason to challenge them. The French worked well with us and the British in the various Allied bodies. They had one or two diplomats in their establishment who I would say were genuine stars. There were French diplomats in Berlin as capable as anyone in the French diplomatic service, and destined for the top.

Q: You're talking about dealing with the mayor and the Senat. Were they both of the same party or were they separate? Were they two different entities?

GILMORE: The Berlin Senat, as I noted earlier, was the Berlin government. All of the senators...there was a senator for justice, a senator for building and construction, a senator for internal affairs, etc., were part of the Berlin government. The Governing Mayor appointed the Senat. Both governing mayors during my time were heads of coalition governments. The first government was a coalition of Christian Democrats and Free Democrats. Eberhard Diepgen of the Christian Democratic Union headed it; Walter Momper headed the second government, a coalition of the Social Democrats and the Greens. By the way, it was the first time the Greens had been part of a coalition government in Berlin, and there was great apprehension about how

we would get along with them. In fact, shortly after Momper was elected in March of 1989, the Commandant, the Political Advisor, and I had breakfast with him and his top lieutenants. By the way, Momper is a very competent, open, very straightforward, friendly man. Very bright as well. And we often had breakfast with him at my deputy's (the POLAD's) residence. The participants were the commandant, the POLAD, and I, and Momper and his chief of staff, and I believe his press spokesman. We went over very carefully the whole question of Allied rights, including the most sensitive areas. We made the point that there was apprehension in some places about Greens being in the government, a concern that they would not understand the special Allied rights and the special Allied responsibilities for Berlin. Momper, I must say, was very careful about Allied rights. The Greens, who held none of the power positions in the Berlin Senate, turned out to be quite friendly overall. We'd have them to dinner or breakfast. They would come, some of them, in T-shirts and tennis shoes and jeans. But they turned out to be fine human beings, the ones we dealt with. And one or two of them, for example, turned out to be very capable officials, and we got along pretty well. Although, I must emphasize, that the Greens really weren't involved with the sensitive issues where status was concerned.

Q: Well, at this time, was there, when you got out there in 1987, Gorbachev has been in power for some time now. Was there a feeling that we are really entering a new era, and it was positive? Or was there concern when things start getting soft, concessions might be made on Berlin which could make us feel very uncomfortable?

GILMORE: Gorbachev was very much a factor. His *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* were coming into full flower then, and it was clear that there were deep-seated differences between Gorbachev and Honecker, who had been and was still the strong man in the German Democratic Republic. Of course the reporting on Honecker and the German Democratic Republic was done by our embassy to the GDR. The embassy was very capably led during my time in Berlin, first by Ambassador Frank Meehan, and then Ambassador Richard Barkley. Gorbachev exerted a strong influence in the GDR. He was far more popular than Honecker on the streets of East Berlin and elsewhere in the GDR. In his remarks to the press on October 6 and in his speech at the ceremony celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of the GDR Gorbachev clearly showed his impatience with Honecker foot-dragging on reform. In his October 7 speech Gorbachev noted the great interest in the GDR in the transformations occurring in the Soviet Union. But I may be getting ahead of the story just a little bit.

Q: I think we might approach this somewhat chronologically, it probably works. So I'm trying to gather what it was like when you first arrived. Did you have the feeling that big things were going to happen. Or was it entering something that diplomats don't like, sort of a slippery period where things are kind of changing, and when things are changing you don't really know what's going to come out of it.

GILMORE: When I first got there, there were still incidents at the Wall. In fact, at the beginning of 1989, in one of my earlier stints as allied chairman minister, I had to make a demarche on behalf of the Allies to Soviet Minister Maksimychev because there had been shootings and a death at the Wall. So, the situation at the Wall was still tough. "No Man's Land" and all the various barriers were still in place and the "shoot on sight" order was in force. On the other hand, there was quite a bit going on in inter-German relations. The Federal Republic had its Permanent

Representation to the German Democratic Republic, staffed, by the way, with some very capable people, some of the best diplomats in the Federal Republic's service. One of them, the head of the Permanent Representation, Hans Otto Bräutigam, was, I think, the single most impressive German diplomat I had ever worked with. There was quite a bit going on in inter-German relations, particularly in the area of trade. Bonn was trying its best to make life easy as it could, or at least to make life easier for the population of the GDR, while making it clear that it looked toward the day when there would be peaceful reunification. The stated policy of the German Democratic Republic was that there could be German unification in a peaceful Europe through peaceful means, and that there should be free self-determination for the GDR. Meanwhile Bonn's weight in the diplomatic exchanges with the GDR was growing steadily.

The GDR, despite what some folks pointed to as its significant industrial accomplishments, was becoming more and more dependent on the Federal Republic economically. We could see it happening, but it didn't seem to be happening in any pell-mell fashion. It was just a steady, ongoing development. Otherwise, access to the Western section of Berlin still had to be conducted in the established ways. If you came from the Federal Republic, you had to go through the right check points, with the right documentation. Soviet soldiers controlled your passport, actually it was your ID card, in Helmstedt and then again as you entered Berlin. So, what I'm saying is that many aspects of the Berlin situation hadn't changed really since 1971, since the quadripartite agreement, which the four powers, the British, French, Americans, and Soviets had negotiated to basically simplify, and to an extent codify, Allied travel arrangements. And also, to make it somewhat easier and more regular for Federal Republic citizens to visit the German Democratic Republic. But there was no substantial change, really, from 1971, from the days of the Quadripartite Agreement. Ten years later, the regime established by the Quadripartite Agreement was still very much in operation, and functioning pretty well, given the anomalies of Berlin.

Q: When you arrived, were the Soviets still testing Allied rights?

GILMORE: There was less of that. The Soviets still considered it vitally important that the Berlin Air Safety Center supervise air safety in the air corridors. There was a huge Soviet Air Force presence in the German Democratic Republic. The three air corridors, which should basically be seen as three squared tubes, had to be adjusted in accordance with Soviet military aviation exercises, and they were. But the Soviets played fair game within the rules that had been set up for the Berlin Air Safety Center. That worked. The access regime worked. When there was trouble at the Wall, when somebody was either captured or shot, or whatever, the allies would raise it with the Soviets. We didn't get much satisfaction, so to speak. When somebody who sought to escape over the Wall had been captured and we could see them being taken back into East Berlin, we would protest, and our Soviet counterparts would sometimes hint that there were ways that the two German states could deal with these questions. That was code reminding us that the person(s) captured could be bought out, perhaps. But the basics of the Berlin regime were very much in place.

At the same time, the Berlin Senat was reaching out, trying to have contacts with the German Democratic Republic. This was not always comfortable for the Allies. Of course, the allies and the Federal Republic coordinated overall management of the Berlin issues, through the so-called

Bonn Group, which met regularly in Bonn. Representative of the FRG Foreign Office and the three Allied embassies met regularly, so there were special venues for discussing Berlin matters. And they were working fine. But there was still very much a Berlin regime that was, as I said, essentially unchanged since 1971, since the conclusion of the Quadripartite Agreement.

Q: How about the intelligence scene. Popular image is Berlin was loaded with intelligence people who would almost get in each other's way.

GILMORE: Well, there was a considerable intelligence presence in Berlin. On the military side, each of the three Allied commandants had under his wing an intelligence contingent. The U.S. had an extensive one, not only in terms of intelligence gathering through human intelligence sources, but also a capability in Berlin to monitor military communications which reached across the GDR and actually into Poland. That was all under the "cover," so to speak, of the Berlin Brigade. The British also had good intelligence capabilities. The French had theirs. We were less in close touch with the French on intelligence matters, but we knew they had capabilities too. The Soviets and the "Stasi" [Staatssicherheitsdienst] of the German Democratic Republic ran intelligence operations of all kinds. Berlin was, in many ways a hive of intelligence activity.

That being said, to my knowledge there were no radically new intelligence "games" being initiated at the time of my arrival in Berlin. There was considerable intelligence activity, but each side pretty much knew what the other side was up to and capable of. Both the GDR and Soviet intelligence services sought to penetrate the U.S. Mission Berlin. We learned of specific penetration efforts when the GDR State Security Service collapsed and was dismantled with German unification.

The most productive source of intelligence on the Soviet military in the GDR (the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany) was the U.S. Military Liaison Mission (MLM). Military liaison missions were established in accordance with post-WWII Four Power agreements pertaining to the occupation of Germany and Berlin. The basic authority for establishing military liaison missions was a Four Power accord dating from 1945. In 1947 the U.S. and the USSR agreed to exchange military liaison missions. The U.S. MLM was quartered in Potsdam, while the Soviet MLM was quartered near Frankfurt. The British and the French had similar agreements with the USSR regarding MLM's. The U.S. MLM personnel would drive over the Glienicke Bridge from Berlin to Potsdam and then throughout the GDR. The U.S. MLM was staffed by top-notch U.S. military officers and was enormously successful in gathering useful intelligence on the GSF/G.

Q: What were your relations with the Embassy Bonn?

GILMORE: I had two different ambassadors. The first was Richard Burt; his deputy was Jim Dobbins [Ed: James Dobbins has an interview on file with ADST]. The second was Vernon Walters, a retired general, Lieutenant General Vernon Walters; his deputy was George Ward [ED. Ward also participated in the ADST interview program]. I had good relations with all four. I tended to be more directly in touch with the deputy chief of mission. He wrote my efficiency report, for one thing, and that was the channel both ambassadors and their predecessors, also, preferred. But of course, as chiefs of mission for Berlin, the ambassadors would come to Berlin at least yearly to meet with the Soviet ambassador to the GDR, their counterpart responsible, in

Four Power terms, for Allied activities in Germany. So when Ambassador Walters would meet with Ambassador [Vyacheslav I.] Kochemasov, the Soviet ambassador to the German Democratic Republic, I would be at the meeting with the mission's Protocol Officer as note taker. I think the mission's relationships with Embassy Bonn were generally good. I worked hard to make it clear that I saw myself as on the ambassador's team.

Q: Sometimes in our relations in Berlin, there has been concern from the Berlin perspective that an administration back in Washington might get a little too loose on Berlin. You know, things in Berlin were so scripted, tight, that lack of attention to detail might give away part of the store. Were you concerned about that during this time, which would have been the Bush administration, mostly.

GILMORE: Not really. Ambassador "Roz" Ridgway, Rozanne Ridgway, who had been our ambassador to the German Democratic Republic, had become Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. She understood that Americans in Berlin and the British could become too enamored of the fine points of what we all called "Berlinery," and that this could cause problems. She also well understood the importance of maintaining Allied rights, U.S. and Allied rights. So we had no real problem. She followed Berlin closely, not only because she was Assistant Secretary, but because her predecessors did as well. Before he was sent to Bonn, Ambassador Richard Burt, had also been Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. George Vest had preceded Burt as assistant secretary. Vest is, by the way, one of my candidates for top Foreign Service officer of the century. I mean that very carefully. So we had no real issues there. Occasionally officers who had served in Berlin and who were back on a second tour of duty in Berlin in a higher ranking capacity...some of them could get a little impatient with Washington for not being careful about how visitors entered Berlin. Occasionally, we would learn of official visitors, for example, traveling directly to East Berlin, which we legally did not recognize as part of the GDR, rather than via West Berlin. When we negotiated the opening of our embassy to the GDR, we made it clear that it was our embassy "to the GDR," not "in the GDR," for legal reasons. And, occasionally, people who served in our embassy to the GDR would get impatient with what they called "Berlinery." And that was all out there. But by and large, there weren't major frictions.

Q: How about with the military? One of the concerns was that some young soldier might run off with a tank, or something like that. Did you have any problems of that nature?

GILMORE: Yes, as a matter of fact, once when I was there, I don't remember the details exactly...a Soviet tank driver took off with a tank and drove it around Berlin. He wasn't trying to hurt anybody. I don't know whether he had drunk too much. I think there were indications that he was all upset because he'd had trouble with his girlfriend. But that was a potential danger.

Our ambassadors to the German Democratic Republic were sometimes concerned that U.S. military assigned not only in Berlin, to the Berlin Brigade, but also those assigned to units in the Federal Republic were visiting Berlin on the weekend, and were using U.S.-Four Power right to go to East Berlin without visas, just showing their ID cards, and buying up a lot of subsidized goods the GDR state had provided for the GDR population, which was needy. So we had a bit of that. And there was also a certain sensitivity from various quarters about possible contacts between the U.S. military establishment in West Berlin and personnel of the Soviet Group of

Forces, Germany. Strictly speaking, only U.S. military personnel authorized to have contact with personnel of the GSFG were officers from the U.S. Military Liaison Mission. The MLM was not part of the Berlin Brigade or other U.S. military units stationed in (West) Berlin. The same was true of the British and French MLMs.

Q: You mentioned that the public safety, i.e., the police function, became important. Were there issues during the pre-fall of the Wall, 1989 period, of police problems in which you became involved?

GILMORE: No, not specifically. In each sector, the Public Safety Advisor cultivated very close relationships with his West Berlin police counterparts, and all three public safety advisors, British, French, and American, had good relationships with the top officials of the West Berlin police, as did the Political Advisor, my deputy, and I. There occasionally would be questions of whether Allied rights in Berlin might unduly limit or inhibit what the Berlin police could do in a given situation. In fact, when we get to it, I'll talk particularly about the night the Wall opened, because there was a very important decision -- an unprecedented decision -- we had to take, giving the Berlin police more scope for their operations. But, by and large, our relationships with the police were very good, in fact, excellent. Occasionally, the Justice Senator, would drop hints that the Allies were -- and this isn't strictly police work -- the Allies were being a little "cowboy-like," in terms of their intelligence operations in Berlin. We didn't really agree with that, to put it in plain English. We were careful to be circumspect and professional, but we weren't about to be schooled by the Berlin Senat about security matters that we had responsibility for. We would listen, but we weren't about to be schooled.

Q: This question refers to the bombing of the disco. What about the GDR operating with or assisting either terrorists or its own people messing around with Berlin. Was there much of that?

GILMORE: Well, we watched for that. At one point, for example, my first Commandant (Commandant of the American Sector, Berlin), Major General John Mitchell, and I were required to have a Berlin police escort for all our appointments and travel around the city. This was because there had been threats against us. They came, we think, from terrorists associated with the Bader-Meinhof gang and their successors who were operating out of East Berlin. It turns out that there was quite a considerable connection between the GDR state security service and the Bader-Meinhof gang and the Rote Armee Fraktion (Red Army Faction). There was some tension there between us and the West Berlin government. But when it came to the Arabs and the others, we had the ability, and we thought the responsibility, to monitor through various surveillance mechanisms, communications into and out of Berlin. And we were careful to target potential terrorist threats. That's how we came upon the La Belle preparations that I mentioned earlier. As you recall, my deputy, when I was still Central European Affairs Director, had called in the GDR Chargé d'Affaires. We didn't know specifically it was La Belle that was targeted, but we knew from intelligence....

Q: That was what? Explain what this was.

GILMORE: I have to be careful. Basically, through our intelligence surveillance capabilities we became aware of information which indicated that a target in West Berlin was being looked at by

Arab operatives. We concluded from piecing together various kinds of information that it was Libya that was behind it. We didn't know the target was going to be La Belle. Of course, it was well before I got to Berlin that La Belle was actually bombed. I was still the Director of Central European Affairs in the Department of State. But the La Belle aftermath was still in the air when I arrived. And of course, the U.S. bombed Libya in retaliation.

The reason I have to be careful here is that I did so much work on Berlin as EUR/CE Director that it's hard to be sure where I worked on a given Berlin issue. From Berliner and other German colleagues and friends I heard, initially, great skepticism about why we had bombed Libya. In retrospect, now that the East German state security service has been dismantled, I hope that our German colleagues in responsible government positions no longer have such skepticism about how La Belle happened and why we reacted as we did.

Q: Did you and your Allied representatives sense that the East Germans were a bit caught off guard by this? Because this doesn't make any sense for East Germans to be housing Arabs who were going to bomb an American-frequented place. What I'm wondering is whether you had the feeling that they weren't going to let this sort of thing happen again, particularly the way we reacted.

GILMORE: Well, although the East Germans presumably would never have told us so officially, it is possible that post La Belle they may have tightened their monitoring and control of some of these groups. To my knowledge, the East Germans never approached us to acknowledge any connection with the La Belle bombing. Of course, after La Belle we monitored very carefully – even more carefully than before the La Belle bombing – the potential for any further violence in West Berlin, particularly against U.S. forces. But, from what I know, I am absolutely sure President Reagan had the right target in mind when he bombed Libya. He knew where the ultimate source of the action against La Belle was.

Q: Kind of leading up to the fall of the Wall, I take it events up through the summer of 1989, things are pretty well going in a straightforward manner, the way they'd been going for some years.

GILMORE: For those of us living and working in West Berlin, the full extent of the East German people's discontent with the GDR regime was at first difficult to assess. We knew there was a considerable pent-up desire on the part of East Germans to travel abroad freely, especially to West Berlin. But the depth of their disenchantment and disaffection with the GDR authorities and the Socialist Unity Party regime became more apparent in September and October, 1989.

The East Germans had a tremendous pent-up desire to travel freely, particularly to West Berlin and the Federal Republic. I think what really began to bring home to me the depth of frustration and disaffection of the people in the GDR was the behavior of those attending the Monday evening "freedom prayer" service at the Nicolaikirche (Nickolai Church) in Leipzig. The first large public demonstration there took place on September 4, 1989. The Monday evening "freedom prayers" had been held at the church in previous weeks, but on September 4 the throng attending the service spilled out into the streets of Leipzig near and around the church. The behavior of the crowd was entirely peaceful, and at each subsequent Monday evening prayer

service the number of participants mushroomed, until on October 23 the throng had swelled to 300,000.

Meanwhile, in September, 1989 the Hungarian Government took a very courageous decision. The Hungarians announced that their border guards would no longer honor agreements to turn back GDR and other citizens of Warsaw Pact member states who sought to cross from Hungary into Austria. With this, the Hungarians formally broke ranks with the other Warsaw Pact member states. Heretofore the practice had been that GDR citizens who traveled to other Warsaw Pact member states would not be permitted to travel onward to countries outside the Warsaw Pact without proper documentation. In fact, already in May, without fanfare, the Hungarians had opened their border with Austria to East Germans who had traveled to Hungary. The more enterprising – some might say more desperate – East Germans quickly realized they could drive to Hungary via Czechoslovakia, cross over into Austria, and then proceed to the Federal Republic.

Q: Yes, going to Hungary through Czechoslovakia, well the Czechs were still pretty...

GILMORE: Pretty tight. The East Germans traveling through Czechoslovakia, into Hungary and then across the border to Austria were improperly documented, according to GDR law. Of course, the FRG cheered Hungary on, and by the way, rewarded it through economic assistance and political solidarity. Meanwhile, the ferment in the GDR grew exponentially throughout October. In early October, I believe on October 3, Governing Mayor Momper invited the Allied ministers and POLADs to the first of a series of debriefings on what he and Berlin Senat officials, especially Senat Chancellery Chief, Dr. Dieter Schroeder, were hearing in their meetings with GDR leaders. The 40th anniversary of the GDR was October 7, and Erich Honecker intended it to be a huge celebration of the success of the GDR as well as his personal success as the successor to Walter Ulbricht. Gorbachev was coming.

Meanwhile, the “Monday prayers” in Leipzig continued, and the crowds who greeted Gorbachev in East Berlin on October 6 and 7 saw him as a symbol of change and reform. They shouted “Gorbi, Berlin,” welcoming him with genuine enthusiasm while largely ignoring Honecker. Honecker was quite ill, and it was becoming clear that he did not have many months to live. Gorbachev’s presence gave the “reformers” in the GDR leadership a big boost while delivering a tacit rebuff to Honecker. On October 18 Honecker was ousted. Technically, he asked to be relieved for reasons of health, but there is no doubt he was forced to leave. The Socialist Unity Party chose Egon Krenz as his successor, hoping that the younger and more vigorous Krenz would be seen by the GDR populace as a sign of the regime’s commitment to change.

The GDR leadership grappled with the need to revamp its travel regime. Here the U.S. Mission as well as our British and French allies had an interesting window on what was happening. Momper had developed ties to Günther Schabowski, a key member of the SED leadership and the regime’s press spokesman. He and Momper met several times, and Momper debriefed us. Schabowski informed Momper about the Politburo and Central Committee’s debate of a new travel regulations law. The GDR’s first version didn’t commit the regime to full freedom of travel and was rejected by the populace. Schabowski told Momper on November 3 that a new version was ready to be promulgated.

In the meantime, on November 4 the first large demonstration in East Berlin took place on Alexanderplatz. Freedom of travel was one of the demonstrators' key demands. On November 6 the party newspaper Neues Deutschland published the text of the new travel law which again fell far short of the expectations of the GDR populace. The huge Monday evening demonstrations in Leipzig continued, and on November 6 the number of demonstrators grew to 500,000.

Q: God!

GILMORE: Can you imagine 500,000 in Leipzig, which is not nearly the size of Berlin. Meanwhile, I should add, and I take great pride in this, the U.S. mission and U.S. Command Berlin had put in place a couple of weeks earlier a round-the-clock operation monitoring developments in Berlin. My deputy/political adviser Jim Williams and Chief of Staff Col. John Counts played the leading role in organizing and overseeing this effort. We didn't know what, ultimately, would happen, but we could see the pressure for change mounting dramatically.

Q: The Leipzig demonstrations, if it was that big in a not really major city, I would think there would be copycat demonstrations in other places too, yes?

GILMORE: You could see manifestations elsewhere in the GDR, but the biggest and most significant were in Leipzig, and then very late in the game, East Berlin. The other manifestations included, above all, East Germans getting into their little two-cylinder Trabant cars and driving across Czechoslovakia to Hungary and then over the border to Austria. The question arose of where else they might go. A sizeable number of East Germans traveling in Czechoslovakia sought "refuge" in the Federal Republic's embassy in Prague, refusing to leave until they could travel onward to the FRG. On November 3, the GDR Foreign Ministry announced that these "refugees" could travel back across the GDR in closed trains and proceed ultimately to the FRG.

Q: As you were watching this, at what point before the very end game, did the Berlin Mission conclude, "This whole thing is going blow?"

GILMORE: We could see that the new GDR leadership under Krenz did not capture the hearts and minds of the East Germans. Krenz and company were not ready to go nearly far enough with reform. Of course, our embassy to the GDR had the principal responsibility for reporting and analyzing developments in the GDR. As I noted earlier, at the very beginning of October we decided on our own at the U.S. Mission, in close coordination with the U.S. Commandant, Berlin and this chief of staff to prepare daily "sitreps" (situation reports) on developments in and relating to Berlin and allied responsibilities in Berlin.

We realized we were witnessing a burgeoning wave of popular discontent and unrest in East Germany which focused initially on the goal of freedom of travel. But by the third week on October the agenda of the citizens' movements "New Freedom" had broadened to include freedom of the press and free elections.

In response to your question whether we said, "This whole thing is going to blow," I would say we did not know where, ultimately, this wave of popular discontent would lead. And I doubt

whether anyone else did either at that period.

In fact, the situation did take a sudden dramatic turn on the evening of November 9. Shortly before 6:00 p.m. GDR Politburo member and spokesman Günther Schabowski held a press conference to report the results of the SED Central Committee meeting earlier in the day. He announced that at the Politburo's recommendation, the Central Committee had decided to put into effect a portion of a new draft law on travel which would make it possible for every citizen to travel abroad at all the crossing points of the GDR. Several of the approximately one hundred journalists present pressed Schabowski on when these new regulations would take effect. Schabowski had not attended the Central Committee meeting. He had been given a slip of paper summarizing the new regulations before beginning his press briefing. He vainly searched his briefing paper for guidance as the journalists asked "Immediately" ("sofort")? "Only with a passport?" and "When does this take effect?" Finally, Schabowski allowed that it must be immediately ("sofort") that the new regulations were valid.

Excerpts of Schabowski's statements were quickly broadcast throughout Berlin and East Germany. Soon East Berliners begin to gather at the checkpoints along the Berlin Wall. They showed their documents and sought to cross into West Berlin. At the Bornholmerstrasse checkpoint they shouted that they had heard Schabowski's announcement and were determined to cross into West Berlin. The GDR border guards had no instruction and at about 10:30 p.m. let the most vociferous of the East Berliners cross. This news was immediately broadcast to virtually every household in Berlin and East Germany. The ranks of those seeking to cross into West Berlin grew like wildfire. By about 11:30 p.m. the guards at Bornholmerstrasse let everyone pass. Soon, all the Berlin checkpoints were open and East Berliners were flooding into West Berlin.

Governing Mayor Momper and his staff had been monitoring the situation closely since Schabowski's press conference. Momper met with key members of the Senat to review and speed up preparations for a possible large influx of East Berliners and other East Germans. He made a brief TV appearance and drove to the wall. At the Brandenburg Gate, where a cluster of West Berliners had climbed onto the wall, Momper urged West Berlin Police President Georg Schertz to take all possible measures to bring order to the surging crowds. Schertz reminded Momper that because the Berlin Wall had been carefully constructed to stand just inside East Berlin, the West Berlin police were not permitted to approach it or the sector boundary.

The Allied chairmanship in West Berlin rotated monthly among the British, French and Americans. The United States was the Allied chairman ally November and I, as the United States Minister and Deputy Commandant of the American Sector, Berlin was Governing Mayor Momper's point of contact with the Allies.

It was sometime after 11:00 p.m. and before midnight when Momper telephoned me. I had returned home earlier from the U.S. Mission where I had briefly checked in with my deputy, POLAD Jim Williams, and other members of the Mission staff. Momper and I were on a first name basis and he came directly to the point. "Harry," he said, "we have a problem." He observed that bedlam was breaking loose at the Wall and indicated that Schertz had told him he and his officers could not physically approach the wall or pass through it into East Berlin

because of Allied restrictions. Because of the restrictions, Schertz indicated to Momper that he and the West Berlin Police could not maintain order and were very concerned about somebody being trampled. Momper then added something further that I have not reported exactly until now. He said, "Harry, you know we are going to get the store back soon." Meanwhile, he contended, "the police need flexibility." In accordance with established procedures and because of the acute political sensitivity of West Berlin police encroaching or crossing the sector boundary into the Soviet sector, I should have consulted our British and French allies and higher U.S. authority before responding to Mr. Momper's request. But this would have taken far too much time.

From frequent conversations about possible contingencies, I knew that the U.S. Commandant, Major General Raymond Haddock would favor immediate positive action. I also was sure that the U.S. ambassador to Germany, Vernon Walters and, above all, President George H.W. Bush would want us to do everything possible to ensure the safety of the tens of thousands of Berliners seeking to pass through the wall. I was confident, too, that our British and French allies would share this view. I therefore assured Mr. Momper, on the spot, that the Allies would take immediate steps to permit greater latitude to the police.

When I hung up, I called General Haddock, who immediately concurred. I then gave appropriate instructions to our public safety adviser, Frank Collins, our official liaison with the West Berlin police. Within minutes, we had given the police the flexibility they needed to establish order at the Wall. Amid the teeming, surging crowds, no one was seriously injured at the Wall that night.

Our British and French counterparts subsequently gave their full support. Although I would have preferred to inform my Soviet counterpart in East Berlin personally and immediately, I decided not to risk complicating the already delicate situation. He and I were in regular contact before and after the Wall opened, and he had indicated that the Soviets, under Mikhail S. Gorbachev, intended to keep their troops away from demonstrators and crowds so long as they were not provoked.

Q: Well, what did the West Berlin police do in East Germany?

GILMORE: They went up to and through the checkpoints at the Wall to ensure that the throngs gathered there would be able to cross into West Berlin in an orderly manner. We need to remind ourselves that the West Berlin police were a highly professional force. They were well trained in and experienced with crowd control. Meanwhile, the East German border guards at the Wall were without instructions and had fallen apart. So, basically, what the West Berlin police did was to go through the wall at established corridors at the checkpoints. The key point is that they were able to regulate the flow of the enormous crowds seeking to cross into West Berlin on that historic night. It is also important to note that the West Berlin police took control of the checkpoints and some immediately contiguous areas in East Berlin only temporarily and solely for the purpose of crowd control. They made no effort to remain longer than was necessary to achieve that objective.

I want to emphasize that the throngs of East Berliners and other East Germans who crossed through the Berlin Wall the night of November 9-10 were peaceful and generally quite orderly. As one of my colleagues at our embassy to the GDR later quipped, "Remember that the East

Germans are Prussians; they don't step on the grass even when they make a resolution." It was the sheer volume of the crowds seeking to pass through the narrow crossing points in the Berlin Wall which made crowd control so important.

The possibility of negative Soviet reaction to the movement of the West Berlin police up to the Wall and through the checkpoints, although slight, in my view, was very much on my mind that night. I didn't reach my Soviet counterpart, Minister Maksimychev, until the next day. Significantly, he did not express concern about the actions of the West Berlin police.

Maksimychev and I were in frequent contact the days after the Wall opened. He indicated that the Soviets, too, were concerned that there be no clashes between demonstrators and soldiers of the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany stationed throughout East Germany. Maksimychev made it clear that the Soviet authorities intended to keep their troops stationed in East Germany away from demonstrations and crowds, so long as they were not provoked.

What I should do now is talk about how within the U.S. Command and U.S. Mission, Berlin and among the three Western allies we had discussed possible contingencies requiring crowd control at the Berlin Wall. I do not want to imply that we had foreseen the chain of events which led to the opening or "fall" of the Wall. We had not. But we had discussed in very general terms what we should and shouldn't do in the case of some kind of large-scale movement of East Berliners and other East Germans near, at, over or through the wall.

The U.S. Command, Berlin had an informal institution called "Top Team." The participants in the Top Team included the Commandant, the Berlin Brigade Commander, the Chief of Staff, the Minister/Deputy Commandant, the Political Adviser and several other senior U.S. military and civilian officials. The Top Team met on an ad hoc basis at the invitation of the Commandant. Traditionally, no notes were taken at Top Team gatherings, and participants were encouraged to "think outside the box."

From informal conversations among top U.S. officials and discussions at Top Team gatherings an informal consensus developed that troops from the U.S. Berlin Brigade should not be used to perform any kind of crowd control function or other police work.

The top Berlin officials of the three Western Allies met periodically – I believe it was usually once a year – to review issues related to the security and defense of West Berlin. The Allies had a plan for the possible contingency of hostile military action against West Berlin. In that forum we also discussed in very general terms what role Allied troops should play in various contingencies. The basic principle of not using soldiers from the Allied brigades at or near the Wall for purposes of crowd control enjoyed the tacit support of all the Allied officials. So when I responded immediately and positively to governing Mayor Momper's request for Allied authorization for the West Berlin Police to approach the sector boundary and the Berlin Wall itself in order to control the massive flow of East Berliners and other East Germans through the checkpoints, I was confident it was the right thing to do in that emergency situation. Strictly speaking, had there been more time, I would have first consulted with higher U.S. authority and then with our British and French allies in Berlin. But there was, in fact, no time for this. In retrospect, I feel very good about my decision. When I talked with my British counterpart,

Michael Burton, a short while after taking it, he was totally supportive. So was my French counterpart, Francis Beauchataud when I briefed him. As I noted earlier, when I next talked with my Soviet counterpart, Igor Maksimych, I indicated in general terms what had transpired. He did not have any specific reaction.

I believe that the professionalism and expertise in crowd control displayed by the West Berlin Police were very important in facilitating the peaceful and secure flow of East Berliners and other East Germans into and out of West Berlin that historic night. The influx of East Berliners and other East Germans was huge. I have a note in my papers which tells me that during the first weekend of the opening of the wall, i.e. Saturday November 11 and Sunday November 12, more than two million East Berliners and other East Germans visited West Berlin. Huge, indeed!

Q: This was not a flow to the West to leave East Germany. This was just a flow to see West Berlin; to come and see it, and go back, and be prepared to come back again.

GILMORE: Yes. And here I would observe that governing Mayor Momper and the West Berlin government, the Senat, worked very, very hard in organizing the reception of the flood of East German visitors. One of the most important and difficult tasks was to provide “Begrüßungsgeld” (“Greetings Money”) for each East German visitor. The visitors had no FRG currency, so the “Greetings Money” was essential. Through an all-out, almost super-human effort the West Berlin government succeeded in disbursing the “Greetings Money” effectively.

The U.S. Army Berlin Brigade gave important logistical support to the West Berlin government’s effort. For example, the brigade placed all of its field kitchen and water supply equipment at the government’s disposal.

As I remember those heady days immediately following the opening or “fall” of the Berlin Wall, a series of vignettes comes to mind. The first is of a seemingly endless tide of visitors coursing up and down every major street in downtown West Berlin. A number of the visitors are pushing baby carriages. There is a run on any and all shops and markets which sell bananas. There had been no bananas available in East Germany for a long time. On Saturday, November 11, there is a particularly heavy stream of visitors, some in their tiny Trabant cars, others on foot, flowing from Potsdam, across the Glienicke Bridge into Berlin.

Our envoy to the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador Vernon Walters, who had also had the title Chief of Mission, Berlin, traveled from Bonn to Berlin on November 11. Shortly after his arrival the U.S. Commandant arranged for Ambassador Walters to take a helicopter ride over the city. The Commandant, his Chief of Staff, Col. John Counts, and I accompanied the ambassador. The helicopter ride offered a bird’s-eye view of the scene at the Glienicke Bridge, and it was a sight to behold: a seemingly endless stream of mini two-cylinder Trabant cars loaded to the gills together with a parallel stream of pedestrians of all ages, heading in one direction – West Berlin. Hundreds of West Berliners were packed tightly along the sides of the road. Many West Berliners were thrusting flowers through the windows of the Trabants. Others were handing money to the children. Many of the adults were crying. Willy Brandt, FRG Chancellor and Governing Mayor of Berlin when the wall was erected in 1961, captured the primary emotion of the throngs when he said, “Finally, we Germans have good fortune (Glueck)

on our side.”

Overall, I was struck by how orderly the huge flows of visitors had been. True, there were a few rougher moments at places like the Brandenburg Gate, where some unruly elements climbed onto the wall to celebrate. But the amazing thing is that in all the tumult surrounding the opening (“fall”) of the Wall; no one was trampled or seriously injured. Some people were bumped and jostled, but overall the process was peaceful and orderly.

Q: Did the Stasi, or the state police, just sort of throw up their hands?

GILMORE: Well, that’s probably a good metaphor to describe their behavior. The Volkspolizei, the people’s police, who manned the watchtowers and checkpoints along the Berlin Wall had no instructions, and once the Wall opened, they did not try to impede the surge of humanity passing through the checkpoints that night. In subsequent days, security was tightened where the Berlin Wall meets the Brandenburg Gate in order to prevent people from climbing onto the wall to celebrate. In the first hours after the wall opened, a number of younger people, many of them West Berliners, had climbed onto the wall at the Brandenburg Gate where the “crown” of the wall was unusually wide. They danced and sang and drank. Some got pretty unruly, and a few fell off the wall and were slightly injured. Otherwise, there were no reports of serious injuries stemming from the opening of the wall.

Q: What was the feeling within the ranks of your office? Do you feel that this is the millennium or something?

GILMORE: At the U.S. Mission, Berlin we shared the elation of the overwhelming majority of Germans, East and West, who were enjoying each other virtually without restriction for the first time since the end of World War II. You couldn’t help but feel the elation. Families had been divided by the wall. East Germans who had tried to escape over the wall had been killed as recently as February 1989.

By and large, the staff of the U.S. Mission also felt strongly that the course of the United States and its British and French allies had been proven correct. The very fact that the Soviets were again asserting their Four Power rights regarding Berlin and Germany seemed to vindicate our steadfast position on the importance of maintaining our Four Power rights in order to keep the German Question open so that someday we would be able to achieve genuine self-determination for Berliners and East Germans. I think we all felt very good about that.

At the beginning of December 1989 the Soviet Union called for a meeting of the quadripartite powers at the ambassadorial level in the Allied Control Council building in West Berlin. This represented a sharp about-face for the Soviets who had pulled out of the Allied Control Council in March, 1948, maintaining that the Western Powers (U.S. British and French) were destroying the quadripartite basis for governing Germany. The four powers did meet formally in Berlin in 1972 to sign the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin they had negotiated in 1970-71. On December 11, 1989 the Soviet ambassador to the GDR and the United States, British and French ambassadors to the Federal Republic met in the Allied Control Authority building. The call for the meeting was a clear indication that the Soviets had decided that their four power rights were

important and relevant. The leader of the Federal Republic did not applaud this quadripartite meeting. Some saw it as an indication that the four powers intended to step in to shape Germany's future, possibly along lines that might be detrimental to Germany's interests. In fact, however, there was only one such quadripartite meeting, and nothing of substance transpired. The United States was not in favor of more such quadripartite meetings.

Attempts to reform the German Democratic Republic failed. Hans Modrow, the German Democratic Republic Unity Party leader in Dresden, became the GDR Prime Minister on November 13, 1989. Egon Krenz was ousted as Socialist Unity Party leader on December 7 and resigned as Chairman of the State Council on December 9. A special congress of the Socialist Unity Party in East Berlin on December 8 and failed to dissolve the party and instead produced a half-baked compromise in which the party became the "Socialist Unity Party – Party of Democratic Socialism." Gregor Gysi was elected chairman of the SED-PDS (here I used the German Acronym) and Hans Modrow and Wolfgang Berghofer were elected as his deputies.

To telescope what happened subsequently, there was an election in the GDR on March 18, 1990. What emerged was a surprise to most observers. There was a widespread expectation that the newly-reconstructed SED-PDS would probably be the leading vote getter and that while unification with the Federal Republic of Germany would be the ultimate goal, unification would be a gradual process. In fact, the March, 1990 elections, the first and only free elections in the GDR, saw the Christian Democratic Union emerge as by far the strongest political party. And there was a majority favoring unification with the FRG.

A coalition government headed by the Christian Democrat Lothar de Maziere assumed power. Its primary task was to participate in negotiations on unification with the Federal Republic. These negotiations were known as the "Four Plus Two" or "Two Plus Four" negotiations. The "Four" were the U.S., USSR, Britain and France, and the "Two" were the FRG and GDR.

During the "Two Plus Four" negotiations the U.S. Mission remained in close contact with Governing Mayor Momper and his staff. The Mission reported in detail on the issues and problems involved in the reunification of Berlin and its integration with Brandenburg and the other former areas of the German Democratic Republic. I leave it to colleagues in Washington, Bonn and East Berlin to present their accounts of the overall unification process.

On October 2, 1990, the day before the "Day of Unity" celebrating the unification of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic and the reunification of Berlin, the American, British and French commandants and ministers had a final meeting with Berlin Governing Mayor Momper. We presented him with a letter of congratulations signed by all six of us. The letter noted that the three allies' commitment to Berlin was "based on a conviction that freedom, democracy and self-determination must be upheld wherever they are threatened at whatever the cost." It paid tribute to the "remarkable courage, energy and irrepressible sense of humor of the Berliners which helped to keep spirits high even during the rigors of the blockade and in the shadow of the cruel Berlin Wall." The letter also praised the "fusion of Allied commitment and the Berliners' resolve which, together with the vital and generous support and determination of the Federal Republic, laid the foundation for the fulfillment of our hopes." Ambassador Walters came to Berlin for the ceremonies celebrating the "Day of Unity." He was the only American

official invited to the celebration. The allied commandants and ministers were invited to a quieter reception in downtown Berlin where we could see the fireworks through the windows.

The unification of the German Democratic Republic with the Federal Republic of Germany and the concomitant reunification of Berlin rendered the U.S. Embassy in Bonn to the GDR and U.S. Mission Berlin anachronistic. Berlin was once again to be the capital of the united Germany. The U.S. Embassy in Bonn would not move to Berlin until the German government moved from Bonn to Berlin. In the meantime, a post called U.S. Embassy Office Berlin would be established. The chancellery of our former Embassy to the GDR would serve as the headquarters of Embassy Office Berlin. Ambassador Walters strongly favored this location because it was very close to the premises of the pre-WWII U.S. Embassy. He also felt we were turning over a new leaf in leaving the headquarters of the U.S. Command Berlin and U.S. Mission Berlin in Clayallee in the upscale suburban district of Berlin called Zehlendorf.

Embassy Office Berlin would cover four German states – “Laender” in German. They were Berlin; Brandenburg; Mecklenburg-Vorpommern; and Saxony-Anhalt. Todd Becker, a veteran FSO with considerable experience in Germany, had been designated as the principal officer of a new consulate general in Leipzig. Embassy Office Berlin would provide administrative support for Mr. Becker and the Consulate General for an initial period.

On learning that I was to be the principal officer of Embassy Office Berlin, I had originally proposed that I have two deputies during a short transition period. John Nix, my deputy at U.S. Mission Berlin, would focus particularly on closing the Mission and consolidating the administrative and consular work of the new Embassy Office. He would also be our point of contact with the command of the U.S. forces which would remain in Berlin for a limited period at the request of the German government. At the end of the transition period, Mr. Nix would become the permanent deputy principal officer of Embassy Office Berlin.

Meanwhile, James Bindenagel, the former deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy to the GDR, would coordinate the Embassy Office’s efforts to establish new and deepen our existing contacts with the leaders and key decision-makers in the four new states. A short time before the “Day of Unity” learned that my two-deputy idea was not accepted and that Mr. Bindenagel was to be given a new position, outside the formal charge of command as my special adviser, as principle officer. When I was informed of this decision, I immediately arranged to meet Mr. Bindenagel at his home to inform him of it.

On the morning of October 4, 1990 Mr. Nix and I drove in my official vehicle from our homes in Zehlendorf to the headquarters of the Embassy Office to assume our new duties. A huge traffic jam prevented us from reaching the Embassy Office by car, so we left our driver stuck in the traffic snafu and walked the final mile or two to the Embassy Office. When we reached the Embassy Office, the local police posted in the square outside the building and initially denied us permission to enter!

Opening day at Embassy Office Berlin was a sad day for the German Foreign Service National employees of our Embassy to the GDR. One of my very first items of business was informing them that their services were no longer required. This was done with dignity and professionalism

as their American supervisors personally handed the German FSN employees written notification of termination. It was sad because a number of the embassy's FSNs apparently thought they had a chance of being employed by the Embassy Office. The German FSNs were permitted to apply for positions in the Embassy Office, but in fact there had been a policy decision to terminate all of them.

Q: Why was that?

GILMORE: The decision was based on security concerns – a judgment that they had all been compromised.

In the period between the opening/fall of the Berlin Wall and the “Day of Unity” a team of security officers from Washington had come to Berlin to interview the FSN's. I learned of this after the fact and never received a proper briefing on their mission or its results. Apparently, some of the German FSN's from the Embassy assumed that if they came clean about their cooperation with the Stasi or other intelligence services, they would be eligible for employment in the Embassy Office. I remember vividly the reaction of the driver of our ambassador to the GDR on receiving his notification of termination. He sat down in the motor pool and sobbed uncontrollably for several hours.

I shall note here that a number of the staff positions at the Embassy to the GDR which would at many U.S. embassies had been filled by Foreign Service National employees from the host country were filled by third-country nationals, i.e., non-Germans. Some of these third-country nationals were employed in Embassy Office Berlin.

U.S. Mission Berlin had also employed a number of locally hired Germans and third country nationals. With few exceptions, they served with competence and dedication, some of them for a number of years. All but a handful lost their positions with the closing of the Mission, although some remained on the job during a brief transition period. Not surprisingly, a number of them were quite bitter about what they perceived as unfair treatment by the U.S. Government despite their dedicated service.

Virtually all the U.S. Foreign Service and other U.S. Government personnel at the Embassy to the GDR and U.S. Mission Berlin would have preferred to complete their tours of duty in Berlin by joining the staff of Embassy Office Berlin. Unfortunately for them, Embassy Office Berlin did not have nearly enough positions to employ them all. A number of those who were not offered positions in Embassy Office Berlin and therefore faced curtailment of their tours of duty and early re-assignment were keenly disappointed. Some believed they were treated unfairly. Both the Embassy to the GDR and U.S. Mission Berlin had performed very effectively during the year of upheaval in the GDR and Berlin that saw the fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of the GDR and the FRG. A number of very capable American professionals had their tours of duty curtailed.

The launching of the embassy office presented tough management issues which made it difficult to foster a sense of team spirit and common purpose. The two most difficult issues were: first, curtailment and onward assignments; and second, housing. I have already mentioned

curtailments. American personnel whose tours of duty were curtailed faced the problem of finding appropriate onward assignments outside the normal assignment cycle.

The second issue was inequity in the housing situations of former employees of our embassy to the GDR, on the one hand, and former U.S. Mission employees on the other. The American employees who had been on the staff of the mission had housing which was vastly superior to that of the staff of the embassy. On balance, I believe the embassy office handled these issues with grace and dignity.

Establishing a comprehensive reporting effort on the four “laender” (states) within the embassy office purview also presented a formidable challenge. Three of the laender had new leaders and no real budgets and few or no experienced personnel to perform essential staff functions. Important new issues including privatization and the industrial reorganization of the former GDR and major industrial and agricultural pollution problems needed to be addressed.

Subsequent to my departure on reassignment in the summer of 1991, I understand that the embassy office subsequently received an award for its reporting. In that regard, I would like to note that more than one colleague at our embassy in Bonn would say to me, “Harry, you folks at the embassy office should remember the old adage about whether the glass is half empty or half full. We think sometimes that your reporting proceeds from the position that the glass is half empty, when you could look at the same set of facts and conclude the glass was half full.” These were the kinds of hints I received from Bonn that our reporting was too pessimistic. But, I think, in retrospect, our reporting was very measured, and quite accurate. I believe we did not exaggerate the hurdles in the reunification process for the average citizen of the former GDR. If anything, I think more skepticism and more emphasis on the difficulties in the reunification process might have been in order. But, I’m proud of the role John Nix and my other colleagues at the embassy office and I played in that reporting effort.

Maybe I should present a vignette which illustrates how different the prevailing attitudes of Germans from the former GDR were from those of Germans in the Federal Republic. U.S. military actions against Iraq in the First Gulf war were generally applauded in the Federal Republic, but they triggered a relatively hefty protest against the Embassy Office. The protesters appeared to be generally young people. They carried candles and were in no way noisy or violent. They apparently didn’t believe that any use of force against Iraq to compel the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait was justified. The protesters conducted what might be described as a “vigil.” They did make access to or egress from the embassy office difficult. The former GDR police force was no longer operating and the West Berlin police were stretched so thin that only a handful could be spared to cover the embassy office. I saw these vigils as a manifestation of Germans who had grown up in the GDR who had helped to make the revolution from below.

Q: You had this large responsibility in what had been East Germany. Were you picking up signs that... ok, these people had made this revolution from down below, but at the same time, they had been brought up in what can only be called a very controlled welfare state. So, in a way, if you’ve made your compromise, you can be quite comfortable in this.

GILMORE: And some were. Veteran observers of the German Democratic Republic used to describe it as a “niche society,” where everybody who could, found a little niche and managed to exist and derive as much personal satisfaction as was possible in such a totalitarian state. Clearly, the mentality of the people in the former GDR would take a long time to change. I would add here, another little anecdote that I consider instructive. Christa Wolf, the East German writer, was given an award by an American literary organization, which nobody seemed to want to present in any kind of public way after the unification. So, it was decided that I should present it as principal officer of the embassy office. So I invited her to my office for coffee as I hadn’t met her previously. Christa Wolf had not been an advocate of German unification on what she considered the Federal Republic’s terms. But she was a thoughtful, dignified and very perceptive person. I asked her how, in general, she thought women in the former German Democratic Republic looked at the whole question of unification and whether they might have some issues with it.

She mentioned two issues. She didn’t take a personal position on them but rather just explained them. First, she noted that childcare in the GDR had been universal and free. This would not be the case in the Federal Republic, and she foresaw problems resulting. Women would be less able to pursue their education or to work full time. Finding full time employment in the former GDR would be difficult in any case because of the economic dislocations resulting from the upheaval in the GDR and the need to adapt to the laws and economic system of the FRG. Christa Wolf’s other point was there had been abortion on demand in the GDR. In the Federal Republic, given the influence of the Christian parties (CDU and CSU), there was very strong anti-abortion sentiment and a consensus that abortion should be limited only to some very specific situations. She thought it would be very difficult for East German women to get used to that. I understand that both those issues, particularly the childcare issue, have been difficult ones for women who grew up and worked in the former GDR.

Q: Was your office getting a good look at the economy of Eastern Europe, what they were producing, or was that more coming out of reports of West German entrepreneurs going out and saying, “Oh, my God.”

GILMORE: Some of us at the Embassy Office had good contacts among West German entrepreneurs who were exploring opportunities in the former GDR. The fact that some of us had been posted in West Berlin before meant that we had contacts with a number of business leaders in West Berlin. We continued to meet with them socially after the Wall opened and after unification. So from these contacts we learned a great deal. The embassy office also had a very talented commercial officer. He, by the way, later became our senior commercial officer in China. His name was Lee Boehm. He was knowledgeable and hard charging and dedicated to identifying business opportunities in the former GDR for American companies. He bumped up against some Federal Republic interests that sought to keep opportunities in the GDR basically to themselves. One area he focused on particularly was power generation. The question was: Would there be an extension of what, in effect, were monopolies from the Federal Republic into the former GDR, or would there be an open market for power generation bids from firms from wherever -- the U.S., France, Japan, etc. We encountered strong protectionist attitudes coming from German officials as well as the power monopolies in the former Federal Republic. Clearly, both the German officials and German entrepreneurs were not interested in seeing U.S. power

companies build new power generation facilities in the new laender.

Q: Did you sense that people away from the situation were so full of euphoria, I'm talking about people in the West, and our government and all, that they weren't seeing things on the ground? Were you sort of the cold dash of realism?

GILMORE: In a way, I think there was a touch of that. I want to be careful here because I want to be fair. Our ambassador in the Federal Republic, Vernon Walters, was a wonderful gentleman with long experience in foreign affairs. When the Wall fell, he was convinced that reunification would happen very quickly. He was dead right! Ambassador Walters had good rapport with Chancellor Helmut Kohl who moved quickly to seize the historical opportunity to unify the GDR with the FRG. At the same time, I think in fairness that Ambassador Walters and some of his closest aides at our embassy in Bonn, like Chancellor Kohl, underestimated the amount of time it would take for people of the former GDR to accept and internalize the values of the Federal Republic. Even as they embraced the basic democratic political ideals and values of the Federal Republic, they saw themselves as "Ossis" – easterners – and their fellow citizens from the Federal Republic as "Wessis" – westerners. Many of the "Ossis" were proud of what they regarded as achievements of the GDR in the arts. Some were also proud of the fine nurseries and other childcare establishments.

Officers of the embassy office were in daily contact with the Germans of the east and their leaders. A number of our reporting officers spoke fluent German. Our reporting reflected what we heard and saw. I like to think that it had the effect of tempering and balancing the reporting from our embassy in Bonn which, naturally, reflected the optimism of the Foreign Office and Chancellery.

As an antidote to the initial optimism and even euphoria emanating from some Federal Republic political leaders and government officials, I would point to the views of the veteran FRG politician Kurt Biedenkopf. Initially a protégé of Helmut Kohl, Biedenkopf rose to be Secretary General of the Christian Democratic Union (1993-1997) before falling out with Kohl. With the opening of the Berlin Wall, Biedenkopf focused his full attention on the former GDR and was elected Minister President of the reconstituted state of Saxony in 1990. I would advise anyone who wishes to get a picture of how difficult it was to integrate the Germans of the East to research Biedenkopf's name and read some of the things he said. He made plain how overly optimistic he thought Bonn had been, how much more investment it would take to turn the economy of the former GDR around, and how long and difficult a process it would be before the people of the former GDR would feel they were genuinely a part of the Federal Republic and to share its values and institutions.

He was convinced from the outset, once the Wall opened, that there was going to be quick reunification. That was where the chancellor was. He had good rapport with the Chancellor. He was right, by the way, and he was widely read in history, Ambassador Walters. But, I think, in fairness that he overestimated the degree to which it would be easy and quick, an easy and a quick process for the GDR citizenry to become part of and accept the values of the Federal Republic. Even when they wanted to accept the democratic values, the former East German citizens often didn't accept some of the commercial values. And some of them were kind of

proud of the small achievements of the German Democratic Republic and I might particularly mention the free nurseries and childcare establishments. They were proud of that. And we just reported what we heard. Nobody was against German reunification. That had been U.S. policy and we were all aboard. And the other thing was, we were right up, cheek by jowl, with the Germans, before laender, we were responsible for and Todd Becker, our consul general in Leipzig, was given administrative support for a long time by the embassy office. Todd and my staff, we were all right next to real Germans from the East. We had a number of people who spoke good German. We were just reporting what we heard. It was a kind of tempered, to put it nicely, the optimism and the euphoria that was present not only in the U.S. embassy, but other Western embassies in Bonn.

But I would add another point. Berlin was deluged with visitors. First, when the Wall opened, before German reunification, we had all kinds of visitors to Berlin. . When the Wall first opened, before German reunification, we had a torrent of visitors to Berlin. Perhaps the most memorable was a large delegation from the U.S. Senate including Senators Lugar, Moynihan, Pell and a number of other distinguished senators. We also had some visitors to Berlin, particularly following the breaching of the Wall and the actual reunification of Berlin and Germany, many of them from foundations. Very distinguished and interesting people. And I remember one person, whom I prefer to leave unnamed, from, I guess you could call it a more conservative foundation, but very respectable. Telling us how democracy was really kind of natural to the human spirit, that people would just, when they were released from the fetters and the constraints of the totalitarian school, would naturally gravitate to a democracy. I remember thinking that wasn't my experience as much as it was a very noble thought. For me, democracy was in many ways something that was learned in a series of procedures that had grown up over a long period of time. But, I remember this particular person talking about how easy it would be. I thought to myself, come spend a day with me visiting various different kinds of persons in the former GDR that there was this almost euphoria and optimism about how quickly the East Germans were to become West Germans was widespread.

I would just add one last point, and that is there was a sentiment, reasonably widespread, after the initial months of reunification in the German Democratic Republic that there had been a takeover by the Federal Republic. But I want to stress that by and large Germans in the former East were very pleased and happy to be part of the Federal Republic. But many of them still felt that there had been a takeover that they were just basically just next to the Federal Republic and that it hadn't been a marriage of equals. I would add, finally, myself, that there couldn't be a marriage of equals unfortunately. There was no way that I could see it could be. But I just point out the difficulties that had to be surmounted, and are being surmounted. I think I'll stop there.

Q: Okay. I just want to ask one question, going back a bit. I've always felt that we played it very well, that we didn't have President George Bush dancing on the ruins of the Berlin Wall, you know the equivalent of people coming over and touting American triumphalism. Was there any problem with that? I can think of an awful lot of political publicity seekers to come over and show off.

GILMORE: There was a bit of that. And in the case I just described, the gentleman who was going on and on about how easy and automatic almost the transition would be, had a triumphalist

quality to some of his pronouncements. George Bush, President Bush, won the deep respect of Germans, almost across the board, and I mean not only conservatives but also Social Democrats, Greens, for his handling of the reunification...

For his dignity, for his knowledge, for his quick support of the Federal Republic, and yet his restraint in letting it be a German show, not putting the U.S. in the leadership and not trying to crow or in any way paternalistic about the role the U.S. and the British and the French had played. During the Airlift, where the building of the Wall... I must say Bush had been very popular among Berliners anyhow. But once the Wall opened, it was clear that the U.S. was going to put its money where its mouth had been about reunification, it was an adulation of Bush. But he never, he and his Secretary of State Baker, never got highbanded about it, never gloated, never crowed. They were the model of professionalism and far-sightedness, in terms of the U.S.-German relationships.

Q: You were in German until when?

GILMORE: I was there until August of 1991. Almost exactly four years from the time I had arrived in August of 1987.

Q: We have talked about industry, were you picking up anything about East German agriculture? Was this sort of paralleling what was happening in West Germany? Very protected farming practices and all?

GILMORE: East German agriculture had been really organized on essentially the Soviet model with state farms, collectives. We really didn't get into it very far the roughly nine months I was the principle officer of the embassy office. Nevertheless, as I said, for four laenders, Laend Berlin and three other laender, or state - what we found that I remember, essentially, was some serious problems. They included vast overuse of agricultural chemicals, fertilizers. The whole question of whether large areas of crop land would have to be given a sort of remedial attention to restore the, I guess agricultural people say, the sweetness of the soil, to restore the balance in the soil. The whole question of restructuring agriculture though, was one that really didn't arise during my time there. Surprisingly. When I accompanied Ambassador Walters on his initial calls in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Mecklenburg, I guess we say West Pomerania, and other places, agriculture was not yet on the agenda. The Treuhandanstalt, the outfit that handled privatization, was really looking at privatization of industry, business, and while I think it got into some agribusiness type privatization, to my knowledge, we at the embassy office weren't yet reporting on agriculture. Also, we didn't have an agricultural attaché to give us any specific guidance. I received any and all American business people that came through during my nine months at the Embassy Office, not one American interested in agricultural equipment sales called on me. And as I think I mentioned, our very capable commercial officer, Lee Boehm, was focused very heavily on the question of power generation and whether very efficient American firms who were interested in the GDR market could succeed in entering it in light of the very special interests of the monopolies coming over from the Federal Republic

Q: What about the concern that really started with Willi Brandt's Ostpolitik, the concern that we had that somehow or another, if Germany became united, it might withdraw from NATO and all,

and become a neutral country, an undigested blob in the middle of Europe. When this was happening, was there concern that NATO no longer was as important and maybe Germany might drift off somewhere?

GILMORE: Yes. And President George Herbert Walker Bush, to his eternal credit, made it very clear that the U.S. was in favor of German reunification and they were making a number of changes in NATO to accommodate the new situation. But NATO was to remain vital, although it was to be adapted to the new situation, and we insisted that a united German state be part of NATO. That was very clear. President Bush was very supportive of that. Of the three Western leaders, Bush, Thatcher, and Mitterrand, Bush was far and away the one the Germans knew they could rely on to be true to his word. We'd always said that if there could be free self-determination for Germany, we would support it. But, he had two strong considerations. As I remember, he articulated them in an important speech. He didn't speak out much on the subject, but in one important speech he mentioned two things: NATO, that the united Germany would be part of NATO, and he also indicated that existing borders in Europe must be respected. I would indicate here that at this point the Kohl-led coalition government had not recognized the German-Polish border, which was a source of great anxiety to the Poles. Later on, there was an agreement between, or a statement that Germany made, and Poland accepted it, that the new, united Germany would negotiate an agreement with Poland to recognize those borders, which subsequently happened, but after reunification. But Bush put a clear marker down on the Polish border as well.

Q: But, you're saying Bush did this. What about attitudes within Germany, were you and your fellow German-watchers watching for signs of neutrality?

GILMORE: There were very important forces in Germany, not only in the GDR, that were not at all in favor of any kind of NATO membership. Opinion in the German Democratic Republic, was changing rapidly, however, particularly after the March 18, 1990 elections which brought to power the coalition government that basically negotiated unification. Still, many Germans would have preferred to see two German states in some kind of federation, and certainly no NATO membership for the Eastern portion of it. Important intellectuals like Gunter Grass, the great novelist, wanted no part of a greater Germany. He didn't want reunification in any case. He wanted a confederation and a cultural nation. But he wanted no part of what was still East Germany, and NATO. Also some of the Social Democrats in the Federal Republic were not at all as convinced about NATO membership for united Germany. The Greens by and large had no interest in NATO period, and probably would have preferred to see a neutral Germany. So the important point is Helmut Kohl, Chancellor Kohl, with his CDU CSU FDP coalition, was convinced of the importance of Germany being anchored in NATO, and being protected by NATO. He also wanted to see NATO change, as did President Bush. Mrs. Thatcher was very strongly for NATO membership. I believe Mitterrand in his way was also very strong about Germany remaining in NATO. But, within Germany itself, it was basically the CDU/CSU the so called sister Christian parties that really wanted Germany to stay in NATO. In fact, Germany did stay in NATO. There was an important document released by NATO in the summer, I believe it was June of 1990, it could have been July, that talked about the kinds of changes NATO would like to see. They included maintaining very close contacts with the former governments of the Soviet Union and the other governments of the East /Warsaw Pact. They also noted how NATO

was going to be quite ready to take an active role in negotiating with the Soviets the lowest possible level of nuclear weapons. They also indicated that NATO would only use force in self-defense. The document was carefully worded. It didn't say no first use of nuclear weapons, but it did indicate NATO would only use force in self-defense. The document also indicated NATO was looking to negotiate the lowest possible level of nuclear weapons and also looking particularly to eliminate nuclear artillery shells. In fact, the Federal Republic, in the process of German reunification, undertook not to put Federal Republic forces into the former German Democratic Republic while the Soviet forces were retreating. One interesting thing, though, right in the Two Plus Four Treaty, the two German states and the four powers that had held responsibility for Germany after WWII, the so-called victory powers, make it clear that the German government would ask the U.S., British, and French garrisons to stay under a status of forces agreement during the period that the Soviet forces were returning to the Soviet Union. All this was very carefully negotiated. Clearly Chancellor Kohl wanted Germany in NATO. Foreign Minister Genscher did too, although he was less vocal about the subject. Bush, and Thatcher too and Mitterrand as well. That carried the day. Gorbachev drove a pretty hard bargain, particularly a tough economic bargain in his negotiations on the cost of having Soviet troops return to the Soviet Union and on other financial issues that where he thought the Soviet Union was owed something by Germany. Gorbachev in the end accepted the idea of a united Germany in NATO, with as I say the force limitations that the Federal Republic was willing to make.

Q: And, I assume, correct me if I'm wrong, that there was some sort of an agreement, or at least an understanding that the Americans, British, and French would not intrude their troops into the former East Germany.

GILMORE: On that issue, what I remember, I'm not as expert as the people that actually negotiated the Two Plus Four...what I remember particularly was the Federal Republic limited what it would do. The U.S., and British, and French signaled their intention not to put their forces in the territory of the former German Democratic Republic while Soviet forces were retreating. And, presumably, by implication, beyond. But the key thing was that it was clear that our concept and the concept that the British and French shared with us was that there would be no diminution of security, that we would defend the new Germany as a full member of NATO, and defend it at its new borders. We would give it a defense guarantee. There are people who followed this issue more closely. Robert Zoellick, who was a Counselor at the Department of State and was Secretary Baker's advisor on the whole issue of Two Plus Four agreement and the arrangements to end four power rights with regard to Berlin and Germany. He was the point person on the U.S. side, and there is a very good book I think you mentioned when we were talking here a moment ago, Dick Smyser, his book, From Yalta to Berlin (Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), touches this issue, treats this issue in some depth.

Q: During the time that you had responsibility for reporting on the East German laender. What were we seeing in terms of how they were forming their governments?

GILMORE: There were different governments in different states [Laender], depending on which political parties were stronger. The Laender whose leaders I was closest to were the New United Land Berlin and Land Brandenburg. In Berlin, Social Democrat Governing Mayor Momper lost the next election, and Christian Democrat Eberhard Diepgen, who was the Governing Mayor

when I arrived, again became the Governing Mayor, so I'd known him well.

I was also particularly close, in Brandenburg, Manfred Stolpe, the lay church leader who was so important in pushing the Honecker and then Krenz, but particularly Honecker, in the direction of openness and reform, and became the minister of reform, the minister president of Brandenburg. I was close to him. He was a Social Democrat. In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern I went up, I visited Mecklenburg-Vorpommern with Ambassador Walters.

The impression one got, particularly in the three laender other than Berlin, was one of considerable learning curve, a very steep learning curve for the new governing people. They faced daunting problems. In some cases, they were not quick to deal with them. But, I have to be careful here, because I don't know that anybody could have done more than they did. We reported on the developments in the East, but of course much of the reporting was just begun during my months as principal officer of the embassy office in Berlin. But I remember particularly going to Saxony-Anhalt and Magdeburg, and being horrified by the state of parts of the environment, particularly the river, the Elbe. And, also the apartment buildings that clearly were not going to stand up very long. They were kind of prefabs, built sort of just by crane, stacking prefab apartments one on the other. They were in bad shape. Of course, there were massive employment problems, because the state industry was up for privatization. In many cases, the Western countries, or potential Western entrepreneurs from the Federal Republic and elsewhere, didn't want to touch the existing corporations, or the existing industrial areas because they needed so much environmental work. They preferred new, as they said, green areas, to acquire new sites and build new industry. So the impression I had, and I don't remember as much as I should having spent a dozen years almost, but the impression I had was that much of the old smokestack industry was not going to survive. A few important industrial activities in the former GDR, for example, Zeiss and optics, were going to be refurbished and continue. But many of the industries, steel, metals production, were just basically not going to survive. Ship building, for example, up in Schleswig-Holstein on the Baltic coast, was clearly a leading industry of the German Democratic Republic. As I departed Berlin, ship building in the former GDR was in grave danger. There was no industrial policy, and in fact the new federal government specifically eschewed any industrial policy to revive industries like that. So as I left in August of 1991, the overall impression I had was of very considerable and growing unemployment and a major restructuring job which was only getting underway.

Q: During the time you were there, how did the opening of the Stasi files affect people? From what I gather it was a society that was completely riddled with...it was almost better to burn everything.

GILMORE; The Ministry for State Security, widely referred to by its nick-name, 'Stasi' was the primary intelligence agency of the GDR. Its extensive espionage and intelligence activities included a massive effort of surveillance on its own people, the population of the former GDR. To accomplish its surveillance mission, it relied on a vast network of informers, with neighbors informing on neighbors and family members informing on fellow family members. As the two German states and their peoples contemplated unification, the issues of who had been a Stasi member or informer, what the copious Stasi files on individual Germans contained, and how one could gain access to the files the Stasi kept on him or her loomed ever larger. A number of

people who wanted to participate on the new era, like Ibrahim Böhme, a Social Democrat, who wanted to be... was once of the founders of the revived Social Democratic party... turned out he had been an informer. There were many cases of this.

An Evangelical pastor from the former GDR by the name of Joachim Gauck was given the responsibility for the Stasi files. His title was Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the former GDR. As a veteran student of German affairs, I understood immediately the special political and historical importance of his position and I sought to call on him very soon after he got set up in his office. He welcomed my visit and my interest in his work. He made it very clear that he wasn't going to be told by any government or any government official how to handle these issues. He was going to do it in as even-handed a way as he knew how. His idea was that any German, any citizen of the new united German state would be able to see his file, or her file. Herr Gauck and I quickly established a cordial relationship.

I should mention here that as the GDR and the Stasi collapsed both the U.S. Embassy in Bonn and the U.S. Mission, Berlin paid particular attention to possible penetration by the Stasi. By the time I left Berlin I had concluded that there was no indication that any attempted provocation had led to serious compromise of classified information at the former U.S. Mission. One or another of the individuals involved in the attempted penetrations might have been able to provide detailed biographical information about the Americans with whom they worked. That was probably the extent of it.

One of the issues that brought the GDR down was the travel freedom issue. As I mentioned earlier, the new travel law that was published by Neues Deutschland just a few days before the Wall opened just didn't convince anybody. So that was one issue. Another issue was the Stasi apparatus and its nefarious activities. One of the mistakes that successors to Honecker tended to make was they'd say, "Well we still need some security". They didn't come right out quickly and say they were going to get rid of the Stasi. It was very clear that taking that apparatus down was a very important demand of the populace of the former German Democratic Republic. By the time I left, and from what I gather, beyond, Mr. Gouk was doing an excellent job, and enjoyed a lot of confidence on the part of the citizens of the former GDR.

Q: Did we have any policy or stand on whether these file should be revealed? Was there concern saying, "Well, let's get on with it. Let's forget the past."

GILMORE: No. That's a very important question. No, basically, of course, we wanted to find out what kind of intelligence operations had been conducted against us and we got into that very quickly. I think I can say to future historians that we were effective in getting access to the Stasi records very early on, in terms of that issue. On the broader issue, it was basically an issue we left up to the Germans. It was very clear that they were angry; angry about what Stasi had done, and there was a widespread feeling that maximum openness about the Stasi files was in order. Everybody should be able to see his or her file. My personal judgment was that it was important to let that cleansing take place, although there were some very bitter moments as people learned that their former neighbors and friends had been informers.

Q: Wives on husbands, husbands on wives.

GILMORE: It was sick. But basically, the impression I have is that the Gauck Commission did a thorough and effective job. Again, I want to emphasize that after departing Berlin in August of 1991, I was no longer able or had a need to follow closely the work of the Gauck Commission. Meeting Gauck and observing his work was a source of deep personal satisfaction. When I gave my last Fourth of July reception in Berlin in 1991, Gauck attended and greeted my staff and me warmly. He thanked me personally as he came through the line for my early visit to his Commission and indicated that it had given him a sense of moral support which he valued highly. In February 2012 Gauck became the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, a position he continues to hold today.

By the way, I gave a second Fourth of July reception in 1991, my final summer in Berlin. Manfred Stolpe, the new Minister- President of Brandenburg, invited the Embassy Office to hold a reception at Sans Souci, the famous palace in Brandenburg. The reception featured a chamber music presentation of Antonin Dvorak's 'American' string quartet in F' major, welcoming remarks by the head of the Brandenburg Landtag, and my response. We then held an American - style July 4 party with grilled hot dogs and hamburgers on the grounds of Sans Souci. It was a tremendous satisfaction to celebrate our national day there while the process of German reunification was underway and to have been invited to do so by Stolpe, one of the key personalities in the German reunification process. It was also a mark of honor, not for me personally, so much as for the United States, that he wanted us to hold a Fourth of July celebration at Sans Souci, which of course is ceremonially the most important landmark in Brandenburg.

Q: Were you getting reflections from our consulates in other places in West Germany that they weren't too happy to see the Prussians and the Saxons start coming back into the system again?

GILMORE: No. Surprisingly. I read very carefully the reporting from all our [posts in Germany, particularly the embassy in Bonn, and I followed the German media closely. The impression I got was that by and large there was a sense on the part of our German friends and colleagues, of elation that they were able to get back together as one family. At least temporarily there was a sense of greater German national cohesion identity and less particularism. Don't get me wrong. Germany is a very conservative society, culturally, and there are important regional differences. Bavarians were still the subject of some jokes, as were the Saxons, and that sort of thing. But, by and large, there was a kind of euphoria about the family being back together again, and that was the dominant feeling.

RALPH H. RUEDY
Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Bonn (1987-1991)

Ralph Ruedy was born and raised in Iowa. Between receiving his bachelor's degree from Iowa State University and his master's from Duke University, he

spent five years serving in the U.S. Navy in Vietnam. Mr. Ruedy joined USIA in 1974. His overseas posts include East Berlin, Dusseldorf, Bonn, and Moscow. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: You were there from 1987 to when?

RUEDY: To 1991.

Q: So it was a very interesting time?

RUEDY: It was, it was. It turned out to be completely fortuitous because had Bonn been the nice quiet embassy in Bonn that I guess it had a reputation for being, being a DPAO there probably would not have been that great in terms of interest or stimulation and also in terms of career pattern. People would have looked at that and said, "Oh a DPO, he's never been a PAO." But, it turned out to be the period that the wall fell and lots of stuff was going on and it was a very interesting and rewarding time and again I was fortunate to have a couple of really great bosses to work for.

Q: Who was ambassador and PAO?

RUEDY: The ambassador when I got there was Richard Burt and he and the PAO frankly didn't get along all that well. The PAO was Terry Catherman and Richard Burt was very bright and young and engaged and involved and all over the place. Terry Catherman was also very bright and dynamic and interesting and a good, good guy, a very senior officer who had been in the Foreign Service for something like 30 years and the personal chemistry just wasn't there very much. But, Terry Catherman was a great guy to work for and he was mercurial some times and dynamic, very, very, very smart and a good, good guy to work for. Terry had come to Germany initially I think right after the war and he was the BPAO in Heidelberg or in Frankfurt and he was kind of a charter member of the German club. He had been there from the very beginning, spoke absolutely fluent German and was just a very smart and cagey guy and he would work some of these issues on RIAS and stuff like that. I would go into meetings with him and I would think, my God, how are we ever going to come out right on this one here. We would talk and chat and work it through and Terry would negotiate with the Germans and have a great rapport and he just really clicked.

Anyway, Richard Burt left then and was replaced by Vernon Walters. Richard Burt was quite a young man and had that reputation in Germany as being a bright, dynamic young man and was replaced by Vernon Walters who had been everywhere and done everything. He had come to Germany, I don't know maybe even been in Germany before World War II, I don't know but had traveled with Averell Harriman to the Ruhr. He had seen the little flowers in the vase in the German ruins and figured if these people are putting up flowers, this country has prospects even though everything is awful. Anyway he was a very, very experienced and wonderful gentleman, really a perfect person to have in Germany at the time and he and Terry got along beautifully. I think the two of them got along very well, which made for a good dynamic.

Q: Well when you arrived there what was on your plate?

RUEDY: RIAS, RIAS television and I thought my God, I finally left all these damn memos and briefing papers and Director Wick's rages and dynamism behind, gone on to the War College and here I am the first thing on my plate getting back to Bonn was RIAS again. We were then in the process of getting from here to there, getting RIAS on the air. There was some big problem practically my first day on the job, or my first week on the job and Terry Catherman asked me to look into it. I looked into it and I came up with some half-baked analysis for Terry and Terry looked at that and said, "No, this won't do." He really called me on it and I thought I'd really screwed up and I had, I forget what the issue was but I hadn't handled it very well and Terry was perfectly right to call me on the carpet for it. But things got sorted out and I worked I think very well with Terry. The two of us were never...we were friends and I had tremendous respect for him and I think he liked my work also but I don't know that we were kindred spirit types but I found it very rewarding to work with Terry.

Q: What was the point of RIAS television?

RUEDY: To reach a wider audience in East Germany and in Berlin as well and there again there were all kinds of intersecting political agendas. I think for some of the Germans that were involved in RIAS television they were interested in reaching West Berliners who voted. I think on the American side we were interested in reaching East Germans who were getting the message from Sender Fries Berlin and other West German television channels but a feeling that we ought to be able to reach them with an American voice and an American perspective as well. So I think we on the American side saw the primary target audience for RIAS television as the East German public around East Berlin and around the city of Berlin. I think some of the Germans were involved in it, its all that audience too but also saw an audience of Germans who voted and some interest also in broadcasting RIAS television to areas in the Federal Republic and you know how that played out, there were all kinds of concerns.

Q: What would we broadcast? I mean what was the plan to broadcast?

RUEDY: News and features, documentaries. There was a lot of discussion about what will RIAS carry that isn't being carried now and Sender Fries Berlin and who actually is the audience for RIAS. Those were all interesting questions and important questions but by that time I think that RIAS had a political dynamic that was separate from that. Director Wick wanted it, the administration wanted it, and there were people in the German government who very much wanted it so there was a momentum in that sense behind it.

Q: How did Walters feel about it?

RUEDY: Walters was onboard with it and I think by the time Walters came in there were lots and lots of other things going on with German and with the situation in Berlin so RIAS continued to be important but it wasn't the sort of lightening rod of concern that it had been for a while. I remember Director Wick came over and met with, oh what was her name, the Minister for Inner German Affairs, who was our "gespracht" partner on matters having to do with Berlin. They were talking about RIAS and German sensitivities toward RIAS. The Germans had political issues with it as well, the American role in Berlin and what the American profile should

be in Berlin. So, there was lots and lots of back and forth.

Q: By the time you came back in '87 you left in '84 did you sense any change in German attitudes, I mean for one thing there is the SS20 Pershing sort of thing, did that sort of thing calm down?

RUEDY: Yeah it had calmed down. It was still an issue, I don't remember now exactly the timeline in one thing or another but those immediate issues had calmed down. Let's see '87, Reagan was still in power; we were transiting to the Bush administration, all that kind of thing. I think Bush was a good deal more understandable in terms of German political culture than Reagan had been. I think that they felt more comfortable; I think they felt that some of the ideological edge was gone but, of course, we had the Gulf War and that was a big, big deal for Germans. I think the Germans did support us but the fact of going to war over Kuwait and actually having begun to shoot that was something that for young Germans was a big, big stretch. The idea of actually going to war, of actually using the weapons, there was a lot of concern in Germany and I think it was that emotional sense of actually the coalition becoming engaged in violence, force of arms being required to settle this issue. There were peace demonstrations and concern among Germans, lots of concern among Germans when the run up came toward the war. Baker in this very dramatic I think last ditch effort with the Iraqis to avoid actually launching the first air attacks and stuff like that, that was a big deal for the Germans. What was it? Once the shooting actually started there was actually an attack on the embassy and this was I think some automatic weapons fire, AK-47 fire, from across the Rhine River into the embassy in Bonn. What was it? Our press section was hit and it blew up a computer and a bunch of stuff like that. So, it was a difficult period.

I remember talking to some youth groups, young political groups in Germany about how there is solidarity. This was an invasion of Kuwait by violence and every step has been taken. We've done everything possible but now it has gotten to the point where if there is no alternative what are you going to do? You can't just let this aggression stand. But the whole notion of resorting to armed force was something that the Germans found difficult, difficult, difficult to accept.

Q: Well turning to the Berlin situation, up until I guess the late summer of '89 were there any bells beginning to ring about what was happening there? How did it evolve, how did our embassy evolve?

REUDY: The bells rang very slowly. Vernon Walters created something of a stir when he first arrived in Germany. During an initial meeting with the press he was asked a fairly innocuous question, which had to do with can you imagine of Germany ever being united again, or unification happening. Walters answered again very diplomatically that "Yes, he could imagine Germany being reunited at some point in the future. This caused a great hue and cry in the German press because some of the Germans thought that it was really stirring the pot and creating instability and a feeling that we were pushing the GDR government. That this was awakening a lot of ghosts which they didn't want to awaken, that it was being provocative as far as the East, as far as the Soviet Union as far as the GDR was concerned. They feared that it was provocative and the text of the statement then we put out there was much hue and cry about the American ambassador talking about Germany being reunified. But Walters answered the

question very diplomatically and there it was. But it indicates, I think, how far off the scope that thought was at the time. German unification, people just didn't think in those terms. I forget exactly when Walters came to Bonn as ambassador.

Q: Did you all get him to clarify what he meant or anything like that?

RUEDY: He did it very as I say diplomatically. I think he handled it very well. It was a little tempest in a teapot but it indicates what a hot button issue German unification was. I forget exactly what the clarification was but it was to the effect that, 'Yes, one could imagine or who knew under what circumstances or you know how history would unfold, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Q: But in a way it was indicated in the German society at that time that they were basically quite happy with the way things were, don't mess around with it.

RUEDY: Very much a feeling of don't mess around with it and thoughts of German unification being provocative and being destabilizing. I think people felt content with the situation as is, a prosperous and secure Federal Republic and people didn't really worry too much about unification with the East.

Q: Well then what happened with, as events began to unfold or you know Hungary and Czechoslovakia and all of that?

RUEDY: Gorbachev made an initial visit to Bonn, as I recall and there was a good deal of concern on the American side that Gorbachev was charming the Germans. That the Gorbachev charm offensive had the danger of splitting NATO or splitting Germany off from solidarity with the alliance and solidarity with the United States. There was a good deal of concern about that.

Q: Gorbymania.

RUEDY: Gorbymania, exactly, exactly. So there was some concern in the embassy and in the American official community in general, folks that were concerned about Germany and the NATO Alliance, that if Gorbachev succeeded what would that mean for the United States and lots of sympathy for Gorbachev among Germans. The Germans I think saw Gorbachev as a breath of fresh air. Who knows what might be possible with this leader of the Soviet Union: a whole new relationship and that concerned people in Germany as well as in the United States. Gorbymania, exactly.

I have a little bit of a different take on the collapse of the GDR than maybe some people do. I think the demonstrations in Leipzig and Dresden were all very, very important but I think what was really going on and what the handwriting on the wall clearly was. It took a while but not that long to sink in, but when people in the GDR began sensing an opening to the West and the cutting of the barbed wire between Austria and Hungary was on German television. People thought, oh yeah, great between Hungary and Austria now they are cutting the barbed wire, and the Iron Curtain is coming down and tensions are being relaxed. They are not looking across one another at gun barrels anymore but the Austrians are neutral. The Hungarians have always been

the more liberal members of the Warsaw Pact so this is not so terribly, terribly unusual. This is a good thing, OK.

I think among East Germans they looked at that and saw something of a different message. They saw the Iron Curtain falling and they saw what they hadn't seen since the Berlin Wall went up in 1961 -- an opportunity to get out. Gradually people, and these were the workers, these weren't the "intelligencia" (intelligence), they were the workers, they were ordinary citizens jumping in their "Trabant" (East German automobile) and driving across Czechoslovakia and driving into Hungary and driving into Austria. You had these, you know they are all in Austria, what the hell are we going to do with them, bring them back to Germany, long convoys and where are we going to put them in Germany and where are we going to resettle them. Then this became a stream, and it was clear that East Germans were going to take advantage of that to an ever-increasing numbers. There was pressure on the Hungarians, I think by the East German government, by the Soviet Union, who knows. I don't know to close the border but that wasn't going to work because once you had clipped the barbed wire you weren't going to put it up again. Then I think for a while wasn't there, I would have to look at the timeline on this, the border between the Czech Republic and Hungary was going to be closed and then Germans started piling up in huge, huge numbers at the West German embassy in Prague and there were negotiations to get them out. They just kept coming and then the East Germans figured out that what are we going to do? We can't very well close our border with the Czech Republic.

You had the peace demonstrations going on or the demonstrations for liberalization going on in Leipzig and in Dresden to some extent in Berlin as well. So there was just a lot of stuff going on. But, ultimately I think a realization on the part of the GDR government that without the Brezhnev Doctrine, the Brezhnev Doctrine is dead. Gorbachev had come to the 40th anniversary celebration of the German Democratic Republic and his words were widely cited: I think that history will punish those who don't keep up with things, the "geschichte" (present) was something "bestraften" (punish). I forget how this was reported in Germany but anyway this undercut the Honecker position. There was just a general momentum which the political powers that be in the GDR had lost control of. Ultimately the sovereignty of the GDR depended upon the realization that the Brezhnev Doctrine stood and ultimately any attempt to break away from the Warsaw Pact would be put down by force of arms. Well, when it dawned on people that that was no longer the case, the place just fell of its own weight. First of all, the working class streaming out in their Trabants through Hungary into Austria, through to the Czech Republic wherever they could get out. They weren't just...they wanted to get out. Then on the part of the more liberal elements a feeling that there ought to be a more kinder, liberal, socialist Republic of Germany and then I think a feeling that well these people are leaving but maybe if we say something like, "In the future maybe you can get visas to travel and stuff" and of course...

Q: Orderly departure.

RUEDY: Orderly departure, yes, something like that. Everybody on this crazy night of what was it, November 11, it was a beautiful night in November with a full moon and unusually mild weather and the word was that there is going to be an opening. There will be possibilities of getting out, that this will change, masses of people going to the wall and nobody shooting anymore. It was just the end of it; it was just the end of it.

Q: At one point the guard just sort of shrugged his shoulders?

RUEDY: That's right, you can't stop it, this is just the way it is, yeah. There was just no stopping it.

Q: The whole world is collapsing around you and from the public affairs perspective what was happening as this was unfolding?

RUEDY: The events acquired a dynamic all of their own and things were moving very, very quickly. I remember on the day that the wall fell and all this electrifying news was all over the television and all over the radio I drove home from the embassy toward my apartment in Plittersdorf and picked up my dry cleaning on the way. I remember thinking that gee all of these great events are taking place but I still need some clean shirts and a clean suit. So I picked up my dry cleaning and at that point there was really, I mean watching it on television, just watching events unfold and as far as the press line or anything in Bonn I think we needed to be visible. We needed to be present but the great pronouncements were really coming out of Washington and coming out of the offices in the Federal Republic. We, I think, needed to be cautious about getting in the way, making lots of pronouncements, saying lots of stuff. I mean it wasn't up to the embassy at that point to make a lot of comments.

Q: One of the great points of this Bush I diplomacy with Baker was this whole episode of how it was treated. That it was not turned into a political rally of gee we won another, this was not a flag waving triumphantism exercise. Keeping a fairly low key there which was...from a political type this must...I mean again I'm talking about American political types, this must have been pretty hard not to claim we won, we won?

RUEDY: I agree and I think that the way it was handled in Bonn was very, very good. There was the wisdom and that's exactly the word that I want to use, the wisdom of Ambassador Walters was key because of Walters being this very sovereign presence. He had been everywhere, he had done everything, knew everybody. I think his presence was sort of a calming thing. The impression of the German public was here is somebody who knows what he is doing. He is a statesman, he has been around for a while, he knows what he is doing. I remember at a staff meeting Walters said something, he was always quoting everybody I mean Walters knew everybody and he knew all the quotes. I think this was a quote from Napoleon, "There is nothing more urgent now than to wait."

Q: But did you feel that Walters, I mean was it pronounced that way or the way 'let's keep our mouths shut, don't go crawling'?

RUEDY: I don't recall hearing specific directions from him to that effect but that was definitely the tenor in the embassy that you needed to avoid great pronouncements or hysteria or cranking out press releases or doing this that or the other. The events had a dynamic and that dynamic was in the right direction and it was difficult to know exactly where things were going to go or how things were going to wind up but there was no violence. I mean this could have had I think horrible consequences. We were terribly, terribly fortunate. I think some of that was just good

luck the way things played out.

Q: I've heard people say that the whole Honecker thing had been so consumed with making this 30th anniversary such a big deal that he kind of ignored all of this stuff that was going around.

RUEDY: Yes, he did.

Q: He didn't want to stir things up.

RUEDY: I think the Honecker regime; they were just incapable of changing. They were just incapable of changing the party line. This was just the way it was so they approached it with blinders and in refusing to recognize what was going on, refusing to recognize the inevitable, not really knowing what to do. Like I say, they couldn't very well close off the borders with the Czech Republic. I think maybe they leaned on the Czechs to do something but what could the Czechs do. The events had acquired a dynamic of their own. I think they were concerned about not provoking violence in places like Leipzig.

Q: You had the Sunday gathering.

RUEDY: Exactly, yes.

Q: With the church or...

RUEDY: Yeah, I forget the name of the church in Leipzig, but yeah. I think the people there were perhaps looking for a kinder, gentler GDR. You had all these demonstrations and Monday night marches or whatever they were. They were trying to keep all of that in check and really you know it didn't compute, it just didn't add up any more.

Q: Did you sense from your contacts in the Bonn government that they were over their heads or I mean how were they responding?

RUEDY: I don't think they were over their heads. I think and I don't know what they were saying to the GDR or you know what kind of communication was going on there. The GDR I think it was clear that any kind of resort to violence in connection with these demonstrations would be pretty catastrophic in terms of the relationship with Bonn and the relationship with the West so they, I think, were wanting to do everything possible to avoid violence. In violence they would clearly be out of step with the Soviet Union, with their great protector, with Gorbachev, with everything else so I think they just saw themselves on the GDR side as up a blind alley. I think the West Germans to the extent that I can gauge that, the government of the Federal Republic was being very restrained about not doing anything that would be provocative or that would bring about any kind of big cataclysm or whatever. They were really I think trying to handle it very, very carefully.

At the same time not saying anything that was anti the demonstrations or whatever. They were not provoking but not undermining, not undercutting either. They were, I think, treading a pretty fine line and treading it pretty well.

Q: Well, the public affairs must have been overwhelmed by news people coming to Berlin weren't they? I mean media from all over the world was there.

RUEDY: I wasn't in Berlin. We had a public affairs operation in Berlin and I worked with them but the correspondents coming to Berlin to cover the story would not I think have made a point of coming to the U.S. Mission in Berlin to do lots of interviews. I mean the story was out there on the street, it wasn't in sitting down with the American. I think Harry Gilmore was the guy who was there as the head of the U.S. mission in Berlin. Gilmore is certainly very cool and calm and exactly the kind of person who you wanted in a situation like that, so he really knew his way around and like I say I think the story spoke for itself.

Q: Well then in the aftermath of all this, I mean you almost immediately get caught in the Gulf War didn't you quite quickly after this.

RUEDY: Certainly the turmoil of the Gulf War was there also.

Q: What did that do with Germany, I mean, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. I mean you would think Germany becoming very much a pacifist type country.

RUEDY: And that pacifism I think was a factor in the way the German public regarded the events. I think there was first of all outrage about Kuwait. Clearly this was awful and there was no sympathy for Iraq, zero sympathy for Iraq on that score. A feeling that this was clearly terrible, clearly beyond the pale and a sense of disbelief that this could have happened and a sense of even greater disbelief that the west, the United States, allies would have to resort to a force of arms to reverse that aggression. So, no sympathy at all for Iraq but clearly a great hesitation, a great concern about going to war to change it and there I think that pacifist reflex played a very strong role. I think among the French, among the British, among the other people in the alliance that it was not so much a factor but for the Germans it very much was.

Q: The French normally reject, I mean they weighed in there.

RUEDY: Absolutely.

Q: Speaking of the French, did you sense a growing French-German relationship or was this more on the French side than on the German side?

RUEDY: No, during this period of time I think their relationship was a little bit frosty because the French certainly were not eager to see Germany move quickly toward unification, I think. The German public had that perception. I think among the German public there was a perception that the French were kind of moving toward the inevitable with a certain amount of reluctance, a certain amount of hesitation, a certain amount of trepidation. Maybe a feeling also among the public, I didn't hear this articulated officially at all, but I think among the public the French would just as soon not have this happen and if they saw an opportunity to slow it down or derail it or whatever they very well might. So, it was not a period I think when there was a great feeling that boy the French were really on our side on this.

Q: You were there until '91.

RUEDY: That's correct, yes.

Q: So how did things, I mean was it a different world you were dealing with after the fall of the wall and all?

RUEDY: Yes, things continued to evolve very rapidly and you know the whole discussion of Germany eventually becoming unified. I think Brandt made a statement that 'what belongs together will grow together', the feeling as a succession of governments took power in East Berlin you know what did all this mean. Would there continue to be a separate GDR? But events just kind of intervened. You had this movement. Kohl obviously saw this opportunity and took it. In retrospect, despite all of the second guessing and despite all of the concern about slow economic growth in Eastern German and high unemployment and the "Osties" (easterners) versus the "Westies" (westerners), I can imagine the way things worked out is not by far and away not the worst of alternatives, not the worst way it could have worked out.

In retrospect, I think that it worked out about as well as it could have, this quite rapid movement toward unification because certainly you had lots of instability and a period of potential turmoil in Eastern Germany. At the same time lots of things were happening inside the Warsaw Pact in Poland and in the Czech Republic and Hungary and everywhere else. So I think the course that events took turned out to be very fortuitous. The first of the talks about the unification of Germany took place in Bonn as I recall and Shevardnadze and Baker, they were all there. This was all a big, big deal and first you had this four power umbrella. It was all very complicated but I think American diplomacy, the whole Baker-Bush approach was ultimately a very measured and careful and wise movement. You had issues around Berlin settled and you had sovereignty turned over to the Germans in the context of German unification and it all worked out. You had a whole host of very, very difficult problems to deal with. The Soviets in East Germany still had about a half million Soviet troops.

Q: What were you all doing in public affairs? Was there much involvement or explaining what we were up to or was it business as usual?

RUEDY: Oh, it was a dynamic period. Business as usual but you had lots of visits by VIPs on the American side, secretary of state visits, press releases and support and so on. We were out too as I recall speaking and putting the American policy line forward but not getting in the way. This wasn't something that the Americans were forcing or pushing or whatever, but that we were working diligently and pragmatically and particularly in close coordination with the German side as events unfolded. I think we were concerned about not letting a lot of daylight appear or seem to appear between...we were not driving events toward unification but we weren't pulling the Germans back from it either. This was a culmination of long-standing American policy. I mean what was unfolding was no difference from what we had said from the very beginning we wanted to have happen. It was up to the Germans to make some of these decisions and to work out some of these major issues and certainly to work out the details. We were there not to dictate or not to impose or not to shape things according to our will but to have happen what we said we

wanted from the very beginning, the whole concept of containment. This was all part and parcel of what we had been trying to do through the entire cold war period.

Q: Did you have any contact with your former first tour former job in western Germany?

RUEDY: Yes, very much so. This was interesting because Terry Catherman had left and during my last year there I was working for Cynthia Miller who was an outstanding PAO as well. She was absolutely terrific and she also had been PAO in East Berlin and I had been in East Berlin as APAO. You know the whole relationship between the embassy in Bonn and the Embassy in East Berlin was interesting. The U.S. Mission in West Berlin and quite how this was going to work, how we were going to divvy up responsibilities, how all of this was going to go. From Bonn we were pushing the envelope a little bit because the East German public affairs operation in East Berlin had been pretty tightly circumscribed. We didn't issue a lot of press releases or one thing or another because we couldn't and we felt now that things were changing we ought to really go for it. We were interested in making sure that our materials got out and our press releases got out. There was some issue about whether stuff to Leipzig ought to go out on U.S. Mission Berlin letterhead or Embassy Berlin letterhead. We said "OK, we don't care, do it on Embassy Berlin letterhead but we've got presence in West Berlin and we can crank this stuff out. We've got all this electronic capability and let it all happen and do it under the Embassy Berlin rubric because Leipzig is still part of the GDR. That's all OK but just do it, let it go. Let's get out to those places, let's get involved, let's reach out, clearly the situation is different now than it was a month ago and let's take advantage of that from the public affairs aspect." We sometimes felt that our colleagues in East Berlin were perhaps more conscious of bureaucratic turf than we would have liked but they had their perspective and we had ours, so what are you going to do?

Q: By the time you left there unification had taken place?

RUEDY: Yes, unification had taken place. We did lots of organizing and reorganizing. Public affairs outreach to the former GDR became a big, big issue for us. We were interested in using our IV allocation to bring lots of people over from the former GDR and doing lots of distribution in that part of the new "Bundeslande" (Federal States). We organized our public affairs effort. We had a very bright, outstanding person who was assigned to the American embassy in the GDR who was going to become a cultural attaché; they were going to establish a cultural attaché position in the GDR. As things imploded by the time she was ready to come to Berlin, there was no more GDR to be cultural attaché to so she was the BPAO in, we assigned her to be BPAO in Leipzig. We were going to open an America House in Leipzig. She had responsibility for finding a building in Leipzig where we could open an America House and do a bunch of this stuff. The BPAO in Hamburg and the BPAO in Hanover we decided, just for the sake of coverage, to ask them to cover Magdeburg and to cover some of the other important cities in the northern part of the GDR. We were busy redrawing the map and getting people new responsibilities and putting lots and lots of emphasis on outreach to what we called the new "Bundeslande".

For me it was great because here it was the possibility to get back to some of these places I thought I would never visit again by going to Leipzig, going to Dresden and going to some of these other places, Magdeburg and so on. Just getting a sense of what we ought to do there by way of a field operation, what we could do and you know just meeting with people. It was

wonderful; it was a great way to end the tour.

Q: Was there any feeling that you know you were beginning to expand your operations into the new lands and beyond there that the West German government now the Federal government for the whole place was sort of saying 'you are messing around in our turf and don't get too active sort of thing?

RUEDY: No, no I never had that sense. They welcomed our presence. We were the foreign country after all, we were the Americans so I don't think that there was any sense of competing for influence in the GDR. We wanted to avoid that too for the West Germans. I think in the waning days of the GDR this was something that we watched very carefully as well. We didn't want to seem to be propping up or lending more credibility to the GDR than they deserved. It was a dynamic situation; we didn't quite know whether they were in free-fall or not but if they were in free-fall we didn't want to be seen as propping them up or giving them credibility. There were a couple of instances, I forget, I think Baker talked to one of the interim GDR leaders in Potsdam or something like that, it didn't amount to a whole lot. I forget who recommended what to whom but in retrospect it was not a big deal, but there was some discussion about whether it was really appropriate for the American secretary of state to meet with this rump-state GDR leader when we had been stiff-arming Honecker for years for very good reason. Now we were seeming to support the continued existence of a separate sovereign GDR. Like I said I would have to look at the time line of that again because it was a rather busy period when lots of stuff was going on in very quick succession. I think the overall arch of American policy was pretty clear and that was to not get in the way of what was happening in terms of inner-German relations and inner-German affairs and to do what we had said we were going to do from the very beginning, support a reunified Germany at some point in time on German terms.

Q: Well then in '91 you left?

RUEDY: Yes I did.

Q: And where did you go?

RUEDY: I came back to Washington and went to a great assignment in the bureau of education and cultural affairs as deputy chief of the Fulbright program. I did continue to be involved with Germany because Germany was at that point the largest Fulbright program that we had anywhere thanks in large part, thanks completely to the tremendous support that the Fulbright program got from the German government. A generation of Germans had grown to cherish and love the German Fulbright program and as we withdrew support for it the Germans increased their support. So the binational Fulbright program when I left Germany and went to this office I think was about \$4 million which made it by far the largest program and \$3 million of that was German money and we wouldn't have been continuing to kick in a \$1 million but the Germans kind of shamed us by upping their ante so we kept ours at a larger level than I think we otherwise would have.

SHIRLEY E. RUEDY
Political Officer
Bonn (1987-1988)

Staff Assistant to Ambassador Walters
Bonn (1989-1991)

Shirley Ruedy was born in Virginia and raised in Ohio. She was educated Ohio Wesleyan and Duke Universities and at several universities abroad. Before becoming a Foreign Service Officer in 1987, Mrs. Ruedy accompanied her USIA husband on assignments in Iran and Germany. As an FSO, she served as Political Officer in Bonn and Moscow as well as in the State Department in Washington, where she dealt primarily with Soviet Union and Regional European matters. Mrs. Ruedy was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: How did things work out after you finished your basic officers course? You said your husband, you had already done a good three years in Washington, and so you were due to go out?

RUEDY: We were. My husband had already been offered a job in Bonn as DPAO (Deputy Public Affairs Officer) and I had this hanging over my head. I wasn't sure; I had heard very mixed things about how tandem couples were treated. Two of our best friends were a tandem and the couple had been separated 90% of the time they had been in the Foreign Service. I said that I would just not accept family separation. If things couldn't be worked out, then I would have to reconsider. I felt very strongly about that; I saw what it had done to people who allowed themselves to be separated, what it had done to their children. Our children were at a sensitive age, I guess they're always at a sensitive age. I had some German which was basically self-taught and so my counselor encouraged me to take the German exam. I got a 2+, 3. I was pretty proud of that; I had just done that on my own. It wasn't quite enough because I needed the 3, 3. I thought I'm not going to get that job in Bonn, because there was a job in a political slot opening in Bonn, and I thought I'm probably not going to get it. But, lo and behold, when they read out the assignments in the very dramatic way that they do, I was assigned to Bonn and I was practically weeping with joy. They sent me for six weeks of brush-up German. So everything worked out; both of us went off to Germany. My husband had to take leave of absence for a while because the postings weren't exactly set up that way. So he played mom for a while which was good; he experienced the chicken pox with all three. He was ready when they said let's get you started, he was ready to go back to work. I remember the first morning I walked in to work along the Rhine. I left early. I walked from the compound to the embassy, and I just had to keep pinching myself that it was happening. I just couldn't believe that this person who was 40 years old with three children was actually going to start working at this embassy. I got in and it all started.

Q: You were in Bonn, was it '87 or '88?

RUEDY: We arrived in '87, and we left in '91.

Q: An interesting time to be in Germany. Who was the ambassador when you arrived?

RUEDY: The Ambassador was Richard Burt. The DCM was James Dobbins and the Political Counselor was Olaf Grobel. I couldn't have been luckier in my first boss. He was a tremendous person; he and his wife were so kind to us. I remember he sent me off – I had only been in the office a couple of days – to cover a meeting the CDU (Christian Democratic Union). There had been some funny business involving a CDU leader from the North who had been found dead in the bathtub. It was kind of a scandal. There was a party meeting, and I remember Mike Polt, who was my boss saying, "OK, you go to this meeting and you write it up. Let's see what an English major can do with a political cable." That proved to be prophetic, because I did indeed have a little trouble at first with writing to task. I was a little bit too flowery; I needed to get to the point. I was interested in describing people and giving the flavor. I was too interested in atmospherics. I had to learn to write cables. Mike Polt was just excellent. He's an ambassador now in the Balkans, but he and his wife, Halle, were just fantastic people.

Q: What slice of the political pie were you given?

RUEDY: I was doing the political parties and especially the SPD and the Greens. I was to cultivate connections with the SPD and the Greens. Rick Burt was invited by the Greens in December of 1987 to an INF (Intermediate Nuclear Forces) treaty signing party. The word came down from the Ambassador's office that the embassy should be represented at a "suitable" level. And so I was sent as a junior officer to the Greens INF signing party. I was very nervous. I didn't quite know what to expect. Here I was three months into the job. I wasn't even sure what I should wear to a Greens' INF party. I didn't have to worry about it, because I didn't have time to change, I went right from work to this enormous gathering of Greens in all their variety and individuality. I thought OK, so far so good. One of the Greens asked me if I would please make a statement. There were hundreds of these people there and my German was OK, but it wasn't up to making statements in front of hundreds of people about the INF treaty. I said, "Well, I hadn't really come prepared for that and I didn't even know if my Ambassador wanted me to do that." They finally talked me into it saying we're glad you're here and we want this as painless as possible so just get up and say a few words; you can speak in English, we don't care, we all understand English. I got up, and I don't remember what I said, but it was quoted in Die Welt. I was really concerned about that. That was amazing.

Q: Talk about when you started to get with these parties. How did a young officer, let's take the SPD first, how do you get in and mix and mingle and make contacts?

RUEDY: Well, there is something called the International Visitors' Program. This is a USIA program that brings young and upcoming political leaders and other sorts of people to the States. I'm sure you're familiar with it. Mike Polk, in all his wisdom, set me to going and doing the follow-up interviews for those to who had returned for all the parties. It gave me entree into this level of the future leaders of the parties. They seemed glad to see me. Ninety-nine percent of them had had a wonderful time in the United States; they were very sympathetic, even the Greens. I got to meet the current head of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) Party who is someone I talked to as returning IVP all those many years ago. I'm sorry, I misspoke it was the FDP (Free Democratic Party), not the CDU. I went down to the University of Mainz where he

was a student to interview him about his trip to the U.S. Whoever nominated him did a good job.

Q: What did these future leaders come back with? Were there particular elements to this? Was there a common trend that impressed them more, either positive or negative?

RUEDY: On the positive side, friendliness of the average American family that offered them hospitality; what I guess we would call family values, the idea especially in the Midwest where families are very important and they felt that they were warmly welcomed and made to feel like a family member. The vastness of the United States was a word that I heard a lot. They would laugh and say you know we planned to make all these trips, but we just didn't realize how far all these places were. The magnificent scenery, the variety of people, the fact that in New York you could find somebody from every country in the world and a restaurant to match; this is just something for the Germans that is really eye-opening. The universities were always praised, especially research universities. They thought that despite what impressions they might've had of American superficiality that the American university system was first-rate.

Q: American high schools aren't quite up to European ones. The real work is done at the universities. Granted there are some where people go to party, but basically we catch up very quickly. In many European universities, Herr Professors get up and lecture and there's not much intellectual exchange that goes on.

RUEDY: Right. And you have the phenomenon of the perpetual student. Some of the Greens in their thirties are still students, and still being supported in one way or another by the government. That was a very different kind of attitude toward education. The young Germans I talked to were impressed by the seriousness with which research students, especially in the sciences, how serious they were and they wanted to get finished and do something else, not just study.

Q: How about things like gender or race? Did they see that we were behind, before or what? Were they matters of interest?

RUEDY: They were of great interest. I remember just after I got my assignment to Bonn, I ran into a man who had spent a lot of time in Germany as a diplomat. He said, "Shirley, I wish you luck but as a woman you're going to have a tough time dealing with the German political leadership." I think I was only the second or third woman political officer at embassy Bonn. I made up for it by working my butt off and just learning as much as I could and just working extremely hard and knowing my briefs. I encountered a kind of condescension sometimes, especially with older German politicians. But with the younger people I didn't sense that. I remember I was invited to a talk at the German equivalent of FSI to new German diplomats were just starting their training. There were several women in the group. They were very glad to see me, and I was glad to see them. I think things were changing. It was very much a generational thing.

As far as race, I think for the Germans, race is so complicated. I think there are some blind spots there. I don't think they understand quite the challenges that we face and that our history has been extremely complicated and that we have made a lot of progress. It's almost as if the young people were projecting in a way their deep anger and disappointment in the generations that

came before and their parents' generation, their grandparents and their great grandparents about how Germans treated race and the Jews and the gypsies, the Roma, and people with handicaps. It was almost as if they were projecting that onto us because when you get right down to it, and I think it's still the case today, people look to us for idealism. And when they find out that we're not as perfect as they want us to be, they get angry. I think the young Germans were tapping into this great disappointment in their own forebears and saying, gee, we thought the Americans were going to be better. It's very complicated.

Q: Were you getting any feeling for the treatment of the Turks? These were no longer gastarbeiters? The immigrants who were coming in were manning their factories.

RUEDY: Exactly. I wrote a long cable on the foreigner problem in Germany. It was very complicated because you have people who can claim German citizenship on the basis of blood. They may have lived in Kazakhstan and don't speak a word of German but they have a claim on German citizenship. On the other hand you have, say, people from Turkey who have been invited in to do work that needed to be done but had to wait ten years or more to get their citizenship. The whole German attitude toward who is a German is very complicated, and it complicates their attitude toward newcomers. There are the asylum seekers, there are the immigrants, there are the gastarbeiters; each of these groups presented different challenges for the average German. The German government tried to deal with it by naming an ombudsman for foreigners. They were concerned about it, but you know you couldn't escape the Turkish ghettos in the big cities.

Q: Was there a skinhead element?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. In Düsseldorf I used to be a little bit afraid of walking. There weren't too many places in Germany where I was afraid of walking by myself at night, but down where I was teaching there were several places which catered to the skinheads. I felt very uncomfortable there. When I was in Bonn, of course, we had the rise of the right-wing party. I wanted to go and interview the leader, but the embassy said no.

Q: How was the party identified?

RUEDY: I forget the name of the party. It was at the time of Le Pen in France and his party did pretty well. That was when I learned about not trusting opinion polls. The opinion polls taken before the German elections said oh, no, nobody was going to vote for this party, but then it did very well which indicated to me that people weren't being honest about how they were going to vote.

Q: Looking at the parties from what you were gathering, as an American observer who sometimes see things that aren't as apparent to people who are there, where were the members of the SPD coming from? Was this because of their work or because of their family, was this the way they lived? What brought them to the SPD? This goes for the other parties too.

RUEDY: I think tradition played a big part. We have something similar in Democrats, you know they're just Democrats. Their families for generations have been Democrats. There was some of that. There was an anti-capitalism strain there. There were some who really did believe that

socialism, it's in their party name, was a better way to go than American capitalism. And there was this new breed of SPD. I remember a book from college which described parties that these very wealthy, well educated New Yorkers were having for members of the Black Panthers and so forth.

Q: It sounds like Thomas Wolfe and Radical Chic & Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers or something. It was Leonard Bernstein and his wife that entertained these guys.

RUEDY: Yes, Tom Wolfe. To me it described this new breed of SPD, that same moral righteousness, holier than thou, we really understand the problems of the world. One of our friends often said that he chuckled when he thought about the rich Germans on the beach on the Mediterranean talking about the oppressed people of the world as they ordered their Kalsch and their copy of the Frankfurter Allgemeine newspaper. That captured it for me; they were very socially committed in one sense but they lived a very comfortable lifestyle.

Q: The Green movement was relatively new at this time. What were we seeing in the Greens, I mean looking back and observing?

RUEDY: Actually, I think some of my reporting attempted to point out that there were many kinds of Greens; the greens by definition held different political points of view. Within the green party, you're talking about a huge umbrella. Within the Green party you had people who were almost moving toward an almost kind of a strange nationalism and at the other end anarchists. I tried to make the point that you can't just talk about the Greens. They have so many different political agendas. Each Green has his own individual political agenda. There was a major split between the Fundies and the Realos, the fundamentalists and the realists. The Realos were willing to work the system; the Fundies wanted to do away with the system. Then it broke down even further within those groups. They were concerned about the environment; they were concerned about nuclear disarmament. They were trying to hold our feet to the fire – we had signed a treaty saying that we would work for complete nuclear disarmament and they were going to make sure that we followed up on that. There was the beginning of the homosexual issue, the treatment of women, these were all big issues. I think the Greens treated women much better than say the SPD although the SPD made more waves at their political party meetings.

Q: Sometimes people so fundamentalist in their thinking tend to be dismissive of other groups. Sort of we'll take care of you kind of thing.

RUEDY: The Greens were really free thinkers and there were some extremely bright political strategists in the Green party. I got to know some people who were doing some very serious long-term thinking about Germany and Europe and relations with the U.S. and they were mostly in the Realo camp. They were concerned about proper relations with the U.S. They did not want for the U.S. to leave Germany or anything like that because they felt that the U.S. kept Germany in its place and kind of under control. It kept Germany from returning to its old ambitions. There were some Greens who also could see a role for NATO. I had a hard time convincing people that such Greens existed, but they did just because it was a way of ordering Europe. There are some very farsighted Greens.

Q: Did you run across Joschka Fischer or Petra Kelly?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. I had breakfast with Joschka.

Q: He's now the Foreign Minister but there are shots of him battling the police.

RUEDY: By the time I was in Germany he was a very skilled politician. Petra Kelly spent a lot of time in the U.S. and was, I think, a cheerleader. She was a very complicated person, and I never understood her. I felt like I understood Joschka better. She was bigger than life even for the Greens.

Q: She eventually ended up with a tragic death.

RUEDY: Yes, she did. She was living with a general who had joined the Greens. It was a double suicide, I think. She embodied the Greens.

Q: In a way, playing with the Greens must've been fun, wasn't it?

RUEDY: I loved the Greens. Some of my most enjoyable meetings, talks, social gatherings were with the Greens. I really, really enjoyed their company.

Q: I imagine an awfully lot of talk, wasn't it?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. They were smart, they were tuned in, they knew what was going on, they read all the latest things. I always learned something from them. They always had a different perspective.

Q: Here you are the new officer on the block and reporting what you're getting from the Greens. I would imagine in the marble halls of the embassy that the Greens – our German Club is a pretty staid outfit – were sort of like the Katzenjammer Kids let loose. Did you have any trouble getting across to them the Greens? How were your reports received by them?

RUEDY: I was received well as long as I was able to back it up, that I wasn't just writing off the top of my head. In fact, I got some very good feedback from Washington. I wrote a long paper on German youth, which is a perennial topic, but it got some very good response from Washington. I certainly didn't have any trouble getting cables out. I learned to write cables. I sort of enjoyed, and I was encouraged, to write these longer think pieces: I did a piece on the foreigners, I did a piece on youth, I did several pieces on the Greens, I did a piece on the Church. I got a personal cable from our now Deputy Secretary complementing me on some of the work I had done. People were receptive. I didn't run into any problems.

Q: Youth, wither late nineteen eighties youth in Germany? What were you seeing there?

RUEDY: I was seeing young people who were aware of the new world that was emerging with globalization, with possible political changes in the offing, Gorbachev. People who wanted to get out from under the burden of World War II and the Holocaust. They just wanted to move on.

And they wanted to get on with their lives. They wanted to get an education, they wanted to get a good job. They were quite sophisticated about politics. Not every young person rushed off to join the Green Party. All the political parties had youth wings and even the FDP. They were not a monolith. There was always concern about the so-called successor generation, but I didn't find anything in that younger generation that would lead me to believe that there were great changes coming. These young people wanted stability, they wanted peace, they wanted to get on with their lives.

Q: In that time of intellectual ferment, I'm intrigued by another issue. The Jewish Germans fit in so well historically before they went. I mean, they were what made German culture in a way. They were the salt in the German stew. With the removal of the Jews from Germany, I don't think Germany will ever recover. Was there any talk about this at all, that is, the contribution that Jews had made, not only to German culture but also to German science, what made Germany great?

RUEDY: I don't recall any conversations about that in particular. I do remember the Holocaust series that was American made played in Germany. There was a lot of response to that, mostly what I interpreted as a positive response. Some young people said it was the first time they had seen the whole story or felt that they could get a handle on the whole era. But I don't remember anybody addressing that particular question.

Q: Of course, time has moved on and so in a way it's almost forgotten. I just see this as a real tragedy, a tragedy for Germany itself. This was a vital element of their society that had worked so well before.

RUEDY: Their loss, our gain.

Q: Hollywood came out way ahead. How did you size up the FDP?

RUEDY: They were a party of professionals. I remember sensing that they were dentists, accountants – that's not fair – but it just seemed to me that a lot of them that I met were pharmacologists, doctors and they were verging on libertarianism, you know, the free market was their motto. They were the free party. They didn't want Christian in their name, they didn't want socialism in their name. They wanted freedom from government regulation to the extent that's possible in Germany. They were interested in fiscal policy and this kind of thing. They were a very small party.

Q: But Genscher played a major role? Genscher just sort of planted himself in the foreign ministry and remained there. He screwed up the whole Yugoslav thing, but nevertheless.

RUEDY: Oh, Genscher, yes. He was larger than life Figure in the FDP. He was always the tail wagging the dog. He was Mr. Foreign policy, and if you're looking at the rest of FDP policy then you're in the weeds with fiscal policy and those things, concern about working on Sundays and all that, everything to do with business. He and Kohl are just amazing politicians.

Q: How about the CDU (Christian Democratic Union)?

RUEDY: Kohl's party. I have to say I admired him greatly. He could walk into a room, he was like a magnet, his political skills were unmatched. He knew exactly the right thing to say, the right thing to do. His life was kind of tragic in the way it turned out. He was Mr. CDU. I had good relations with some of his staffers. They admired him personally. I think he was a kind-hearted man, just a very admirable figure.

Q: You mentioned with the FDP about hours and working conditions etc. Something that has engaged France for so long has been trying to control commerce by only 35 hours of work, trying to manipulate the pie, a very socialist thing of over regulation in a way. Did you find this in the German body politic?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. We were always amazed; we in the embassy who put in long hours that Germans could seemingly work their time – they went from 40 to 37 and a half while I was there and later to 35 hours a week. They seemed to get their work done. I always kind of envied them. I thought they were doing something right. But it got to be so that if you tried to do any business you just could not do much embassy business unless it was truly an emergency on Friday afternoons. People were just gone; they weren't at their desks.

Q: Did you get at all involved in foreign policy?

RUEDY: No, we had a large political section. There were other folks doing that. But what I did get to do is, we got the new ambassador, Vernon Walters. I was given the task. Vernon Walters asked that someone in the political section put together the biographies of the 300 most influential Germans from all walks of life. As a junior officer this task fell to me. It was one of the best things I ever did. It was wonderful. I had good support from all the consulates. I collected, collaborated with them, with other sources of information here in Washington. When the ambassador arrived, I had a nice thick notebook of 300 bios. He used that to start making his initial calls. That's how he decided who he was going to see. I don't know if that had anything to do with it, but a little later he chose me to be his staff assistant. So I worked for him during German unification and the beginning of the Gulf War.

Q: Where were these people coming from? Can you categorize who were looked upon as the leaders?

RUEDY: Well, obviously business leaders, people in the media, church leaders, the political parties, cultural types, university academics. We had representatives from all sorts of professions.

Q: You mentioned before that you wrote a cable on the Church. What was happening to the Church at that time? If you look at France the Church isn't a big deal. Even in Italy it seems that women go to church and men don't. What was happening in Germany?

RUEDY: Germany too has a tax that supports the churches. There is support for the Catholic, the Evangelicals and for the Jewish synagogues. This is paid for primarily, as I understand it, by taxes. You can get out of paying that tax by going through a process. The assumption is that you

will pay the tax until you decide otherwise and go through the procedure. The churches there, unlike churches here, are not directly responsible for their existence to their parishioners. This gives it a very different feeling. The churches in Germany are much more political than they are here. We talk about our religious right and so on but if you going to go to a church in Germany I would venture to say, you would always find some evidence of social activism. Attendance is not so good. I did know some young people who were quite fervent Catholics. Again it was Catholicism of a social activist. In fact, we took one of the young Catholic women from Düsseldorf with us to Ireland, and she was absolutely shocked by the Irish Catholics because her Catholicism, I think, was more intellectual. The Irish Catholics were so emotional, the rosaries and the pictures on the wall and the graves and all that sort of thing. She said she had a hard time connecting with that. The churches, I think, are more social; this is a gross over-generalization, but my sense was the churches were for the congregants the parishioners more a social than a spiritual institution. There are still Germans who are concerned about being baptized, being married in a church and getting a church burial, and they are entitled to all those things because they pay the taxes. I didn't know any Germans who went regularly to church except for these young people in the neighborhood. Of course, I should say that the Catholic Church is an important component in both the CSU and the CDU.

Q: Is that concentrated more in Bavaria?

RUEDY: No. It's also nationwide I would say. The Evangelical Church, I don't connect them with a particular political party but they were very politically engaged on specific issues.

Q: Did you see a role for the intellectuals or the chattering class, in other words social commentators? Were they an important factor?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. German media has its media stars. That has continued to evolve. I think we were at the beginning of it when I was there but when I was in Germany last I was watching German TV and they have adopted some of our kinds of news programming and commentary where you have people fighting each other and shouting at each other. There was definitely a chattering class. When I was there also Die Zeit, which is a paper published in Hamburg but it is a paper for intellectuals and has extremely dense articles very difficult for non-native speakers of German to get through. I think translating articles from Die Zeit is like a 4-level here at FSI. That is an extremely influential paper; the people who write for that are very well-known and always have an opinion on everything.

Q: Vernon Walters, when did you become his assistant?

RUEDY: January 1989. It may have been 1988.

Q: How did he strike you? He has this tremendous reputation of everything he does and his language ability and he's been around the great people from World War II on. He translated for de Gaulle

RUEDY: Everything you hear about Vernon Walters is true. He was for me again a larger than life figure. Someone I came to admire greatly, respect; I learned things from him I never would

have learned if I had not been able to work for him. It was a high point of my career. He knew himself. I don't know that many people know themselves as well as he knew himself. He understood politics, it was in his blood. He had great insight, he had a sense for great movements of history, and yet he was a very kind man. I've seen him take great care in the smallest detail of helping somebody out. He was a great man but he didn't take himself that seriously. He was hilarious. He had great stories. He always had great jokes. He made people feel at ease. He was very charming.

Q: Did you find when he came in from what you were seeing in his interaction with others are with you that he was musing about whither Germany? We are talking about the eve of the collapse of a divided Germany. Certainly within any establishment anywhere on both sides of the Iron Curtain, this was not a matter of concern. It wasn't going to happen.

RUEDY: I think, I know, he understood before a lot of people did what was happening in the Soviet Union. He was a student of Russian and Soviet history, as he was a student of so many things, but I think his grasp of great historical movement, larger historical movement, stood him in good stead and he understood, I think, that things were changing in the Soviet Union. He was a great admirer of President Reagan. He thought that Reagan was putting the pressure on at just the right time and in the right place. I think the way he viewed the world, he thought what was happening in the Soviet Union would devolve on Europe and Germany and there would have to be a change in Germany. He liked to tell people that he talked about German unification before he was permitted to do so by Washington.

Q: I've heard other people say this. As things led up to the summer of 1989, how were events in East Germany playing out with our embassy in Bonn? Did they pay much attention to it?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. We were focused like a laser. The reporting that came out of our embassy in East Berlin was read, reread, dissected.

Q: I've had a long interview with Dick Barkley.

RUEDY: Well, he and Ambassador Walters did not see eye-to-eye on things. I had some sympathy for the folks in East Berlin because after all, I had lived there. I knew the scene. I understood. There were things about East Germany that I loved too. But from where I was sitting and watching what was happening in Bonn, I just had a hard time understanding the continued sympathy for East German political types when history was moving so fast. I thought Ambassador Walters had a better handle on what was really going on. Dare I mention the word, I thought there was a hint of "clientitis". It's normal, it's human.

Q: It happens. How was Gorbachev seen? For people looking at Gorbachev in the embassy, the political section particularly, were they saying what's happening here?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. And the Germans were fascinated with him, even Maggie Thatcher was fascinated with him. Here was someone who just didn't fit the mold. I think people were trying to figure out what to make of him. I was talking to my boss in INR (Intelligence and Research) at State who was a Russian-Soviet specialist and he had dug out a piece he wrote about Gorbachev

in 1985. He was just an enigma. People were hoping for the best, but it was hard to categorize him. So, yes, we were very interested in what was going on, although I have to say that was my not my department. I was getting it more indirectly from what the Germans were saying on how it was affecting their politics. No, he strode on to the world stage.

Q: In a way, he was caught up in something. Things came out the way he didn't want them to come out. He thought he could both preserve communism and ...

RUEDY: Yes, preserve the union. But I've done a lot of work on Russia too, and it seems to me that he was already reading the tea leaves, at least on the economy, about the Russian economy quite early, and he was putting people into positions who knew something about a Western economy. He was starting to see the handwriting on the wall.

Q: Speaking of the economy, during the time I mean when you started out in Bonn how were we looking at East Germany? There was a tendency in a lot of reports, you know, it's the tenth largest economy, painting East Germany being much more of a substantial power, particularly economically and militarily than it turned out to be.

RUEDY: I personally truly never understood that. It didn't square with what I had seen when I was traveling around with my husband in the East. People didn't have soap powder to wash their children's clothes so the kids couldn't go to school. Some of the villages didn't have salt. I couldn't put those two things together; it didn't fit. No, I never understood where it was coming from.

Q: What were you getting from the German parties? What was coming in to you through Walters' office on all the events of the summer, events in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia, asylum seekers and all? Was there much agitation on the part of German body politic on this?

RUEDY: I think Kohl was masterful in the way he handled all of that. First of all, there was just total euphoria. There was this sense of an era coming to an end, infinite possibility ahead. Who knew that this could happen? The Germans were very excited at the beginning. I think then when they started looking at the balance sheet and looking at what this was going to cost and just how was this going to work, the devil in the details, then I think we started to see some concern. I think Kohl just handled it so well in connection with other Western leaders by just taking leadership, powerful. He could have, had he been a politician who sort of had his finger in the wind and followed the people rather than leading the people, I don't know that it would've gone as smoothly as it did.

Q: It was a remarkable thing on the part of everyone including our American leaders.

RUEDY: Yes, James Baker

Q: And Bush, Sr.

RUEDY: Yes, it was fantastic and, as I said, Kohl being a leader. We are one people and just hewing to that line; as I said, it was just a miracle.

Q: One thing it looked like the unrest was really boiling and particularly in Berlin, in East Berlin and there was also the possibility that the East German authorities would put it down with force. How was this being seen both in Germany with the politics and also from our own embassy?

RUEDY: As I recall, there was a sense that Gorbachev had things under control. When he visited Honaker he kind of said, "Look, we're not going to have a bloody revolution here. Handle it." But as I recall people believed that Gorbachev could manage this. He still had enough clout that he could manage this, and that he wanted to manage it so that catastrophe was avoided.

Q: What were you all doing, watching TV all the time of the events that led up to the fall of the wall?

RUEDY: It's hard to describe the sheer joy and anticipation, just history on the move. Things happening, things falling into place, like God's hand was at work. This was going to work out, there was just this wonderful new era approaching and it was going so fast, moving so fast; it was almost impossible to keep up with the developments in all the different areas. These things were historic, truly historic things were taking place. It was just amazing, a marvelous time, what a time to be a diplomat.

Q: What was Walters doing? Was he in frequent consultation with the German leadership?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. A large part of his time was taken up with the Two Plus Four Talks. That's when I first met Condi Rice; she was there as part of that delegation. Once that started, it just absorbed all of the embassy's attention. He was in very close contact with Baker and with the Germans. I'm trying to remember Kohl's adviser who we worked so closely with at the embassy; he had been in Texas and loved to give Texas barbeques.

Q: The Two Plus Four meeting, what did this mean? There was the practical thing about East Germany? Is this going to be good? Stabilizing or what?

RUEDY: I don't think anybody in our embassy was worried about those kinds of issues. I think people in our embassy in East Berlin were. There were some differences of opinion and just reading between the lines of cables that were coming out I think that there was some concern there that things were moving too fast. I was just a little fly on the wall carrying papers back and forth, but I got the sense that our team in Bonn recognized the speed and did not want to put up any roadblocks. Let her roll. I remember a cable that Olaf Grobel drafted, and it was like two sentences. "Things here are moving faster than expected; unification could come at any time." It was just amazing. I think the folks up in Berlin were more concerned about the possibility of unrest, about going too fast, about the effect of the economic fallout. Our embassy in Bonn, I think, was concerned that we work out very carefully the whole military situation, especially with the Soviets.

Q: The Soviets had lots of troops in Germany, and Poland had already turned unfriendly or at least separated itself. It was a very tense situation.

RUEDY: I think getting that right was a big concern, and what was going to happen to the whole nuclear issue, basing, our military presence, suddenly all of those were questions on the table and they had to be dealt with. There were a lot of legal eagles looking at all that paperwork and all those things that were being signed. It's a complicated document.

Q: What were you doing for Walters for Two Plus Four and all that?

RUEDY: Keeping his schedule, making sure that he had the papers that he needed. I was his staffer, arranging his travel. I was working with Tim Tellenko; there were two of us because he was a very busy guy. I do have to tell one story. In the middle of all this, I went to his office to consult with him on something and he had all these papers on his desk to do with Two Plus Four. Then over on one side, he had a Swedish grammar book. That was his way of relaxing, just study a little Swedish grammar.

Q: He was a renowned linguist. When unification started to happen, did Walters tell the embassy not to go running around, let's keep a low profile?

RUEDY: I think we took our cues from him and that was certainly his stance. I don't know if there was an embassy directive or anything like that but we just all had the sense that this was the way the President was approaching it and the way we should approach it. I think we felt quite humbled by everything that was happening, at least I did.

Q: When history gets moving, you feel like a ship in the ocean. What about the influx of East Germans? Did you see this as a problem?

RUEDY: It was still too early. People were still caught up in the euphoria. There were a lot of jokes about the Trabants, the little cars, and how they were going to pollute the atmosphere and so on. I think it was just too early. I think some of that concern came later.

Q: What about later? You were there until mid-1991, is that right?

RUEDY: Right.

Q: How were things by the time you left?

RUEDY: I left the Ambassador's office, and I went to do my consular tour so I was doing consular work for about eighteen months, I guess. I was on the visa line, and we started getting folks from the Soviet Union, from other parts of the former East coming through Bonn trying to get visas to go to the U.S. That was quite a dramatic change in the clientele that we were seeing. We were starting to see more people moving West with the new freedom, with the new, more porous borders. There was that movement. I think then people did start to think about what the longer term economic consequences and social consequences of this were going to be.

Q: I realize you weren't dealing with it where you were, but within the embassy context what about Kohl's decision to exchange the D-mark one for one?

RUEDY: I think the economic experts were concerned about that. Politically, I don't know that he had any other choice. It seemed to me he was very concerned not to create second class citizens. The way you deal with your money is very symbolic, so politically I'm not sure he had much of a choice.

Q: What was the word on the visa line about dealing with all these people? Before that I assume the consular section in Bonn was a fairly quiet enclave.

RUEDY: It wasn't quiet when I got there.

Q: When I was in Frankfurt in 1955, they had one consular officer who didn't do much but manage diplomatic visas.

RUEDY: It was tough for those people to get visas. We welcomed them with open arms and then they'd hit the visa line, and we'd say no visa for you. I remember we had this Russian, he was a music producer or something like that, and I got him. He wanted to go to the United States to investigate new business possibilities. There was no way I could give him a visa, given our visa laws. He was just furious. Here was this pip squeak of a woman telling him that he, this great Russian entrepreneur or whatever, could not get a visa was just more than he could take. He asked to see the supervisor and the Minister-Counselor Affairs who wasn't in. I had a terrible time with him. It was the only time I had to call the Marines to remove a person from the waiting room. We had a lot of disappointment, folks like that.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to talk about? There were really exciting times.

RUEDY: There was just so much. Driving to Berlin with our kids and seeing people hacking away at this wall; it was just incredible. They had little hammers that you could rent. The East Germans became entrepreneurial overnight. And so we rented little hammers for our kids and the kids were there; it was just amazing. I would love to go back and relive it and take a lot more pictures. It was fantastic.

Q: How did you see from the parties about their relationship with France? There was this tremendous effort to bring the French and Germans together again. In a way it was together and against Americans and against the Brits. Did you pick up this feeling with France?

RUEDY: Yes, there would definitely was that idea. Of course we have this now with Schroeder these annual summits or whatever.

Q: Picking up where Mitterrand and Kohl had been.

RUEDY: I think the reasons were complex, but that was an idea that Kohl had, to strengthen relations with the French. Of course, the French-German relationship has had its effects on European politics, on NATO, relations with the U.S. So that has had far reaching consequences. I don't know how seriously the French take it. I don't know much about France, but I always had the feeling that the Germans were much more serious about it, in their German way, than the French were. The French thought if we can get something out of this, it's OK, but otherwise

Q: Were the German party people talking about the French relationship much?

RUEDY: Yes. There was a lot of discussion about it. As I say, I think the German saw this as a part of a larger plan; Kohl had his vision of a united Europe and I don't know that they thought the Brits were really on board with this, but if they could get France the two biggest economies, they could take it someplace. Especially with the reunification of Germany, that was very important to Kohl; this was a long-term strategy.

Q: In 1991 where did you go?

RUEDY: In 1991, we went back to Washington.

Q: Let's talk about your impressions of what was happening when the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait happened.

RUEDY: I was not really deeply involved with the policy in all of that. We were sort of in a reactive mode in embassy Bonn. I think there was a lot of concern about personal security, about how secure the embassy was, because we were expecting some kind of reaction as we were seeing the troop buildup and so on, and thinking what was going to happen. Some people I know even sent their children home, they were so concerned they sent them back to the U.S. We lived on a compound there and a lot of us were concerned who had children in the school. The school was right on the Rhine and it was right on the public bike path which was heavily used. There was a lot of concern about protecting the compound, protecting the embassy. I was still working in the front office, so I knew of the ambassador's concern, and DCM George Ward's concern. There was a lot of attention to security, a lot of new rules and regulations, new boundaries set up. Some of these changes had very poignant affects. My family and I attended the Protestant chapel there, the Stimson Chapel. A good number of third country nationals attended that church. As soon as security put up new checkpoints for getting onto the compound where the church was located attendance dropped because we realized a lot of the third country nationals, especially those from the Philippines, weren't properly documented so they were afraid to come through the line. There was a lot of fallout from those new restrictions. Physically we were restricted and, of course, it does something to your psyche to see all these armed people around in Germany where one normally feels extremely safe.

Q: What was the threat?

RUEDY: The threat was that the Red Army Faction or some group like that who opposed our invasion of Iraq would do something to the embassy. We had lots and lots of threats. There were multiple threats to blow up the embassy. Indeed, the embassy was attacked from across the river by a rocket propelled grenade. The Ambassador's office faced the Rhine; it was a beautiful office but very vulnerable because it faced the Rhine. This rocket propelled grenade hit a few yards down from his office. It actually hit a USIA office and did quite a lot of damage. Yes, they were serious, and I'm pretty sure that was the Red Army Faction.

Q: What was the Red Army?

RUEDY: They were left wing radicals, anarchists. They had attempted to kill a U.S. general. They were very anti-American, and would use any excuse; well, they were terrorists. One very personal example of the state of mind we were in and the lengths to which we were going to protect all of the American personnel. I got a call at probably 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning on the weekend from our DCM George Ward. He asked me if I would please get up and go into the embassy because he had been told that the embassy was going to receive a fax, I believe from the French. The fax was something that had been picked up by a Swiss shortwave radio operator and purported to be plans to deploy biological weapon against either the embassy or a target in the United States. The DCM asked me to go in and get this piece of paper and fax it to Washington to the Operations Center. When I got into the car very sleepily and pulled off of the embassy compound, I was immediately picked up and tailed by a car which had four males in it who looked to me Middle Eastern. I had no idea what was going on so remembering my defensive driving course I started driving all around. I knew the area pretty well. I started driving all around trying to lose them and eventually I thought I did. I headed straight for the embassy and it felt pretty good to get behind the doors of the embassy, the gates. The whole process of getting this fax out was a nightmare. The Marines told me in the meantime that they had just received another call from the French embassy that there was going to be an attack on the embassy in 30 minutes. You can imagine that my heart was pounding. I was trying to find a fax machine that would work in semi-darkness. I looked at the paper and it made no sense to me at all. It was obviously in Arabic and I don't read Arabic, but there were coordinates on it and it did look ominous to me. I felt like the whole state of the Western world was on my shoulders, and I needed to get this thing faxed. The first fax machine didn't work so I was at one point crawling down a dark hallway counting doors to find where I thought another fax machine was located, because part of the embassy was completely dark. I don't know if it was because of the bomb threats or whatever, but I was alone in this huge building and desperately seeking a fax machine that worked. Finally, I got it faxed off. I went home and I don't think I went to sleep. I think I was awake for the rest of the night still in the state of shock. That was a night I will never forget.

Q: Did you ever get any feedback from your four Middle Eastern types following you?

RUEDY: No. I reported it to security but I don't know what they were up to. It may have been just a coincidence; four guys were out driving around at 2:00 in the morning but I doubt it.

ANNA ROMANSKI
America House Director & Branch Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS
Berlin (1987-1991)

Born in England, Ms. Romanski was raised in England and in New Jersey. She was educated at Stanford and Yale Universities, as well as Middlebury College, where she studies the Russian language. Joining the State Department in 1974, her assignments both in Washington and abroad were primarily with USIA, serving in Public and cultural Affairs capacities. A speaker of Polish, German and Chinese, she served in Germany, Poland and China. Ms. Romanski was interviewed by

Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: Then in '87 you are off to Berlin.

ROMANSKI: Right.

Q: And you were there until when?

ROMANSKI: I was there until 1991. My assignment would normally have ended in '90, which would have made it a four-year tour, the longest allowed. However, Foreign Service Personnel made an exception for two reasons. One was that my husband managed to get an assignment for himself in Berlin, but he didn't arrive there until '88. I was allowed to extend so that our tours would end at the same time. The Foreign Service was understanding in terms of trying to keep tandems together -- it was after all the policy. Since I had transferred from Bonn to Berlin, it wasn't like five years at the same post. I was in the same country but not in the same place or position.

Q: What was your job?

ROMANSKI: In Berlin, my assignment was much more interesting. I was the America House Director and the Branch Cultural Affairs Officer. Bonn had been a very large post, perhaps 20 officers just within USIS. Berlin was much smaller in those days. There were just three officers: the Public Affairs Officer, the Information Officer and myself. I combined the functions of cultural affairs officer with the America House director job. The positions had been separate at one time, but had been downsized into just the one.

Q: Who was the head of the mission?

ROMANSKI: The Minister was Harry Gilmore.

Q: You arrived there in 87. Was there the feeling that the Germanys were going to remain separate? Or were people saying, "Oh, the wall is going to come down?"

ROMANSKI: The thing I found so astonishing when I got to Berlin and saw the wall was that nobody I knew, including people at the embassy, gave any indication that the two Germanys were going to unite and that the wall would come down. I'm very skeptical when I hear the many people who now say they knew all along that the wall would fall, that they had foreseen it. I agree that it was bound to happen sooner or later, but no one of my acquaintance, German or American, predicted that it would happen as soon as it did.

Q: I've interviewed a good number of people. One was our ambassador to East Germany at the time. He said he remembered in the spring of '89 telling his wife, "This must be the more boring job in the world." And this was just before all hell broke loose. Some people have said that Vernon Walters was saying that the situation was not going to last.

ROMANSKI: That could very well be. I knew the ambassador slightly, but we didn't have an

extensive amount of contact.

Q: This wasn't something he was announcing. But some people who knew him as DCM and all. But by other people's account, he seemed to be the one person who was raising the question.

ROMANSKI: That certainly could be. Someone at that level with a wide range of contacts who knew Germany well, as Ambassador Walters did, could very well make that claim credibly. None of the people that I knew could. I even remember the very night that the wall came down. I happened to be attending a reception at the Aspen Institute, which always attracted a good, high-level audience of researchers, think-tankers, government officials, etc. I talked to a lot of people because I had many contacts by then. Nobody gave any indication. Nobody said anything. Nobody rushed home. So, although there are all these people who claimed to know the wall was coming down, I didn't know them and I don't number in their ranks.

Q: I haven't run across any either. Well, how did you find your work in Berlin?

ROMANSKI: It was interesting. I enjoyed it. It was my largest supervisory job. The America Houses, as you probably know, have quite an interesting history. There had once been hundreds of them after World War II, because they were considered a democracy-building institution funded by the U.S. Government. However, by the mid to late '80s, their number had dwindled to only a handful and that handful was destined to dwindle still further. America Houses were once quite self-sufficient with numerous employees. They had multi-faceted operations, including their own print shops. In Berlin at this time, there were over twenty employees. I was their boss. For a short while, I even supervised an ABCAO, that is to say an Assistant Branch Cultural Affairs Officer to promote exchange programs with former East Germany.

We tried to run a fairly active program in the America House so that we could attract audiences to it. We had a library. We had the speaker program that I had run out of Bonn. It continued with someone else in charge. We had art exhibitions and various other kinds of activities. Since the building was so large, we shared it with a couple of like-minded organizations, such as one which promoted study in the United States. My job was partly administrative and partly substantive. It was busy, but a great job.

Q: Was there much contact with academic institutions there?

ROMANSKI: Yes. We had a lot of contact with the Free University of Berlin. They had a very large American Studies department called the Kennedy Institute. We programmed speakers at both the Institute and the America House to attract audiences to the facility.

Q: Were East Germans able to get across at all?

ROMANSKI: No, not before the wall came down. We never had any contact with East Germans. In fact, there was a separate USIS operation at the time over at the embassy in East Berlin. They had their own public affairs operation which included some of the same activities. We met them. Shortly after I arrived, the Cultural Affairs Officer from the East came over and introduced himself. We talked about sharing some resources, which of course mostly meant sharing my

resources since we were better funded. But I didn't mind -- I was happy to help out, plus I don't remember that we cooperated all that much.

One of the things that was interesting about Berlin in the old days was that I had quite a lot to do with the British and the French cultural officers. This harkened back to the old quadripartite days, agreements and traditions. We actually had cultural lunches. I never had more contact with cultural officer counterparts than I did in Berlin. It was encouraged. The public affairs officer, the officers in the political and economic sections -- everyone pursued his own contacts up to and including the ministers. There was a lot of official camaraderie in those days: the good old days.

I was once taken for a helicopter ride over the city by one of the political officers with liaison functions to the military. I could see the at-that-time still intact Berlin Wall dividing the city. It was a fascinating shot from the air -- even if it was not like the Great Wall of China which could be seen from space. I also visited the Berlin Documentation Center with one of our visitors. This was fascinating as well because we were shown documents on which individuals were classified according to their degree of "Aryan-ness." In other words, an individual with blond hair and blue eyes would of course be closer to the Aryan Nazi ideal than someone with dark hair and brown eyes. It was a very highly graduated system. I had never seen anything like it, but it did provide insight into Nazi thinking and record-keeping. Until the fall of the wall, we were in charge of the Documentation Center, eventually the documents were turned over to the Germans and people could file applications to see their files.

Q: Was there any feeling that you were under siege? Or had that gone away?

ROMANSKI: Going into East Berlin was never particularly pleasant. There was only one checkpoint we could use: "Checkpoint Charlie." I think there was a way of going over using the S-Bahn system, but I never did it because it was very complicated and I was afraid of somehow doing the wrong thing, getting into trouble and causing an incident. The Cold War kind of mentality still lingered.

Berlin is a very large city but we could only move around in the western part. We couldn't even drive to a city that was relatively close by -- like Hanover -- because one would have to cross East Germany to get there. Occasionally, one could develop a bit of island fever if one failed to schedule a vacation or trip to the West regularly enough.

One of the nice things that I alluded to when we were talking about Hamburg was that USIS Germany regularly arranged conferences for its officers. I've mentioned them before. These usually took place in Bonn but might occasionally be held in Berlin or at one of the other America Houses. This gave one an opportunity to get out of Berlin on official business. Otherwise, it would be vacation travel or waiting for the wall to come down, which actually happened sooner than most of us had expected.

Q: You mentioned the Aspen Institute. What was this?

ROMANSKI: Berlin was a very large city with a number of U.S. universities and similar institutions such as the Aspen Institute. Some of these organizations would try to do some of the

same things we did such as programs for opinion makers. They were not official U.S. Government entities, more like think tanks. They would cater to visiting groups. They might conduct exchange programs. We had a fair amount of contact with like-minded institutions like the Aspen Institute.

Q: A friend of mine who served with me in Belgrade, David Anderson . . .

ROMANSKI: He may have been there at the time. I have certainly met him. He later I think became the director of the Aspen Institute, didn't he?

Q: Were you getting enough funds? Charlie Wick was still in charge, right?

ROMANSKI: Well, one of the reasons why the U.S. Government had been closing America Houses was because they were extremely expensive to run. First of all, there was the facility itself, which was a fossil from the early '60s. It had been built to hold more than a hundred employees, but we were down to about 20 or so. One could rattle around in the building. It wasn't even the cost of the building itself. A lot of German towns with America Houses were so desperate to keep an American presence that they would often offer the facility rent free or for minimal rent. This didn't include the upkeep of the building of course, but at least one didn't have to pay rent for a prime downtown location.

Even this support wasn't enough because the most expensive element of the operation was not the facility itself but the German FSN staff. When I started my career in Hamburg, my first post as a junior officer, every one in the America House, no matter what his position -- and I include the janitor -- earned far more than I did. The America House in Hamburg was co-located with part of the University of Hamburg, both to cut costs and also as a natural programming venue. Hamburg University actually paid the janitor's salary.

By this time, a few promotions later, I could no longer say that I was the most poorly paid person in the America House, however the FSNs were still an enormous expense. USIS employed very well qualified FSNs for the most part, many with PhDs. Almost all of them, except for technical people, spoke fluent English. This kind of employee expected and deserved a good salary. We were paying competitive wages.

Q: How did you find the impact of technology? This was still the early days of the computer, the word processor and all.

ROMANSKI: As far as office technology went, it was still in a developmental stage. Our technology worked all right. USIS at the time was separate, so we had our own system. The part of the operation that we never were able to successfully computerize, despite numerous attempts, was the invitation and audience record retrieval system known as ARS. Although many tried, it remained a nightmare.

Q: What does ARS mean?

ROMANSKI: It's a way the government, in this case USIA, tries to demonstrate its

effectiveness. It preceded GIPRA -- I've forgotten what the acronym stands for at this point, the Al Gore initiative. Even before it had been officially launched by Al Gore or anyone else, we were constantly trying to demonstrate our effectiveness bolstered by a slew of attractive statistics. Not just anecdotes, not just hearsay such as, "I was talking with Professor Schmidt of the Free University and he said the program with Professor Jones from Georgetown was the best thing he ever went to." That's fine, but one can't quantify that. USIS officers were always trying to find ways of proving that we were successful in an effort to win minds and hearts so that we could avoid the inevitable budget cuts. However, ARS was never an effective means of doing this -- although it did soak up many man hours. In the many years of exposure that I had with the program in Germany, we never got the system to work as it was intended to do.

With ARS, we would always feed information into the system, but it would stubbornly balk at giving us anything useful in return. It was a wonderful make-work project, but a very dull one for the poor Germans who actually worked with it. This was an instance where technology failed. Ever so often someone would come in and say, "This system is worthless. We've got to overhaul it." So it would begin anew, but however good the intentions were, they never worked out.

On the speaker program, one innovation which was introduced and later abandoned -- although there had been an initial flurry of excitement -- was the so-called "electronic dialogues." These were basically trans-Atlantic telephone calls, eventually with a television connection where one could see the person via satellite link-up. These eventually developed into WorldNets, with two-way video connections. For a while, these were all the vogue. Ultimately, they did not prove as satisfying as having a live body, someone with whom one could exchange business cards or invite to lunch. Interest in WorldNets eventually died down, as is often the case with new technology.

Q: Who was coming to the America House?

ROMANSKI: It varied according to the program and the speaker. Luncheon programs were still quite popular because even busy Germans would need to take time for lunch. We would arrange a guest speaker to give a presentation over sandwiches or a simple meal. Afterwards, those who wanted could mingle and chat. These were quite successful, depending on how good the speaker was, how much of a reputation he or she had, and how many programs there were in a given month. This approach was less successful in Berlin than in Munich, because Berlin is such a large city that it is difficult to get round quickly. Geography was working against us.

Q: Let's go to the fall of 89. What were you experiencing?

ROMANSKI: It was very exciting when the wall came down. To tell the truth, as much as I enjoyed being in Western Europe, the work had gotten to be fairly boring, fairly routine after a while. It was not exciting, certainly not cutting edge, especially in a country as centralized and bureaucratic as the USIS operation in Germany tended to be. There was not a lot of initiative one could bring to the job.

All that changed once the wall came down because the country opened up. We not only could,

but we were even encouraged to travel to formerly closed cities in East Germany. We began to get lots of visitors from East Berlin visiting our library for the first time, which was much better than the small one they had at the embassy in East Berlin. It may have been almost like the old days after World War II, where there would be dozens of people in the library instead of a handful. The librarians became quite inspired. We had one library patron return a book that he had borrowed years ago before the wall had gone up. The book was no good to us any more, outdated, but it made a wonderful anecdote. I remember that we had to send the book back to USIA headquarters and it may have wound up on the Director's desk for all I know.

The fall of the wall was also very good for my German language use. Many West German contacts spoke excellent English, which meant that they would want to speak English with you. This was not the case with East Germans, who rarely knew English. This gave a good boost to my German language ability. It was stimulating to meet people who had never met an American before, who might be relatively fascinated by one. It was almost like being back in the Soviet Union again.

Another result of the fall of the wall was that Secretary of State James A. Baker started coming at least once a year. Of course, this may also have been the result of moving the capital of Germany from Bonn to Berlin. I remember a discussion I had with my senior FSN in Bonn, who was sure that they would never move the capital. I think it was just wishful thinking on his part. Unlike my Bonn FSNs, I was certain the capital would be moved to Berlin, which is much more of a capital city than Bonn. I was right. It made me glad that my analysis of a German political situation was more astute than a senior FSN, at least in this instance.

Q: Was there a quick adjustment of plans and programs?

ROMANSKI: Not really. With an operation so bureaucratic and centralized, it takes a while to adjust. It was a rather gradual adjustment. USIA decided to open a new post in Leipzig with an America House director, much like myself, who was also a Branch Public Affairs Officer. This cut off a lot of our turf. Previously, we had been the only operation in the east -- now we were only responsible for East Berlin and the northern part of East Germany. It continued to be a challenge and we tried to adjust our programming fairly quickly, but it took time. We were also trying to promote contacts between the east and the west in an American context.

Q: Were you finding through your contacts and your Foreign Service national employees that the East Germans were really a different breed of cat?

ROMANSKI: On the whole, they got along well. Probably better than West Germans meeting East Germans in general. I don't recall any great difficulties. Naturally it was an adjustment. For example, there was one person in the America House in West Berlin whose main job was providing American Studies materials to the Free University and to teachers of English and American literature in German gymnasia. She had to adjust her focus quite drastically. There weren't very many teachers of English in East Germany: the language of choice was Russian.

The East Germans tried to re-program teachers of Russian, so we would arrange programs for them. The Russian and English languages are not very similar -- nor are the literatures and

cultures. Eventually a lot of these teachers were forced to retire or were replaced by younger teachers of English language and American English. It was a gradual change. Some of the initial programs for the gymnasium teachers in former East Germany, who didn't know much about the United States and hadn't much English language, could be quite challenging and interesting.

Q: Did you get out there and hammer on the wall? Did you join in the general festivities?

ROMANSKI: Not a whole lot. The wall came down during the night and we didn't even know about it. Fortunately, we turned on the news and soon went out to mingle with the multitudes. I can definitely verify that there really was this tremendous feeling of euphoria. I can add something else, and I don't consider myself particularly prophetic, this great feeling of good will with people giving flowers to one another and streaming across the wall -- I knew that feeling could not last, that problems would arise sooner or later. It turned out to be sooner. Not in terms of U.S. relations with Germany so much, but in terms of German-German relations.

As far as hammering on the wall, we weren't allowed to (although some in the military did it). However, pieces of the wall were soon on the local market. We still have a few as souvenirs, but we bought them.

I'd like to talk a little bit more about some of the changes that occurred when the wall came down. Our status as one of the Quadripartite powers changed. We had been used to getting more invitations than one could count, even at our level. It was a very active life -- Americans were in demand. That all changed once the Wall came down. It was no longer our city. On the other hand, my husband and I really enjoyed the wonderful cultural life of Berlin, which had just been enriched by the removal of the wall. The city at the time had three opera companies, a half dozen symphony orchestras, over twenty theaters, dozens of museums. It was amazing. Since I was cultural officer, I was often able to acquire hard-to-get tickets -- not free of course, but I could at least use my connections to buy them.

Berlin had a rich and varied cultural life. It had its own Film Festival. The US Government didn't have to provide speakers because they came on their own. I remember attending an official lunch at which I recognized the film star Denzel Washington before he became a big name. I identified him by name, he heard me, came up and chatted with us briefly. My FSNs were quite thrilled even though this was before he had won an Oscar and become a big star. He was there to promote the film "Glory."

During another Festival, I remember meeting the director Oliver Stone, who was promoting his film Platoon at the Festival. He was desperate to get a glass of wine which I managed to snag for him at the heavily-attended but poorly-serviced official reception. Berlin was an interesting place to serve both before and after the wall came down, but interesting in different ways.

Q: Both in Bonn to Berlin, were you seeing a new German coming along? You know, younger people coming up who no longer remembered America's role . . . ?

ROMANSKI: That was particularly true in Berlin. Some of the old contacts remembered the days of the Berlin air lift, however, we were often dealing with people who had been born after it

had taken place. The Germans have been criticized for not teaching about the World War II years, the Hitler era and Nazi crimes very rigorously. Younger people would have no recollection of those years and, correspondingly, no particular reason to feel any kind of gratitude towards Americans. There was a memory gap. The younger generation was definitely growing up more critical of Americans than the older generation was.

In a way, it was quite ironic. Younger Germans, often rightly so, were often quite critical of Americans for historically mistreating Afro-Americans and American Indians. Nonetheless, most of them had a real blind spot with regard to their own Nazi past, about which most of them knew very little. The American TV series "Roots" was very popular in Germany, but there was nothing equivalent about the Holocaust period. It's a truism that it is far easier to be critical of other people's cultures than one's own, far easier to turn a critical eye on one's neighbor than oneself.

As I previously discussed, both the U.S. and the German governments, were trying to counter this attitude with massive exchanges of young people. The exchanges would hopefully foster positive experiences. They were trying to train cadres of people who would have good feelings about the U.S. or Germany for the future, as well as firsthand knowledge of the country. The U.S. still considered Germany its most important ally at the time, in some ways even more so than the UK.

Q: Was there any concern at the time about what would happen with Soviet troops?

ROMANSKI: Actually, there was quite a bit of concern about whether they would actually leave. I think it was the Germans who subsidized their departure, didn't they? The Soviets did not have any money to pay for their return to the USSR. Plus many of the troops did not really want to leave.

Q: They didn't?

ROMANSKI: Well, compare the lucky people who served in East Germany with those who are now serving in places like Chechnya. You could only imagine how reluctant they would be to leave. Life was good. Nothing much happened. It was light duty. There might have been very rare anti-Soviet demonstrations, but I never heard of anything very serious. Many left reluctantly. Life in the USSR was no picnic.

We had problems with our troops in those days. Officially, the Germans wanted us to stay. Unofficially, there were little tensions, little incidents. It was not regarded as an unmixed blessing.

Q: Well, of course, there was a rather major withdrawal of U.S. troops which moved via the Persian Gulf to participate in the war against Iraq and then back to the United States. How did the Gulf War play out?

ROMANSKI: I don't remember that there was a great deal of reaction against the Iraq war compared to, let's say, the Vietnam war or, I'm sure, the current Iraq war. After all, Iraq was the aggressor and had attacked Kuwait. Germany was as dependent on Middle Eastern oil as anyone

-- even more so than we were. There was interest in getting the situation resolved quickly. Germans may have thought that the U.S. made its move rather abruptly, but I remember support for this particular action. Germany was an important NATO member and NATO supported the invasion.

Q: They did. Well, you went there in 91?

ROMANSKI: Yes.

Q: And then where did you go?

ROMANSKI: I went back to Washington.

Q: What were you doing there?

ROMANSKI: I was Centers Management Coordinator. My position in Germany had actually qualified me for this assignment because I had been running a cultural center. However, in this particular position, I would have much more contact with binational centers than with U.S. Government cultural centers, however, I didn't know this at the time of the assignment.

Q: I think this is a good place to stop. We'll pick this up in 1991, when you were going to be centers management coordinator.

Q: Today is the 18th of July 2005. Anna, you were back in the department, USIA, from when to when?

ROMANSKI: I was at USIA for this Washington tour from 1991 through 1996. I was back five years. For the first for two years, I worked in the Centers Management Coordinator job. Then I switched assignments to Career and Assignments counselor in the USIA personnel division. USIA was still separate from the State Department at that time, although rumors of consolidation were rife: there were more and more as time went on. The rumors proved right.

Q: In 1991, where were the binational centers?

ROMANSKI: Most of the binational centers were located in Latin America. They still are. There were also a few in Europe -- a number of these in Germany. As we discussed earlier, after the second world war, the United States wanted to democratize Germany. We opened up a lot of U.S. Government centers at the time. There were hundreds of them originally, even in some very small towns. Naturally, most of these closed over the years. The more important ones, such as the ones in Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt or Hamburg became America Houses. There were other ones in smaller towns like Nuremburg or Kiel. The U.S. Government did not feel it was in its interest to keep up the payment on these cultural centers. However, if the Germans were willing to run them, the U.S. Government was, for a while, willing to give a certain amount of support. The arrangement changed over the years. For a while, the director was often an American director, although not a Foreign Service officer.

These centers were known as German American Institutes or GAIs for short. They basically did what America Houses did, but with a much greater emphasis on culture and, in some cases, language teaching. GAIs always had a library and the library was very important. The institutes offered student counseling services. They also did some programming on substantive issues, but they tended to prefer soft programming on fluffier issues. Many had quite active film programs. Some centers programmed music. The programming would depend on the director and his or her contacts as well as how long he or she had been in the community. The center in Cologne, for example, had a German director who was interested in art and who arranged quite wonderful exhibits but rarely featured American art, which was too difficult or expensive to get. A GAI could create its own unique profile. As the years went by and budgets grew tighter, U.S. Government support for the centers decreased until it dwindled to almost nothing except for maybe a few thousand dollars for the library so that it could keep up U.S. magazine subscriptions or purchase other items unavailable on the European market.

When I was running the speaker program out of Bonn (this likely continues to the present day), the Embassy would provide speakers to the German-American Institutes. Some of these speakers would be U.S. Government officials but most were not. Even the ambassador might visit a German-American Institute upon occasion if it suited his schedule. Some of the GAIs, for example the one in Nuremberg, became quite interested in promoting trade and developed quite a good working relationship with the Foreign Commercial Service.

Returning to the question of where we had centers, we also had a few binational centers in Pakistan of all places. When I started the assignment, I had a boss who loved binational centers because he had spent most of his career in Latin America and knew how important they were in that part of the world -- trying to counter anti-Americanism. I should explain that Latin American centers were not like the centers I have been describing in Germany. Most of them taught English -- not always terribly well but well enough to suit the local population. USIA had an English teaching cone, a corps of professional English teaching officers, who would often consult with and help the binational centers, but they would not teach at them. The U.S. Government could not afford a contribution as great as that. The English Teaching Officers might organize programs or conferences, supply text books or test materials, etc. but they wouldn't be running the show.

RICHARD C. BARKLEY
Ambassador
German Democratic Republic (1988-1990)

Ambassador Richard C. Barkley was born on December 23, 1932 in Illinois. He attended Michigan State College, where he received his BA in 1954, and Wayne State University, where he received his MA in 1958. He served in the US Army overseas from 1955-1957 as a 1st lieutenant. His career has included positions in Finland, the Dominican Republic, Norway, South Africa, Turkey, and Germany. Ambassador Barkley was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 12, 2003.

Q: Today is 11 August 2003. Dick you were at the GDR from 1988 to when?

BARCKLEY: I arrived there in 1988, but it was in late November. Then I stayed until 1990, two weeks after the unification.

Q: You were cut off without a base.

BARCKLEY: No job.

Q: You know for some people this was a great victory when the Berlin wall came down, but they didn't think about the real repercussions that follow.

BARCKLEY: Terrible professional losses. First it was one of the best embassies I have ever served, and second, personally it was the loss of an ambassadorship. They are hard to get to begin with. But I suppose those were the only marginally sad notes in an otherwise happy development.

Q: Well at least you didn't have to leave by helicopter.

BARCKLEY: That is true, eating an apple, I recall.

Q: I interviewed John Gunther Dean, and he left Phnom Penh by helicopter. Dick, 1988, you had been confirmed. What were you gathering, you had been obviously involved in the German process, but you had been out of it for awhile.

BARCKLEY: Yes, for three years.

Q: How did we view East Germany and all, I mean what was sort of our policy and our thinking?

BARCKLEY: Well if we had a view of East Germany it was uniformly negative. The idea of trying to stimulate any policy engagement in that area was always doomed to failure from the start. There were a number of issues, of course, that over the years we had flailed away on. Of course we didn't have relations until 1974, and so by the time I arrived it had been 13 years into things. I was the sixth ambassador replacing Frank Meehan who was probably one of the premier experts in East-west and particularly German affairs. Before him had been Roz Ridgeway, who of course then went on to become Assistant Secretary of State. One of the things we had focused on for a long time was to try and get the East Germans to recognize their responsibilities for the holocaust and for Jewish claims. Of course many of the survivors were still living in the United States, but the whole issue had a much broader constituency in the sense that obviously we felt that the West Germans had met their obligations, or had tried to meet their obligations, and the East Germans had always rejected any responsibility. The East Germans claimed that they too were the victims of Fascism and the very success of East Germany as a state ruled out any responsibility for the holocaust. But that wasn't uniformly true of course, as large numbers of the East German government had been in fact Nazis, so they had just not met their obligation. So we

flailed away on that front for a long time. The East Germans of course, were looking for trade advantages. There was some talk at one time, particularly during the earlier stages of Roz's tour, of trying to work out some sort of deal of trade improvements for payments, but it never really came to anything. There was never any constituency that was in favor of any kind of engagement in East Germany. The feeling all along was that we would allow the West Germans to dictate policy in that area, and we would happily follow suit. So when I arrived, although it was an area that I had spent a lot of time in, there was neither much knowledge about it or any sympathy for it in terms of the American body politic. In fact it was extraordinarily difficult to find anybody who ever had been there, except as a tour from West Berlin.

Q: Checkpoint Charlie.

BARKLEY: Yes, the Checkpoint Charlie thing. Of course the wall went up in '62 and had been one of the constant reminders of the character of communist regimes. Without any question, there was an understanding that East Germany was the jewel in the Soviet crown. That its economy was viewed to be infinitely more successful than that of any of the eastern European countries. They exported an awful lot to the Soviet Union. More importantly the Soviet's advanced to the Elbe via their positions in East Germany, and that is the farthest Russian advance into the center of Europe for a long time. You have to go back to the Napoleonic wars for that one. The GDR also was viewed as consistently loyal to the Soviet Union and all of its major policy lines. Which was true. There were certain variations on that theme, but the fact was there was no constituency in the United States I think that supported warming of any kind of relations or even engaging them very effectively.

Q: In the first place, you said there were Nazis in the government. I mean we were sitting on the Berlin document center which is a tremendous mother lode of material. Did you have pretty good information about some of the people?

BARKLEY: Oh I think so. No question the vast majority were old line communists, who also were engaging in a number of things that were below the belt by civilized standard. But there was an attempt to try and bring some old Nazis in. The fact that it was a political party that was part of a National Front, the Front being of course just that, for the Social Unity Party, the East German communist party. But I think we were very reluctant to use the Berlin document center because so many West Germans were in there and you never certainly wanted to let that out. The German propensity, which we found out was continued by the Stasi, for documenting all of their sins is an incredible thing. So the document center was a very touchy issue.

Q: Well then what did you all, you have the accepting partial responsibility as a German entity for the Holocaust. Did that go anywhere while you were there?

BARKLEY: No. The ministry with which we discussed this knew that this was one of the items of interest to the United States, so they didn't want to shut it down completely. What they wanted to do was make us think they were seriously engaged and try to throw out more kinds of sweeteners with the enticement that sooner or later they are going to come around. But it wasn't only us. The international Jewish committee also engaged with them. Edgar Bronfman met with them and came away convinced that they wanted to do the right thing, whatever that was.

American Jewish committees were interested in trying to get them to do something more. It certainly was an issue deeper than just money. We are not talking about a great deal of money, but it was, for International Jewry and for American participants, I think it was the recognition all of the German people bore responsibility for what had happened. That had to be recognized. There were important psychological dimensions to this whole thing.

Q: Were you and your officers able to get around East Germany?

BARLEY: Yes, it was rather remarkable actually. There were a number of things that were going on. One is, is that nobody had any illusions about the influence of the American Embassy in East Berlin. Actually I was there when we established relations with them in 1974. We made the decision early on is that after recognition we were not going to hide under a bushel. We were the most powerful nation on the face of the earth, and our embassy should reflect that. No one anticipated trying to compete with the Soviet, who were not only in an Embassy but were sort of Proconsulate, but we wanted to be *primus inter pares* on all the rest. So we put together a very nice embassy. It was located in downtown Berlin. There was a long discussion whether or not we should this because we never recognized Berlin as part of the German Democratic Republic. But the only alternative was to put it someplace like Potsdam which meant that the administrative problems would be enormous for we would spend all our time on the road going from one place to another. So there was a long discussion on what we would call our Embassy. We called it the American Embassy **to** Berlin. We were not ready to say it was the American **in** Berlin. We were the American Embassy responsible for relations **to** the German Democratic Republic, not **in** the German Democratic Republic. That was a nicety that we followed a little bit more strenuously than the French and the British. But nonetheless we established an Embassy. It did not have any attachés because of the demilitarized status of Berlin. It was almost strictly a political reporting position. We did have, of course, USIS. We had a Commercial Attaché and an Agricultural Attaché, but their responsibilities were not very broad. So mostly it was a political and economic reporting post. Interestingly my move there seemed to coincide with a sudden disappearance of the old German hands. After the embassy in Bonn changed hands in 1985; Richard Burt came in and wanted to make a new start, and not have the burden of all the old guys hanging around. So it happened that East Berlin usually ended up with most of the people with a deep expertise on what was going on in Germany. Frank Meehan as my predecessor had as his deputy, Alan Thompson, who was a very experienced German hand. As political counselor he got Jonathan Greenwald who then stayed on with me. Jonathan and I had served together in Berlin in the 70's. He was very energetic and intellectual kind of an officer. So it turns out that much of the expertise on Germany, historically, was in our embassy in East Berlin. The same thing continued after Richard Burt left, our ambassador in West Germany, and was replaced by Vernon Walters. He had no experience in Germany. So he instituted a lot of procedures that changed the precedents we had established over many years, including, I am afraid to say, he altered the status of our operation in West Berlin. Where in the past, our minister in West Berlin had been in charge of all policy, he changed it so that a lot of the policy decisions were in the hands of the Commandant, a military position, which had been always just strictly a military position. So there were shifts in what was going on in inter German affairs from the stand point of American diplomacy. I landed right at that particular time. I did have long term effects on how things happened subsequently.

Q: What was your relationship to West Berlin mission.

BARKLEY: Well I am happy to say the minister in West Berlin was Harry Gilmore, who was not only a competent officer but a very good friend. We had very good relationships. Our relationship with Bonn was cordial. We didn't have at the time I arrived, any particular policy problems with them. In time, of course, once East Berlin became the focus of international attention, there was always a little bit of unhappiness in Bonn who was used to being the filter through which everything passed. General Walters was an experienced man at diplomacy, although he had not had any experience in German issues. German affairs were uniquely complex, at that time. You start tinkering with procedures which we had established over the years and you can look for interesting challenges.

Q: I noticed, I was interviewing somebody who was with Vernon Walters around this time. I can't remember his or her name, but was saying Vernon Walters, wonderful storyteller, very experienced and all, but wasn't a deep thinker or somebody who you know, thought strategically. His talents lay in language and...

BARKLEY: Well, he certainly had dramatic talents in language. He was also a man of enormous self confidence. I never witnessed any sense of doubt in his positions. But in terms of what we were engaging in, he certainly didn't have any experience. I think he had considerable experience in places like Brazil. Of course France is the place where he wanted to be. That was his first language, although god, I don't know how many languages he had. He spoke quite good German. He got that from his nanny as a boy. But it was interesting he was a man who really preferred to talk rather than to listen. It was an interesting thing, because you and I know you have to listen a lot.

Q: How did you view the political situation in East Germany? When one looks back in history, a huge slice of what had traditionally been Germany was handed over to Poland and all. Was this anything that was wrangling among the East German population?

BARKLEY: You know that there had been a major adjustment of the territory of Germany as a result of WWII. The partitions of Poland, going way back to Frederick the Great, was such that one was never quite sure whether Silesia was Polish or German. Of course as the very strange position of Eastern Prussia is difficult for people today to understand. In any event we ended up with the Oder, Neisse line dividing Poland and Germany. Nonetheless, what the Mark of Brandenburg then known as Prussia, as well as Saxony and Thuringia were new in the eastern sector. Now those states had been dynamic players in German history, and of course the fact that Berlin, as capital, was the hub of all of Germany. Those post WWII Berlin zones were located strictly within what was the Soviet Sector which became the German Democratic Republic. This is a constant source of problems for us, and indeed it became the bellwether for U.S. relations during the cold war. So it was a very strange composite. It is interesting that once the West Germans decided to recognize the reality of East Germany by introducing its Eastern policy, one of the first things they did was to work out border arrangements with Poland, to recognizing the permanency of the border. Strangely enough they negotiated the legitimacy of that border although East Germany not them shared it with Poland. The idea met with enormous opposition in the West German refugee groups. But they did all any way. It was dramatic politics at that

time. Happily it coincided with our own policy of détente at that time. Nonetheless, East-West relations blew hot and cold as you know. I noticed many times that Poles would show up in East Germany, before and after the fall of the wall, were met with a certain contempt from the East Germans. There is a strange terminology that they used. If they want to put someone down, they call it *Polnische Wirtschaft*, which means Polish economy. Which is comparable to our term of “Chinese fire drill”. But the contempt for them was quite high. Of course at that time, things were already changing in Poland, so the whole east European scene was shifting. One wasn’t quite certain where that was going.

Q: Well were we looking at, as political officers, were we looking at were there sort of unspoken divisions within East Germany? I mean the border people, did they think more differently than the ones to the west?

BARKLEY: If so we certainly didn’t spot that. What we did spot, which turned out to be of infinitely greater interest was when I was there, were the first murmurings of Glasnost coming out of Russia. Traditionally the East Germans always looked to the Russians to see which way the wind was blowing. But at the same time the government was unnerved by the prospect of more openness to East German society. They felt they were too vulnerable. Of course what followed after that was Perestroika, and the East Germans had real trouble with that too, claiming that indeed they had instituted Perestroika much earlier. In fact in the 70’s they went through a thing called *Erneuerung*, which means renewal, but the idea was to restructure their economy. In fact of course the activity was never particularly successful although it was more successful there than in other eastern European countries. But nonetheless, it was still basically a command economy, where the Central Committee allocated resources to the economy. Of course there were enormous distortions. We weren’t fully aware how deep those distortions were until the Wall came down.

Q: This is one of the things that one can’t help. Certainly Soviet hands always ask. I mean we knew the economy was lousy, but we didn’t realize, or we just couldn’t conceive that it was so poor.

BARKLEY: You know I always said when I was there, that whenever we got visitors it was important to find out from whence they came. If the visitors were coming from Moscow through Warsaw to East Germany, that was one thing. If they went from Paris through West Berlin to East Germany it was another. In other words, coming out of Moscow and Warsaw, East Germany looked like a dynamic economy. Things were infinitely more rational than they were in these other areas. There was the appearances of progress at many levels. And of course international economists were also buffaloed by East Germany’s cooking of the books, as we found out subsequently. But I remember in the 70’s when I was watching East Germany, the general feeling was the standard of living in East Germany was higher than the standard of living in Britain. Of course it was all junk. Somewhere along the line the economic indices that international economists use came to that conclusion. There was no question that if you were there over those 15 years you saw progress on a whole number of levels. One of the things I think, that made it very difficult for us to understand what was going on, is the very fact that the East Germans had participated in the 750th anniversary of the founding of Berlin. In preparation for that they put an enormous amount of resources into Berlin. So East Berlin all of a sudden

started to look fairly snazzy. We were all somewhat impressed by that. I remember meeting with Hans Brütigam who was at that time the Permanent Representative of West Germany in Berlin. He said, "I have this problem with my analysts. Half of them believe that they are making progress and moving ahead, and the other half don't. But I will tell you just looking around that indeed they have progressed." I came to that same conclusion. It was an erroneous conclusion at many levels, but it was one that I think was generally accepted in 1988.

Q: This happened throughout the entire west looking at the east. I mean you were seeing only one part of it, but we weren't seeing what amounted to a collapse in the economy.

BARKLEY: I think that is true. In some respects they had. They had patched the collapse, put a Potemkin village in front of the collapse and it is very hard. Of course the East German economy was tied very much to the eastern European economy and particularly to the Russians. So a collapse in any of these had obviously impacts on the others. But at the same time, you have to realize that the East Germans had also become rather adept at securing hard currency from West Germany. A lot of that hard currency was put to fairly good use in making it appear that things were better than they were.

Q: Well I am an old Yugoslav hand, and had jealousy a new class pretty much developed in East Germany. I mean was there a communist elite of everybody...

BARKLEY: Well I think at that time too it was something that we often talked about. That the construction of the Wall back in '62, literally gave East Germans two options. One option was to accept it and make the best of things, or the other one was to fight against it and end up in Bautzen prison. The vast majority basically tried to come to grips with these realities because of course the East German government buttressed by the Russians gave them no other options. So a lot of them went to work. After all they were Germans for goodness sakes. They did fairly well in certain areas, but many of them opted out of the political system, and the Wall in many respects delegitimized the East German government. There is something that the East Germans never wanted to acknowledge, but there were large numbers of people who lived their lives fully divorced from political activities. It is what one of the East German, Gunther Gaus, who was the head of Permanent Representation for a long time, called society of Niches, where people lived in their little corners but had no particular reference to anything else. Of course what made it extremely difficult to do anything effectively was the looming presence everywhere of the Secret Service, the Stasi. They had representatives everywhere trying to ferret out dissidents or whatever. Except for a couple of writers who were quite courageous, most people just kept their mouths shut and did their jobs.

Q: Well the influence of the Stasi, were the Stasi giving you all a rough time?

BARKLEY: Well we knew they were there. What we never quite knew of course is which members. I mean we worked on the assumption that every East German that worked in the Embassy, as a driver or a gardener or whatever, worked for the Stasi. Now whether he was the head of the Stasi or whether he was what they call a Mitarbeiter, somebody that just contributed now and then, we were never quite sure. So there were no illusions on the part of the Embassy. Nonetheless the fact that they work for you made it extremely difficult. So we tried to hire third

country nationals at many levels, and we made the interior of our embassies as leak proof as we could by not allowing East German nationals to ever penetrate it. But of course they did. I don't think that they penetrated us any better than they penetrated the West Germans for they were everywhere. The Stasi were an overwhelming presence in this society. It was much like the Gestapo. It was a terrifying presence.

Q: Well did you look upon the Stasi as a political entity? Because the KGB you know, very much a player in the politics of the Soviet Union other than just being a control apparatus.

BARKLEY: The Stasi were run by a fellow named Mielke. Mielke was an old line communist and a brute. I mean he probably engaged in murder for the Communist Party as a youth. The more sophisticated part of the Stasi, the foreign branch was run by Marcus Wolfe. Wolfe became the prototype for the brilliant but somewhat perverted Eastern European intelligence specialist. Indeed he was brilliant. He put together Stasi elements abroad that brought, and particularly in West Germany. They penetrated Bonn almost every level of society. The kinds of reports that went back and forth were really quite complete. It was astonishing what they knew about everybody. It is also astonishing in the final analysis how unimportant it was.

Q: This is the whole idea. This whole intelligence game, well you know when you add it up..

BARKLEY: Intelligence feeds the political apparatus. If the political apparatus fails, the intelligence doesn't help them very much. Yes, it is quite astonishing I think when you see how things actually turned out. But the whole leadership, (Mielke was over 80) the whole leadership of East Germany was quite aged. They had become rather inept at recruiting a younger cadre who were sufficiently imaginative. As we subsequently discovered, when Honecker and others left, the people that followed them really had no idea what was going on. They were the children of the Apparatchiks and they came out of the system and had no idea what the world was really like.

Q: Well you know I have talked to people who have served in Poland from the 70's on. You know they more or less say they were convinced that there were probably three or four dedicated communists in the whole government, the whole society. How did you find, was communism itself, I mean were the people were fervent communists or was this...

BARKLEY: It is very hard actually to say how fervent they were but certainly they were disciplined. At international conferences the Poles or the Czechs would often come to us, look at the East Germans, and say you have got to watch out for these guys; they actually believe what they are saying. Whether they believed what they were saying or not, they certainly knew what were expected of them. If anyone wanted to find out what the Party was saying, they simply had to read Neues Deutschland, which was the party organ. It was all in there. What was remarkable about the party is how little they actually learned over the course of the years. They kept mouthing all of these Marxist Leninist slogans. One for example, that I recall was their refusal to raise the price of bread because if they did they believed that they would have riots in the streets. So they kept the price of bread so low, it distorted almost everything else in the economy. It came to a point where bread was so cheap that farmers would buy it to feed their pigs. Well this is not a rational behavior in any economy, but it became such an article of faith at the top that the

price of bread was the indicator of whether the masses would support you or not, that they couldn't alter it. And that happened throughout. Honecker personally tried in some respects to become a more acceptable, rational leader. He came out of a very traditional Communist background, out of Saarland and of course, went through the Second World War. There is always a lot of questions as to whether or not he stayed true to his faith. But all of these guys came in in 1948, many of them were returnees from Moscow, Communists who left Germany because they were being persecuted and ended up in Moscow. Many of them experienced the horrors of Stalin. Some of them even lost their parents to the purges. But by the time they came back, they were pretty heavily indoctrinated. Ulbricht was one of the first old line Stalinists to return. Nonetheless, Honecker, particularly, wanted desperately to be considered to be a reasonable player, particularly in the West. He consistently tried to maintain a level of engagement that in the last analysis came back to haunt him. But one shouldn't forget that in 1987, Erich Honecker was invited as a State Visitor to West Germany and was lauded at that time as one of the more reasonable Eastern European leaders. Two years later he was considered the last Stalin. So things had shifted dramatically.

Q: My good friend worked for a German woman while he got his doctors degree at Frankfurt University when I was in Frankfurt back in the 50's. One of the jokes, just after the fall of East Berlin, the whole collapse of East Germany was the German government was going to give Honecker an award for keeping East Germany away from West Germany for 40 years.

BARCKLEY: Yes, well, of course, there was a lot of that. They are still going through some growing pains on the unification thing.

Q: Did you get any, what were the dynamics, I mean were there any dynamics when you arrived? I mean obviously you arrived just before that most miraculous year of 1989. When you arrived was it pretty much a static situation?

BARCKLEY: Well they were trying to maintain it as a static situation. In other words they were trying to isolate themselves from things that were happening in Hungary and in Poland and in other places. Things were also happening in Czechoslovakia by the way. Certain people were battenning down the hatches. The trauma of course was what was going on in Russia. Once Gorbachev realized that the continuation of the Russian system meant that they were becoming increasingly less competitive with the West. You know their economy was in terrible shape. How do you revitalize it? I mean the problem with any kind of command system is that people become corrupted by it. That was certainly true in the Brezhnev era. I mean the only area in which they were able to maintain any competitive levels was in military hardware. They put so much into it that the rest of the economy suffered terribly. So there was all of a sudden Gorbachev faced with his terrible dilemma, how do you revitalize without junking the communist system, and what will be the impact of a revitalization, whether you call it Glasnost, or Perestroika, or whatever, on the other elements of the Soviet economy. In certain areas rather than throw glasnost and perestroika out, they tolerated new movements. They tolerated them in Poland, and in Hungary. The East Germans saw what happened in Poland and Hungary and feared a similar loss of control.

Q: What were you seeing happening? I am talking about early on when you arrived there, in

Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia.

BARKLEY: Well Poland of course already had its dynamic with Solidarnosc which goes back to the early 80's. Lech Walesa was increasingly popular. Jaruzelski came in as sort of an interim figure. He was military figure who was supposed to have the ability to reach out to more nationalistic Poles. It turns out he wasn't very effective in doing that. Many of the things that go on in Poland, elections, etc. were never reported in East Germany. There were a lot of things they were trying to isolate themselves from. What they didn't know at that time, of course, was that what was happening in Hungary would have a dramatic impact in their own ability to maintain control. I presented my credentials in early December. I must tell you I was a little bit anxious. Being the last Reagan career appointee, and a U.S. election coming up with no way to know which way things were going, I wanted to get myself established as soon as possible.

Q: The election had already taken place.

BARKLEY: The election had taken place, but we didn't know where the new administration was headed. Would they want to have their own people? It was quite clear that the careerists were safer than others, but nonetheless, the administration may want to have their own people on station.

Q: So actually it was when the Bush administration took over, it wasn't really that friendly to the Reagan appointees.

BARKLEY: Well I can't address that specifically, but I want to be quite clear, every administration wants to define itself. I don't know that there was any tension. I always thought that President Bush had an extraordinarily high regard for President Reagan. I believe he does to this day. Reagan had deep skills as we all now know. But certainly there was going to be a change in the diplomatic structure, and they were going to get people in who were part of their team, not part of the previous team. But that usually happens among political appointees, in London, Paris, Rome, all of the lovely diplomatic spots. And indeed it did, but it was not an ugly transition that I am aware of.

Q: No, I was saying I thought there was, I mean I have talked to people who felt there was not as friendly a transition as you might think.

BARKLEY: Well I suppose that may have been the case, but I did not feel it where I was.

Q: Maybe that was in Washington.

BARKLEY: No the head hunters were the ones of course, because there were a lot of payoffs. There always is in the political system.

Q: Well anyway you presented your credentials. How did that go?

BARKLEY: I presented them in December, and I was received by Erich Honecker. I had never met Honecker before, but it turns out that he knew quite a lot about me because I had been doing

a lot of things in East Germany over the years.

Q: The Stasi.

BARKLEY: The dossier I am sure was quite thick. He was very friendly actually. He was 76-77 years old, looked extraordinarily fit. A little guy. He had a sense of humor. He was inordinately proud of what he had achieved. A little peacock of a man, but he wasn't boastful. He went through a rather extensive litany of what they had achieved. I told him that from the time I first came over in the 70's that East Berlin looked incredibly different. Indeed it had. He was very proud of that. It was slightly an open secret that one of the things that Honecker wanted more than anything else was to be invited as a legitimate head of government to Washington. Well there was no likelihood of that happening. Nonetheless hope springs eternal. And of course if he felt that he could ever be accepted there, after having been accepted in Bonn, his status would be forever imprinted in the history of East Germany. So he was very congenial, but at the same time of course unwilling to make any kind of gestures that would allow anything in terms of forward motion. But more importantly there were no constituencies anywhere in the United States that supported anything like that. But he was very friendly. We had a very long talk. I guess almost an hour. We sat there and chatted about a number of things. As I didn't have any arrows in my quiver, in particular, I talked with him about the importance of getting rid of the Jewish claims issue and that there might be things we could do on the margins in terms of trade. I really had no ammunition. But nonetheless of course it is always interesting for you to meet the head of government, in this case also the head of state, of a country to which you are assigned. He looked remarkably healthy at that time. I think other journalists who had come over to see him had said the same thing.

They had started to give some interviews to western journalists. I think Jim Hoagland who I have always thought was one of the premier foreign policy analysts met with him. Most of them came away thinking there is not much here. Nonetheless, as I said, he was very cordial. It turns out subsequently that he went out of his way to be quite nice. Shortly after I was there, about three weeks after I was there, they had their annual diplomatic New Years Eve reception. I had picked up a leaf from Louis Lerner's notebook in Norway, and arranged to have a couple of American turkeys brought over to be presented for of course the holidays. I gave one to Honecker and I gave one to Fischer, who was the Foreign Minister. Well the New Year's reception came up and there was a huge group of people and everybody looking around to see who was going to be talking to the top man. I was over chatting with some of my colleagues. Pretty soon the chief of protocol came over and said to me, "Herr Honecker would like to talk to you." Well I think that he had already talked to the Soviets. So the first Westerner he selected was me. Of course everybody, just like Kremlinologists used to do, wondered what is going on here. So I went over, we chatted a little bit. He said, "I specifically wanted to thank you for sending that turkey." He said, "My cook couldn't find an oven big enough for it, and so they had to take it to some restaurant in town. But without question that was the most delicious thing I have ever eaten." I said, "American turkeys are considered to be the Marilyn Monroe of fowl." He burst into peals of laughter at that reference. Of course the whole room sort of quieted down. They were wondering what in the hell is going on between the American ambassador and Honecker. Anyway, he went through the whole thing and it was very nice. We had a nice talk and that was it. But the whole subject material was indeed this Christmas gift. As you can imagine my

colleagues all jumped on me afterward and wanted to know what the hell that was all about. I tried to convince them that indeed it was nothing more than a discussion of American turkeys. That was one of the more interesting interludes I had at the beginning.

Q: Did you have contact with the Soviets?

BARCKLEY: Oh yes.

Q: How did that go?

BARCKLEY: Well the Soviet's name was Kochimov. He was an old line Soviet apparatchik, who had that I am aware of, no knowledge at all of Germany or anything else. When I was making my calls he was very nice, took me into this cavernous kind of embassy which was typically Soviet with heavily polished floors and very little furniture. We went up to his quarters and he served lunch. We had a very nice time, but it was extraordinarily difficult because he spoke only Russian, and of course I was holding my conversations mostly in German. The interpreter was German to Russian etc. It turned out that his second in command was indeed the guy who really did the work. He spoke very good German and was a very congenial kind of diplomat.

Q: Well I mean, particularly something like the German mission there, we are talking about the end of 1988, that you would have almost a new breed of Soviet diplomats that was beginning to think differently. Maybe the people to East Germany weren't of that breed.

BARCKLEY: Well it was always interesting. During my German exposure, the most sophisticated members of the Russian embassy were always KGB. Some of them were very nice.

Q: Did you meet any by any chance?

BARCKLEY: Yes. A guy I used to see a lot of times in West Berlin in 1974 at the request of the Station was a fellow by the name of Leonid Taranichev. He was extraordinarily sophisticated and used to complain about how badly the East Germans treated them. He spoke very good German and moved very easily throughout the other side. There was always the feeling that they didn't have to do what the rest of us did because the East Germans came to them to tell them, or what is my guidance or what should I do. There were clearly arguments going on between the East German government and the Russians on how to handle glasnost and perestroika without releasing here movements that you can't control.

Q: Were you getting good information from your other colleagues and yourself and all about what was going on in the Soviet Union because I mean this was pretty revolutionary.

BARCKLEY: What has always astonished me Stuart, is how little western missions know about anything. With the exception of the French and the British, even the Germans are sometimes cut out. These missions do not have the responsibilities that we do. American embassies are almost always the best informed. The kinds of things that we got from Russia and our embassy in Russia was infinitely better than anything that they had been given. Of course nobody in our embassy in

Moscow knew exactly what was happening either. After the fact, of course, there are all of these experts out there. But at that time, there weren't. We did know of course the importance for Gorbachev for his reforms to succeed. We also knew that there were a number of people in East Germany, particularly at the universities and the churches, that were hoping that the examples of glasnost and perestroika would be picked up in East Germany. They were constantly told, "no this doesn't pertain to us." It doesn't have to happen here for we have already made the necessary reforms. Of course we didn't foresee what was going to happen. There are a lot of academicians that after the fact tell us we should have but we didn't.

Q: I think this was a major turning point and it happened without all of the professionals looking at this across the board within countries concerned, and it happened without really...

BARKLEY: I think we were caught in the same sort of dilemma that they were. We were children of the cold war and presumed a division along these lines was a rather permanent feature. I never saw anybody in the time I was there who expected the wall to come down. Certainly President Reagan called for it to be taken down, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this Wall." But the consequences of it were something I don't think any of us were particularly prepared to really envision. And of course the Russians and the East Germans say the Wall will stay as long as the reason it was constructed is there. Honecker was talking about 50 or 100 years. Well he didn't know any more than the rest obviously.

Q: You were talking about the infusion of western money in hard cash into East Germany. I understand the West Germans essentially ransoming a lot of family unifications, getting East Germans coming to West Germany.

BARKLEY: Well one of the most prestigious positions in East Germany at that time was the guy who was in charge of trying to get hard currency into the country. His name was Schalk. A horrible man, but one particularly adept at getting hard currency. It flowed at almost every possible level. One of them was through a large number of people that the West purchased from East German jails. A large amount of money went that way. Large amounts of money went through the churches. Of course ever since Bismarck, German churches have always got their money from the government. So Government money was sent to East German churches for rebuilding and sustaining the churches. However hard currency came in, the task of this guy Schalk was to grab hold of it, absorb it so the East Germans could buy important items for their economy or whatever it was. Of course they made a lot of trade arrangements too. Schalk was known to have ongoing relations with the then President of Bavaria, Hans Joseph Strauss. Large amounts of money were transferred for a whole variety of reasons where the idea was the currency would come back to buy West German hardware or goods. So as the inter German relationship heated up there was a great exchange of money. Then one of the ironies is that West Germans would send a lot of hard currency to relatives in East Germany. The hardest thing was to get hold of that money because of course there was a huge black market in which things would go on. So the East Germans opened up hard currency shops. The people who had relations in West Germany were better off than anybody else. But one of the obligations of communist membership was that you could not accept hard currency from abroad. Members of the communist party were disadvantaged in that they couldn't actually join the fun. So there was a whole variety of different classes of citizenship. Those who had access to hard currency could

use the hard currency shops and get all of the western goods.

Q: Did the soviet army play, I mean were they just sort of sitting there, or were they a factor or were they over the horizon as far as...

BARKLEY: Well of course there was a very large and well equipped and well trained East German army. But the East German army was dedicated specifically to Warsaw Pact activities. They also had a very large police force. Then they had the Stasi and a group of laborites who were armed called the Arbeiterbrigaden. So there were a lot of instruments of control in East Germany. As it turned out they weren't particularly effective. The Soviets of course ever since Hungary and the Prague spring understood that if you are going to crush any kind of a movement there is a huge price to pay. It came quite clear that if they were called upon to do that, that would be the end of Gorbachev's experiment in openness. So the Russian army which was there in force basically stayed in their garrisons almost all the time I was there. They had training exercises, but did not intervene in political development.

Q: Were we able to have attachés? Could we look at, I mean did we see the East German military apparatus as being a power unto itself or...

BARKLEY: There were a number of ways that we did this. One is that out of the occupation zones of WWII came so-called MLMs, military liaison missions. Every one of the occupying powers had the right to keep a military mission in the zone of the others. Our Military Liaison Mission was located in Potsdam, and they had the right to move freely in what was the old Soviet zone of East Germany. The reason the Russians let this continue is they had their own MLM's in the British, French, and American zones. They got a lot of information they wouldn't have gotten normally, so they knew that if they closed this operation down they would lose their access to our information. So our guys moved fairly freely. They did some strange things. I think most of our information came through technical means and we had a general understanding of what was going on. Traditionally military attachés are more limited in their activities in eastern Europe than MLM's would be as we had a pretty good idea of what was going on on the ground.

Q: Well we didn't see the German high command of their military as being a political entity.

BARKLEY: Well the politburo member and minister of defense were political people. The generals that were there obviously were highly trained and loyal to the regime. Kessler was defense minister while I was there.

Q: Well in the Soviet Union the military I gather it was there, it was loyal, but up to a, I mean it was a force to be reckoned with, and any political leader in the Soviet Union had to be very careful around the military.

BARKLEY: I don't pretend to be an expert in Soviet things. I do know of course that they had political commissars that were attached to the military and indeed there had been purges during that the Stalin era. And of course you know coming out of WWII the Russians had a huge army. But Stalin I think really did put the fear of God in them. What the interaction there was I don't know. Quite clearly the Russian body politic maintained a very large and quite effective military

force. By definition that would indicate they had some political say in what was going on. Probably not in excess.

Q: But we were never thinking in terms of...

BARKLEY: No we were never thinking in terms of independent Soviet military force in East Germany. Never.

Q: What about we went through the Helsinki accords, and in many ways the most obscure part of this was not the settlement of borders and all that, but it was the freedom of movement of so called third basket which was the seed of much of what happened in Czechoslovakia and other places. Did that have any resonance in East Germany?

BARKLEY: No. I mean the people who were allowed to travel, did the traditional kind of thing. They kept their relatives home. It was a question of hard currency. They didn't get any hard currency unless they had someone. Of course they allowed the travel of all of their senior citizens, hoping they would stay because of course then they wouldn't have to take care of them. But they did allow an enormous amount of travel generally to the East. Every German has the Wanderlust; they just love to travel. That was one of the difficult problems in later days is they all traveled east. They would go to Romania to the Black Sea. Czechoslovakia and Hungary were great destinations. Often they would encounter western tourists there who had much better accommodations because they had the hard currency which these countries wanted. But most all of the tourist travel was east.

Q: What about while you were there the influence of West German media and Voice of America and all that? Were the people pretty well informed?

BARKLEY: The active media was mostly West German. When I was there no Americans were stationed permanently in Berlin. They had stringers there, but reporters covering Germany were all based in Bonn. Of course they came to Berlin, and many of them would try to come over. The West German media was quite active. There were certain standards of behavior that the East Germans expected. There was this one fellow I remember who was with one of the major German channels, Lothar Loewe. He got himself crosswise with the East Germans. He had very good access to large numbers of people in East Germany, but he used the term "shooting people down at the wall like rabbits" or something like that. They wouldn't let him in for awhile. They gave him a long hard time. Of course much of the reportage that was coming from West German were sources who lived close to the wall, and could pick things up but did not have to go into East Germany. Like every other press, there was conservative press, and liberal press, all of those different groups. The more conservative groups were more hard line towards what was going on in East Germany; the more liberals were following SPD lines and claiming that a loosening between the two people was a good thing per se.

Q: Were American tourists able to go into East Germany?

BARKLEY: Every now and then they would come in. They could go through Checkpoint Charlie. There were procedures that were developed over the years. I mean for example, when I

went through Checkpoint Charlie, all I had to do was simply flash my passport. They could not touch a diplomatic passport. American civilians could go through and many of them did. In fact a large number of U.S. military would go through. They would buy bread at a penny a loaf. They also were purchasing a large amount of groceries and things in East Germany. It became an embarrassment actually, but they did that, and they had the right of access under the four power guarantees of free access. So there was a lot of movement back and forth. The guidance was if you get into trouble you must demand a Soviet officer. You could not talk to the East Germans. That would be a form of recognition.

Q: Well then how did things begin to play out when you were there?

BARKLEY: Well, I recall a number of things. During the first couple of months, there was no indication that there was any shifts of any magnitude going on. I spent much of that time making my protocol visits, not only to the diplomatic corps, but also with members of the politburo. It was always fascinating because these are the names of people I knew. But in some respects, the most interesting thing, of course, was to go into the provinces, because you began to realize that that is where the local governors, the local party chiefs actually held sway. So I did a lot of that. I did a lot of things, and I picked up certain things I didn't know. I mean, obviously, there was life beyond the capital, beyond the beltway if you will. Some of it was really quite interesting. They were experimenting in cultural things, for example I met with number of university people. I had a very good staff who set up really very good meetings. It didn't take long for the university types to let you know that the party line was not to their liking. None of them would go so far as to say that, or talk in terms of unification etc., but they were all quite hopeful that Glasnost would be extended to them.

Q: Well, they were followed?

BARKLEY: Yes, by party apparatchiks. I remember going to Mecklenburg and meeting with Werner Eberline. He was an old Soviet émigré whose father had been killed by Stalin. He liked to engage in conversation, but he was rather unbending, although every now and then he would show flashes of insight and humor. It was very useful for me because it gave me a broader feeling of the country other than what you had in Neues Deutschland. I do recall that one of the more interesting things was the so called diplomatic hunt. This is a great tradition actually where the entire politburo and members of the local establishment would go out and shoot rabbits in the outback. It was a tradition, an old German, almost pagan, tradition in that you blow horns for the hunt and you sing the songs of the hunt etc. It was alive and well in East Germany. They invited the diplomats along. I remember it was delayed for awhile, but by the end of January 1989, we all went down to Erfurt. They took us in and they gave us boots and everything. Everything was courtesy of the East German army. The East Germans actually, had developed one of the best shotgun industries in the world at that time. So we were all given shotguns etc, and we had a "minder", a hunter who had dogs and all. It started out the previous night with a big banquet. I remember I sat across the aisle from Schalk. I remember it was the first time I had met him. He was one of those unseen presences in East Germany. In any event we met with lots of them, and they talked openly. It was a social event; it was not a political event. But obviously at the same time you could see that there was a political pecking order. Not only in terms of who sat at what tables but where people were. The next day we went out and shot rabbits. Actually the

organization was quite remarkable. The East Germans were known to be able to do that kind of local organization. For example when we got off the train there was a huge crowd cheering the diplomats. It was interesting to watch because diplomats are seldom cheered. There were these rather silly grins on most of these people's faces as we walked along the tarmac and we were cheered heartily. Anyway the next day first the politburo came out led by Honecker. He could see a number of them were not enthusiastic hunters, but Honecker was. They were all dressed of course in their hunting gear. I noticed that those with the finest headgear were the highest ranked in the politburo. Honecker had this sort of sable Russian hat. It turned out they went over to one section, and then sent the diplomats out into the fields as sort of beaters. We would march across the fields and rabbits would take off. They had been breeding rabbits there for a long time, so there were lots of them. They would run over the hill and who was there, over the hill shooting them as they came down the line but Erich Honecker and his troops. We were slogging through the mud. I remember what a really gory day it was. It was unforgettable in the sense that you were actually thrown together in a sort of ancient ritual and watched these so called modern people engage in this ritual with great joy. I understand that Honecker of course, this will not surprise you, killed more rabbits than anybody else. I am sure the numbers went down depending on the rank of the politburo member. But seldom did you get them all together to watch any kind of interaction along that line. It was clear that Honecker was the boss.

Q: In know that Tito used to have these hunts. These things got a little bit scary because a lot of diplomats weren't very good.

BARKLEY: Exactly. The guy next to me was a Cuban diplomat, and I wasn't sure I felt very comfortable about that. I must say I did not acquit myself particularly well. I was nearsighted in the eye I should have been farsighted in and too proud to wear glasses. So I didn't do very well. I did bring one back. But it was an absolutely remarkable experience. After that I made more calls, but I recall in March of that year, I was out in the garden. My wife and I were walking along. I looked at her and said, "You know, this has been my dream to come here, but this has got to be the most boring country in the world." Well that was not a novel thought. A lot of people talked about East Germany being the most boring country in the world. I was used to a lot more political action where I had been previously. It was all covered up, you know. It got to the point you were trying to pick out little nuggets from people. Of course reading Neues Deutschland, after awhile it got really old. But I had only done that for three months. Well I often look back on that comment, and my wife later often reminded me of it. But another personal thing that happened is for the first time Nina was with child. My wife became pregnant just before we arrived, so we were going through a very interesting thing moving back and forth through the Wall to the doctors in West Berlin. That became obviously a very important element in my life because it was my first child, and an advanced age.

Q: Then out of, it was basically, when did the whole...

BARKLEY: The shift start? It was about April or May of that year. That was when the Hungarians announced that they would open their border with Austria. Word got out very quickly. It was never printed in East Germany, but the West Germans trumpeted this as a major development. Pretty soon there was a trickle across that border of young East Germans whom the Austrians channeled right into West Germany. The flow grew rapidly until it began

hemorrhaging. It wasn't that there were so many, there were sizable numbers, but they were the best people, professionals who could get good jobs immediately in the west. We didn't know it at the time, but that was the opening shot.

Q: Could a young professional East German go to Hungary through Czechoslovakia?

BARKLEY: Yes, the only places they could travel were of course within the Warsaw Pact countries. Hungary was one of them. Hungary and Czechoslovakia were two of the most popular tourist destinations, so there were a large number, and of course it picked up. The East Germans knew what was happening but didn't quite know how to stop it. They tried a number of things. First they made representations to the Hungarians and Hungarians said they would try to intercept them before they get to the border, but they didn't. Obviously they weren't putting many resources into it. It would have taken an awful lot to do it. Then they tried to stop people from going to Hungary. They found out that people then simply claimed their destination Czechoslovakia and crossed that border into Hungary without much trouble. So they got the Czechs to close down the border. But there was a constant problem here too. As East Germans only could travel to the east, and many of them were party people, so if you closed down a lot of these things, the party hacks who looked upon this as one of their big privileges got upset. So but that was the start of the hemorrhaging. Now we weren't fully aware of the total impact of this, but as you can imagine, the GDR was different than any of the other countries because there was one Germany, one common language. Also many of them had relatives in the West. They could function very well once they go to the west. Other countries of course had some problems on that front, but there was a particular attraction for the East Germans once they saw there was a way to get out without being shot at the wall. So things began to shift at that time. Then in the summer of that year in June I believe, it was only a month afterward, while the government was trying to come to grips of how to handle this new development that Honecker got ill. It has always been a lot of debate as to what it was, whether he was exhausted or had gallstone problems or whatever. Nonetheless, Honecker underwent medical treatment. After the fact we realized that the system really demanded someone like Honecker around to make the big decisions. So for the longest period of time, a lot of the key decisions were postponed. So at a time where there were great shifts throughout Eastern Europe, there was nobody in East Berlin to give guidance.

Q: While this shift was beginning to happen, what were you doing and what were you getting from Hungary, Czechoslovakia and other places?

BARKLEY: We were traveling a lot. There was only a couple of months since I began my tour. I was determined to get down to areas like Leipzig and Dresden where a lot of West German television didn't penetrate. So I went to as many places as I could. Then it slowly dawned on us that something that had been going on a long time turned out to be more significant than we thought. That was the activities of the churches. The churches had worked out sort of an arrangement with the government that they would not contest its authority if they would be allowed to continue to operate. Of course they were also one of the major sources for hard currency which gave them leverage. Every Monday they held a prayer meeting, which was supposed to be a time for reflection. Some political dissidents, not terribly many, would go to these churches in the provinces and they would engaged in some nascent political discussions. We didn't see it at that time, but the number of people that went to these meetings slowly started

to increase. Of course by the end of the summer it was almost a deluge of people that were going to the Monday prayer meetings. But during that entire summer that Honecker was ill, delaying a lot of decision making on the part of the government. At the same time a lot of people were jockeying for positions to replace Honecker. Some of the old line guys and some of the really new figures like Krenz and Shabowski. Nobody that I am aware of at that time was calling into question the viability of the East German government. But in retrospect we look upon that summer hiatus in terms of leadership as a crucial period of time, because lower level leaders were trying to come to grips working with the Czech and the Hungarian issues, and later on with the Poles, to try to solve the tourist problem without aggravating their political bosses. The decision makers were at sixes and sevens. They didn't know what to do. Honecker was not there. Now whether Honecker could have changed it, because he would have been more decisive, I don't know, but quite obviously the political system was not functioning effectively. People were used to the decision-making processing working well. Whether they were right or wrong, people knew what was expected of them. But even political instruments like Neues Deutschland didn't know what to do. The usual policy among the East Germans if there is foreign news that you didn't want to talk about, you didn't print it. For example during that period of time, there was no reporting about the elections in Poland that brought Walesa to power. There was no talk about Tiananmen Square in Beijing. The discussions that were going on were not in the paper about how to handle the outflow of tourists, which was increasing daily. It was the summer time after all. That is when people went on holiday. So they were not addressing a lot of these problems. So they were in some respects put into a box, at a particularly perfect time for those who were against the regime, or who wanted to get out.

Q: You were more I mean in this sort of thing, all one could do is observe. There was nothing you could do.

BARKLEY: No, there were a number of problems that we did have. It was a constant part of life in the foreign service in East German. Occasionally people would try to claim asylum in the Embassy. We had a long standing agreement with the West Germans that we would never turn over any asylum seeker to the authorities. Well what do you do? First thing that you do is contact the West German mission over there and say we have got this problem and how they help us handle it. The next thing you did was you call in Mr. Fixit, Wolfgang Vogel, who not only did major spy trades, but in fact the guy who usually was able to work out some sort of arrangement. The fact that I knew Vogel well and had negotiated with him for many years helped me a lot.

Q: Call him, "I have got another one."

BARKLEY: Yes, call him in. He would inevitably show up. He spoke with the authorities, but he was not a member of the authorities. Most of the East Germans who were looking for asylum had heard of him. He would work out the arrangements. "If you voluntarily leave in two weeks, I will make sure you get out west." But at the same time you didn't want this to get out because if the word got out, more would just go to the American embassy. We were the only Embassy that had ground level entry, because we wanted East Germans to read in the USIS library. So we were very vulnerable. The numbers entering the West Germany representation grew to the point that they closed it. We came very close to that, toward the end of the summer. So we had those constant problems. Because of my long exposure to Germany, I knew what the regulations and

the expectations were. Inevitably American ambassadors who did not know that got into trouble. We had had some incidents that had aggravated the West Germans in the past because other embassies had turned some of them over to the GDR not knowing what to do. So we worked out procedures for this problem. Of course all this predicated on the assumption that we could hold it under some level of restraint or control. But mostly we were engaged in political reporting. I must say I had a marvelous Embassy. John Greenwald ran just a wonderful political section. I had a good economic section, first Reno Harnish was there and then Mike Moser came in later. J.D. Bindenagel was my deputy, one of the great German experts, young, energetic, intelligent. We just had a wonderful embassy. I was very proud too, that more than half were female officers. They were incredible. All of them spoke quite good German. They moved very well in the society. It was just a first rate team. I remember people in Washington saying we are getting pretty good stuff here. Well they didn't know yet what they were really going to get. They were going to get great stuff.

Q: So I mean when did things begin to boil up in Czechoslovakia and the West German embassy and all that?

BARKLEY: That happened during the summer. Once again there was no decision making. The Czechs closed their border with Hungary. The East German asylum seekers decided they would descend on the West German embassy in Prague instead. I have never been there, but I was told, it was a large embassy with a huge garden. People started to come in, and of course because of the German policy they could not turn them away. Sooner or later the numbers started to increase. By September, there were thousands of them there. They set up campsites on the embassy grounds. The numbers kept coming. They didn't know what to do. They were in terrible shape. I was fearful that the same thing was going to happen in our embassy. Shirley Temple Black was our ambassador in Prague. In fact a couple of people did come there, and she tried to turn them over to the Czech authorities. I thought the West Germans would go ballistic. She finally began to coordinate with the West Germans, but we had some painful moments there. Well then once the West Germans turned to Wolfgang Vogel. Now this was a black eye for the East Germans too. You have got to remember the East Germans at that time focused most of their attention on the 7th of October, which was the 40th anniversary of the creation of the German Democratic Republic. They wanted that to be a major success. They did not want the embarrassment of foreign problems like the FRG embassy in Czechoslovakia. You can imagine, the West German press found out very quickly, and although the Czechs were trying to be helpful to the East Germans, the word was out, and it was an embarrassment. It turns out although the press didn't know about it, much the same thing was happening on a smaller scale in Warsaw. If people couldn't get into Czechoslovakia, then they went to Warsaw. So the East Germans were trying to control this by controlling the borders without aggravating their colleagues in the East. They had an impossible task. Well by the end of September, Vogel was successful in negotiating the transfer of these people by train to West Germany. It was important for the East Germans that this train go through East Germany. So they went on a closed train. It sounded a little like smuggling Lenin into the Helsinki Station. At the same time while this was going on, the numbers of people going into the churches on Monday was increasing dramatically. All of a sudden people sensed that something dramatic was taking place, as did we. We didn't know where the hell it was going, and we were quite fearful that it would produce a crackdown.

Q: One of the occurrences that could happen, I mean this is the entire cold war that you and I lived through was that all hell might break loose in Berlin, I mean people getting in a mob like the '53 situation or something, and the West Germans couldn't stand it if they were put down brutally. All of a sudden World War Three should start there. Was this in your minds?

BARKLEY: Well at the time the permanence of the wall did not seem to be in doubt. I would like to tell you yes, we spotted that, but we didn't. The wall was still standing firm. The police and the automatic shooting operations there were still working. That is why, in fact because of this not only the wall but there was a dead zone between East and West Germany. It was not only the wall that snaked around Berlin. Those were formidable obstacles. That is why people thought they could evade that and escape the other way. Then when they found out that the eastern route was also closed, they in desperation tried the Western Embassies.

Well there was no question at that time that the East German authorities had remarkable instruments of control. The problem was that there was no general understanding of what was going on. But at the same time the courage and the determination with which people were trying to get out was a major surprise. And the ones that were staying were in fact making their displeasure felt through the church meetings and incipient demonstrations. During this entire time, the whole emphasis as I said, of the East German government was to have a successful celebration of their 40th anniversary. The presumption being is after that is over "we will show these guys what is going on". But they wanted to be a showcase at that time for the reasonableness and the advancement, and the success of the East German government over that 40 year period. But something unusual was clearly afoot. Just before the end of September, I had planned to visit Shirley Temple in Prague. My sister was visiting then, so we decided to drive to Prague staying the first night in Dresden. It was about the first or the second of October. I am not exactly sure. Meanwhile I had my staff visiting church meetings in Leipzig and Dresden.

Q: Were they attending these...

BARKLEY: Yes absolutely. They were a marvelous bunch of people. Most of them were young. At that time that played into our hands, because I think the authorities were so strained in trying to watch so many different things that the last thing they were going to worry about were our junior officers, or where they were going to travel.

Q: It must have been exhilarating for your officers.

BARKLEY: Those kids were wonderful. Jon and J.D. had organized the staff so that they would cover the country. I just happened to be our guy in Dresden that night. So I told Nina and my sister, I am just going to take a short walk to see what is happening. It turns out this was exactly the night that the train of asylum seekers out of Czechoslovakia was roaring through Dresden on its way to West Germany. People in Dresden didn't know that. They found out about it later. Some of them apparently had relatives who did know however and they went down to the train station. But basically the train shot right through. I was crossing the bridge across the old river at that time taking my usual evening walk. You know the old foreign service officer getting out there to see if he can tell what is going on. There were a large number of people crossing the

bridge. As I walked across, all of a sudden I looked down and saw on a road that went under the other side of the bridge, a long column of Volvo trucks full of police. They obviously expected something. I don't know whether it was connected with the train or whether it was the weekend activities. Little groups were beginning to appear everywhere. No one was quite certain who they were. There were young people just looking around. I remember right next to me was a man and his wife pushing a baby carriage. As they watched the deployment of the Volvos, they looked and said in German "as ist nicht Schoen". In other words, this is not at all nice to see this. I paid attention to what was going on. You know having served in South Africa you feel when there is a certain electricity in the crowds. These were really very normal people, but they were clearly unhappy at what they were seeing. One almost had the feeling they were steeling themselves for something. So I crossed over and saw the staging area over by the Zemperoper, which is the major opera area. My sense was that the police didn't know what to do either. They were probably there to stop any large groups of getting out of control or whatever. I walked through that part of the town for awhile, and decided I had to return to Berlin. Something clearly was happening in this country. Dresden is one of those areas remote enough from Berlin that western TV was not available so they were responding to something different. I said to Nina, my wife, "You know, we have got to get back to Berlin. Something serious is happening out here in the country." Meanwhile we were getting reports out of Leipzig and other areas that the police were deploying there too, that they were looking around for trouble. So it was time to get back. Of course a week later was the 40th anniversary celebration. Well it was fortunate I did get back. There were new movements in the country among average people which had not previously been involved. Indeed it turned out that we even had a major problem in our Embassy. One of our officers, inadvertently I think, probably naively, let a number of people into the Embassy who said they just wanted to talk to the consular officer. Well as soon as they got in there, they demanded asylum, and we ended up with 17 people right before the major celebration. So we got Vogel involved in that. Of course the Embassy wasn't prepared to feed these people, so we had to bring food in from the outside. They were there for a number of days. Word got out to the press, and through Vogel and the Foreign Office I was trying to get them out without getting too much publicity, which would draw more of them. We were forced to close the Embassy during that period of time. They heard about it in Washington. They said, "Can't you keep the embassy open?" I said, "Do you want me to abandon the Embassy? I can do that. Do you want me to execute a burn? But if we open the doors it is going to be a repeat of what went on in Czechoslovakia." So the Department came in with one of those Solomon like decisions, "Keep the embassy open but don't let any asylum seekers in."

Q: I was wondering, you have a consular section, and I assume you are issuing visas and all.

BARCKLEY: Not many but yes.

Q: And a USIS operation there. How do you keep people, I mean either they come in or they don't.

BARCKLEY: Well that is the problem I had with Washington. And you know, Washington doesn't like to be faced with this kind of problem either. The British and the French were apartment kinds of Embassies that were on the fourth floor someplace, and they could button down very quickly. We were a ground floor, open, library. So we had a real dilemma. So we had

to shut the doors. We in principle kept the embassy open, but for all intents and purposes nobody went in and out. Vogel only did us a great service. He not only got these people out, but also all of these people assembled in front of the embassy trying to get in and couldn't. He got their names because we weren't allowed to do that or the police would pick them up. But Vogel got all those people out. He somehow got all of their names and got them out. Once again it was because the regime didn't want a black eye right before the anniversary. It was a remarkable period of time.

Q: Were you feeling that this 40th anniversary really I mean in a way once it was over, all hell was going to break loose. I mean was this your feeling at the time, or was this in retrospect?

BARKLEY: Well at that time we were trying to get through each day as best we can. When you have 17 people in your mission with little children trying to bed them down and take care of them, while the negotiating their release, it took all of our energy. I was at the foreign office or with Vogel all the time. We got it resolved. But I think nobody saw clearly how things were going to develop after that. We knew that on the 40th anniversary that Gorbachev was going to come to town. That was an important visit. What would he say? What would he do? Would he turn and say well you know East Germany is our great ally and we will trust them to do whatever they want to do, even if the result is the end of glasnost and perestroika. East Germany was a very key segment of their empire. We were not quite sure how all that was going to go. I am not sure that Gorbachev.

Q: I think I am just looking at the time. This might be a good place to stop. We will stop here and we are moving into October, and we are moving up to you told about events before, and things were simmering and Czechoslovakia. We were turning away, you essentially shut down the embassy to avoid getting a refugee problem. So we are coming up to the 40th anniversary. Gorbachev is coming, so we will pick up developments then.

BARKLEY: That is a good place to do it.

Q: Today is 26 August 2003. Dick so Gorbachev is coming. Was the embassy hunkering down? Did you ever feel all hell is going to break loose, or what were you thinking? I mean how did things develop at the time?

BARKLEY: Well I am not sure we thought all hell was breaking loose. We certainly knew things were moving. The 40th anniversary was, for the East German government, an absolute priority event. As we talked earlier, they had done everything to make sure that they entered that event without any particularly onerous things hanging over them. They had agreed to get all of the demonstrators and asylum seekers out of the West German embassies in Poland and Czechoslovakia. They helped us actively to get out a number of people who were seeking asylum in the American embassy. It was going to be for them at least, a symbol that indeed East Germany was a living and going concern. But they also did not want to be under censure from the West for their immediate behavior.

Q: I was thinking, at this time, what was happening? Were the East German border guards killing people at the border and all that, or had that kind of petered out?

BARKLEY: The border, of course, was an extraordinarily long border. I mean it is not only the Wall, that went around Berlin, but there was a dead strip everywhere between East and West Germany. They would have automatic shooting devices at many points along the borders. So it wasn't a matter that necessarily a human being had to press a trigger or anything. Of course those areas were mined. It was a most dangerous thing to cross over if indeed you were inclined to try, and I believe most of the East Germans knew that. It is hard to believe because within a very short time that was all thrown into question. In any event October 7 was the 40th anniversary for the creation of German Democratic Republic. They attempted to round up all of the socialist nations and powers to celebrate as they did periodically. So the Social Unity Party (SED) mobilized all of its considerable resources to make this a success. Actually the guests came in from all throughout eastern Europe. Many of the names were new, but some were old. Of course the key guest was Gorbachev. Quite clearly he was more than *primus inter pares*, he held sway over the whole affair. Zukoff came from Bulgaria; Jaruzelski came from Poland, and Hacik came from Czechoslovakia, Ceausescu came from Romania. It was a huge gathering. The only two that I recall during evening celebration, that were not from that bloc per se were Daniel Ortega from Nicaragua, and Yasser Arafat, the head of the PLO. So it was a notorious gathering at that particular time. The ceremony was a two day ceremony with speeches the first day and a gala dinner the second. Of course the entire diplomatic corps was invited.

Q: Did we send fraternal greetings or do anything like that? I mean that must have been a little tricky.

BARKLEY: Excuse me, to do what?

Q: You know when you have an occasion, usually you...

BARKLEY: Oh no, we did not send any greetings. No, I don't think it ever crossed anybody's mind. I was instructed to attend of course, as were all of the diplomatic corps accredited to East Germany. The first day was mostly speeches. The two speeches that everybody was watching was Honecker's and more importantly, Gorbachev's. Gorbachev was in a clearly difficult position because he had espoused both Perestroika and Glasnost. Those were concepts not welcomed by the East German government. Gorbachev's speech as you would have expected showed his complete confidence in the ability of the East German government to handle its problems, but it did make a general reference that is important, to look forward and to embrace reform. Honecker's speech was rather standard, what they had achieved and all. He didn't challenge Glasnost or Perestroika, but he rather indicated that it was something that the East Germans had already embraced earlier, something we had discussed earlier too. If you looked at the speeches with hindsight, it was clear that Gorbachev was saying he could not back off of his reform measures. They were essential to his survival. The East Germans were saying well we are not going to embrace them because they are going to undermine our survival. Of course we didn't know what was going on in the inner councils. There was clearly tension, that played out later.

Q: Well on the inner councils because this is a disparate group of people, Ceausescu and the others involved. Did we have any people who were kind of telling us what was happening in the inner councils?

BARKLEY: Well of course we picked up different rumors and things. As far as I know, whatever would have been going on in those councils would have probably played back to their capitals, and that is where you would have picked it up. It was nothing that we particularly picked up, but although we had already heard murmurs from the different embassies in all the countries that were participating. They always reflected the positions of the governments involved. The Hungarians of course, had already made rapid strides towards reform, and indeed had opened their borders. The Poles did the same line. There had just been an election in Poland that was never mentioned actually in the East German press. The Czechs were still hard line. Romania and Bulgaria were unique cases. I am not an expert in Romanian politics but obviously the cult of personality had gone very far with Ceausescu. But we were of course particularly concerned with the interaction between the East Germans and the Russians. The Russian Embassy was of course very closed mouthed. They didn't tell us an awful lot. Debate was certainly opening up in East Germany. But even at that time this one particular event, the 40th anniversary had everybody so preoccupied, that there weren't as many rumors as immediately thereafter. In any event, the second night, which was the actual anniversary, the evening events were particularly important. It started out in almost the traditionally old German tradition with a Fackelzug, or torchlight parade. The major mobilizations were organized by the Free Democratic Youth, led by Egon Krenz, who was the crown prince of the politburo. They marched in their blue uniforms down Unter Den Linden with great joy. Just watching that, you wouldn't have thought that there was anything particularly wrong with what was going on. Of course that cloaked great discontent at the grass roots level. But it was a unique evening and certainly nothing I had ever experienced before. The limousines of the diplomatic corps pulled up after the major guests had disgorged. We walked up the steps of the Palast der Republik, the major gala hall, if you will, in which the ceremonies took place. After my wife and I got out, and were walking up the steps, a slightly tardy Daniel Ortega arrived. He came up almost the same time we did. Of course I was somewhat surprised to see him, not because there was any doubt about where he stood, but that indeed he should be considered to be one of the honored guests. The importance of that played itself out a little bit later. In any event, we came in, there were a number of gala tables, and were artistic events going on. It was a banquet. I sat at a table with a number of diplomats. Every one of the tables had a prominent member of the politburo there. Of course I had met almost all of them in my initial calls. At our table was Joachim Herrmann who was the politburo member responsible for propaganda and information, and a real hard liner, although that evening he was rather gracious and charming. Then of course the other politburo members were scattered around. The head table, which was most fascinating, had Gorbachev and Honecker and all of the princes of the Eastern European governments there, including as I said Yasser Arafat and Daniel Ortega. I watched a couple of the more ambitious young guys, particularly Gunther Shabovsky who was the head of the Berlin Communist Party. He was quite clearly discontent because he wanted to be at the head table and was not. He was moving around trying to engage in what was going on. It was rather bizarre. And from what one could tell, there was a certain comradery going on. Later on after the meal they sat down and things became closer and the whispers became more hushed. But I recall one of the more important things was to watch Daniel Ortega engage the East German Minister of Defense because it was quite clear

that the Soviets were beginning to curtail their military support, and you could see that he was trying to get the East Germans to fill the void. I am sure there was an enormous amount of politics going on, but it was remote from our table. But just to sit there, and of course once again with that great advantage of hindsight, to see a host of people at a table who in a relatively short order would all be gone from power, with the sole exception of Yasser Arafat. A rather remarkable period of time. When we left it became interesting. They had parked our cars a few blocks away, and they asked us if we would be kind enough to walk to them because it was impossible to organize the exit in any orderly fashion. I was walking along with a very good friend, the Finnish ambassador and our wives. There were huge crowds out and of course they were waving and cheering. I don't know, I am not exactly sure that this is true but as I passed they cheered very loudly, and I don't think it was because I was the American ambassador, but because I have a bald head very close to that of Gorbachev. Of course where ever Gorbachev went, they were cheering him loudly and asking him to extent to East Germany the reforms he was instituting in Russia. We got to our cars after this rather remarkable evening, and we were on our way back to our residence. On the way there was a cross section near Prenzlauerberg which is an area in Berlin known to harbor free thinkers or artistic types, to the extent they existed at all.

Q: Kind of the Hyde Park?

BARKLEY: More or less. Imperfect as the comparison is, but nonetheless we saw little groups of people out on the corners. We had never seen that before. There was that milling around of people who were uncertain of exactly what to do, but you had the impression they were not happy with what was going on. That was, of course, all behind the scenes, while the gala was celebrated. There were huge sighs of relief from the East German government that they had gotten through this ceremony relatively unscathed. But what we saw on the way back were knots of sullen people, usually close to the churches which were the sanctuaries for most of the protest movement. So there was still a lot of murmuring going on, and a number of people who rather openly tried to seize on Gorbachev's visit to appeal to Gorbachev to get behind a reform movement in East Germany. In any event it was a totally remarkable evening. One I have thought back on many times.

Q: Did Gorbachev leave right away?

BARKLEY: No, he was there a couple of days. Obviously he had intense discussions with the GDR leadership as we found out later. The discussions were along the line of is the new generation prepared to challenge the old boys who were determined to hold rigidly on to things. Was there an opposition among the younger people actually to challenge the East Germans, and did they have the gumption actually to attach themselves to Gorbachev and would Gorbachev endorse their efforts? One must remember that Gorbachev himself represented the rather new generation from that which was represented mostly at that table, with the exception of course of Poland and Hungary. All of the old line bosses were not inclined to change very much. It was what they knew and they were afraid of instability. A lot of this played itself out in subsequent weeks. We couldn't see in the inner councils. Actually one of the people that I looked to for a lot of sort of inner kinds of discussion was the Yugoslav ambassador, Milan Predojevic, who was a rather congenial fellow and of course was still viewed as a brother socialist. Therefore they fed

him a different line of discourse than they would to an American ambassador, who was the traditional arch enemy. I began to see there was an awful lot of interaction and discontent at the local party levels that played itself out. In any event, it turned out that the 40th anniversary was the last hurrah for the GDR. From then on things began to change dramatically and quickly. The next couple of months were almost a fog of activity where it is still hard to sort out what went on at any particular time.

Q: Well at this time in October, 1989, was anybody pointing and saying this house of cards may come falling down? I am talking about from the official Washington, INR.

BARKLEY: No. Of course after the fact as you can imagine, there were a lot of people who said well if you had listened carefully to this one passage in my speech, you would have seen that I foresaw that. That is a lot of crap. Nobody knew exactly what was going on. It is only the pontificators who later on thought that they saw some things going on. Obviously if you were a scholar, I guess, and you are looking at the sweeps of history, it would seem that Gorbachev and perestroika and glasnost and the sheer inability of the Soviets to compete along a whole variety of lines was the problem. You could have probably foreseen some movement, but most people didn't see it then, and we didn't see it then. We knew things were happening. East Germany, as you know, is the gem in the imperial crown of the Soviet Union. That it would be on the cusp of a true radical movement was barely believable.

Q: Well what about Poland? I mean here in a way Poland was really a major player in that area, and it was sort of going in its own way at this point.

BARKLEY: Well that is true, and the election in Poland in that spring in which Lech Walesa did very well, was not even reported in the East German press.

Q: He didn't attend the...

BARKLEY: No. Jaruzelski who was president. Jaruzelski was a military man. I am not an expert in Polish history. He was considered a more liberal figure, but he was still a military man and I am sure did not look upon what was going on there as anything that the Soviet would tolerate beyond certain points. The East Germans never had a particular affinity for Poland anyway, as I am sure you are aware. Not only is there an historical precedent there, but their chief patron, their main patron at every level was of course, the Soviet Union. But right after the 40th anniversary, you could see things were beginning to pick up steam. The Monday evening prayer services that had started to get many more participants all throughout the country, particularly in Dresden and Leipzig, but also in Berlin. The numbers increased rather dramatically. It seemed to be every week the numbers almost doubled.

Q: What was happening at these prayer meetings? Was it just a gathering, sort of a silent protest; was there agitation or...

BARKLEY: Well of course, the ministers in essence offered their churches to the protest movements. The church had a long historical relationship with the East German government. The Lutheran and Reformed churches were the only two major protestant churches in that area.

There was a small but very active Catholic community, but largely it was in the Lutheran churches where these people met. The idea was of course to comfort people who had trouble on their minds. They would come to the church and receive solace from the misery. Well the things that were on their minds of course were political change. The government at that stage did not want to be seen cracking down on the Churches, particularly with the world focusing very much on what was going on. And so they allowed these things to go on. The religious community became the assembly point for the reform movement. I think it is important to realize that at the time, nobody was talking about reunification. The students were talking about a letting up, an ability for them to speak openly, more Perestroika, or more Glasnost if you will. Restructuring was something I don't think preoccupied most people. But certainly Glasnost, the ability to criticize, which had been denied them so long was something which particularly attracted the younger generation. I mean there had been a passing of the torch, although the leadership apparently was not aware of that. Younger people of course had access to the western media, and they knew what was happening, and they were unhappy. They were becoming a little bit more courageous. Of course, once they realized that the church was a safe haven, they gathered there.

Q: Were you making contact with church authorities?

BARKLEY: Oh yes. Our people were out. Many of them attended the church meetings. There was at that time a lot of discussion. Of course the whole concept was they would get together and pray. One of the things they prayed for was an opening of their lives.

Q: Well you know one looking back on the church in Germany under the third Reich, its role wasn't very positive. Again they were public servants and tended to be rather unchallenging to Hitler. I mean those that did get killed, Mithoffer and others.

BARKLEY: Well I don't want to get too much into the history of this, but of course the Catholics did sign a Concordat with Hitler. The Lutheran church and others basically went along, although there were people like Mithoffer and Nedermeyer, a lot of very strong church leaders, who were horrified at what was going on and became victims of the Nazi regime. So there is a mixed bag, but the fact was that Germany per se had begun to consider theories of the church under socialism quite early. Even Paul Tillich later on discussed this. But there was an early agreement on the part of the church that they would not challenge the regime; they would render to Caesar. In East Germany, particularly after the events of the early 50's, the government forced an incredible crackdown. Strangely enough, the Church under direct pressure usually shows a fiber that it doesn't when it is not challenged. So as it turned out there were a large number of clerics that were concerned about the ways and means of the Communist Party. But they had made their peace with it, and indeed had their political instruments, particularly in the CDU, which as a party had become sort of a running dog of Socialist Unity Party. But there was always within the church, a number of people who agonized over the moral problems that a communist regime posed for them

Q: You know looking at it at that time, what would you say were the things that particularly rankled with those, not the extreme liberals, but those that wanted a change? What were the things they really wanted?

BARKLEY: Of course they would have liked to have had a much freer press. They would have liked to have been able to publish and read and do things without any censure or penalty. Revolutionary movements don't clearly define what was going on. This was not a revolutionary movement in the sense that there was a Lenin based Marxist oriented kind of thing. There was the yearning of people to be free I think, and the recognition that things were moving very quickly in the world, and they wanted to be part of what was going in the world. I mean the explosions in the information age had just begin at that time, and was making itself known. Once again in retrospect, in hindsight, we could see that they had access to information, and that access to information fed aspirations, we were not as fully aware of.

Q: Were we doing anything, I am thinking about the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe and all that. Was there all of a sudden looking at and seeing this opportunity for sort of throwing gasoline on the fire or anything like that?

BARKLEY: No I don't think so. East Germany was of course, a unique case. With one little exception, East Germans had total access to West German television and radio etc. So they knew what was going on in the world. West German television of course, particularly in the area of the news is extraordinarily complete and active. So there was a great knowledge of what was going on. I mean you could not for example, sit in East Germany and not know that the border was opening in Hungary. You found that out, not through Voice of America, I don't know how many people listened to it, but my guess is if they ever did a survey there were very few. Most of our emphasis in Voice of America was to Eastern Europe because, the West Germans had so thoroughly covered what was going on in East Germany. We had Radio Free Berlin which was of course, independent radio that had been, started by the Americans and was in the hands of USIS for awhile in Berlin. It was extraordinarily well listened to. We actually did not control the content of that, but there was a general uniformity of views coming out of the western press everywhere as to what was going on in the world, and the East Germans got that. That made it very interesting when I was traveling round and talking to people. One of the persons that I met that October actually was Hans Modrow who was destined to play a key role. He was Party Secretary in Dresden. Dresden was one of those areas which could not easily receive western news. In my discussion with him, I asked him, "You know theoretically you are in the valley of the blind as East Germans say, and yet from what I understand, people are leaving here as rapidly through Hungary as anywhere else." He said, "I didn't think it was a question of that. It was a question of discontent, that people were looking for a way out." The traditional line was there was a seductive quality to western reportage that was luring these people away. I am not sure he believed that, but that is what he said. In any event things began, particularly in the Monday night meetings, to develop dramatically. On the 15th October I had a personal engagement that was for me also very instructive as to what was going on. Our daughter, who had been born in August, was to be baptized. I was determined that she be baptized in Pankow at the village church. So we got hold of the church leader, the superintendent, a man by the name of Werner Kuchel who turned out to have played quite a role in subsequent events. He was really a rather remarkable fellow, not particularly remarkable in the sense of Germany, but for me he was. For 600 years his family had preached in the church in Pankow. He was delighted to be asked to baptize my daughter. We invited a number of people, many members of the government and, of course just friends to attend. It turned into quite a political baptism. In fact what I didn't know was the Pastor Kuchel's son had been one of those who had gone through Hungary and

was now in West Berlin. They would wave to each other across the wall like many other people did. But it lent a very personal grievance to his view of what was going on. We had this all on tape. It is very interesting to revisit it occasionally. He basically said this wall must go. Of course this was three weeks in advance of what really happened, but it was a fascinating experience for us to sit there. Of course he did the proper rites; he blessed my child and baptized her, but in the process the commentary that went back and forth was rather pointed. So things were beginning to happen. In any event, shortly thereafter, I was called back to Washington. They saw things were moving. I believe our embassy reporting was as good as you will ever find. It was remarkable, we had just wonderful people. They were covering everything from the church meetings to what was going on at every level. So on the 18th of that month I flew into Washington. While I was in the air, little did I know that Honecker had been challenged by his own party, and he had resigned. So I got off the airplane in Washington, and I was met by Peter Ito who was head of the East German desk. He said, "Well what do you think about Honecker's resignation?" Of course I knew nothing about it. I said, "Oh my gosh." He said, "Yes," and predictably the torch was passed to Egon Krenz who was sort of the heir apparent and had been for a number of years. But it was clearly indicative of a major challenge within the party, and it had much to do with the follow up to the 40th anniversary.

So there I was in Washington, while things clearly were moving in East Germany. Official Washington was not only reading our reportage but of course the western press also was focusing on what was going on. Reporters were there in large numbers to cover the 40th anniversary. So all of a sudden there I was in Washington and believe it or not, there was great interest in me. So my normal call on the usual suspects was increased rather dramatically. I didn't meet with the secretary but I spent a lot of time with Bob Zoellick who was really a breath of fresh air, an extraordinarily bright young man who worked for Baker. I spent a lot of time at the White House with Bob Blackwell who at that time who was in charge of European affairs. Nobody saw clearly what was actually happening, but they were curious to get together with me to see whether I could shed some light on things. Of course I could shed light on what was happening on the ground better than anything else that they had had because I had been there. Clearly Washington was beginning to pay attention.

Q: What were you imparting to these people?

BARKLEY: Well what I was imparting was not only that there is regime change but other movements afoot. Of course we didn't know exactly where things were going. We didn't know what the survival chances of the Party were, but we saw no signs at that time that unification or the demand for unification was on the horizon. In fact that never even entered the discussion. I think we were so basically children of the cold war that the idea of unification of Germany was just not on our agendas. But it was certainly clear that things were happening on and after all what had gone on in Hungary and Poland, it seemed contagious. Where it would head, no one knew. The presumption all along was because of East Germany's unique position that allowed the Soviet Union to expand its influence to the Elbe for the first time in history, there probably would not retreat from that. Although one was aware there was so much movement in the Soviet Union itself, and in the eastern bloc nations, one couldn't see clearly where this was headed. At that time I began to get my chatter down a little bit to explain what was going on in the different outlying areas, who some of the personalities were that we should pay attention to. We did know

of course that among the younger groups, the ambitions were not limited to Krenz, but from people like Shabovsky and Modrow and others. Of course it became clear very shortly, I was in Washington about a week, and I must say our embassy continued to do a good job in reporting things. It was clear that there were people within the SED after the fall of Honecker, who were looking upon this as an opportunity to gain more influence. Some of them were the old boys actually. The question was whether the younger generation would hold firm. Then we began to see cracks in the institutions. That was within the grass roots of the Social Unity Party. I think the fact that Honecker left and a large number of members of the old line politburo were changing led Krenz to call for a new party convention to discuss the future. That instilled in the grass roots a certain courage to say well if things are changing, we want to be part of it. We don't want to be the people who are retarding change. So there became a large number of people out of the Social Unity Party who began to sympathize with some of the demands of the reformers, not knowing precisely what that would be. But at a minimum level of political pluralism and openness that they didn't have at that time. We saw that beginning to happen when even Krenz would show up to address a bunch of people and be booed. This never happened before. The party was particularly noted for its internal discipline. Obviously what was happening was the Central Committee was desperately trying to send out guidance to the new leadership as to how to regain control of what was happening. It also became quite clear that Krenz did not represent a particularly sympathetic figure. Although he was only in his late 40's, he had been so associated with the Honecker regime that he was not looked to as a sign of change.

Q: He wasn't a Gorbachev.

BARKLEY: Oh no. I got to know him a little bit. We had met on a few occasions. He was somewhat better than his reputation. He was basically a child of the system and he voted for the system, and he expected the system to continue, and that he would naturally become the head of things. In his view that was preordained. Anyway it became clear that there were a lot of things going on underneath him that he did not understand. It also became clear that he couldn't control them. In any event, in the plenum, they came up with some newer faces and some older faces. But the grass roots of the party began to reject them and reject them actually at the grass roots level. Several people were given key party positions in the provinces who immediately had demonstrations against them. It was clear things were changing rapidly. By the end of October, everybody in the Party from the old guys who were trying to hold on, to the younger guys who were trying to seize control, to the grass roots who were not going to be blamed for the past as rigid rejecters of reform. No one saw clearly where this was headed. But one of the more interesting developments, and it turns out the key, was that Hans Modrow, who was always looked on as a reformer and against Honecker, and had spent all of his life in the provinces, was named the Prime Minister. He replaces Willi Stoph. Under Willi Stoph the position had no power. The power really was in the Party and the Politburo and the Central Committee. Modrow turned that around. He became indeed the symbol of change. So things happened and happened rather dramatically, with people like Modrow and Shabovsky now in charge. Interestingly, I had a meeting with Shabovsky at the end of October. I went in with Jim McAdam who was one of the few university professors who had focused on East Germany. We had an absolutely remarkable discussion in which he blamed the Russians for not being able to handle reform, and handle it efficiently. Shabovsky's wife was Russian and his relationship with the Russians was essential to success. His performance was especially remarkable. I remember him saying in a

very Germanic manner, we tried to tell the Soviets how to reform their industry, but they wouldn't listen. Then I remember he said, "Everything they have done since then is Mist und Kaese." Which means cheese and manure, or junk. If they had listened to us right along, we never would have gotten into this fix. This was remarkable kinds of statements coming from a guy who held a position of great power in the party. What he was clearly doing was reaching for the laurel wreath. He and a number of other people were beginning to speak openly in heretical tones, and things were beginning to move. I remember as we left, we were walking out, and one of his young assistants came with us and he said, "You know, even Mr. Shabovsky hasn't the faintest idea what is happening. We have files full of reports on what we should have done, and nobody would read them." So you began to see that even blind loyalty at that high level was beginning to break.

Q: Well you have this remarkable thing where it seems that every other person was reporting on the other person in that society with the Stasi and all that. I mean was one getting the feeling that all this wonderful security apparatus really wasn't getting the picture?

BARKLEY: It is an interesting comment because I doubt if there was ever a secret service or security system as efficient as the East German Security office. The head of it was Erich Mielke, an octogenarian, a mean, mean old man. But he clearly had lost a lot of his stature although he hadn't lost any of his meanness. The Stasi of course had two major tasks. The first was to maintain an iron grip on what was going on inside East Germany. The other one was in foreign affairs. In foreign policy the Stasi was really quite efficient. The major focus of course was penetrating the West German government, which they did to a fair-the-well. The head of the operation was Marcus Wolfe. Marcus Wolfe, among the intelligence community, was considered to be the top spy in the world. I mean he was a faceless kind of figure, but indeed the efficiency with which he ran that operation was remarkable. Yet despite the fact that they had dossiers on everybody, and indeed, as we subsequently found out, hardly any East German had not been compromised, and in the last analysis it didn't mean diddly. Somehow the sweeps of history cannot be checked by a security system in a modern day in which the flow of international information is constant.

Q: Were we looking, seeing these things going, were we doing the things that you know, embassies kind of do. They go over and look for mobilization you know, martial law coming along according to the ministry of, the defense minister whatever they called it there, seeing if windows were lit up late at night, the usual thing.

BARKLEY: For one thing we had a very small embassy. The construct of the American embassy in East Berlin was entirely different from that of a traditional embassy. Policy decisions regarding the status of Berlin made that made it very difficult for us to have a normal embassy. For example, we did not have any military attachés, because we did not recognize East Berlin as part of the German Democratic Republic. I was ambassador **to** the German Democratic Republic, not **in** the German Democratic Republic. These are important status questions. The second thing of course is that we never looked to East Germany for a productive relationship. We actually recognized them as part of the eastern policy of the West German government, but we were never enthusiastic about it. So we were a classical reporting post with a very small embassy staff, which we mobilized as best we could. The things that were going on, however, so

exhausted us. We had young people going off to the churches and around the country to make sure that what was happening in Berlin was not the only part of our reportage. We were using whatever sources we had, and for a long time a lot of people were reluctant to meet with us except at Ambassadorial level where they just basically spouted platitudes. But to find out actually what was happening, such as access to the Stasi headquarters and to the military compounds outside of the city were very limited. So no, we did not do the lights on kind of thing. It turns out of course that the Stasi headquarters lights were on, but what they were doing in there was something we weren't quite sure of. Much of it I am sure was a burn, and lot of others were wondering how best to secure their own futures. With respect to the military dimension, it too was complicated. The East German army, which was quite efficient, was totally dedicated to the Warsaw Pact, much as the West German army was dedicated to NATO. So they were not part of the security apparatus that the government could call on. What they would normally call on were the vopos, the police force, which was huge. Or they would call on the Stasis which was basically an intelligence group. But they also were large. And they had the workers brigades, which were the organized laborites that had played a key role in crushing the revolution of 1954. So they had not necessarily looked to the military. If it had ever come down to it, what we were concerned about was the idea of another Prague spring or what happened in Hungary in 1956 where the Russian military would give orders to the East German military and together they would crush any dissent. As it turned out because of Gorbachev's policies in Russia, the idea of going for a military solution would be the end of his reform policies, and so it turns out the military were never looked upon as an option at that time.

Q: Were you seeing another sign of cracks in all of a sudden people who had been aloof and sort of party members beginning to sidle up to you or your colleagues and saying I have always been a friend of the west and you know sort of preparing?

BARKLEY: Well yes that was happening at a lower level. One of the fellows who had the best insight was Wolfgang Vogel, the spy trader who had played an instrumental role in not only getting the asylum seekers out of our embassy but of the German embassies in Warsaw and Prague as well. He had an enormously important role at that time. He was a confidante of Honecker, so even before Honecker fell we had gotten some reports from him, but most of them were with a sigh that said, this guy doesn't understand what is coming at him anymore. He means well. He wants to see a rational transition of power to the next generation. He isn't ready to do it yet, and feared that showing too much wiggle room, or too much ankle, at this time would only embolden those people who are out to cause mischief for the East German government. So he was a pretty important source of information at higher levels. He had a remarkable way of telling the truth without implicating himself in what that truth might mean. A major skill in that business. And of course the willingness with which Shabovsky and others would meet with us. Just about this time actually Marcus Wolfe came out of the woodwork with a major criticism against the direction the past the government had gone. Some thought he had future ambitions. Most of these ambitions you have to keep in mind, were still within the context of a reformed East Germany, not in the context of a united Germany. That didn't come until January. We are still now stuck in October and the beginning of November.

Q: I mean a united Germany for all these people I mean they wouldn't be able to participate would they, you know be accepted in a united Germany.

BARKLEY: Well the first place of course in a rather persuasive way, the East German policy thinkers would say, "Well if we just ape West German institutions, with multiple parties etc, there is no reason to have a distinct East Germany. Therefore a distinct East Germany must have different institutions and traditions; it must be guided by, of course, the traditional Communist Party. That doesn't mean that you can't do things a different way, but it is absolutely essential for world peace that we continue to be an entity." Well I am not sure that the fineness of that point was captured by objective people who were looking for a better life.

Q: How were things going then? I mean you were meeting with Shabovsky and others, I mean was anybody telling you, yes, the Russians are no longer part of the game or something like that?

BARKLEY: Oh, no, we weren't there yet by a long shot. That was part of the end game; it wasn't part of the beginning which is where we were at this time. And of course the Russians would never have told you if they knew. For the Russians too, it was important that reform took place, but that it take place within the confines of Soviet interests. There was no defined Soviet interest at that time. They wanted reform but they never defined it in terms of changing the balance of power, which indeed is what we were talking about in subsequent discussions. But nonetheless, the situation in East Germany itself, the chaos in the transfer of power from Honecker to Krenz and Krenz's clear inability to either foresee or control what was happening became more and more apparent. That is when of course in November the crucial time. In November when the new Modrow government was trying to figure out how they could handle the continual rupturing of people from East Germany seeking asylum in the west, that there became the big meeting on the ninth of November which became, of course, one of the major days in western history.

Q: I just got an E-mail from J.D. Bindenagel. I mentioned I was interviewing you. He said, "Be sure to have him talk about the ninth of November."

BARKLEY: Well that is where we are now. By the way, at the same time that the new communist party in East Germany was going through its growing pains, there were the beginnings and initial rumblings of new parties and new political formations. People who had come out of the church groups were finally emboldened to organize themselves politically.

Q: Was there any mention of the Helsinki accords and agreements at this point?

BARKLEY: No, that was a fine point that was lost. The thought that there will be no violent changes of borders which came out of the Helsinki accords, was really a matter of domestic politics at this time. But new groups formed, like the New Forum, and then there was the beginning of a new SPD, Social Democratic Party of East Germany. There were young leaders that were coming out, people we had not heard of before. So there was rumblings towards new political structures. Of course, the West Germans were monitoring things. There was no panic, but a total preoccupation with what is happening here in the other Germany. So on November ninth Shabovsky had a press conference. It was a rather unremarkably uneventful press conference for a long time, to the point where I gave up watching it on television, got in my car

and drove home. I didn't see anything new coming out of the whole thing. By the time I got home I immediately put on the news. During that interim, Shabovsky was handed a piece of paper where he announces that forthwith, or in a very short period of time, there will be no travel restrictions on East German citizens between East and West Germany and East and West Berlin. The question was asked at that time, what does this mean. He said, "Well just what I said. Everybody will have a right to a visa. You can get that visa. There will be no exceptions and they can move back and forth." One of the journalists said, "Does that mean immediately?" He looked at the paper and said, "Yes, that means immediately."

Q: Where was the paper coming from?

BARKLEY: It was obviously passed to him by members of the politburo who had been meeting to discuss how to handle this constant rupturing of people trying to leave through eastern Europe. They didn't know a way to stop them. So basically they thought instead of trying to stop it and get the Czechs and everybody else to do the dirty work for them, which they were not inclined to do, is that they would seize the nettle and say, okay, we'll control it from here, but everybody will have that right. The idea was of course to try to reassure dissident elements that nobody was going to be disadvantaged by being a GDR citizen. You won't have to sneak out through the back door, for "we are strong and self confident", which they were not. Nonetheless, so for the first time they said that. Of course it hits the western press. The western press of course which is watched by all the East Germans, said that as of immediately people could go back and forth between the borders. Well the evening was hardly over when groups were going down to take a look at the wall and see what the hell was this all about. Pretty soon, literally within hours, there were huge groups at Checkpoint Charlie at Bornholmer Strasse, the normal east-west checkpoints, to see what was going on. Well what we didn't particularly know at that time was how this would play out. How would the border guards handle this? Well subsequently we were informed that they were told for God's Sakes don't shoot anybody and don't do anything, and if they push you, get out of the way. Well at Bornholmer Strasse and other places, people simply said, "We want to go across, can we go?" They said, "Ok, go ahead." Try to imagine a couple of checkpoint guys sitting there looking at huge mobs of people and wondering Jesus, what are they going to do. I can't shoot; I have been told not to shoot. What do I do? So of course all the cameras were there and they started to go through. And of course it was jubilation. People saying, "This is wannsinn, it is crazy. I can't believe this. This is crazy, I don't know what is happening here." They started going back and forth, and that was the end. From that moment on, the guys at the border just threw up their hands and lifted the gates. What happened at Bornholmer Strasse was repeated at Checkpoint Charlie. Well of course all of our guys were trying to get down there and try and see what is going on. The mobs by that time, every Trabant in East Germany was on the roads to go to the border and see what was happening. The roads were clogged; you couldn't get anywhere.

Q: This was not just Berlin but the whole East German..

BARKLEY: Well the whole focus was Berlin at that time but it would have been East Germany as well. Once, all of a sudden, the major gates, particularly Checkpoint Charlie opened, there was no holding it. Anyway that was basically the beginning of the end. Pretty soon before you knew it, people were hammering on the wall. It was the death knell of the wall after 28 years. An

astonishing development.

Q: You know there was talk about sort of a decision either open it up or let's really crack down. I mean was that even, by November ninth, was that even within the politburo a question of let's declare martial law or something and bring out the troops?

BARKLEY: Well I think if they were going to declare martial law and bring in the troops, it would have had to happen earlier than this. By the time this event had taken place, the discontent in the country was evident. We are talking about hundreds of thousands of people coming out of the churches and marching in Dresden and Leipzig and other places, and of course the huge numbers in Berlin. Subsequently I remember Vogel telling me that the word within the government that a group of people that had mobilized were willing to die to test the borders in Berlin. I don't know if that was true or not, but certainly the message flashed around. All Shabovsky had to do was make one or two statements and they lost control. Now that doesn't mean that they still didn't have the authority or the ability to do something, but I think the fact was is that almost all of the instruments of authority realized something was happening and questioned whether or not they could control it. I don't know. Certainly the Russians went further and further into their Kasernes (bases). The Russian army was not to be seen. Things obviously caught the world by surprise. I mean you could have foreseen the continuing of this asylum seeking problem for a long time before it really broke. Once again we can look back and say well we should have known but we didn't. I mean we are not talking about the vast majority of East Germany. This is a country of 16 ½ million people. Whether they mobilized five or eight percent of them, it was incredible. Still the vast majority were not active. And of course the instruments of repression themselves, one doesn't know at this time whether or not they would have responded or how they would have responded. Were they once again ready to have blood in the streets? Clearly Gorbachev wasn't ready to have blood in the streets.

Q: So what were you...

BARKLEY: You can imagine how this hit Washington. You know how Washington responds in times of unexpected political challenge or change. And of course we were the only constant reporters. The press was there, but the press was basically doing a quick and dirty on immediate events and not what does this really mean. We were doing a pretty good job of keeping at least the bureaucracy up to date on what was happening. At the same time of course, poor Harry Gilmore, our minister in West Berlin, was also trying to do things because of course the West German government was not quite prepared for hordes of East Germans descending on them. And nobody in Bonn seemed to be prepared for it at all. I think Kohl was in Poland at the time. Genscher showed up very quickly, he of course was the coalition partner with Kohl, and he spotted a political opportunity and started making speeches, you know about freedom and free movement and all of that. Kohl charged into town to try to take the mike away from Genscher. But they weren't sure what this meant either. None of them were talking about unity. In fact two months later, the West German government was offering a Community of Treaties that would link the two countries together, but unity was not on the table. It just wasn't part of the agenda. So Washington then went back and forward, and you can imagine every talk show in the world wanted to have the President or the Secretary of State or the National Security Advisor. So on the 10th, I get a call telling me that Nightline was looking for a speaker for the 11th, the next day.

“The Secretary wants you to take this on.” Well you don’t have to be a particularly sophisticated foreign policy observer to realize that I didn’t know the secretary, and they were throwing me into the breach. That is not so dangerous. The ambassador can always be denied. One can always say, “He is not speaking for the government”. So anyway, I didn’t quite know how to handle the whole thing, and when you are talking to Ted Koppel you are not talking to a slouch. I mean this guy is one of the foreign policy commentators who actually does his homework. So that evening I went on Nightline. I guess it was a 15-20 minute segment, I don’t know. He asked a lot of questions, about the period that led up to this. Even at that time we knew better than anybody else what was happening. I got my line of chatter down a little bit, and so we went through what was actually happening, so I answered that the best I could. Then I remember, and I don’t know how I came up with this, but at the very end he said, “Well what are the long term implications of this.?” They are asking me a question that nobody else knew the answer to, and what are you going to come up with. So I said, “I think the long term implications are that the East German people will never agree to be ruled without their consent again” something along those lines. Anyway I weathered the storm and I got through it. I got nice calls from Washington on how it was handled. Of course at that time you know this was an event of gigantic magnitude. Everybody seems to recall the pictures of the guys on the wall with hammers beating it down. It was an absolutely remarkable moment in history. It was a great privilege to have been there.

Q: Were you concerned at the time, or was anybody mentioning that we really didn’t want to have a bunch of American politicians coming around and pontificating and saying we did this and that sort of thing. I mean was that...

BARKLEY: Well you know that is like asking the tide not to rush in. As you can imagine right after the wall, the number of senators and congressmen, and their staffers that descended on us was just enormous. Each one of them wanted to identify themselves as being there and tell their constituents that not only were they there when the wall came down, but their policy lines had led to this wonderful event. It is what American policy is all about. In terms of policy makers in Washington, they were obviously more careful. Thank God, they were more careful. They clearly saw that things were happening here, and did not want to add fuel to the fire until they knew in what direction things were headed. So there was interminable discussions as to what this all meant and where it was going. Nonetheless, very early on, the President and the Secretary of State made statements that indicated that the future of Germany and freedom looked like it was moving ahead. We would certainly welcome and endorse a thing like this. Meanwhile Congress continued to visit. I did as many briefings in the two week period of time as I had ever done in my life. We discussed the implications and what all of this meant, and you know what East Germany was. Many of these people had no idea what East Germany was, except that a Wall ran through Berlin. They began to realize that indeed this was a large nation, and was a nation that within the definition of Eastern Europe had a rather successful economy, and was a key player particularly in the Soviet analysis of things. So things were happening at a very intense level. Whenever CODELS come, you know, it is usually a nightmare for an Embassy. In this case it was not a nightmare particularly for us because everybody stayed in West Berlin. It was a nightmare for Harry Gilmore and the Mission in West Berlin, who had to take care of these people. Basically they would come over and it was our task to get them to meet with as many officials as we could. At that time, a large number of people were willing to talk to CODELS because they wanted to be seen as not the hard line, Stalinists that Honecker later on was

identified with. So we were able to do a good job of handling these people. We didn't have to bed them down which made it a lot easier. Sometimes it was hard. A lot of American congressmen and senators, it is a terrible thing to say, are prima donnas. Often when they arrived they were not particularly attentive to the East Germans they met. I remember Stanley Hoyer came with a group and was about two hours late getting there. We had important people lined up and desperately trying to ask them to stay on. They said, "But I have got to get out on the street. I can't do this." Then Hoyer came in and didn't even say thanks for staying. It got to be really pretty heavy going. Once he got there he was fine. But the discourtesy was something that some people didn't appreciate, including yours truly. But by and large you know, most American senators and congressmen are pretty impressive people. It is an easy thing to take shots at them, but most of them really wanted to know what was happening and what was going on.

Q: Well during this time, you know obviously the world had gone upside down. Could you talk to East German officials? Was everybody kind of wandering around in a daze or what?

BARKLEY: As you know the first line of contact for every Embassy is the foreign office. The foreign office changed dramatically with the fall of the wall. You know, these guys had been hard liners all of a sudden were just the voices of sweet reason. It was remarkable. They were all saying, "We know things have to change. Let's reason this together." Well we all knew that what the foreign office said in the past and so it now was not terribly important. We were spending infinitely more time in trying to get to know who the new players were. Not only who were the new players in the government were, but who were the new players in these other groups, Neues Forum, etc. The new SPD, all of the national front parties were changing, declaring their independence from the SED. They were jettisoning all of the old types too and new people were coming in, people we didn't know. We were trying to get to know them. We were a very busy group. Our problem wasn't that we didn't have anyone to talk to; our problem was that we had so many people to talk to that we tried to find a useful format. It is extraordinarily difficult.

Q: During this were you seeing, was there a possibility were we concerned about a violent reaction someplace, I mean hard liners taking over or assassinations or anything like that?

BARKLEY: Well I think that was always lurking in the back of your mind. I don't think it was assassinations so much. What was truly lurking in everybody's mind was the historical precedent of the Prague Spring. Whether or not finally Moscow would wake up and say, "Oh my God it is out of control" and say reform and openness be damned we cannot allow this to get out of control. And so we were constantly paying attention to what the Russians were doing. We had some fairly good contacts in the Russian embassy. Not the ambassador, I mean he was a hopeless old man. Really one of the last Stalinists. I don't think he ever understood what Gorbachev was about, but he had some good young people. They were willing to talk. What they kept saying is of course, it will be ok, it will stay under control etc. I don't think they knew any better than any body else. There must have been an enormous heartburn in the Kremlin at that time as to what all this meant. I had the distinct impression that Washington was particularly concerned about doing nothing to provoke a Soviet reaction. Extraordinarily responsible behavior. And of course at this time the President and the Secretary had begun to develop very good relations with the Russian leadership, not only Gorbachev, that went back during the Reagan years, but the Secretary of State Baker had become extraordinarily close to Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. At the same

time every other country in the world was taking an assessment of what this all means. The key people who had to make that assessment were those with specific responsibilities for Berlin and Germany as a whole. I am talking about France, England, the United States and Russia.

Intellectually the idea of German unification was embraced by statesmen with greater enthusiasm depending on how close they were to Germany. I remember the French used to say they loved Germany so much they were glad there were two of them. Not quite as intense but equally concerned was Great Britain. Over the course of the 20th century they had some very rough experiences with the Germans. For the longest period of time of course, the U.S. said that the idea of a whole, free and unified Germany, was a good thing. But we of course sat across the ocean and were not that close to it. I can't speak for the Russians, but the Russians had rather difficult relations with Germany too for a long time. So everybody was watching what was going on with a certain amount of heartburn.

Q: I have to say that during the whole time, I am a creature of the cold war. World War III if it were going to start, was going to start by mobs tearing down the wall and something happening in Berlin and the Soviet army coming in and we would get involved. I mean you know this is sort of the classic scenario, and I mean you were reaching it but without some of the elements being the army coming in. Were people talking about this?

BARKLEY: No, but we are both children of the cold war. I recall all the war gaming we used to do was focused on the fear of a renewed Berlin crisis. Of course Berlin had been sort of the bellwether of our relations with the Russians for a long time. You would always look to where the flashpoints in east-west relations existed. Someplace like Thrace a miscalculation by the Bulgarians and the Greeks and the Turks or whatever could occur. Over the course of the years certain stability on the borders had been reached. You know part of the West German policy was to recognize the borders, the post war borders with Poland and with other countries, and indeed they did that. So the borders were not as volatile as they had been at one particular time. As much as we hated the Wall and the controlled strip between East And West Germany, it did lead to a measure of stability and predictability. What it didn't do of course, is illuminate the problems that were going on, on the eastern side of the border, and that is really what was playing out now. The general dynamic of western society which had become so appealing to the east led to attempts to restructure a system that was broken. That was what got us into the position we were in at that time.

Q: Were you getting the, you mentioned the French and the British and the Soviet powers. I mean they all had this Berlin thing which in a way was more on Harry Gilmore's side I guess. I mean were you consulting with your fellow ambassadors to try to figure out swapping information?

BARKLEY: In East Berlin, we had a monthly meeting with the British and the French ambassadors and the West German permanent representative. At the beginning it used to be that the West Germans basically told us what they saw happening, because they had resources far in excess of anything we had. We would add bits and pieces. As the time went on, of course they were no better informed than the rest of us, but we did talk. The French ambassador, she was not particularly active, or did not seem to be very concerned one way or the other. I think she had a

very small staff. The British ambassador was typically good and also very typically articulate. But I think everybody began to realize as things unfolded that the American embassy was the best. I am very proud to say that. We had wonderful people. We organized in a remarkable way, won with the limited resources we had.

Q: Were you given any additional help at this point?

BARKLEY: No, we never got any augmentation. We never asked for any. Washington was very pleased and very praiseworthy of what we were able to do. Anyway, as the Wall went down, I remember Jonathan Greenwald, a wonderful officer who was my political counselor had planned on home leave, and I think he wanted me to say to him oh Jon, you can't go. But maybe it is the old foreign service in me, and I said, "No, you have earned it, you should go. We will fill in somehow," and his deputy Imre Lipping took over. He was also a brilliant officer, and he had excellent young officers with him. By that time, J.D. Bindenagel was our DCM. He was marvelously well organized and made sure that the coverage of the country was as complete as it could be. I was very impressed. They had everybody out, everybody who spoke some German and even those who didn't. We even had communicators traveling in different areas to report back on what was going on. We had the agricultural attaché, we had the USIA. They were all over the place. I was fortunate to have the remnants of the old German hands. I had clearly the most experienced Embassy in terms of German affairs. Also a lot of young talent that was eager and willing to get out and go. They were fantastic. So we were everywhere to the extent that we could be, and we didn't need anymore help, and no one even thought about it. Interestingly enough, what was happening in the rest of Germany, I had the advantage of having remarkably talented and experienced people. In Bonn, with very few exceptions, they were all new people. Many of them had no experience in Berlin affairs. Our ambassador was Vernon Walters who was a prominent policy expert. Most of his experience had been in attaché duty in different places. He was a linguist of remarkable talent. Harry Gilmore had some German experience, but most of his experience had been in the Slavic areas, Hungary and Yugoslavia. He was a very level head, but the real German expertise was in my Embassy. I think that worked out to my good fortune. I am sure there were a whole variety of reasons for it, but for the first time our embassy in East Berlin was the focal point of coverage in Germany. Bonn, I am sure, was unhappy with that. They thought that Bonn was the center of where American interests should lie.

Q: What was happening to, you opened up the wall, and everybody is jumping around and all that, but is this a real hemorrhage or is this going in, taking a look, coming back? What was it?

BARKLEY: Mostly the latter. West Germans very quickly came up with the concept of Begrussungsgeld which is welcoming money. Anybody who entered into Germany for the first time got 100 Marks. The idea was these people come into Germany, they look around, West Berlin, they see all these wonderful goods, but they don't have any money. So everybody who came through could apply for 100 Marks, which is about 60 bucks at that time. The West Germans did this. Of course it was a real drain on their treasury, but they did realize that this was a moment of great historical significance. So a lot of people came over; they would buy things, and they went back home. After all that is where their homes were. There was no place for them to stay. We began to see then the first sign of people who had no intention of emigrating or going to West Germany. I mean there were still a lot of those people too, but those are the younger

people. The vast majority of people went back to their jobs and they went back to their homes. They went back with a load of bananas or oranges or whatever it was they needed at that particular time, or dishwasher soap. There was a whole variety of things they were particularly interested in. What you saw, however was constant movement back and forth, but it wasn't only one way. It went in both directions. As a matter of fact the day after on the 10th I drove down and with flags up on the limousine and demonstratively went through Checkpoint Charlie. We got a lot of cheers as we did that. The day after, we went down to another checkpoint, I don't know if it was Heinrich, Heinestrasse, or something like that, on foot, and we walked across. There were just swarms of people going in both directions, but when it came time to come back, the Vopos stopped me because I didn't have an East German identification card. I showed them my diplomatic passport and they finally let us through. So there was a lot of movement back and forth. The police on both sides were trying to get control somewhat. They didn't want to get it out of hand. But by and large, the movement was free and open. It came in both directions, and the vast majority of East Germans went back home, because I think they were confident they could go out again.

Q: But this shows the confidence that once it happened, it happened.

BARKLEY: It is astonishing in view of their history that they continued to go back, because a lot of people would look upon this as a one time opportunity. But you could see the regime at the Wall had lost all semblance of control. The people were going to come back. You can't even begin to visualize the streams of people that were going, mostly to the west. As soon as they got their money, and some of them always had a little bit of West German money, they would ride them in subways and things that they never had been able to do before. They were playing out the fantasies of a life that had been frustrated by their incarceration in the past. It is an interesting topic.

Q: The S-bahn was working then?

BARKLEY: Well it always had been working, but it had stopped at the border. Very quickly one of the things they tried to do was to re-open the subway, the S-bahn on both sides of the city border. That took awhile to get the technical ability to do that. In any event, the next major thing from my standpoint came in December when we were told that James Baker was coming to give a major speech in West Berlin. This is the first time he has been to Berlin. After what is going on, what he says was going to capture world attention and be an indication of the course of American policy. So of course we began to prepare for his visit. By December of course, the whole question of whither East Germany and whither Germany per se was beginning to preoccupy us a bit more. So we did a scene setter for the secretary, basically on where we saw things going. I sent in a cable saying that the secretary should consider visiting East Germany. In view of the fact that the United States had unique responsibilities for inter German relations, and under the Potsdam accords we had responsibility for Germany as a whole, and for Berlin, I said, that, we still are the key player on this issue. Kohl was coming at the end of December or early January. His trip had been announced. Mitterrand is coming before that, so we had western cover for a Baker visit. It seemed to me that the United States should not be hiding, but should be seen to be engaged in the process of reform, and that it would be very good if the Secretary would agree to go over and meet with Hans Modrow in Potsdam. As you can imagine, these kinds of

recommendations don't always solicit responses. We heard nothing further. This was shortly before the Secretary arrived. Before he arrived, he did do something that was really quite remarkable. He took our scene setter cable and released it to the press. It was a cable that had been largely drafted by J.D. Bindenagel, but we all worked on it, and I thought very well captured what was going on. I had never seen before a secret cable released to the press. In any event we were preparing for his visit and simultaneously with his visit we had a CODEL, headed by Richard Gephardt. I arranged to have a dinner for Richard Gephardt on the 11th of December. He had a number of high-profile people with him and I was able to get some fairly high ranking East Germans including Deputy Prime Minister Krystal Luft, who was an attractive woman who came in with Modrow and others and was rather forward looking. I got a call that said that the Secretary, who was giving his speech on the 12th would like to have a meeting of his in-country team in West Berlin at his hotel on the evening of the 11th. He had his team with him from Washington which included Bob Zoellick and Margaret Tutwiler, and all of these close confidantes. Harry Gilmore would be there, and Ambassador Walters would be there from Bonn, and I would be there representing the Embassy in East Berlin. So my wife did traditional foreign service wife duties sitting in for me for the dinner while I was on my way to West Berlin to meet with the Secretary. I had never met the Secretary before. I wasn't quite sure what I was prepared for, although from what I had seen he was obviously a charming intelligent fellow. Well we came in, and he came up to me and introduced himself, which was not necessary. He said, "I did something I have never done before. I released this cable you sent to me to the press." I said, "Yes Mr. Secretary, I am aware of that. I read it in the press. It read just as well the second time as it did the first." Well he looked at me and I am not quite sure whether he thought I was pretty cheeky or whatever it was, but he smiled a bit and sat down. Anyway, the meeting started, and it turns out to have been perhaps one of the more important meetings in my career because it had a lot to do with where the United States saw its position in what was going on. I recall he started the meeting by looking at Dick Walters, because the Soviets had just called for a meeting of the Berlin group which was one of the few instruments that they had available to pressure the West on events. We did not want to buy into that meeting from a policy standpoint unless it was to discuss Berlin issues. So we agreed to do that under limited terms. I remember the Secretary looking at Ambassador Walters and saying, "Okay, I understand the political scenery, but what legal rights do we have in this whole situation?" You have to remember that Dick Walters had never served in Germany, he had never learned the arcane aspects of Berlin. Although he spoke good German, he had no background in German affairs. He said, "Well we don't have any legal rights." Well that was something that I just simply couldn't let go, so I said, "Excuse me Mr. Secretary, we do indeed have legal rights." I said, "Under the Potsdam accords of 1945 and subsequent accords. Indeed our rights are inscribed in the United Nations charter. I gave them the pertinent UN articles as well. The Secretary looked at me and said, "What have we got here? Does somebody actually know what is happening?" I think right away at this time he thought he had better listen; for this guy seems to know what is what. Well it was clear that I had just exposed my entire career. All of a sudden I was the only one present that had learned this unique quality of inter German Berlin affairs. As you can imagine I don't think Ambassador Walters was very pleased with me. But it was something that was essential to be clarified. Then we opened the discussion and he said to me, "I would like to hear what you have to say Dick, about what is going on." Well I had been briefing Congressmen for the past three weeks, so I had a line of chatter that flowed. I gave the briefing as best I could. I must say, I was really on that night. I don't know why, but it came out very nicely. You could see he was very interested in what was

going on. Afterwards they asked a couple of questions. If I didn't know the answers, I said so. Then the Secretary looked at me and said, "Well do you think I should go over and see the chief?" I said, "Well Mr. Secretary it was a recommendation that I made earlier. I think it would be very helpful if you did. After all, many of our allies are already lining up to come over and meet with the new government. I can't see where this would be a hazard for you." I said, "However if you do that, there are several things that we would certainly recommend. One is that you inform the West Germans and get their approval before you do this, and second that you agree only to meet in Potsdam because of the status of Berlin. We can not do it in Berlin. Third that you use this occasion to impress upon Modrow etc. that the elections being planned for this spring would be free, fair, open, secret ballot, along traditional western lines of a democratic election." He said, "Well I got your cable, but we thought the Russians might misread this and their military might take to the streets." I said, "Well, all of our indications are, and indeed it has been publicly stated by the Russians, that they will not do that, that they are going further into the Kasernes and don't want to be involved at this time."

Q: For somebody reading this, Kasernes is the German term for barracks.

BARKLEY: That is right, the barracks. Anyway we discussed it further. Nothing was decided, the Secretary thanked us and left. Meanwhile Harry Gilmore said, "Dick, you got a moment?" So I said, "Sure." So Harry and I sat together. Harry had a unique problem in Berlin that affected all of us. The problem was is that the Commandant in Berlin who was a military officer, usually a two star officer, was in a very strange position. He is in charge of the 5,000 military forces we had in Berlin but was to stay away from politics. And although he was the personal representative of our ambassador in Bonn, the ambassador almost always briefed the commandant and said that political advice comes exclusively from the Minister in Berlin who was Harry Gilmore. Ambassador Walters never understood this and never told the Commandant that political decisions were in the hands of the Minister and implied that the Commandant was his representative in all things. So the Commandant was getting very active in politics that he did not understand and was causing us a lot of trouble. And poor Harry was getting no support at all. He looked a little bit to me for solace and understanding as he was going through the difficult task of trying to put political judgments into a situation he had lost control of. That is what he wanted to talk about. We had a good talk. Harry is a very bright guy. As I was leaving a secretary came up and caught me as I was going out of the Intercontinental Hotel and said, "Do you have a moment to see Margaret Tutwiler?" I said, "Absolutely I have a moment to see Margaret Tutwiler." So we went back upstairs, and there she was. She said, "You know, I know Jim Baker very well, and I am telling you that after your discussion up there, he very much would be interested in following your advice and going over and seeing Modrow." I said, "Well that would be wonderful." She said, "I want you to come in here and talk to him." Well I had never been in the inner sanctum before in my foreign service career, but I really liked the Secretary, and thought we had, had a good exchange in our meeting. I came in and he said, "Come on over here. We have got to talk." Dennis Ross and Bob Zoellick and Margaret Tutwiler were there. Susan Baker who I did not know, came up and asked if I wanted a drink. I thought she was a secretary. I didn't treat her as properly as I should have. But anyway it was a very congenial atmosphere. We sat down and he said, "Let's go over this again." I gave all of the reasons why I thought it was important for the Americans to be seen to be engaged in something in which we had such deep interests and that I thought the risks were minor as long as we double

checked with the Germans. I would recommend doing this. "Well I will go and talk to Brent Scowcroft." So he gets on the phone, and I hear his conversation. He was feeding back what we had discussed basically. Obviously Scowcroft said okay but, you do not go into Berlin. I remember the secretary saying, "Of course you do not do that. There is a status problem here. We will go to Potsdam." Which of course is exactly what I was feeding back to him, so I was pleased with all of that. He came back and he said, "Well I think we are going to try and do this. Can you set it up?" I said, "I am sure I can set it up." He was giving a speech the next day at one or two o'clock, an important speech, so the only time frame he had to put this together was about four or five o'clock that afternoon to meet with Modrow. It was difficult administratively but I said, "I think I can do this." He said, "Meanwhile I will get in touch with Genscher and we will see how it goes." Well he did get in touch with Genscher who as I suspected said, "Oh that is a good thing. You should do this," because Genscher and others wanted to do it too. Of course the Secretary would only be the first and it would give them a little bit of cover for whatever they wanted to do. I returned to my residence that night to set up the activities as the CODEL dinner was just coming down to a conclusion. As I walked in they were having dessert. Of course they were enormously curious as to what was going on. I mean I remember I came and they all stood up and said it was good to have you here. I am sure you had a good meeting etc, and what they wanted to know is what was going on. Well I said, "It was a very good meeting." I took Krystal Luft who was the Deputy Prime Minister and said, "Do you have a moment madam, I would like to speak with you." I brought J.D. in who was at the dinner. I said, "The Secretary is willing to meet with Modrow tomorrow in Potsdam. I thought this would be of great interest to the East German government as it was to the American government." I remember her looking at me and a smile crossed her face and she said in German "das ist eine sehr gute sache" which means "This is a very good thing. We will do this." She gets on the phone and talks to Modrow. He said, "Fine. I will make my schedule clear. We will meet in Potsdam. The foreign office will set it up for us." So I turned to J.S. and said, "Ok, J.D. it is in your hands." He mobilized the admin section, got hold of the Intercontinental Hotel and all of the other places we knew we were going to meet, and the boys went to work. They were marvelous. About an hour and a half later J.D. called and said, "It is from the foreign office. They want to talk to you about the meeting." So I said, "Okay." I knew him personally. He said, "We will meet at the Cacillien Hof," which as you might recall was the site for the Potsdam agreements. I said, "No we will not meet there. This is not a meeting that is to recreate historic imagery. This is a new meeting." He said, "No that is where we will meet." I said, "Well then, call the meeting off." Well you can imagine I was speaking without any authority, but I did it anyway. He came back and he said, "Fine. We will meet at the Inter-continental Hotel." But they were making a last minute pitch to put an historical spin on this, add Russians into the mix etc. So I then let the Secretary know the meeting was on. They were extraordinarily impressed that we could do this so quickly, as indeed was I, but it just turned out that we had the right people at that dinner party that could smooth the way. So it was all set for 5:00 the next day. I had told the Secretary that if you do meet with this government, you need to meet with church leaders to counterbalance the idea that you are only meeting with one side, the church being the representative of all of the dissident elements that were now coming out of the woodwork. He said, "Absolutely we will do that." We got hold of the Church leaders who also were extraordinarily pleased to meet with the Secretary in Potsdam. Well I went to bed. I woke up the next morning and the news was flashing all around that the Secretary was going to go to Potsdam. Margaret Tutwiler announced it to the press. The press asked, "Well why are you doing this?" The said, "Ambassador Barkley made a persuasive case for this, and

we thing it is the right thing to do.” Well, she was doing everything that she should to protect her boss in case anything went wrong, and guess who was going to be first in the firing line. That was fine, that came with the pay-grade as far as I am concerned. So the next day around noon, I went over to meet with the Secretary before the meeting. By the way I was extraordinarily impressed with Margaret Tutwiler who was a woman of incredible sensitivity and intelligence, and she had, believe me, the ear of James Baker.

Q: I have interviewed her, a rather long set of interviews with her. She is a person I have never met anybody who has such a focus on the job at hand.

BARKLEY: Well I am sure the story she has to tell would hold several volumes. Nonetheless, she was obviously instrumental in this whole thing taking place. So when I arrived in Berlin, every journalist that I knew, and I knew a lot of them, as well as western journalists, spotted me and descended. I had no comment. Knowing that anything I said would probably have been twisted. Anyway the Secretary gave a gang busters speech. It had been written I think, largely by Jim Dobbins and others, but he captured I think, the mood that the United States welcomes multiple viewpoints and democracy and all these other things. Anyway it was a great speech. After the speech it was time for our meeting in Potsdam.

Q: How do you get to Potsdam without going into Berlin?

BARKLEY: Well, there is a bridge called the Glienicke Brücke, the Bridge of Freedom, which used to be the site where we made all the spy exchanges. It was the only direct access from West Berlin into Potsdam, but it had been closed to traffic, except for official traffic. By that time of course, the East Germans had totally mobilized everything. The secretary asked me to accompany him. He said, “You know I have never been in Berlin before,” so as we went through I pointed out some things, having spent a large share of my life in East as well as West Berlin. We got to the bridge, and it was dusk. It really was sort of an eerie kind of scenery because that part of Potsdam had not been particularly developed, and the lights didn’t shine brightly. We got to the bridge and there were the East German police all lined up. They waved us right through. This was a new experience for me too, going through that area and being welcomed by the other side. As we got on the other side of the bridge, the limousine stopped and the doors opened. The secretary’s scheduler Margaret and Margaret Tutwiler got in and sat in the jump seats. On our way over the Secretary was asking me once again what points we should cover in our meeting, and we went through it. He had a little note pad. I mean all of our position papers go for naught; at the last minute it is word of mouth. We went through the commitment from Modrow towards free and fair elections etc. No impediments to the organization process of the political parties, secret ballot, the usual things. Anyway as soon as they jumped in, Margaret took over. It was a remarkable thing. She looked at the Secretary and she said, “Mr. Secretary, this is the first real breakthrough you have made in your Secretaryship. You are the first secretary ever to visit East Germany at a crucial time. This is a serious moment. When we get out and speak to the press I don’t want any smiles or laughter, only somber attitudes.” It was absolutely remarkable and wonderful how much she was in control of not only the agenda but making sure that he got it right. I just sat there with my mouth agape. I looked at him and he was paying very close attention. We get there; she jumps out, and I looked at him and said, “Mr. Secretary, is she always like this?” He said, “Absolutely, I couldn’t live without her.” He got out. He performed

perfectly. Of course as we came in Modrow was at the door and welcomed us. We went up and had our meeting. It was mostly the Secretary and his staff and on equal number of East Germans. Of course there was nobody in the diplomatic corps except myself because it was Eastern Turf. I was told subsequently there was a nervous moment when everybody went up and sat down because they served tea. One of the waiters looked remarkably like Egon Krenz. I didn't see that, but they told me afterwards there was a very nervous moment that "Oh my God, we are being set up." I didn't at all think that would happen because Modrow and Krenz did not get along, and obviously Modrow was taking control and Krenz was eclipsed. We had a very good meeting. The secretary had his notes and made every point very clearly. He is a very articulate man, very thoughtful. Modrow handled it very nicely and was obviously pleased that the Secretary of State of the most powerful nation in the world was there. We got every commitment the Secretary wanted. So it was an extremely good meeting. Afterwards we went over to the church and met with the church figures. That was also a very good meeting.

Q: Did the East German officials have any problem with the church officials, I mean meeting then? Did they understand?

BARKLEY: No. I told them precisely what we were doing. I think after they tried that one thing with the Caecilian Hof they knew I was prepared to call off everything. For them that was a minor sacrifice. So we had no problem with that. We met with them. One of the church leaders was a fellow by the name of Schotle who is now the minister president of Bandburg. We had a very good discussion. The Secretary of course was curious as to their views on what was happening and how things were going. So it was a good meeting all in all. After that, we returned to West Berlin.

Q: Now to sort of put the nail in the edifice or something, did the secretary say I have the assurances of the...

BARKLEY: Oh well of course as soon as we got back we drafted this up and forwarded to Washington all of the assurances. I don't recall exactly what Margaret did at that time. You know that is a very good question. It is one I don't have the answer to.

Q: Well I assume that somewhere or another you want to make it...

BARKLEY: Oh absolutely. I mean the report is that yes the Prime Minister indeed is committed to free and fair elections. I think that was the long and sort of it. But certainly, you know you are absolutely right. He had to come out of it looking good. He was satisfied and she was satisfied with the meeting, and so indeed we came out of it well. Of course I had recommended it, but it had worked out very well, and they were pleased. It is important I think that Genscher was pleased. I am not sure about Kohl because Genscher was the Secretary's counterpart. Kohl I think would have liked to have been the first there. That was precisely my point. But however we had been so foursquare on supporting Kohl in whatever happened in Germany, more so than anybody else, in fact, and without qualification. He had no complaints although subsequently I heard that he would have liked to have been the first. He wasn't going to be the first anyway. Mitterrand was going to precede him.

Q: Did you get any feel from or about Vernon Walters, about being upstaged?

BARKLEY: Well it was quite clear that he wasn't particularly pleased. But on the other hand, he saw that the future was moving back again towards Bonn. We always had a cordial relationship, but it was never a particularly warm one I would say. I mean he wasn't a career officer. He came out of the political establishment. There were tensions clearly between Walters and the Secretary that I was unaware of until later on. Walters had made some statements that Washington considered unhelpful about the pace of unification and things like that, way ahead of the issue. When Washington was doing their best not to humiliate the Russians, Walter's comments were considered unhelpful. Subsequent to that meeting however I will say that he did get hold of his Commandant and told him to make sure that he did nothing about checking with me first. So subsequently we had some very direct discussions on that. I told the Commandant that the importance of discipline at this particular moment in history could not be underestimated.

Q: This brings us a point that follows soon later on, with the fact that the President of the United States, the Secretary of State handled this whole situation extremely well, without putting I mean you had keeping the Soviets from feeling disrespected or something of this nature.

BARKLEY: Well you know there are moments in history where you look at your leadership and say "Thank God they are there". This was certainly one of them. In my experience, the first George Bush, the one we are addressing now, had an absolutely uncanny feel for foreign affairs. Of course he had long been in foreign affairs. He had been our ambassador to China and head of the UN and CIA, so he knew the international scene very well. The Secretary obviously was an uncommonly intelligent man, and of course Brent Scowcroft. It was really quite a remarkable team. They saw the winds of change and they had an idea on how to handle it. Of course the Secretary as I said, had this relationship with Shevardnadze and the President with Gorbachev. They met constantly on all of these things, and fully understood is this is not the time to be fainthearted.

Q: You were saying they were a remarkable set of people.

BARKLEY: Well not only that. The Secretary had, from my perspective, an inner group of advisors who were also extraordinarily gifted. Both Bob Zoellick and Dennis Ross are two that come to mind, and you know by thoughts on Margaret Tutwiler. So it was really an excellent Department. I was extraordinarily fortunate, first to be there when all this happened, and second to have people on the receiving who were uncommonly wise and judicious. It was great fortune. Everything came together nicely for once.

Q: Well we will pick this up the next time, the secretary of State James Baker has finished his being in Potsdam and all, and we will talk about how things were, you know your contact with the East Germans went and how things developed after that.

Today is 3 September 2003. Dick, in the first place, while all these things are going on, you had you officers out around, I assume all over East Germany and all. What were they picking up? I

mean were they feeling the world had turned upside down. You know from the German contacts, particularly the party apparatchiks and all that.

BARKLEY: I'd like to go into that, but before we do, I would like to put in a side bar to the Secretary's visit. I thought about this, primarily to show how the department functioned at certain levels at this time. Before the secretary left, he asked me if there is anything else that we should be doing in East Germany which would serve American interests at that time. I said, "Yes I thought there was. I thought it would be an extraordinarily important symbolic gesture if we were able open up some sort of diplomatic office in Leipzig. First, of course, to reward Leipzig for being the center of the opposition, particularly from the church standpoint, and secondly to endorse the developments that had taken place there. On top of that," I said, "no matter what happens, the Leipzig area will become at one point, the economic engine of that part of Germany." He said, "Well send me a note on that." I said, "Mr. Secretary, with all due respect, if I send a note to the State Department on that, the mattress mice will eat it up before it gets any consideration, because there are limits on the number of diplomatic missions we might have. He looked at me and said, "No, no, you have to do this the right way." I said, "Oh, what is the right way?" He said, "Send a personal message to Margaret Tutwiler outlining the reasons to do this, and she will take care of it." Well quite obviously this was bypassing the bureaucracy, something that I was not trained to do. On the other hand, I was also trained that the bureaucracy will indeed sidetrack some important initiatives unless it is brought to the attention of higher levels. So after he left, I went back, and I wrote what I thought was a persuasive cable to Margaret pointing out that the Secretary asked me to do this and these are the things that I think we should do. I never heard anything more until that Spring, when Congress appropriated funds for the State to open a Consulate in Leipzig. It subsequently opened. They sent in Todd Becker, who was an old German hand and a very capable officer. As I understand, the Mission is still open in Leipzig, despite the fact that they have closed a number of other Consulates and Consulates General in Germany. I think it has probably very much shown its value. But what was particularly intriguing to me is how to get things done at a particular level. It certainly worked. Ok, now back to your question about what we were picking up from our people throughout the country.

Q: And Leipzig would of course fit into that.

BARKLEY: Yes, we were covering the terrain. Guys were on the move all the time. We mobilized our staff. Jon Greenwald who had been on home leave was now back and energized by what was going on, and I think saw clearly, maybe for the first time that reform was not possible but that revolution was the order of the day. A lot of things had happened however in Berlin. Modrow getting a lot of pressure from his rank and file out in the provinces, and as I might have said earlier, the Socialist Unity Party was determined not to be the villain in this piece. And there was a lot of pressure on the old guard to move. That pressure became so pointed that Modrow organized what he called a Roundtable which was a group of a number of people who were unhappy with the way things were going. These were Church people, people from the Neues Forum and other groups that had sprung up. Actually they sort of shared power, and they all did this primarily because most of them, and certainly the church leaders, predominately believed that Modrow was really the last chance for an orderly transition, and if he went it could revert back to the old boys. The idea of a crackdown, or at least of Soviet acquiescence for a

crackdown, was at that time not far fetched. So Modrow had broadened the scale of his government. By this time Krenz had resigned and had been replaced by Gregor Giese who was a human rights lawyer at that time and a man of some prominence. His father was the State Secretary for Religious Affairs and known to be liberal in a rather rigid system. So things were changing quite dramatically, but quite clearly the Party was in disarray, and that is what we were picking up. But what we were also focusing on of course were the new groups that were coming out of the woodwork. One of the more prominent ones and the ones that we all presumed would have quite a good future was an East German version of the SPD. They were a bunch of young men who were born and bred in the idea that somehow socialism was the natural order of things. They looked to the western model of the Social Democratic Party, which of course had shucked off its Marxist moorings. We were trying to follow up on them, although they were quite elusive because they were trying to evade the Stasis, which was still out there looking for people. We were not quite sure what their future would be, but we began to establish contact with them and with people in the Neues Forum. We also began to look at what were previously the National Front Parties. There was a total change in all the leadership of the National Front Parties, and those parties began to reconstitute themselves along the lines of their western counterparts. The one of course, that ultimately proved the most successful in doing this was the CDU. There had been a CDU in East Germany but it had been totally under the thumb of the communist party. It had been run by a particularly egregious fellow, who was also dumped unceremoniously as a fellow traveler and had been replaced by another human rights lawyer by the name of Lothar de Maziere, a name that would become more important as time went on. The same thing happened in the Liberal Democratic Party of Germany. Their leader, Gerlach, who had not been the worst by a long shot, nonetheless he lost his influence. They all began to try to establish contacts with their partners in West Germany, and they did that very successfully. It became evident in late December and early January that the movement not only in the streets but within the political apparatus as well. The first and foremost I think one would have to look and say the CDU in the West Germany had done the best job of assisting their now sister party in East Germany. They poured money into it and a lot of expertise. But more importantly, even in the sham political structure the East Germans had before, the National Front Parties had an organization. And that organization proved to be particularly valuable. The new East German SPD did not have an organization.

Q: It had been taken over by the Social Unity Party?

BARKLEY: Exactly the Social Unity Party absorbed all of these. All the socialist parties were brought into the Unity Party which was the Communist Party that was in total control. So they found themselves with an enormous amount of public sympathy but were losing the race in terms of organization. We began to notice in our visits that when they went to the Social Unity Party offices they were usually little walk-ups in some dimly lit apartment house. They didn't even have copying machines. They didn't have any of the things that would allow them to organize well.

Q: So what was the CDU doing and SDP? I mean were they sending people carrying copying machines? What kinds of things were happening?

BARKLEY: Well as I said, the other parties did have a nascent structure. They did have copying

machines. They did have all of those things. They just used them previously in the cause of the communist apparatus. But the SBD didn't have any of that. During this entire time there was an enormous amount of maneuvering among the great powers. Right after the wall came down and after Genscher appeared to be the first one off the mark in lauding what was going on in East Germany, and foreseeing a wave of future changes, Kohl attempted to recapture an initiative within his own coalition. Kohl came up with the ten points program which foresaw a long fifteen year period where some sort of unity would occur. His Ten Points called for a contractual relationship between the East and the West Germans. It is important to remember at this time that hardly anybody in East Germany, to my knowledge, was talking about unification. What they were talking about was democratization and reform and openness. Things began to change however. During this entire time, the West was particularly attentive to what was happening. The French and the British were obviously more concerned about the possibility of a united Germany and feared things were moving too fast. Also there was the presumption that the Russians were too. After all the GDR was really the crown in their emporium. It was hard at that time to foresee where things were going to go. Of course Russia itself was in terrible disarray, as was Eastern Europe. President Bush was meeting with Gorbachev at that time. They met in Malta. Of course he had enunciated quite earlier that whatever happened to Germany it had to happen peaceful, and that Germany had to stay as member of the NATO alliance. The West Germans and the British and the French moved a little bit more deliberately. Indeed Mitterrand and in December Kohl visited East Germany and began what became actually part of a national campaign. Kohl even at that stage was not talking about, or urging, unification fearing the reaction on the part of the Russians. The United States as we pointed out earlier had established the position very early that self determination in Germany had long been a policy of the United States and there was nothing to fear and we would endorse it.

Q: What about the 300 pound gorilla, and that is the large numbers of Soviet troops sitting on East German soil? I mean were people talking about what to do about them?

BARKLEY: Oh certainly. The fear was they would be unleashed. There would be another Prague spring or something like that. It was quite clear that was the force that would authorize it, and if it did authorize it the East German army, which was totally dedicated to the Warsaw pact, would also engage. Up until that time, the only forces of order the East Germans had, which were formidable, were the VOPSP, the Stasis and the Worker Brigades. But they were never brought into the play, primarily, we discussed earlier Gorbachev's entire policy of Glasnost and Perestroika was on the line, and if they did clamp down, that would be a sign that his future was over too. So he was in political irons. There were certain things he could not do. At the same time of course, the Soviets were intent on trying to reassert themselves and in the process do whatever they could to invoke Four Power rights and responsibilities for Berlin and Germany as a whole. They indeed right before the secretary's visit had called for a meeting of the four power consultative process on Berlin. We didn't bite on that, and of course nobody wanted to get involved in that issue. No one thought that the Western Powers were going to try to determine Germany's future by a diktat. I don't think that was at all in the cards. It wasn't in the cards as far as the United States was concerned. Things began to get most interesting because others began to pick up the pulse of what was going on in the country at large. I should add at this time the western press had zeroed in, and so of course they were all over East Germany too. So people were moving in different directions; reports were coming out.

Q: I assume you were, I mean it would be part of the tour for them to come by and talk to you.

BARKLEY: Oh yes, they would come by the embassy. I met usually with the commentators but not particularly the reporters. USIS was busy trying to help, but they were moving fairly independently throughout the country.

Q: Well did you feel you had been on a tightrope? I mean you had to be very careful about what you said and all this, not to get too far ahead or be too standing out or something when things are happening?

BARKLEY: Well I inherently believed that, but I also inherently had the duties of talking for the press. In that sense this reluctance served me well. You know a lot of ambassadors can't let a microphone pass by. I always thought there was very little to gain and a lot to lose by addressing the press. So I let the press people, particularly in Washington, take care of that. Of course, West Berlin was a magnet for a lot of people because living was so nice there, so a lot of people would station themselves there, but more began to move throughout the country. There were some anxious moments. But first time, actually in early January, we began to look at the real possibilities of some sort of step up in the pace towards unification. A lot of things began to happen. The election that had been called initially for May by Modrow was moved up to March 18, because he didn't think he could contain the situation for a five month period of time. So March 18 actually became a critical time where all of a sudden the government had committed itself for the first time in its history to a free and fair election. You can't say that the East Germans weren't organized. And they did indeed organize this election very well. Of course at the same time the SED had been reconstituted now as the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), because they were in the election too. They became very nervous. There was some speculation at the beginning that they would poll up to 30-35% of the vote because so many people were indeed indebted to the party for their own status. So at many different levels there was a lot going on. While we were looking at how to engage in this process, I got a call in early January from Jim Holmes from the Policy Planning Staff. He said that they are fully aware of our legal obligations under the Potsdam accords, and knew that any final negotiation on the future of Germany had to include the four victorious powers. So they came up with a formula, and he wanted to spin it by me. We were on a secure line to the extent that it worked, I don't know. He said, "What do you think of a four plus two kind of negotiation?" The four being the allied powers who had the specific legal obligation and the two being East and West Germany. Well I said that something along that line would obviously be necessary, but it is incredibly important to make sure this was in harmony with West German thinking. After all West Germany had to be the principal player as this thing moved forward. The idea was bootled about and found to be a good idea, at least a good idea to float with the West Germans. I don't know who exactly, but I think it was Baker raised it personally with Genscher. Genscher said, "The formula is backwards. It should be two plus four instead of four plus two." In other words allow the two Germanys to make the decisions as to where they want to go, and then discuss it with the allies on how that can be accomplished. So a lot was going on. As we used to say at that time, the East German video was on fast forward.

Q: Did you have a chance to talk to Modrow during this time?

BARKLEY: I did not. It was a delicate balance. It was one of the things that actually we had to be careful about. My standpoint, and the standpoint of the embassy, was to be seen as forward looking, not backward looking. We had indeed met with Modrow, with Baker, and the idea was once again to strengthen his hand going in to this transition phase. It was something that the church also endorsed while Baker was there. We did that, and after we did that, we didn't want to be seen to do anything that would be seen as tipping our hat to the guys in power. We were talking about a transition to get them out of power. So I deliberately stayed away with one exception. There was a lot of maneuvering that was going on politically, and some of the things smacked again of the Communist Party playing dirty tricks, sabotaging different groups in their efforts to mobilize their voters, etc. It became fairly well known in the press that this was going on. I got a call from Baker who said, "What is your view on this?" I said, "Well you know, there is a lot of political maneuvering going on. I think I should go see Oskar Fischer," who was probably the least damaging and the most natural figure for me to see, because he was the Foreign Minister and had been Foreign Minister for a long time. So I went in to see him, and I said, "You know there are a lot of press reports, and we have had them confirmed; you guys are doing a lot of things that are not consistent with free and fair elections." I remember very well, he looked at me and he said, "We know how to handle our people." I said, "Mr. Minister, that is exactly what you told me six months ago, and that is not an acceptable answer." I said, "If these procedures don't stop, our government, who has commitments from your government that there will be free and fair elections, will make open criticism of what is going on." He said, "Oh, we don't want that." I said, "Well I think then it has to stop." Now, I can't say it stopped everywhere, but it did stop most places.

Q: What sorts of things were going on?

BARKLEY: Well primarily the thugs were going in and breaking up people's rallies and things like that, the usual intimidation that the system had become quite adroit at applying. I don't remember exactly what the particular issue was, but it was quite clear that within the Social Unity Party there were certain elements that were trying to do things to their advantage. At the same time, for the first time actually, it was in January, a political party, the CDU, that was running came out for immediate reunification. To the great surprise of everyone it was Lothar de Maziere who was the new head of the CDU.

Q: Had he come across your radar before or not?

BARKLEY: Some of our guys had met him. He had been working actually the Gregor Giese on human rights. No one was quite aware actually that he was an active member of the CDU. I think that he was probably a nominal member, and he kept probably his distance from some of these unsavory characters that were in the leadership then. But when all of the rank and file jettisoned the leadership, of course they looked around for somebody, and he was selected. De Maziere was a very skilled first violinist in a number of symphony orchestras, and a lawyer who had emphasized human rights to the extent that was possible. You were working within East Germany within margins on that front, but some were working more assiduously than others. He worked, as I said, with Gregor Giese who was at that time known to be quite an activist defending human rights groups. So a lot of these people were somewhat new to us. The SPD

recruited a lot from the clergy. A number of people later on became members of the transitional government after the election. Most of those were in the SDP. Many of them wore the traditional uniforms of rejection. The ministers often were bearded and never wore a necktie, sort of a man of the people, slightly hippie kinds of people, but at the same time with great moral courage. Of course later on, when they came into the government they tended to shave, wear neckties and behave in a somewhat different way. But as soon as one of the political parties raised the flag of unity, a lot of things changed. Then out in the streets and among the groups you started to hear people yelling an old phrase, "Deutschland Einig Vaterland", which means Germany One Fatherland, which of course was the call for unity. The streets had a whole number of phrases. At first it was "we want to get out of here". Later on "we are staying". Then of course we want reform. And then this one, Germany our fatherland, was the ringing endorsement that scared a lot of people actually because it was reminiscent of the Prussian driven unity themes that go back over 100 years. It was an extraordinary time. Then certain things began to happen that showed the greater depth of the depravity of the previous regime. That is, is that many of the new faces in the new political system, particularly in the SPD, dossiers started to be released that showed they had worked for the Stasis at one time or another. This hit particularly a young fellow by the name of Wolfgang Schnurr who was in the CDU and another guy by the name of Ibrahim Boerner who was supposed to be the head of the SPD. In the old system if you did anything, the Stasi had a file on you. If they knew you, they had a file on you.

Q: Was the Stasi trying to destabilize these new parties?

BARKLEY: They obviously were trying to throw a question on the heroism of the new leadership, and indeed that worked. For a lot of the people, a Stasi file is something that was sort of hanging over everybody, and still is. To this day there is a lot of anxiety as to what those files contain. But a couple of these people, particularly young men who I think were trying to get ahead of the system, and had embraced the concept of democracy, had their reputations rather effectively tarred because of their past. They didn't deny their participation, but they tried to explain it in terms that East Germans understood. I don't think very many people in the West understood. That was of course, the overwhelmingly heavy hand of the Stasis. Anybody who had a relative or wanted to travel or wanted to do anything, had to have an interview. That interviewer would most inevitably pull out something that labeled the guy as a cooperative witness or something like that. And of course the Stasis methods came back to haunt a lot of people. Many Stasi personnel were paid by the report, which meant that there was a lot of room for creativity, and a lot of people were putting in those reports things of some questionable value. On the other hand, there is no question, as far as an effective secret service went, they were without peer at that time in finding and documenting almost everything that went on in their own society. A rather sick kind of achievement.

Q: Were you seeing any reflection on the overseas operation of the GDR? I mean they had established very good security apparatuses in places like Libya and other places. I mean were they beginning to pull back, or were we seeing things as far as sponsoring rest and recreation places.

BARKLEY: Well it was extraordinarily difficult for us because we hardly anywhere had cordial relations with their Embassies. I do recall that when I went back in October in 1989, I went to

see my East German counterpart in Washington. He was very curious. He didn't know what was happening. He didn't know what he should be saying for Honecker had just passed from the scene. The new administration had not gotten their instructions out, so these guys were flying solo. But they were beginning to become very open about the previous system, that the previous government had not been responsive to the people and they needed to do more things within the system to open it up. That happened everywhere. Quite obviously while the system was changing at home, the direction from the foreign office I think was the last thing people were concerned about. But what was interesting, and this was actually more towards the future was, as you pointed out, there were a number of areas where the East German foreign service was quite competent. Areas where you would expect that to be the case where there were sister parties or communist regimes in power. They had very good Chinese language capabilities. The same was true of certain Arabic areas. They were not all fools. Some were extraordinarily competent. Of course they were always looking over their shoulder at who was the commissar. In every embassy, there was always one. Of course they had to march to the tune of the Party. As it turned out I don't think any of them actually survived in the new united German foreign office. But of course I am getting ahead of myself. The Embassy of course was particularly active in trying to keep up with what was going on, but also we were beset with rumors of dire things happening. The economy was collapsing; people were not working, all of this sort of thing. Many of these reports were directed from West Germany and some of them reflected different political agendas. We used to get a lot of reports out of the mayor's office in West Berlin which were reported by Harry Gilmore about what was happening, because of course Berlin was particularly vulnerable being surrounded by East Germany. But it also was quite clear the mayor, Momper, was trying to get the federal support. Momper, being a social democrat, was trying to get the federal government to make more funds available to him in case things came up. So he had his own agenda to try and feather his nest for whatever possibilities might occur. We had people all out in the country, and we were usually able to confirm or deny such rumors. It is a somewhat delicate problem, when you are in the foreign service, and there is reports of chaos etc. It is often hazardous to naysay those reports because if indeed something does happen, it looks like you don't have your finger on it. But I said, we are going to report things as we see them. This is what we are going to have to do. And we basically rejected almost all of these reports. People were still going to work during the day, and they were working until the time off in the evening. Certainly there were still a lot of young people that were leaving but that has been going on for several months. Indeed it did turn out, and Modrow mentioned this to both the West Germans and the Russians, that the East German economy was not robust but was basically a Potemkin Village. It was all façade and there was very little behind it. Nonetheless what is there was there and had been there for a number of years, and it continued to function. I think that was particularly true of the older workers who had their families to feed. So there were constant rumors. In this entire period, nothing was absolutely certain. Anything could have happened. At the same time the administration's policy is of doing nothing to scare or to try to humiliate the Russians was very wise. The last thing we wanted was to provoke them in the wrong direction. So we were hypersensitive during this particular time. Up until the time of unification I was trying to convince everybody that this was the time to maintain our discipline, not deviate from past practices, but to hold onto them. After all, playing games at this time could come back to haunt you.

Q: You know you are a disciplined foreign service officer brought up in the practice of

diplomacy. There are lots of people sitting here in Washington today who want to get photo-ops and have George Bush dancing on the remnants of the Berlin wall. I mean the political apparatus doesn't think the way we think.

BARKLEY: Well happily I think it largely did. After all the president was meeting with Gorbachev. He knew perfectly well how sensitive these issues were, and part of the instructions that came out in this whole thing is that we are not talking about a western victory here. We are not crowing about the inevitable victory of the western system. We believed it; we believed it all along, but there are times not to say it. Certainly the President permitted Congress to have its day as you talked earlier. I mean hardly any member of congress didn't appear sometime to stand by the wall and tell his constituents that he was there. So there was a continual numbers of people, and of course during that period of time, both the Mission and the Embassy were leading around these people. One of the more interesting developments was Ambassador Walters' interview with the press somewhere. He said "Unification, is coming; and coming quickly." Of course he was accurate, but it was the wrong thing to say, and it sent up warning signals. Gorbachev apparently complained to the President. Kohl was extraordinarily upset because these words are incendiary. We got through that. Indeed the Secretary said that Ambassador Walters was giving his own personal opinion and did not reflect that of the United States government. That is just the kind of censure that you might get if you get out on a limb. But it just showed at that time how extraordinarily delicate things were, and we all knew it.

Q: But also we had people in place who understood how delicate it was.

BARKLEY: Well I think that is right. Nonetheless, nothing was a given. This was a time of turmoil, and out of turmoil, a whole variety of miscalculations can take place. I thought that the general discipline that we showed, we were rewarded for. It wasn't everywhere. We can get into that at a different stage. But in any event, the elections, the campaign went ahead, without undue difficulties.

Q: This is the March 18...

BARKLEY: The March 18 election. By the end of February, early March, western politicians entered the fray very aggressively. Kohl would show up in Dresden and make campaign speeches. The leader of the Social Democratic Party in West Germany was Oscar Lafontaine, who was from the far left wing of the Party and indeed was trying to pick up the pieces of a party that was in terrible disarray ever since the rupture between Brandt and Schmidt. Lafontaine was a sign of SPD desperation. The more he campaigned of course, the more his party lost in West Germany. In East Germany the Social Democrat's lack of organization and the fact the Social democrats had a long ongoing cooperative program with the communists they were caught in a maelstrom. Of course this didn't set well with the populists when it turns out that they were turning against that policy and indeed trying to get voters to agree with it. Nonetheless, at the beginning the presumption had always been that East Germany's natural political instincts would be for Social Democracy, for a number of reasons. One is that the Christian Democratic Union of West Germany had its origins in the Catholic Church, the old Center Party. There had always been a large clerical function there. The division of Germany between Catholic and protestant which had a long history, meant that most of the protestants were actually in the east, in what

was Prussia, Saxony, and Thuringia. This was the area where Martin Luther was particularly active. So the presumption was that Social Democrats had a natural affinity towards protestant groups, and therefore the eastern Germans would go back to their roots and embrace them. That did not turn out to be the case. What they voted for was unification. It became quite clear that the CDU and Lothar de Maziere had clearly tapped into the real sentiments of the East German people. Now how deep those sentiments went is something that people are still trying to sort out. But it was quite clear that the East Germans basically wanted the economic miracles of the west, and they thought that by unification, they would get them.

Q: Were polls being taken showing which way things were going?

BARKLEY: Oh yes, but they were very inexact. For one thing the telephones in East Germany, which pollsters tend to use were not very effective. Large numbers of people didn't have them. There was still a reluctance on the part of large numbers of people to speak openly. I mean after all it had been a long time. I think the polls proved quite accurately that at the beginning the SPD started off with an advantage, but that advantage slipped very quickly. In any even, Modrow kept his word. In any event they went to the polls on the 18th of March. There was an overwhelming victory for the CDU.

Q: Were there international observers?

BARKLEY: I don't know but a lot of West Germans were there. It had become almost a West German domestic kind of party. I mean Jimmy Carter wasn't there, but there was general agreement that the election was fair.

Q: That type of thing.

BARKLEY: Nothing like that. But strangely, there was no criticism in the press about irregularities. The election went off remarkably well. To everybody's great surprise, not only did de Maziere win, but the overwhelming sympathies by that time had changed to unification. Now during all of this time, there were the traditional meetings of NATO and the EEC etc. People were trying to sort out the new realities. The West Germans, particularly Genscher was particularly adroit at this period of time. For example very early he went to Moscow to reassure them that what was going on would not harm their relations. There was a lot of talk of course as how the West Germans could square the circle by staying in NATO and not do so to the disadvantage of the Warsaw Pact. Genscher kept meeting with Shevardnadze and other leaders. I can't prove this but I think he understood very clearly that almost by definition with unification, NATO would change dramatically. But the idea was at that time is that we would not endorse a neutralization of Germany or a detraction from the systems that had worked so well up until then.

Q: Well this of course had been a great fear of the unification of Germany. Take Germany out of NATO which would...

BARKLEY: The Russians had sort of dangled that lure in front of Bonn for a long period of time.

Q: Well let me just stop. This is tape nine, side one with Dick Barkley.

BARKLEY: Well the Russians had rather consistently tried to lure the West Germans into neutrality, saying that unification was not out of the question as long as it did not pose a military threat etc. These were shorthand for trying to lure them, knowing that Germany was the most powerful industrial and financial entity in western Europe. For a long time they tried to lure them out of NATO, they tried it with bluster; they tried it with favoritism etc. But the policy that had been enunciated earlier on by Adenauer stayed in place, and that is that the connection of West Germany to the west would not change. Of course that was the case, and the point that President Bush was trying to emphasize is that you cannot loosen these moorings. And indeed Kohl, and for a long period of time other political parties, had tried to anchor Germany into the European Union. Of course at that time the European community was a way to make sure there was no going it alone. So for a long time, the FRG had this double policy of trying to alleviate some of the pressures in inter German relations but at the same time anchoring that Germany into a broader European concept. It is something that they continue to do to this day. But the Social Democrats had been the author much earlier of the eastern policy which attempted to build down some of the suspicions and tensions in central Europe without losing those moorings. At the time it seemed like they were trying to square the circle. Well it turns out that they did. But it wasn't all that certain at that time. So it was an enormous change over what had happened in the past. But back to Genscher. He went to Moscow early on and Moscow was quite unhappy I understand with what he had to say. Of course he was in coalition with Kohl and it was important to know that there not be any divisions within that coalition although there clearly were personal differences. Both Kohl and Genscher were trying to strike stronger positions within their own parties. In early January the Germans did something extremely wise. Kohl went to Moscow, and he brought with him a gift, several hundred million dollars worth of foodstuffs, particularly meats. The idea was to show to the Russians, who were in dire straits, that there were great commercial advantages to a future relationship with a united Germany, especially in view of western Germany's booming economy. So there was an awful lot of things going on, and words didn't really mean what they used to mean. Staying in NATO? what is NATO? what is NATO's future? whither Germany? what does a united Germany mean? When will it become united? how will it become united? All of these things were still up for grabs. But it became quite clear after the election that all of a sudden unification was in full swing. De Maziere had put together a broad-based government. He brought in the Social Democrats and others. It was basically a transitional government, transitional phase that lasted until unification. Transitions are not automatic. You are going from one thing to another. You are sure where you started off, but you are not sure where you are going to end up, so we were not quite clear on that. But meanwhile the idea was to keep American policy in line. Thank God it was a period of time which I personally thought was very much in synchronization with what the Secretary and the President were trying to accomplish. It didn't happen automatically. For example, at the celebration party of the March 18 elections, a couple of our officers were in West Germany and were told by a couple of military officers who were at the same party, that the commandant had ordered Checkpoint Charlie to be torn down. And not only to be torn down, but there would be a ceremony surrounding its closure. Well when I heard this my antenna went up. I feared that this is an attempt to humiliate the Russians at a particularly sensitive stage. So I nosed around to try to find out if anybody knew anything about it. It seems to have been something initiated

personally by the Commandant. He had been given a freer hand by Ambassador Walters than previous Commandants had. I am not even sure that Harry Gilmore was fully aware of what he was doing, but he was becoming extraordinarily active. He showed up in West Berlin at the city hall, which was against all of the standards and procedures that we ever had. We did not recognize the existence of the East German control of East Berlin. We had pictures of him drinking Skoal and Bruderschaft, Brotherhood with the Mayor a major political blunder. All of these things in shocking violation of our policy. I sort of lost it and I got hold of Washington and said, "do you guys know what is happening here." When they found out, they were shocked, and they said there would be no movement of Checkpoint Charlie until we have a time to make sure that it is not portrayed in a humiliating way for the Russians. It did turn out indeed that there was a large ceremony, in June in connection with one of the two plus four meetings that took place in East Germany by Checkpoint Charlie. It was quite an interesting ceremony. Well shortly thereafter Ambassador Walters heard that there was a lack of discipline and control on West Berlin and made sure that nothing was done without checking first with me. That improved things a lot although I was somewhat shocked to find out that the Commandant had made an official trip to East Germany, which was also way beyond his portfolio and certainly should not have happened without the Embassy knowing about it. Probably if we had known about it, we wouldn't have let it happen. So there was a lot of attempt to recapture some level of control. Now I am not going to say that any one of these things would have reversed the course of history, but it would have probably made it much more difficult to make that transition as smoothly as we did. Meanwhile of course, as soon as the election was over, following up on his policy declarations Lothar de Maziere made his first gestures towards the West Germans. They worked out a situation where some economic aid started coming in, and it was determined that the West Germans would take over the East German economy and the East Germans would exchange East German marks for West German marks on a one to one basis. This, of course, was extraordinarily enticing to the East Germans. So in July of that year, after the first of July, the exchequer was taken over by the West Germans. That had an impact on us as a matter of fact, and I have to retreat a little bit to another thing that was going on. It became clear that our Embassy's mission in East Germany had a short time frame. We knew that with unity of course there would only be one Embassy, and it was quite clear that the Embassy would be the one located in Bonn. So we were going to be phased out. Well, Washington had very little experience in phasing out embassies of this dimension. One of the first things I thought of is that a unified Berlin could be the capital of Germany and was where the U.S. Embassy would sit. The Mission, sat together with the military, over on Clay Allee in West Berlin, but that clearly wasn't going to be our future mission. The best building we had in the city was the building we were in. It was the finest building in Berlin outside of the Russian embassy itself. We had an agreement with the East Germans that we could buy the building we were in, which we were presently leasing, including my residence and all the residences of my staff for six million dollars. Now that was a real steal, no question. So I put my what I refer to as "a blood in your hands" cable to Washington saying unification is on its way, that don't know exactly when it will happen, but we should move right now to secure the properties, these prime properties, for our future Embassy. We did have claim to our old Embassy property on Pariser Platz in the East-West no man's land, but it would take forever to have that built. In the meantime we need property. We have these properties which are in excellent shape. They have all been refurbished, and we can get it all for six million dollars. I said something to the effect purchasing those facilities on the open market would probably cost close to a quarter of a billion dollars. I think I turned out to have been a

little bit too optimistic on that. I said the American people would never understand if we did not move smartly to do this. Well as you know these are the kinds of cables that Washington hates to receive because it might find itself in the public sector somehow and it would be an embarrassment if they hadn't addresses it. It is also the kind of cable that demanded action.

Q: All well within your calculations.

BARKLEY: Well of course, I knew precisely what it would do. I also knew precisely that every group would try and put the blame for lack of action on somebody else, but at some point the Secretary of State and others would have to decide. Now when the Secretary was out during the June 2-4 negotiations, I said, "I think we should buy all of this." He said, "Oh absolutely." So this bomb also hit Washington, and they went to work. To give the people credit, the American bureaucracy does not work quickly. A friend once said, "It is like a bear on roller skates. It doesn't skate very well, but it is a miracle that it can do it at all." But actually they went to work. Now they had to get Congressional approval. They had to do a thousand things. They had to take the funding from some place else and get the funding elsewhere. And they did it. I think I received the answer six months later, the first of July, to go in and tell the East Germans that we wanted to move ahead on this deal and the money was available. I went into see Marcus Meckel who was the Foreign Minister at that time, and he looked at me and said, "I am sorry it is too late. We just turned our exchequer over to the West Germans." Well as you can imagine, after all that was happening the West Germans were saying we will be eternally grateful to us, etc., I thought well, the best we can do is to try to bring this up and see if the West Germans as a successor state would honor the obligations of the previous East German government. Well in short the answer was we are grateful, but we are not stupid. So we never made the deal. Now I can't tell you how much money between now and then has gone into the new Embassy but clearly an enormous amount.

Q: Well when did you, I don't mean a precise date, but when did you all sort of put yourself into unification mode?

BARKLEY: Oh our mode became quite clear in January, as soon as De Maziere made it a platform, we knew it was going to happen. We didn't know exactly when it was going to happen, but we knew it was going to happen. Of course, we had an inkling all along that something was happening. We didn't know at what pace it would go, but that it would happen quickly became clear in January, and by March, by that time the two plus four meetings were going on, and they were making great headway. Every now and then I, some of the people that showed up at the meetings of course were old line people from the Russian foreign service who raised all sorts of objections. But it was happening, and it was happening beyond them. What the negotiations did was basically confirm the realities on the ground. And of course the new East German government and the West German government got together. It was not a meeting of equals. I mean quite clearly what we were not talking about was unification in the traditional sense. It was more of an anschluss, where the West Germans absorbed East Germany. None of the East German institutions were designed or contemplated to continue to exist after unification took place. So there was nothing actually the East Germans brought to the table except economic demands and appeals for the rapidity of the process.

Q: Were you taking at this time, were your officers taking a second look at the East German economy and beginning to see it for what it was?

BARKLEY: Oh yes. It was a rather remarkable thing. The head of the East German economy was Gunther Mittag. Mittag was, in his own way, a perverted genius. Of course it was a command economy. The Party decided how it would spend its money. And like most command economies it didn't work very well, even though the East Germans were better at it than most. The problem was is that when it came time for allocating resources, for investment, they were almost always misplaced. They would come up with a favorite project. All of a sudden they wanted to be competent in computer technology, so they would put money into that. But if they put money into that, they took it from someplace else. So the economy never dictated its own pace. It was dictated from above. But almost more importantly the statistics that were accumulated which were essential to understanding how any economy functions, turned out to be almost all to be cooked. But they were cooked by a particularly skilled bureaucrat. It became quite clear that it was all façade and nothing behind it. Once it became apparent to the highly skilled German economists, who had been looking at this for a long time, our boys caught up very quickly. Because of course we had an extraordinarily small office. We had three people in our economic section. Middle grade officers, extraordinarily good officers. I have always thought that American economic officers should not be architects, but engineers. Basically they are trying to tell you what is going on, not how to create something. To that extent of course, the East German economy was not transparent. We didn't know. We weren't the only ones. I mean the West Germans had no better view of what was happening than we did. We found out very quickly. And of course, one of the first things that became clear during the political campaign was how politically astute West German leaders were. Lafontaine kept saying that the GDR was in terrible shape and that to exchange currencies one for one would bankrupt the West. It would take years to get this straightened out, he claimed. He was accurate in some respects, but his politics was flat. Kohl said, "Oh yes, we will do the right thing. Your savings and things will be secure. The currency will be one to one." Well you can imagine how much East Germans thought about that when it became a matter of political discourse. So there was a total mishandling of this on the political front by the SPD. And Kohl decided to force the move, and it turns out it was a stroke of political genius, although the West is still paying a big price for it.

Q: Well then you know once the economy is taken over by another country, I mean that is the ball game.

BARKLEY: Yes, it was over. The game was over. The four power talks were basically finished by the end of June, 1990. Thereafter a couple of things happened which were particularly interesting. First, the Bush administration invited Lothar de Maziere to Washington for a working visit. What is really ironic is that less than two months after he was elected, he achieved something that every East German official had been trying to achieve for 40 years. Of course the fact that he was a democratically elected leader and had pledged himself to unification had a lot to do with it. So I went to Washington for that meeting.

Q: What was your impression of the man, by the way?

BARKLEY: He was very shy kind of man. He spoke very quietly. I don't think he had any great

pretensions. De Maziere was one of the oldest Huguenot families in Berlin. There were a number of de Maziere of great stature, one of them in the West German military. He was very cultured as I say. He was first violinist in a number of symphonies at one particular time. As a lawyer, particularly a lawyer for human rights, he was quite competent. He was a Christian in a certain sense, which is not unusual in East Germany. The protestant church in East Germany was in quite good health, maybe because it had been under such pressure that it had to rise to that occasion. A lot of people used the church for solace and support. He certainly was not a braggart; he was a rather modest man. Like a good lawyer, he did not seem to be in doubt about what he was doing was right. He was an attractive fellow. He had attended I remember, a dinner party I had for a group of senators. He sat next to Richard Lugar. I was at the same table. This was way back in December, and nobody knew that his future was going to be. I remember he sat at that table, and a number of people were trying to make sure that if he didn't speak English, we were trying to interpret for them. It was hard going to keep him engaged. He didn't have that personal dynamic that everybody thought of as a future political leader. In any event, he did go to Washington. He was received by the President. The President gave a very gracious luncheon for him. After the luncheon I remember it was particularly touching. The President brought in a string quartet. He said, "I know Mr. Prime Minister, that you are a musician. I thought you might enjoy this." They were really wonderful, and he did enjoy it. You can imagine a man from rather humble East German background, coming as the representative of his country, the first and last one to visit Washington, and the glorious reception that was organized at the White House on his behalf. He was overwhelmed. It was a working luncheon. The President, Brent Scowcroft, Baker and others were all there. It was a very nice affair. Ironically he decided that he wanted to lay a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldier. So we went up to Arlington, and he laid the wreath, and they played not only the Star Spangled Banner, but the East German national anthem which was I think the first and only time it was ever played on American soil. Once again it was a bizarre feeling that this was actually happening. Then at the end of that month, the next two plus four negotiations took place, this time in Berlin. The negotiations were of course headed by Foreign Ministers and the Secretary of State. The sherpa work was done largely by Bob Zoellick on our side and Dieter Kastrup on the West German side. For some reason things were a bit delicate. I, of course, had no place in these proceedings, except that it was on my turf. So the Secretary asked me to attend as part of his staff, and I did that. So it was the only meeting of the two plus four that I sat in on. I had the impression that things had already been ironed out between the West Germans and the Russians. There was a little bit of byplay, but basically there wasn't very much. The Russians made a couple of efforts to put clauses in that would vitiate a lot of the agreements. I remember Baker rose to the defense of the West Germans, and during this entire time Genscher sat rather stone faced and unconcerned. I had the feeling, "You have got this made already Herr Genscher. I don't know how you did it, but I am sure you did." It was on this occasion too they had the solemn removal of Checkpoint Charlie as a symbol of East-West discord. It was done very nicely. All of the participants made sure it wasn't done to humiliate Russia, but naturally celebrated on all sides as a victory of the human spirit. So things were at that stage on automatic pilot. Then the whole question was how do we wind down our Embassy. One of the things that all of us in the Embassy were slightly worried about was that the entire psyche of the East Germans had changed over 40 years. We were fully aware of that, and we were also fully aware there would be an awful lot of trauma once this whole thing took place. That was not a view shared at all by our Embassy in Bonn. They focused primarily on taking over the Embassy and us getting out of there. I had long talks with Dick Walters who was quite

appreciative of the difference in the different areas, and I got from him the commitment that my key officers at least would stay on to help them with the East German aspects of operations. So I felt a little bit better about that. He appeared extraordinarily helpful and sensitive to what was going on. Interestingly enough the closer we came to the first of October, the day Germany would be formally united, the more Embassy Bonn began to exert itself. As Ambassador to East Germany, I was not included in those things. In fact there was some problem whether or not Ambassador Walters was going to be invited. It was an interesting time. There was a certain amount of administrative chaos. I kept waiting and waiting to hear from Washington as to what was I supposed to do. As you can imagine I had a wife and a young child, and we were somewhat anxious as to the future. I heard nothing. So sometime in August or September I called in to the Department. I didn't want to cable. I called and I said, "Hey guys, what do you want me to do here? I mean how do I close this down? How do we do this?" There was a silence on the other end of the phone. It became quite clear they hadn't thought of that at all. They said, "What do you think?" I said, "Well I think that I have to disappear. Give me two weeks after unification is formally declared, to pack up and get out, and I will be gone. There will be no fanfare; I will just disappear. My officers, I think they should stay until the next summer because they have kids in school and things like that. I have talked to Ambassador Walters and there would be a transition so they can be employed in different things and helpful in the transition etc." They said, "Sounds good." So that turned out more or less the way it was. So basically I wrote my own orders. So on that rather glorious day, October first, I was nowhere to be seen, and I watched it on television and realized that this is a major political event, one that I never thought I would see. I was extraordinarily delighted on one hand, but somewhat saddened by the loss of what I considered to be one of the best Embassies I had ever served with. Two weeks later we got on a plane and flew back home. It turned out that indeed despite Ambassador Walters commitments to take care of my officers and make sure that they would be involved in the transition, that did not happen. They were all moved out of their offices forthwith and Embassy Bonn moved in.

Q: What about the staff of the embassy, the nationals?

BARKLEY: First there was a huge exodus of the Stasi officials who were trying to come out of this whole mess with something. Those who had been in touch with our intelligence people very quickly made arrangements to pass a lot of files to us. I think those files were passed earlier in the game rather than later. It then became quite clear, what we knew all along, was that the East German members of our staff, foreign nationals all had been compromised. A local in the GSO, who was really quite clever, was indeed the head of Stasi operations in the Embassy. As was our gardener and everybody else. They were under enormous pressure. They wouldn't have gotten the jobs if they hadn't done it to begin with. But when we started to get third country nationals to man the telephones and certain things that had a little bit more delicacy. We felt a little bit more comfortable with them. One was a Turk, believe it or not, and several members of the staff were Turkish. We had Australians, Israelis, everything except German nationals. Many of those stayed on. They were hired by the new people because they knew the systems pretty much. I think all of the East Germans were jettisoned.

Q: How did this work? I mean we had this mission in Berlin, Harry Gilmore. We had an embassy and a good building and all that. What happened, well let's take your staff, your officers DCM and all that. Where did they go? What happened?

BARKLEY: Well the key staff had residences. The only person who immediately left was myself. Of course they shut down the residence. They didn't seem quite sure how they were going to man the future embassy in Berlin. In fact one of the ongoing discussions at that time was would the future capital of Germany be Berlin or would it stay in Bonn. After so many years of saying that Berlin was the capital, the original capital and would be the future capital of a united Germany, the idea of keeping Bonn seemed unrealistic. It appealed to a lot of people who didn't want to go to a major municipality, and Berlin had some baggage from the Hitler era. Nonetheless, they finally decided to go to Berlin. But that transference took a long time. Even the West German government didn't come in immediately. The West Germans like the Americans, had a lot of facilities in West Berlin. Ambassador Walters had a residence in West Berlin, a very beautiful one in the Spechtplasse. The minister had also a very nice residence, so we had a large number of residences in West Berlin to draw from. In fact they were so much more comfortable and more commodious than those in East Germany, that that is where most of them stayed. But the transference of the embassy up came in stages. Nonetheless, Jon Greenwald was immediately given sort of a sabbatical and he went off and wrote a book called Berlin Witness, a very interesting book on that period of time. J.D. Bindenagel was my DCM. Within a week of my departure he was told to vacate his office and they gave him a cubby hole somewhere down the hall. It was somewhat of a humiliation. So all of my efforts to try and make sure there was a rational transference of power didn't work out. Apparently the Bonn Embassy decided that after I was gone, they would go ahead and take over the whole operation, which they proceeded to do. Most of our officers were transferred out, and fairly quickly. Some of them had been holding on. They had their transfer dates that summer which is the normal cycle of course, and some of them had already left, but those were not replaced. I was not particularly happy when I found out what went on. Of course it was no longer my business except that I thought I had commitments on it. I thought more could have been done to make sure that our coverage, particularly of East Germany, which was going through some very serious growing pains, would stay in place. There didn't seem to be much sympathy for that viewpoint in Bonn.

Q: Well then what happened to you?

BARKLEY: Well once again they didn't know what to do with me. I came back to Washington. Of course I was on TDY status for awhile, and tried to get my family settled. It took awhile. Then we decided we would buy a house. To be perfectly honest I decided this would be it for me because you know, I was a Minister Counselor, and I had had my embassy. Of course there were a lot of people who wanted Embassies. So when I came back I had the usual meetings. I actually met with the Secretary. It turns out, though I didn't know it then, that the secretary had written to members of his staff, saying he wanted me to be given a good future assignment. That, of course, helped enormously. That alerted the powers that be. I had very long talks with Larry Eagleburger who asked what I wanted to do. I gave him a couple of thoughts of Embassies that I knew were coming up. Larry had this marvelous style you know; he is very candid. I said that I heard Harare was coming up, Zimbabwe, and that having been in South Africa, I thought that would be a very interesting posting. Of course, the African bureau already had their own candidate. I didn't know that. I expected it was the case. I remember he said, "Dick you just want to go to Harare and sit pool side and relax." "Now you think alright, you are high on everybody's agenda but in a couple of months we will have forgotten you, and there will be nothing coming." I said, "Yes,

Larry, that thought has crossed my mind.” He said, “Well I am sure that is not going to happen.” Anyway after awhile I was given one of these strange assignments to do some research on some area over in the Pentagon. I don’t know exactly what it was anymore. It was a holding pattern. So a couple of months later I was told that Mort Abramowitz, who was our ambassador in Turkey, was coming out a year earlier to take over the Carnegie endowment, and that my name had been put forward for that assignment. Well of course I was ecstatic. I knew nothing about Turkey except what I had done in NATO. Indeed I had been part of the task force on Cyprus in 1974. But it was such a major post of course I was flattered, but I didn’t quite believe it would happen. But within a certain period of time it was confirmed that was what they had in mind. Of course you go through that extraordinary procedure that only Americans go through, that you have to first get the approval from the White House. Interestingly enough, with few exceptions, Turkey has never been a posting that political appointees want. So it tends to go to careerists. I think it was because of the reputation of Ankara as being an inhospitable place. But anyway I had to go through this process of confirmation by the Congress. It took a long time. I came out in October and I was almost a year before I went off to Turkey. During that time I took some Turkish language training. I did a lot of traveling. I got my home leave. They gave me things like that. I bought a home and settled in. We bought our home in February, and I got my orders in March. In September I was confirmed. I was off to Turkey in November of ’91.

JOHN BRAYTON REDECKER
Deputy Principal Officer
Frankfurt (1988-1991)

Mr. Redecker was born in Germany of American Foreign Service parents and spent his early years with his parents abroad. He was educated at Williams College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After serving in the US Navy and with the Aluminum Company of America, he joined the Foreign Service in 1964. Mr. Redecker served in Washington, dealing with trade and management issues, and Foreign Service posts abroad, where his assignments concerned economic, trade and a variety of other matters. His foreign postings include West Berlin, Brussels, Rabat, Madrid and Frankfurt. He also served as Diplomat-in-Residence at his alma mater, Williams College. Mr. Redecker was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.

Q: That’s deputy principle officer. Oscar Holden was there when I was a brand new Foreign Service officer.

REDECKER: Alex Rattray was the consul general. He was very ill. A very interesting man, I thought. A big fellow, but he had deep, serious, crippling diseases in his legs and in his joints. He was in pain much of the time and was often out of action. I was acting, in charge often.

Q: You were there from when to when?

REDECKER: That was 1988 to ’92. I was there as DPO. Frankfurt had become the third largest

post in the world with 17 agencies including a congressional and budget office in this vast seedlum establishment, seedlum being these apartment buildings where all these civilians working in the consulate were housed. I think we had a staff of 380 people at the time I was there.

Q: I was at the seedlum. It was named after my great uncle.

REDECKER: So I came to that, was acting CG a great deal of the time, a visit back home. I was at home and perhaps can one day show you the charming newspaper article on myself in the Frankfurt paper. It was a drawn likeness of myself by FAZ's chief cartoonist.

I had a very exciting time there. I was moving around our consular district and reporting extensively on the resurgence of the right parties called the *publicana*. I visited and consulted with Oskar Lafontaine. Oskar Lafontaine was an outrageously arrogant man and couldn't stand Americans. He said, "If anybody's coming to visit me, why do you send some visa person from a consulate? Where's the embassy person? I want the ambassador here." I said, "You're not going to get the ambassador here. We do other things than issue visas." That was not a good way to start a conversation.

Of course, I had an automatic way of developing instant relationships with all these people because I'm talking their language, and they cannot distinguish me from their own people. I had very much to do, of course, with the military.

Q: The Gulf War must have really hit you hard.

REDECKER: Later on, yes. One thing that hit us very much was the Lockerbie event. Lockerbie, after all, the plane...

Q: The plane had been loaded in Frankfurt.

REDECKER: Yes, indeed. The embassy was running around. In Frankfurt I was acting CG at the time. I set up a crisis management group in 24 hours, busy using my own precepts from years of simulation into a quasi real thing. I dealt a great deal with 5th Corps General ____ from whom one is heard much later was then 5th Corps commander. I became very friendly with him, and I was also very involved with the Air Force and downsizing of the Rhein-Main Air Force facility. I had a lively time in Germany because I could go anywhere automatically with the city government. All the city government people took me in as one of their own. I could report, I think fairly innocuous things compared to what I had done in the past. I would see happenings in Frankfurt and the political machinery that was, perhaps, animating things that were going on in Bonn and, as you said, the Gulf war and the real opposition of what we were up to.

Q: By the Greens.

REDECKER: By the Greens. I never got along very well with the Greens. I found them very small and socially disagreeable. That's my personal view. I had to deal with some of them. My time in Frankfurt was very pleasant. I had a beautiful residence. My boss wrote me wonderful

efficiency reports. We got along splendidly together. If I only had such splendid relationships in places like Spain! I had a wonderful time, but I never got promoted, so the famous TIC...

Q: Time in class.

REDECKER: ...comes into effect. I felt my boss did all he possibly could to try and turn that around, but it didn't happen, so I ended my Foreign Service career in the city that I was born in.

Q: What about the Greens? What was your impression of them?

REDECKER: I met some of the Greens, but I just temperamentally don't work well with people like that. I sent one of my junior officers who could interact with them. I had two reporting officers.

Q: What was the German reaction to the Gulf war? It had a major impact on Germany. It helped flush out an awful lot of our troops that never came back. Was there a feeling of relief on the American and the German side that we were downsizing our military establishments?

REDECKER: I think the downsizing, yes. Definitely. Too many Americans around and, in the case of Frankfurt, were all sitting right in the middle of the city and not outside. At least Rhein-Main Air Base was somewhere that you couldn't see, but the rest of them were plunk! right in the middle of the city. That was a great relief to get them out.

The 5th Corps disestablished itself, I think which provided a great deal of relief. On the whole -- to come to your point -- the Germans looked at the Gulf War as something that had to be done with respect to liberating Kuwait. Perhaps the Germans are especially sensitive to this kind of a problem, their own country having gobbled up nation states before World War II, terminating what was a constituted nation.

Q: Czechoslovakia, for example.

REDECKER: That's the first thing that comes to mind, but then you think of Austria in a slightly different way, Danzig and then, of course, Poland itself. There is a sympathy for saying, "You can't do this." The consequences of allowing Kuwait to disappear off the map as a constituted entity are sufficiently problematical and foreboding, and you better do something about it. I think it was largely support for that. The second Gulf enterprise was entirely different. No comparison. That would be my response to your question.

Q: When you left in 1991, what have you been doing?

REDECKER: I stayed in Frankfurt and wanted to build up with some German friends a consultancy that would offer gaming. I concluded just to compress a long rumination about it: Europeans will not do gaming. They are temperamental and unsuited to think of a game as simulation, as a solution to a real-life problem; that you can lift yourself out of a real life situation, put yourself into a contrived artificial situation, manipulate it by controllers. To derive insights about what you should do in the real world when you're finished with the game and

come back to the world is an idea fundamentally that I think doesn't work in European culture. The mindset doesn't work.

HAROLD W. GEISEL
Counselor for Administration
Bonn (1988-1992)

Ambassador Harold W. Geisel was born in Illinois in 1947. He received his BA from Johns Hopkins and his MBA from the University of Virginia. After entering the Foreign service in 1971, he was posted in Brussels, Oslo, Bern, Bamako, Durban, Rome, Bonn and Moscow and served as Ambassador to Mauritius. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 30, 2006

Q: Well you were there from when to when in Bonn?

GEISEL: I was in Bonn from March of '88 to July of '92. I think, yes, it was my longest assignment by far.

Q: Talk a bit about Ambassador Burt.

GEISEL: Rick Burt was really smart but he was disliked by some of the staff. He was disdainful of some of them. All that being said and done I thought he was a very bright guy, very able, and he understood the Germans very well.

Q: Who was his DCM?

GEISEL: DCM was Jim Dobbins. I liked Jim very much, I do to this day but, some people didn't. Jim is simply one of the smartest people in the universe and he's sort of a reserved guy and what I especially liked about Jim is that he never bothered me. What I mean by that is he never messed around because he assumed that most admin stuff was not for him. He also didn't bother people who worked for him in general. You know, if he didn't have anything to do he would go walk along the Rhine and memorize German words. Now, this is what a manager should do. You know, in the best of all worlds your subordinates are doing their job, they're doing it well, you're there to support them and that certainly was the way Jim was with me. Now, he could be very, very, very tough on his subordinates and he certainly made enough enemies in his time but I found him very able, immensely able. You know how Mark Twain once allegedly wrote a letter to a friend and he said I'm writing this letter in two pages because I don't have the time to write it in one page? Jim Dobbins was one of those superior people who could say everything that needed to be said and use very few words to do it.

Q: Very, very analytical. He's at Rand now.

GEISEL: Yes.

Q: I've interviewed him.

GEISEL: Oh good. Did you think he was pretty bright?

Q: Oh yes. I mean, no doubt about it.

Let's talk, first let's talk about the German staff. How did you find the German Foreign Service Nationals?

GEISEL: Well, I'm glad you asked because there were so many of them and they cost us so much money and most of them were simply outstanding. And when I say German staff I of course include the many TCNs, Third Country Nationals that we had in the admin section. Standards were very high, well educated, devoted to doing their jobs right; obviously just like what's the case in many places, the youngsters sometimes weren't as highly motivated as the old-timers who had been there since before there was an embassy, when it was the High Commission for Germany, that moved up from Frankfurt to Bonn in when was it, I guess about 1948 and 49. And you know, in those days, I have an old manual, actually, that was given out during the occupation, we fed them, we fed them lunch because there wasn't any food, you know, and this was our way of keeping them going. One of the great social events of Bonn, and I kid you not, was called the Motor Pool Ball. Yes. Because once upon a time the very best and the brightest Germans went to work as drivers, because they could speak English, for the American High Commission which became the American Embassy. There were things like that. The embassy had an enormous complex, residential complex, in Bad Godesberg and there we had there the American Embassy Club. Well the American Embassy Club had a huge dining facility, it had a snack bar, it had a bowling alley, it had a swimming pool; I don't know what all else it had. And for the Germans, to be a member of the American Embassy Club was something very special. The speaker of parliament, a lady named Rita Susmuth, had a special table. Every, I think it was Wednesday; she would have lunch at the American Embassy Club and invite her friends to this lunch. The American Embassy in Bonn was still a very special place albeit more special with the older Germans and our older FSNs very much reflected this; they just didn't come any better, with the work that they did, some Americans could just put their feet on the desk and do nothing because the Germans were so good.

Q: Well, I imagine the budget for the locals by this time was-

GEISEL: Astronomical.

Q: They were earning more than the Americans, weren't they?

GEISEL: Depended on the exchange rate. Yes they were. It wasn't the way it was in Switzerland, where I believe my secretary, let alone the more senior people, made more money than I did. But yes, I would say in terms of pure salary the senior Germans were up there with the more senior Americans. And they were worth it, frankly speaking. Most of them were worth it. Now, there were a few that had retired in place. I remember an old lady who worked for the science attaché who just, she, I don't know if she had Alzheimer's or what she had but she was useless and she was just working because she wanted to work. It was preposterous because her

pensions, between her civil service pension and her German social security were just as much as her salary and she was old enough to retire. And I remember forcing her out. A number of science attaches had been afraid to do it and I just said this is just too much money. However, by and large the old timers were just wonderful and I was sorry whenever they retired.

Q: How did you find dealing with the German establishment? I'm thinking of the Customs, the contractors and all that.

GEISEL: Well, it depended. You know, they were, they could be inflexible, definitely the mark of a German bureaucrat. I had very, very, very good relations with the people in the ministry of finance who dealt with the Berlin budget. I'll digress here just to mention the Berlin budget. The Berlin budget was very important because they paid everything in Berlin, both for DOD and State except for the salaries of Americans. Everything. So for instance our embassy, or our mission I should say, of 36 Americans had 24 cars and drivers, many of the vehicles were Mercedes Benzes. Just like every American Embassy, of course!

Q: Oh, absolutely.

GEISEL: Our people lived the way you couldn't imagine in these beautiful houses, many of which had been Jewish houses that the Nazis had taken and which the German Federal Government had compensated the heirs of the victims and then taken over as government houses and gave to us. Then we also built new houses at the Germans' expense, five of them that were built for staff. Rick Burt I think properly called them the Golden Greek temples. And there that was one of the few times that the Germans came to me and they said please, there's going to be trouble in the newspapers, don't give them to staff. Make sure that diplomats are living in them. And we did, much to the sorrow of our staff. Speaking of the Berlin Budget, my predecessor was a chap named Dick Bowers. He ended up being ambassador to Bolivia. He came up with the idea of a Berlin budget office at the embassy, headed by a retired FSO admin type who spoke perfect German, a fellow named Dan Thal, who you might very, very, very much want to talk to.

Q: Dan Fee-

GEISEL: No T-H-A-L. Thal. It means valley in German. He lives in Boston. And he headed the office for I think about eight or nine years and the Germans paid for it which was the best deal of all because it was part of the Berlin budget. Well, what it meant is where the embassy previously had been the messenger for DOD, which of course consumed almost all the money, presenting their requests to the German government, we started holding hearings and having them justify what they were doing and they hated it but they had no choice because the ministry of finance would not talk to them, at least not the ministry of finance in Bonn. So we had this Berlin budget office in the Embassy Admin Section that did the heavy lifting with the ministry of finance and all I did was sign and smile and talk to the big shots. We had wonderful relations with them, though. As for other areas, we had good relations with the foreign ministry, from my point of view, no problems. Tax issues, as you would expect; you know the usual value added tax stuff and driver's licenses but nothing that was difficult and they were great to work with when it came to stuff like the G-8 or G-7 I should say. Customs, inflexible but you know, you could deal with them. I had more fun with the Italians but arguably I got more done with the Germans,

people like Customs and police, although there again when you want to talk about it, when the first Gulf War broke out we had some initial problems with the police being inflexible.

Q: How about the consulates? How did you find supporting them, dealing with them and their usefulness?

GEISEL: Well, most of them were very good, especially the big ones because you had very senior officers, some of whom should have been ambassadors or maybe were going to be ambassadors who were running them. Without exception all of the CGs (Consul Generals) and most of their officers spoke very good German and had very good relations with the lander.

Q: That is the equivalent to the states.

GEISEL: Yes, the states that they were accredited to. They always felt, with the exception of Berlin, that they were neglected by the embassy and I think to some extent they were and I went around and visited them all and made the point that I had been a consul general myself and I was going to see that they were well treated, which they were. We had a bit of a problem with Stuttgart because I think that was our smallest, that was another one sort of like Naples where they were rattling around in this huge building. In fact, I think they closed Stuttgart, didn't they?

Q: I believe they have at some point.

GEISEL: Yes. But our consulates were happy. By and large our people lived well. And of course remember that in those times, before Unification especially, Bonn was a pretty sleepy place and most of the people who were at our constituent posts were much happier to be there than to be in Bonn.

Q: Yes. It was not a place that would attract people.

GEISEL: Well, it was a very pleasant place, quiet, but there wasn't much to do. You had this huge American presence, you know, we had- not only did we have a food store, we had a department store, we had snack bars, we had barber shop, we had a Stars and Stripes book store. My wife had our second child in Bonn and our little girl, our eldest daughter was still quite young and she went to the American Embassy nursery school and then she went to kindergarten at the Bonn American School, which was run jointly by the Department of Defense and the Embassy. We had a lovely house along the Rhine and apartments for staff, and they were in beautiful condition and they were spacious, especially the ones that were renovated, also all along the Rhine. So people had a very pleasant life. We had the only church owned by the U.S. Government on our property. But if you gave me the choice between living in Berlin and living in Bonn or living in Munich or living in Bonn I would have been to Munich or Berlin in a heartbeat.

Q: Yes. One almost sort of plus thing for Bonn was, wasn't it, that there was a very active student leftist movement in Germany. You know, they get out, put masks on and have marches and all that. But I would think that Bonn was just not a place where anyone would bother to go to.

GEISEL: That's right, that's right. Even though we had a big university in Bonn, where my father actually graduated from law school. But no, except for the Gulf War, I don't remember any demonstrations. It was sleepy old Bonn.

Q: Tell me, how did the cataclysmic event of, was it November-December of '89, wasn't it, when the Berlin Wall came down? You were there, weren't you?

GEISEL: Of course I was there.

Q: How did that hit?

GEISEL: Well, let's talk a little bit about it because hopefully some other people will say the same thing that I'm going to say and just reinforce it. We had one year of Rick Burt and then he left to be replaced by Dick Walters, a man who I absolutely adored; I adored and respected, he's just one of the finest human beings I've ever known in the Foreign Service. The first time I met him I said what do you want to be called, general or ambassador? And he said well, they're both good titles, either one is fine with me. Then he called me in to his office the first day that he got to Bonn, he had to see me right away, and I was all set for a complaint about his household effects or that I hadn't gotten the residence fixed up the way he liked it or that he needed something added to the office and it was none of that. The very first thing he spoke to me he said, look. You're the admin guy and I have to tell you something that's important to me. Whenever there's someone in the hospital, I want to know about it right away so I can visit them. And he told a story about how he had, when he was acting director of the CIA, he was at a conference and people had timidly interrupted him because they said could you please sign this, this man is dying at a hospital in Gettysburg and it's an award we want to give him before he dies. And Walters said no, I won't. Get me a chopper; I want to go see him. And that was one of his big things, if you were in the hospital, he dropped everything and he wanted to see you. Now, everyone appreciated it except some of the wives who were a little embarrassed, they were pregnant and they were just about to deliver a child or had just delivered a child and in walks Ambassador Walters. The gesture was so appreciated and what a difference between him and his predecessor.

Then the next thing he said to me, he said, now Harry, I like money as well as the next guy but if you're ever unsure whether to rule for the embassy or rule for me, always rule for the embassy. Now, that was an admin officer's dream. And I would have done anything for that man.

So let's go then to your question about the fall of the Berlin Wall. You know, when was it, starting in July of '89 various East Germans were jumping over the fences of West Germans embassies behind the Iron Curtain?

Q: Particularly in Czechoslovakia.

GEISEL: Czechoslovakia I remember, that's right.

Q: And Hungary.

GEISEL: Hungary they walked across the border, yes.

Q: They were leaving like mad.

GEISEL: Yes, yes. And the world was changing. Now, what was interesting is that, in September, Ambassador Walters sent out a message saying that he could see German unification within five years and this got out, I don't think he made any secret of it, and the press asked Jim Baker about it and he said I think Ambassador Walters is ahead of the band. Well, the hell he was. Interestingly enough our embassy in Berlin, that is the embassy in East Berlin, which is something we have to complete because I helped open that, helped create it in 1974-75 and forgot to mention it when I was in EUREX but anyway, the ambassador there, Dick Barkley, sent a message saying it would take at least 25 years because the German, the East Germans and the West Germans thought in completely different ways. Now as a result of course, after two years, Dick Barkley for getting it wrong but getting it the way Jim Baker wanted was rewarded with ambassador to Ankara and Dick Walters was told to retire to make way for Bob Kimmitt, who was also a great ambassador but that's still and all, it shows you what happens if you predict something different from what the Secretary of State has predicted.

Q: I interviewed Dick Barkley and he said in the spring of '89 he was in the garden of East German, Berlin with his wife and he said you know, it's nice being ambassador but God this place is dull.

GEISEL: Well Dick is an old friend and I can see where, you know, look, an ambassador is talking to mostly high level officials, high level people from, you know, the people who are something in the country. I mean, he's hopefully getting stuff through his other officers from lower down in society but you know, the embassy in East Berlin got it totally wrong.

Q: Well of course the thing, to be fair with embassies anywhere and that is that so much depends at a certain point the East German government had to have lost its nerve.

GEISEL: Exactly.

Q: I mean, it was ready to clamp down and you know, to fact, you know, start shooting and it didn't.

GEISEL: Yes, and that was, I think to a large extent because they knew they weren't going to get support that they had always expected to get in the past from the Soviet Union.

Q: The Soviets had cast them aside. So it was something that nobody, I mean, very few people got right.

GEISEL: Well I mean, even Walters, if you will, said he could see it within five years. Five years, it wasn't a year.

Q: Yes. Anyway, how did it hit you?

GEISEL: Well, I certainly didn't really see it coming. We had a conference for the principal officers and the embassy minister counselors, in Berlin two weeks before the Wall came down. And you know, we talked about, you know, the tensions building up but if you were to have said to me, Harry, what do you think the odds are that the Wall is coming down? I mean the Wall didn't literally come down but you know what I meant, they opened it up, the Wall is coming down in two weeks, I would have said well, you know, that's pretty ambitious. And then boom, it happened. Well, we had a very good DCM; I hope you've interviewed him already, George Ward?

Q: Yes, I've interviewed George.

GEISEL: Well, he probably told you a great deal about Berlin 2000, which was his plan and I say his, he usually says it was "Harry's and my plan". Nonsense. It was his and I helped him. And from when the Wall came down we made the correct assumption, even though a lot of people said it wouldn't happen, that the embassy would move to Berlin by 2000. And we started planning for what that embassy should look like. And we made the point that a lot of agencies shouldn't move to Berlin, that, you know, there was too much admin and that those agencies should move to Frankfurt and a lot of the support should move to Frankfurt and that is what has happened. And we started planning for merging the embassy in East Berlin with the mission in West Berlin and that of course happened very, very quickly. I remember going, I think it was in December of '89, to Berlin, just a few weeks after this had happened and going to the embassy in East Berlin and there was Dick Barkley literally at the door because he was saying goodbye to someone who was visiting him and he said, ah, Harry, you've come to inspect your new plantation, have you? And it went very fast because basically we didn't want the Department to get it wrong. The Germans helped us; I'm looking at this from an admin point of view because they announced that when unification came there would no longer be missions in Berlin, all the foreign presences there would have to be accredited in a different way. I mean, when we were a mission we were accredited to ourselves because Berlin, as you know, was ruled by the three allied powers in the West and the Soviet Union in the East, although the Soviets said that they had turned over all their powers to the East German government which, when we talk about setting up our embassy in East Berlin we can talk about. But thanks to the Germans' demand that there would be no more missions in Berlin, we went to the Department, we said look, whether you like it or not the Germans say there is going to be one diplomatic presence in Berlin as of October 1, 1990, and we've got to figure out what it is. So now you know. Those are big secrets. It's one thing when you're talking about spying and all these other things but when you're talking about which Americans are going to stay in Berlin and which ones aren't and who's going to get what title in one section, you better believe we had to treat that as "top secret." And we met in the tank in West Berlin, I think it was in the West or was it in the East? No, I think it was in the West and it was I and the Berlin DCM who was wonderful, a guy named JD Bindenagel.

Q: I've interviewed JD.

GEISEL: Oh good. Well, he's great, he's a great guy. And then Harry Gilmore. You've done him already?

Q: I have done Harry.

GEISEL: Great. Harry was the minister, of course, in the West. And it was always the three of us with sometimes other people being brought in and I think George might have come for one meeting.

Q: George Ward.

GEISEL: George Ward, yes. And we did a staffing pattern and the Department second guessed it but of course ultimately the Department couldn't get its act together, especially Personnel as it was called in those days and we just sent them a message from Walters near the end saying well, what are you going to do? And they did nothing. And then the last day, as you would expect, they came back saying embassy was authorized to implement the proposal in Bonn telegram such and such and we did and the announcements went out to the posts in Germany and to the German foreign office.

Q: Well you know, looking at this, you're breaking an awful lot of rice bowls when you're-

GEISEL: You can't begin to imagine. I mean, just think of the Berlin budget, which was tens of millions of dollars, which all went away.

Q: And then you've got these people who had lived on the banks of the Rhine in Bad Godesburg-

GEISEL: Exactly.

Q: -you know, I mean, they were, they might have been American citizens but they had put down real roots and all of a sudden- how did you all deal with it?

GEISEL: Well, keep in mind of course that the Germans themselves were improvising as they went along because they weren't sure, you now, originally- Well, first of all, it wasn't until they had a vote, a nationwide vote, that it was decided that the capital would be moved to Berlin. But then of course the Germans being the good compromisers that they are for things like this, left different pieces in Bonn to keep some employment going. The best example was of course their social security office which had been put in Berlin to create employment but of course was occupying far too much housing and everything so that was moved to Bonn.

Q: Yes, the Germans were working hard to sort of stack the deck to keep people in Berlin.

GEISEL: Yes, well to keep people in Berlin, to keep people in Bonn.

Q: There had been an exodus, you know, early on.

GEISEL: Early on, exactly.

Q: So they were putting stuff in to keep people.

GEISEL: Oh yes, it was all jobs for the boys in the old days when the wall was up and that's why, frankly, they were so generous to the allies and never bothered us, really, on budget matters, because, you know, if we built some Golden Greek Temple housing well, that was in a way fine because that created jobs and they didn't have to run that by anybody really, they said well the occupiers have insisted on this. So yes, that's right. And then all of a sudden they found they were going to be short of housing and they wanted to keep the people in Bonn happy. Remember that it was a Christian Democratic government and that Bonn is a Christian Democratic stronghold.

Q: That's where Adenauer had his roots.

GEISEL: Yes. Adenauer was 28 kilometers away in Cologne; he was mayor of Cologne during the Hitler time.

Q: Well I mean, did you immediately in your plan for 2000 look to building a new embassy?

GEISEL: Oh yes. And there was only one place to build a new embassy too, and that was of course where the old embassy was, on Pariser Platz. And the British are doing the same, they had the same, and I think the French were there too if I'm not mistaken. And of course this was very hard and the Germans did a number on us, they didn't mean to but they did, when we thought we would pay for most everything by selling a big, 14 acre radio transmitter site that we called RIAS, Radio in the American Sector, which was hopelessly antiquated and which we didn't need anyway, and it was worth a fortune except nobody had realized that somehow, it was after I left, some Berlin bureaucrat had declared it a green zone. So I don't know if the Germans ever ended up giving us compensation for that or not but that certainly made a mess and we thought we wouldn't even have to go to Congress to ask for the money because we had statutory authority to reprogram proceeds of sale. But that was for another day.

One of the issues was housing. How are we going to get all this housing in a very expensive city? Well there we came up with what I think was a really nifty proposal and the Germans helped us on that. Basically the Germans allowed us to trade our housing in Bonn for housing in Berlin. Well, how do you do that since the Germans have a law similar to ours, that it must be relatively equal value and the properties in Berlin were worth much more. These were properties that we had been occupying under the occupation. Well, we came up with something, I'll take credit for coming up with it although I think my successor says that he did but, one day the records will all be open and it will be shown that in Berlin 2000 we had spoken of it, we came up with a concept that we had known from our days in Frankfurt of usufruct and actually from our chancery in Bonn. U-S-U-F-R-U-C-T. And it means all of the privileges of ownership without the ownership.

Q: Like a lease.

GEISEL: It's like a lease but you can do anything. Tear buildings down, put new ones up, modify them, but it is a lease for a certain time. So what we did is we offered to trade the property which we had in fee simple, which is in full title, in Bonn, for a 99 year lease of the properties in Berlin with the right to renew the lease for another 99 years. There of course is

where Don Hayes came in because he's the guy who did the negotiating along with some people from what was then called FBO. But the concept was an old one. Most importantly, the Germans wanted to do it. We're talking at the highest level and Chancellor Kohl basically told Walters that he was interested in helping us and that he would find a way to make this move happen and the Germans did help us.

Q: Well did you use the impending move to Berlin as a way to clean out the Bonn stables? I mean, you know, all these organizations, or were they too well entrenched?

GEISEL: Well, that really was after my time. In Berlin 2000 we certainly made plans but neither I nor George Ward can take much credit for that, which was really Don Hayes and Beth Jones who worked that through, I think with some success. There were some strange things going on. The Office of Defense Cooperation gave some of its German employees up through secret clearances. Well, one of those employees turned out to be a spy for the Stasi, which of course we discovered when we, well when the German Federal Government got hold of those Stasi archives, we also found that we had spies in West Berlin. We found that, unsurprisingly enough, I think everybody except one FSN in the East were Stasi spies. I'm not even sure about that one. So going back to what you said, because of the spy issue, because of the moving issue, I won't go so far as to say that we cleaned house but certainly we kept a lot of people who were questionable from moving to Embassy Berlin. I can't say "we;" that was our successors who I think did a wonderful job.

Q: Was part of your plan, I would imagine, to put something into, Leipzig or someplace? You almost had to do that.

GEISEL: Well Leipzig actually happened before the wall came down and boy, was it tough getting the East Germans to agree on a consulate office and getting us housing; they'd given us horrific housing. They gave us a pretty good office, I've forgotten what kind of building, it was a conference center or something of that sort that they ran since they had all the property. Yes, sure, of course we had to be in Leipzig. I forgot who the first CG was but he was great and gave us some terrific reporting, actually much better than, I won't say better but it was very, very good reporting.

Q: Well Leipzig was the center where they were having these candlelight ceremonies every Monday or Sunday or whatever it was, much more than and not in East Berlin, and they kept these ceremonies, they were just quiet but they were bigger and bigger and bigger.

GEISEL: Exactly, exactly. Yes. You know, Leipzig Consulate General in those days, it was tiny. I think we had three officers if I remember right. I don't even know if they were all officers but three Americans at first and they were just actually what the Secretary is now talking about with these small posts that she wants to have all over the world and that's what we had in Leipzig, a hostile area. We had wonderful reporting, our CG was waving the flag and as I say, he really was given a rough time by the East Germans in terms of support but we had wonderful information coming from him. So, there he was when the people were marching down the street.

Q: What about, how did you find, did you have much workings with say the Brits, the French and

the others in Bonn?

GEISEL: Oh yes, yes, very much so. We were very, well not so much with the French, as you can imagine but with the Brits all the time. And I loved working with them. It was different in Berlin but part of it was that the Germans appreciated the fact that we did not rip them off as badly as the British did, let alone the French. The French at one time were trying to haul as many recruits as they could through Berlin and they would then have the Germans buy all their uniforms. The Brits apparently in their day had ordered polo ponies. Now funnily enough, when I'd been there awhile and we had a new general commanding, not so long before the Wall came down, this idiot wanted polo ponies for himself and we said no. He may not have called them polo ponies, they may just have been riding horses or something and we said that would be very embarrassing.

Now that reminds me, of course we profited mightily from the fact that we were at least marginally restrained compared to the British and French in Berlin because the question came what to do with all of the furniture that we had in Berlin because it all belonged to the Germans, it all had been bought with occupation funds. You know, we're talking about a big crowd there. Now, it was especially of a concern in the ambassador's residence because the ambassador had a second residence in Berlin and although FBO, thank goodness, owned that residence, the residence in West Berlin, the Germans owned the furniture and we had bought some beautiful pieces in the old days, as you can imagine, including some real antiques. I bring this up just as an aside; the question was how to get the Germans to sell it to us at a price that we could afford to pay. Well, there again the Germans wanted to be helpful to us and we were very quick about it unlike the British and the French and as soon as we could, what would you do for the Germans? We gave them an inventory. We gave them a detailed inventory. I forgot how many hundreds and hundreds of pages long it was and of course we depreciated the heck out of everything including the antiques. Then we offered to pay the Germans the "book value." Well, I believe it was 680 pages or something like that. The Germans were delighted. So I think we paid, if I'm not mistaken, either \$25- or \$50,000 for all the furniture in the ambassador's residence in Berlin and it was worth considerably more.

So what happened with the British and French? They were dilly dallying and didn't get their act together and the Germans did the same thing that our bureaucrats would have done; they hired consultants to do inventories, the British and the French inventories. Well of course the consultants' goal was to make the stuff look like it was worth a fortune.

Q: Sure. Because they took a percentage of it.

GEISEL: They took a percent or at least they took some glory; whatever the arrangements were made. Our arrangements were all done, we cut the checks. In fact hurray for EUREX, which went to bat for us with the Department to get all the money, realizing what a deal we had gotten and how, if we didn't move quickly the Germans would get smart. Although there again as you said to me while the tape wasn't running, hey, we gave the German bureaucrats what they wanted, we gave a list of, even if it was not entirely realistic, that was 600 pages long and what auditor would go through it all?

Q: Sure, they can act on this, they didn't have to- And again, it wasn't coming out of their particular pocket.

GEISEL: Exactly, exactly. It was found money for them. But in any event, you asked about how the British and the French and we dealt together, we and the British worked very well together. You know, I'm wondering if I ever even met my French counterpart other than at cocktail party or two and I don't think I did.

Q: Did you have many dealings with the American military?

GEISEL: Oh yes.

Q: How did that essentially work out, other than the polo ponies?

GEISEL: Well, that was the American military in Berlin and as I said, the American military in Berlin, by the time I got there, my predecessor Dick Bowers had beaten them over the head enough that they really realized that the embassy was important and that they did have to work through the Berlin budget office and, other than the polo ponies, we got on very well. There were instances where we had to say no and really mean it but very rarely. Just shortly after I came, a very difficult commander, a two star general who thought he was especially close to God left and he was replaced by a one star who was a great guy, special forces guy, a guy would started as a displaced person in a concentration camp and, after the war, came as a refugee to America, enlisted in the army as a private and ended up as a major general and a Green Beret, a fantastic guy, so, no issues there. There were two types of military at the embassy. There were those who were part of the defense attaché office and the ODC, I think it was called, who were military assistants, if you will, more advisors, since we didn't assist the Germans, and maybe a handful of other people who were part of the embassy and accredited to the Germany foreign office as diplomats, if you will, as military attaches and assistant attaches. And then there were people who were actually under the command of Heidelberg where the-

Q: Seventh Army?

GEISEL: Seventh Army was, yes. Everyone worked very well together in Bonn. I can't think of any-

Q: Did you have, I mean, you know, I'm thinking of the FBI, DEA, Treasury and then on and on?

GEISEL: Oh yes, this was on and on and they were overstaffed but they were very nice and many of them were German speakers who'd been in Germany many times before and who worked with people in the defense ministry in Bonn, which is why they were there. Of course the commander of the U.S. Army Europe, USAEUR, had a representative office at the embassy. I can't think of any problems in all the time we were there.

Now, I'll just mention something that could never exist anywhere else. You would see German military officers walking around the embassy with embassy FSN IDs. Can you imagine that? Well, they had a unit, I think they were either 100 strong or 200 strong; I think they were about

100 strong in the embassy working for the Defense Attaché Office as a special office; they were doing photo interpreting of East Germany, you know, from our satellites. Our defense attaché would pass these photos to the Germans and because of the sensitivity of it all, the work had to be done in the embassy so there were all these German officers and I suppose some non-coms in uniform around the embassy. I think there were at least 90. Can you imagine that? Wearing FSN badges.

Q: Did you have any, I mean, prior to the collapse of the East Germany government but even afterwards, how about the spy business? Because from what I gather, I mean, every other German in West Germany, you know, at least Mr. Wolfe had a wonderful organization going.

GEISEL: Yes.

Q: And did that, I mean, did it happen before the Wall came down?

GEISEL: No, after.

Q: But after it came down, I mean, was there sort of revelations?

GEISEL: Oh yes, but as I mentioned earlier, most of that came about after I left in '92. Some of it had come out and DS, I think, reacted very well and very quickly and there were amazing things. Like I'd mentioned, this one FSN who'd been working forever for the military in Bonn, who was apparently one of their biggest spies, and that did come out before I left. And I believe that, in fact I'm sure the Germans actually tried her as a spy and she was given some jail time, I don't remember how much. But I know we found she had actually stolen some information on Patriot missiles. It all came out in the press.

Q: What about the Gulf War? You were mentioning that.

GEISEL: That was a very tough time for our community. We were very scared and it turned out we had good reason to be worried. And we improvised. We depended on the Germans for protection and at first they weren't giving it to us but of course they were no match for us in public relations. I remember all of our people were upset because they saw there was no increase in security. So, I until the Germans had some cameramen around the American school; I don't know whether we tipped them off or whether we just knew they were there, and then we called all the children out, closed the school down, had them march in front of the German cameras and we announced that we weren't reopening the school until the Germans gave us police protection, which they had told us they didn't have the manpower to do it. They cursed me and we had protection the next day. Then the Germans were terrific, you know. It was just a matter of breaking through the bureaucracy which tends to say no, this is different and we can't do it and once you reached a higher level the answer was of course we'll do it. So, within two days they gave us fantastic security around both the chancery and the housing compound and they were serious and they were good. I can't say that was the end of our worries because, as you may remember, ultimately someone from the Red Army Faction stood across the river and fired an AK-47 or maybe even it was a heavier caliber weapon, I think it was actually a heavier caliber weapon into the embassy chancery, which was really little more than cardboard, it was just, I

mean, it wasn't cardboard but you know what I mean, the bullets went right through, but they shot the place up after we'd closed for the day, I think it was 6:30 at night and they aimed high at first. I remember our econ counselor, Don Kursch, was there and he ducked, so no one was hurt. But there were, I think, 80 some odd bullets, they were heavy caliber bullets now that I think of it; broke a lot of windows and went through a lot of walls.

Q: Were there a lot of third country nationals in Germany at the time?

GEISEL: Yes.

Q: Did we hire them?

GEISEL: Well, we hired them legally, but yes, yes, yes. Oh yes, especially in the jobs that the Germans didn't want to do. Hey, we didn't invent that with Mexicans. They were picking up the garbage. Not as much in Berlin for garbage- not as much, I should say in Bonn as far as garbage was concerned, had mostly Germans there but we had a lot working in admin, some Turks, mostly Filipinos. And the Germans would occasionally harass us about them but in those days there was pretty full employment so you know, it was the sort of thing that the Germans would call me in and I would say a few nice things and give them papers to justify what we were doing and then they would leave us alone for awhile until they felt the political pressure to question us again.

Q: Well were you seeing in Germany any sort of results of, I'm not sure if this is the right term, social engineering, but the safety net, the vacations, the-

GEISEL: Oh sure.

Q: I mean, from an American perspective, did this seem to be sort of an inhibitor to Germany or not?

GEISEL: Well sure. And we would feel some of it at the embassy where, you know, some of the goof offs would get notes from their doctor that they needed a rest cure at Baden-Baden, you know, and that this should be charged to sick leave. And to some extent we put up with it. Now of course as you know, that nonsense has today bankrupted the German health system and now they're trying to reform it. Yes, we would see it and it was obvious that the Germans were going to get in deep trouble because a labor hour in Germany with all the benefits was already, I believe, the highest in the world. Now, to some extent, of course, they made it up because they're good engineers. Now they have over 10 percent unemployment there.

Q: Right. Well then, this probably is a good place to stop, I think, Harry. You left Bonn in '92.

GEISEL: Yes, and I left for Moscow and I think that's a good place to end. And I'll just say how I went to Moscow and why I went to Moscow and then we could call it quits unless you want to talk about Germany for maybe 10 minutes in 1974 when I forgot to do it.

Q: Okay.

GEISEL: But in any event, I was, by this time, really looking forward, my assignment was up in '92 and I was really looking forward to going back to the States because I hadn't had a real job in the United States since 1973 to '75 in EUR post management. When I was doing this roving throughout Africa, I was really in Africa most of the time even though it was counted as a domestic assignment and I wanted to go back. One day I got a call from John Rogers, who was our undersecretary for management and he said Harry, we need you to go to Moscow. And I said huh? And he said well, Ambassador Strauss doesn't like the guy he has now and the guy is due out anyway and he wants you. And I said how did he even know about me? He said well, actually he was told by Jim Baker to get Pat Kennedy because Pat Kennedy was the best admin officer in the Foreign Service. I said yes, I agree with that. He said but Pat can't come. I said you mean Pat won't come. He said well, whatever, you're the next best. So I said I really had counted on going back to the United States, it's been so long, John. I knew John very well. And he said Harry, believe me, there aren't any jobs for you in the Department. And I thought to myself well, if the undersecretary of state for management is telling me that, I can take a hint. I have a philosophy, I would always rather have people say thank you to me than f--k you.

Q: Yes.

GEISEL: So I said okay, John, I'll go to Moscow and he said oh, that's wonderful, Harry.

Q: Okay. So now, do you want to talk a bit about setting up our embassy in East Berlin?

GEISEL: Yes. And this can-

Q: In '74?

GEISEL: '74-'75. I'm sort of amazed at myself how I managed to miss that. My wife had mentioned it to me because I told her what I was doing and she said oh, you must have told them all about Berlin. And I said yes, of course I did, when the Wall came down. She said no, when you helped set up the embassy. I said oh, I forgot about that.

Q: Okay.

GEISEL: We were given word in relatively early '74 that we would be opening up an embassy in East Berlin, an embassy to East Germany and that "to" is a important word as I'll come to, before the communist party celebrated its, what would it have been its 30th anniversary, in October of 1974 and Secretary Kissinger had correctly assumed that the East Germans would be quite desperate to get us to recognize them prior to that date. We went out first as a team that was headed by Nelson Ledsky and Joan Clark. Have you done them?

Q: I've done Ledsky, not Joan yet. Joan was done by someone else.

GEISEL: Oh, okay. Nelson doing the substantive work and Joan doing the administrative work and that was my introduction to what is called quite fondly "Berlinery." Have you heard that term?

Q: I've heard it, yes.

GEISEL: Berlinery means, as an example, we would talk about the proposed American embassy IN the Soviet sector, the proposed American embassy TO the German Democratic Republic in the Soviet controlled sector of East Berlin. The East Germans would come back with their language which was Berlin, Berlin Hauptstadt der DDR or Berlin, the capital, the American embassy in Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, to which Nelson would immediately respond, "that is unacceptable language because the final status of Berlin has not yet been determined". It was all done, I would say, sometimes almost in good humor but quite seriously. The good humor would come in when we would talk about the former American embassy on Pariser Platz that was destroyed by the Russian artillery bombardment. They would come back and say the former American embassy on Pariser Platz which was destroyed by the American air bombardment. So everything that we did in the negotiations always had to consider Berlinery and indeed, we had to be sure we didn't make any mistakes.

So for instance, when I was ordering the seals for the embassy and for the consular section, we had seals for an entity that didn't exist. We had "Embassy of the United States of America Berlin, Germany." Berlin, Germany. There hadn't been a Berlin, Germany since the end of World War II.

Q: Yes.

GEISEL: Then the seals that had to say that we were the Embassy of the United States of America, it would say "to", that was on stationery, the German Democratic Republic. You know, it was a way of preserving our rights. As I said, at least on our low end of the spectrum, we did it with good humor but basically, the problem we had is that someone had to set up this embassy overnight, we had to be ready to go but we couldn't go until we established relations because, you know, Kissinger was trying to get everything he could from the DDR.

We had an ambassador designate who wasn't designated and wasn't nominated, a wonderful man named John Sherman Cooper, the former senator from Kentucky, and in those days the greatest thing in politics was to be a liberal Republican, which is exactly what he was and everybody adored him. His wife, Lorraine, was the stepdaughter of Prince Orsini of Rome and she was a bit difficult but I got on very, very well with her. There were interesting problems, though. The Coopers had real money. They had four servants in Georgetown and they were taking their servants with them. Two of them were either Peruvian or Chilean ladies; one was the cook and one was the cleaner. The two men, Michael and Thomas, one was the butler and I don't know what the other did but they were, as we would say today, gay. No question about it. And when we were planning for the residence, they wanted to have a big bed and of course I had gone out of my way to see that there were twin beds and that they each had their own room. Now of course I knew at the end of the day it didn't matter once they got there, I just said, you know, this is a security issue; this is a communist country, as indeed it was. And funnily enough when I visited afterwards, Mrs. Cooper gave me tea and there was neither Michael nor Thomas to serve and I said Mrs. Cooper, where are my dear, dear friends, Michael and Thomas? And she just said, now, now Harry, not everyone can love you.

But we had another problem. We had the Department's director of funds management, as he was in those days, who came in to see me because I had been screaming for money. We had to buy everything; we had to buy furniture, we had to buy equipment, we had to get cars. You know, it was like starting an embassy but the embassy wasn't there yet. You know, it didn't even have an organization code. You know, all the bureaucratic things which we had in waiting, the files, everything, the people selected to go there. And he said, "I can't give you any money until I see a flag flying over the flagpole." And I said Walker, if you don't give me some money there is not going to be money to buy a flagpole. And ultimately, of course, Joan managed to whisper at a higher level to, you know, stop the nonsense, and get us the money. Bureaucrats are of different calibers and I found throughout my career that most of the bureaucrats in the department were good but some of them understood our basic mission better than others did.

PETER K. MURPHY
Consul General/Minister-Counselor for Consular Affairs
Berlin (1989-1990)

Peter K. Murphy was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1936. He received a bachelor's degree from Boston College in 1959 and served in the U.S. Army from 1959-1960. He joined the Foreign Service in 1962. Mr. Murphy's career included positions in France, Argentina, Italy, and Germany. He was interviewed by William D. Morgan on April 4th, 1994.

Q: Now, we're going to move on to Bonn, German - Peter. This was a normal transfer to Germany, was it not? Ambassador Vernon A. Walters wasn't calling for you?

MURPHY: No. But I should tell you that when the job of Minister-Counselor for Consular Affairs opened in Bonn - and was proposed to me by Personnel in Washington - Ambassador Vernon A. Walters called me to urge me to take the job. He told me that he had been named ambassador to Germany - although the news was not yet public - and that he hoped we could work together in Bonn. I - however - was not at all fully convinced that I would like the job: I knew no German - and thus had to go to the FSI German program prior to traveling to Bonn - not an easy thing when you are over 50 years of age! I had never worked with Germans before and wondered how much it would differ from the Latinos I had worked with most of my entire professional life. I soon found out that there was a GREAT difference - and I'll say for the record that I much preferred the Latin way of working and doing business! I found it to be much more humane. However - I did like working with Ambassador Walters and the staff at Embassy Bonn. By that time, I had come to know Dick Walters quite well. Also - the position of Consul General - and Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs at Embassy Bonn had great possibilities as with the job came jurisdiction over all consular work in the nation - including the Mission in Berlin..... so I took the job. Also - for the record - there were no other jobs available within that time frame for an officer of my grade!!

Q: In regard to consular affairs? If I can belabor this point, you did not supervise in any way the

Consulates General in Germany?

MURPHY: No, not at all. I had direct supervision over the consular sections of Hamburg, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Munich, and Berlin.....but not the Consulates Generals per se. I lived in Bonn and traveled frequently to all of the posts around Germany. In Bonn we lived in what was referred to as the “Golden Ghetto” on the banks of the Rhine River in a small town named Bad Godesberg - just down the Rhine from Bonn. I must admit that I found working and living in Germany to be quite unlike anything I'd ever experienced in my years of service.

Q: You mean it was orderly.

MURPHY: It was all orderly all right, Billbut a bit too orderly for me! The thing I objected to most was the fact that we all lived together in this ghetto. Now - - I fully realize that after World War II there was no housing for the huge contingent of Americans that came to this small town of Bonn (Bad Godesberg). Something had to be done to house the Americans. The Germans built very large and beautiful apartments in which about 500 American families were housed. We were assigned to one of the three separate houses (reserved for Ministers of the Embassy) on the property - - with very large gardens going all the way to the Rhine River banks. The entrance to this compound was blocked by German and American guards because of the security situation at the time. No one - German or American - could get past the entrance gate without a permit.

Q: Then - it really was a ghetto?

MURPHY: It was indeed a ghetto. No Germans lived inside...at that time. I believe that now (1996) - with the impending move of the Embassy from Bonn to Berlin - the Embassy is selling off some of our government property in Bonn. The only Germans that I knew during my two years in Germany were those with whom I had struck up acquaintances before being posted to Bonn. I did meet some people in the Foreign Ministry, but it was rather like working in Washington. It was all business - and there was never any socializing or human contact of any kind. Near our house, we had a Post Exchange, a Commissary, base ball fields, soft ball fields, Little League fields, an American School, a New England style church serving the three major faiths - and, I believe, the only church in the Department of State's inventory!! We had a huge American Club - with a pool, tennis courts, and restaurant - with lobsters flown in from New England once a month! There was even a German Post Office - marked Deutsche Bundespost - but also indicated in English - in case you missed the point!! In spite of the fine living conditions - I really did not like the assignment to Germany - with one great exception - - - we lived through the fall of the Berlin Wall and the fall of the Democratic Republic of Germany. This was indeed a historic period and one which both Jackie and I found fascinating. We took full advantage of being in Germany by traveling to Berlin during those crucial days.

Q: But your colleagues in the diplomatic corps in Bonn, your fellow consuls general?

MURPHY: We did not have the same rapport that I found in other countries, Bill. It wasn't like being in Genoa in the consular corps, or in Nice, or in Argentina. We did have some acquaintances among fellow diplomats but in no way was it a close-knit corps.

It was very pleasant living in Bonn; it was very clean, very orderly and we couldn't have asked for better housing. Bonn was a wonderful physical location for us because of the fact that my wife, who is French, has some relatives in nearby Luxembourg. My mother-in-law is Luxembourgish. It was only a two hour drive to Luxembourg City, so we often visited that country. We did discover wonderful towns in the area of Bonn and along the Rhine.... great restaurants (not as great as in France - but not bad!!) and historic sites. We often went off with Ambassador Walters and his military aid, Comdr. Lee Martiny, on gourmet expeditions to Belgium, right next door, or over the border into Holland. We'd drive over to Belgium after work, as a matter of fact, to a two star restaurant in Liege for a great meal!

Q: Does this in part, perhaps, reflect the German problem of having set up a new capital, so to speak, in a little, tiny town and having authority over huge land mass. Speaking from the Embassy in Bonn - - the power is really in Frankfurt, or in Hamburg, and those American Consuls General act that way.

MURPHY: You are absolutely right, Bill. The Consulates within the country were far more active and important than Consulates in most European countries. Bonn was not Paris - and people in the provinces - in provincial capitols far more important than Bonn - never let you forget this fact. This will all change now, of course, with the German capital moving to Berlin. It will take years to accomplish - and many billions of Marks - but it will be done! Even with Berlin as the capital, however, I suspect that Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Stuttgart will always remain important and powerful centers within Germany

Q: And eastern Germany is existing as an entity, if you will, and a capital's split, Berlin, caused an inability to act like a country.

MURPHY: Right, exactly. All this had a part to play in how our Embassy operated and what responsibilities I had in the country - - and the reaction of our constituent posts to our directives....! Our Embassy is still located in Bonn, and did you notice that when President Clinton visited there this past weekend, that's one of the things he promised in his public speech, that by 1998 we will have opened our Embassy in Berlin. At the moment we have a Branch Office of the Embassy located in Berlin - at the site of the former Mission in that city.

Q: There is a plaque, I don't know if you've seen it, but I did see it a couple of months ago, right by where he spoke, just to the right of it, in that No Man's Land.

MURPHY: You mean President Kennedy spoke.

Q: No. I mean President Clinton.

MURPHY: Oh, really? I'm sorry.

Q: That little plot was in No Man's Land. There is a plaque dedicated by the last Under Secretary of State, he was maybe Acting Secretary at the time, I can't remember his name, under the Bush Administration just before the end of the Bush Administration, saying "This is the site of

our past and future Embassy." That's all there is - a plaque.

MURPHY: The reason for the that: The German government has insisted we rebuild our future embassy in exactly the same spot where the former one stood. I recall having attended several meetings with Foreign Office officials who insisted that we re-construct the embassy on exactly the same spot in Berlin!

It was truly a fascinating time to be in Germany. The unification of the two German nations. Jackie and I visited East Germany (the *German Democratic Republic*) a few weeks before the wall fell. In Dresden one would have thought the planes of World War II had left only last week - such was the state of disrepair of the public buildings.

Q: You were there during the unification? What were your dates again?

MURPHY: I was there during the unification. 1989 to the end of 1990.

Q: Two years?

MURPHY: Yes, two years. Interestingly enough, Ambassador Walters predicted in his first staff meeting in Bonn that during his tenure as ambassador the Berlin Wall would fall. He gave many historical reasons why he thought this would come about. I must say 90% of the people in the staff meeting thought he was speaking through his hats!. They were not convinced this would happen.

Q: He even made a speech that became public on this subject and had everybody shaken up. You were there, but I was here in Washington. I remember thinking, "What is that man doing?"

MURPHY: Oh, yes. Washington was very upset with him...especially the White House. But it was an interesting time. I remember that my wife and I - and also our youngest son, Marc, - traveled from Berlin to Bonn - through the German Democratic Republic - with Ambassador Walters on his private railway train. The Ambassador received special permission from the Russians to return by train during daylight hours to Bonn from Berlin. Night travel was usually insisted upon by the Russians - so that it was more difficult for the travelers to make out the depressing scenery of the East German countryside.

Q: That famous sealed train!

MURPHY: It was a train that only he and the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe were authorized to use, and I believe it was the only time Dick Walters used it. It was a "perk" of ambassadorial rank! The train itself was simply splendid! I can't begin to imagine how much our little trip from Bonn to Berlin - and return - cost the German taxpayers. The train represented the last of the last vestige of the "Spoils of the Victor" of the Second World War. There were four private sleeping compartment-rooms, if one wished to nap. We had a communications car as well as a lovely dining car with a large table seating twelve. There was a French chef aboard who prepared fantastic meals for us. It seemed as if we stopped every half hour or so in order that the Soviet and East German guards could check our special passage documents. They were not

exactly visas - but represented permission from the Soviet Minister in Berlin for the American Minister in Berlin and his party to pass freely through the German Democratic Republic. Photographing, of course, from the train was strictly forbidden!

Q: Ambassador Walters was, am I correct, technically in charge of Berlin and the military?

MURPHY: Ambassador Walters' title in Berlin was United States Minister in Berlin, administering the city of Berlin together with his French, British, and the Soviet colleagues. Those four Ambassadors all had the added title of Minister in Berlin. The Soviet quarter of the city was, of course, in East Berlin. So - the Soviet Ambassador to the GDR was Minister there as well. Ambassador Walters - as the American Minister in Berlin - and as such had a separate residence in Berlin and also a separate staff at the United States Mission. The German government paid all the expenses of all four missions in the city - - and, after seeing how the staff lived and worked - the Germans must have paid a fortune each year!! We also had an American Embassy in East Berlin itself - as the capitol of the German Democratic Republic.

Q: Then under Walters came the Military Commander of Berlin?

MURPHY: Yes

Q: So the ambassador was the boss in Berlin?

MURPHY: He was the boss in Berlin. Often when I had visits in Berlin, I would stay at his fully staffed Berlin residence. The ambassador was very generous in this regard.

Q: After all of this, Peter, I hate to remind you that you were only the Consul General.

MURPHY: I was only the Consul General - and Minister of Embassy for Consular Affairs..

Q: So tell us professional stories of your work in Germany.

MURPHY: Professionally.well, one of the major consular events during my tour was the introduction of the "Non-Immigrant Visa (NIV) Waiver" for Germans visiting the United States. In order to cut down on NIV work in Western Europe, the Congress passed a regulation which stipulated that nations whose citizens did not overstay their temporary visits in our country would no longer be required to hold U. S. tourist visas to enter the United States. You can imagine the cut-back in NIV workloads at our posts throughout Europe as a result of this new regulation!

Q: Determined by low incidence of...?

MURPHY: Low incidence of overstay. There were certain prerequisites before a country could be put on this "Visa Waiver List" that would eliminate the necessity of obtaining a visa to travel to the United States. I arrived in Bonn about two weeks before this directive came from Washington. I had to devise ways of educating the German public that a visa was no longer necessary. This seems like a rather simple task. However - I soon discovered differently!

Germans like authority and they like permissions, visa stamps and seals! To convince them that they no longer would be turned away at our borders if they did not have an American visa in their passports was a major effort - involving the mounting of a huge Television, Radio and media campaign. I gave press conferences throughout the country - and we organized the effort through all the consulates as well.

Q: *Control.*

MURPHY: Germans do like control; in fact, I would say that they love control. So, Bill, although we took to the airwaves, had television programs as well as seminars for German travel agents, it took many months before the lines of visa applicants diminished in front of the consulates in Germany. I must say that Marsha Barnes, the Chief of the Consular Section in Bonn was of great assistance in this program. Marsha is an experienced and very capable consular officer who is fluent in German....as opposed to me - - most unfortunately!

I should perhaps mention an interesting “political perspective” to this Visa Waiver initiative. Shortly after the Visa Waiver directive arrived from Washington, I was called to the Foreign Ministry in downtown Bonn and told in no uncertain terms: "The Federal Republic would like Washington to be aware of the fact that if this new Visa Waiver applies to the Federal Republic of Germany it must apply to ALL Germans. By that we mean anyone possessing a German Passport.” What they were getting at, of course, was the fact that the German Constitution recognizes citizens of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) as German citizens. In their eyes all Germans - from West or East - are to be treated alike. You can imagine the consternation this caused the FBI and the CIA and other members of our intelligence community. Imagine: an East German escapes to the Federal Republic and, after obtaining a German passport, hops on the next plane in Frankfurt and shows up in New Yorkwithout ever having passed through any type of visa look-out computer check at an Embassy or Consulate!

Q: *Hadn't this been thought through ahead of time? Weren't we aware of...?*

MURPHY: I am sure it was, Bill. However, the Germans wanted us to be fully aware of the fact that they would not tolerate any German being treated as a “*second class German*”. The message was delivered not only to me in Bonn but that same day the DCM of the Embassy in Washington delivered the same message to the State Department. They certainly wanted to cover all bases!

Our position within Consular Affairs was that we absolutely had to respect the German Constitution and that there is no way we can say that East Germans could not come to the United States under this “waiver authority” if they had valid West German passports.

Q: *What did you do to amuse yourselves - to have fun or to socialize in Germany, Peter?*

MRPHY: Let's see.....well, I'll tell you about one interesting evening in Germany. Ambassador Walters and I are both members of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. We entered into the Order on the same date - in New York City at St. Patrick's Cathedral.....together with General Al Haig. This Order, originally founded in 1099 to assist pilgrims and to protect the Christian territory recaptured by the Crusaders in Jerusalem, is - since 1834 - now headquartered in Rome

in the Malta Palace on the Via Condotti. It is, in effect, an international charitable organization. The seat of the Order - as well as a large Villa on the Aventino Hill in Rome - is considered to be "extra-territorial" land by the government of Italy. In view of the sovereignty of the Order and under the provisions of International Law and the Treaty of Vienna, the Order of Malta is recognized by some nations as a separate State and, as such, maintains diplomatic relations with about 26 nations in addition to several international bodies (UNESCO, FAO, Council of Europe, the Arab League). In 1994 the General Assembly of the United Nations granted the Order the status of Observer at the General Assembly - following receipt of a resolution signed by 71 nations. Today, the Order is dedicated to providing assistance in charitable and social fields - and in particular, aids those stricken by natural disaster and to the casualties of war. There are about 1,700 members of this Order in the United States.

To give you some idea of the Order's "behind the scene" work in humanitarian causes: the Order provided material assistance to those East Germans fleeing to West Germany through Hungary and Austria. Some years ago - following the war in Vietnam the Knights of Malta - working through other governments provided the funds to build hospitals and clinics for the Vietnamese war victims.

While I was in Rome, I frequently met with the Prince and Grand Master of the Order - Angelo de Mojana Di Cologna -as well as member of his staff to discuss humanitarian assistance in various parts of the world. This information was passed to Washington and was useful to the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) and other parts of the government. I often met with the "*Hospitalier*" of the Order - whose office directed much of the charitable work. At the time, he was a young German Baron from a very wealthy family - Freiherr Albrecht von Boeselager. He spent about a week a month in Rome, residing permanently with his family not far from Bonn. Jackie and I, together with Ambassador Walters, were invited by von Boeselager and his wife to a dinner at his home (Schloss Kreuzberg in Kreuzberg/Ahr) together with several of the German officials of the Knights of Malta. Many of these men were leaders in their professional fields - and quite well-healed, as you can imagine! During the evening, some of them explained how they raised funds and sent aid to the East Germans who were temporarily refugees in Hungary. The Order actually passed funds to their Hungarian counterparts - and a refugee camp was built for the German refugees in record time. It was most interesting to learn these facts firsthand. This flood of East German refugees can truly be considered to be the those who opened the floodgates of the Communist Empire.

Q: That did become the start of the fall of the Eastern empire?

MURPHY: Yes - the beginning of the end, as it were.

Q: Tell us, Peter, a bit about your relationships to the constituent posts.

MURPHY: The constituent posts. I can assure you that a lot of my time was take with administrative matters involving these posts! We had a number of personnel problems involving both Germans and Americans - and somehow I frequently found myself in the middle of these delicate problems! My relationships with all the Consuls General were very good. Some of them had enormous egos, I must say. You can imagine, Bill - with the size of the offices in Frankfurt -

or Munich!

Q: I would argue all, but....

MURPHY: No, I don't think Harry Gilmore didthe Minister in Berlin, for example. I was very impressed by the operations of Frankfurt, which is an enormous post. It is larger than any of our embassies in Africa. I was also impressed with the work of our Consulate General in Munich. I think Bavaria is perhaps the most interesting part of Germany, from my point of view. I think the people are more human....at least I found that I related better to the Bavarians. Although I must say that both my wife and I were really astounded on our first visit to the city of Hamburg. It is truly a beautiful city - the art, the architecture - - the overall elegance of the people.

Q: It's a strong city in the sense of a port that is centuries old. Your tour in Germany was only two years, was it not?

MURPHY: It was only two years. At the end of that period I was assigned to Washingtonjust at the start of the Gulf War in Kuwait and Iraq! Miss Elizabeth Tamposi - Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs (and the only Assistant Secretary of State ever fired personally by a President of the United States!) asked me if I would take over as the Consular Affairs Director of the Gulf War Task Force which had been set up on a 24-hour-a-day basis. Ambassador Mary A. Ryan, former Ambassador to Swaziland and present (1996) Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, was the overall Director of the task force from the political perspective. Mary is presently (1998) Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs - and one of the most popular AS the Bureau has ever had.

Q: Ms. Tamposi, at any rate was...?

MURPHY: Ms. Elizabeth Tamposi was then the Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs. While stationed in Bonn, I had heard several tales of her initial days in Consular Affairs! At the end of my tour there, I received a call from CA asking if I would consider taking the position as Ms. Tamposi's Senior Deputy Assistant Secretary. With no hesitation at all - I declined the offer.

Q: You might be a little bit more specific since it's quite public..... awareness of Ms. Tamposi's role, including the firing by the President. What was part of her problem at that time?

MURPHY: Ms. Tamposi, I believe, was a woman much removed from her element in her position at the State Department. I had spoken with her by phone a few time from Bonn. I knew that she had, in effect, fired Mary Ryan from her position as Tamposi's Senior Deputy Assistant Secretary.

Q: Senior Deputy?

MURPHY: Yes. As a matter of fact, Mary asked me why I hadn't taken the job when it was offered to me. I told her that I found working with Mr. Wilson and Mr. Shakespeare, the two political appointees at the Vatican, very stressful. The high visibility of the White House, the

constant intrigues, and the continual walking of the fine line between the State Department and the White House required great skill - as well as enormous physical stamina! At this point in my career - as I was contemplating retirement - I didn't want to get involved with that again. I knew it would be the same old routine: Tamposi was the protégé of the Chief of Staff at the White House, John Sununu. The reason for this connection: Tamposi's father - a very successful N.H. contractor - was Sununu's chief financial backer in New Hampshire! Her background was that of the state legislator who had lost her second term in an election. She then turned to Daddy's real estate firm. Her father was a very wealthy real estate developer in New Hampshire and Florida. Betty Tamposi, as you know Bill, had no experience whatsoever in management, in international affairs, or the Washington scene.

Q: And stories had already begun about some of her idiosyncrasies.

MURPHY: Yes, idiosyncrasies! When I came back to Washington, I returned with a very open mind. I said, "I'm here in Washington for another five months before I retire." Naturally, the *Gulf War Task Force* was under Betty Tamposi's jurisdiction, her bailiwick - since it involved the protection of American life and property abroad. Tamposi knew this was where the publicity was, where it was in those days at least, so she naturally wanted to be directly involved. After working a week for her, I sat down with Betty and talked very openly. First of all, I told her the reason I hadn't taken the job she had offered me. She then asked me, "*Why are people around here so upset that I fired Mary Ryan?*" I told her point blank, "*You fired the most distinguished and respected woman Ambassador we have today in the Foreign Service. She is respected and greatly admired by her peers throughout the world. No one can understand your actions in throwing her out of your office. They presume it is a matter of professional jealousy.*"

Q: And a very professional person as well.

MURPHY: Sure she is! I gave examples of Mary's professional background. I continued to tell Betty, "...And people think basically that it's professional jealousy. You're jealous of a competent professional woman." She was very sorry and, of course, upset to hear that.

Q: Did she take it?

MURPHY: She took from me..... and the reason she had to was that nothing she could do to influence my career.

Q: You'd already turned down her offer as her Deputy?

MURPHY: Yes, I'd already turned down that offer. Another reason I spoke so openly and forcefully to Betty about this matters was because of my respect for consular work - and those who work in this complex field. As you are aware, Bill, much of my career was spent in and around consular matters, even though I didn't spend my entire career working directly in of for the CA Bureau. I have deep affection for consular work and for the officers and national staffs who perform that work for the American public.

At one point, Betty showed me a map on her office the wall which was full of little flags - each

one representing a country she had visited. She explained that one of her major goals in the State Department was to visit every country with which we have diplomatic relations. In an indirect way, I suggested that this was most inappropriate objective for a person in her position! I said, "When you go to a post to hold a conference, you should go there for the specific purpose of bettering the consular image, the consular function, to make the lives of consular officers easier in the field. Because of your position, you can assist our Embassy in country X by cutting through red-tape at the local Foreign Ministry. You should utilize your visits abroad for these purposes. They are the people in those nations who need the assistance. You can see how important immigration is in our nation. When tragedies occur that involve Americans overseas, you have seen how important immediate Washington back-up becomes. That is what your job is - - and this should be the reason you visit selected diplomatic posts."

A few days later, Betty came to me and said, *"Perhaps you can help me plan my next trip to Europe,"* and she went over her proposed itinerary with me. She was planning to land in Frankfurt and go up to Bonn for a few days and then on to Romania. I said, *"What's the reason? Why are you going to Frankfurt?"* She said, *"Oh, they have a machine-readable passport production there, so I'll go and look at that. I'll stay a couple of hours there in Frankfurt."* I suggested that she spend more time with the consular personnel in Frankfurt - one of our largest consular posts in the world. I tried to impress on her the crucial importance of that consulate which handled all of the medical evacuations of American citizens coming from Africa, from the Middle East, hostages landing there, of the work they do to coordinate all that, all the immigrant visa work, all the non-immigrant visa work. In addition, I told her of the assistance the consular section provides to the American military - issuing thousands of Reports of Birth of American citizens; U. S. Passports; hundreds of Immigrant Visas. I told her, *"Without the excellent German staff, we could do nothing."* I explained how important it was that she address both the American and German staffs - to encourage them in their work and also to thank them for their extraordinary efforts in coping with the recent spate of hostage releases from the Middle East - and all the work they do to support the needs of our Armed Forces stationed in Germany. She apparently understood what I was saying. When she returned from her trip, however, she timidly confessed that she didn't find the time to speak with the consular section personnel in Frankfurt. I found the entire experience of working with Betty Tamposi most discouraging, Bill!

Q: Peter, we were in the midst of talking about some of your impressions and your briefing of Ms. Tamposi, and teaching her some of the facts of Consular Affairs. What more do we have to say about this woman who was fired by President Bush after two and a half years?

MURPHY: Well, I must tell you, Bill, that I had a preconceived notion of what the woman was like from what I heard from my colleagues overseas.

Q: You had not met her before?

MURPHY: No. Before arriving in Washington from Bonn, we had never met. I did find that Betty Tamposi could be very personable.....when she wanted to! But I also had the feeling when speaking with her that she was always on her guard; she was a bit leery of the person she was

speaking with. There is no doubt that she suffered from an inferiority complex. This affected her daily work and her interpersonal relations with her fellow Assistant Secretaries as well as the personnel throughout the Consular Affairs Bureau.

Q: *Perhaps afraid of hurt bosses?*

MURPHY: I believe Betty Tamposi was intimidated by Foreign Service professionals - - by people who knew more of the work than shethis wasn't at all difficult! I remember, for example, discussing the new Visa Waiver Program when we first met. A few minutes into the conversation, I quickly realized she didn't have any real interest in - or knowledge of - visas or visa waivers. Her main interest in me, that I could see, was my involvement with the German end of the investigation of the Pan Am 103 crash in Scotland.

Q: *Was there overriding...?*

MURPHY: She made the PanAm 103 tragedy her "*cause celebre*" and stated at a large press conference: "*My predecessors might not have done this right, but we in Consular Affairs are now going to work for the American people. My office will find out who these terrorists were and why they blew up the Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland. We shall see that they are punished.*" As I mentioned, my involvement stemmed from the fact that the investigation traced back the terrorists to the International Airport in Frankfurt, so the German government too became involved. Groups of relatives of the victims of the crash came to the Embassy in Bonn two or three times during my tour in Germany, seeking assistance in meeting with German government authorities - including the Chancellor of the Republic.. They were looking into the German side of the investigation; security at Frankfurt airport and related issues. It was obvious that Tamposi was very interested in this subject - which could buy her TV time - - and maybe even a press conference!!

J. D. BINDENAGEL
Deputy Chief of Mission
East Berlin, GDR (1989-1990)

Born and raised in South Dakota, Ambassador Bindenagle attended the University of South Dakota and the University of Illinois and entered the Foreign Service in 1975. He served in Korea and held several posts in Germany. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: *In 1989 you left for Germany?*

BINDENAGEL: Right, but to the "other" (East) Germany. In 1989 I went to East Berlin. Ambassador Richard "Dick" Barkley, who had been my political counselor at Embassy Bonn asked if I would be his Deputy Chief of Mission. I was delighted. I had to leave the Canadian Desk early, but I Assistant Secretary Roz Ridgway approved and I was able to depart. We arrived in East Berlin on March 20, 1989.

Q: You stayed there how long?

BINDENAGEL: We left in November 1990, after German unification abolished the GDR and we closed our embassy. However, in March of 1989 the Communist Government of East Germany was still well entrenched, Erich Honecker was the Chairman of the Council of State (Staatsratsvorsitzender).

Soon after we arrived, I took my family to downtown East Berlin. My daughter, Annamarie, was eight years old at that time, and my son, Carl, was six. We went down to see the Berlin Wall from the eastern side of the Brandenburg Gate. Jean, my wife, my two kids and I were standing there trying to tell just what this Wall was. The Brandenburg Gate towered over the empty square – Pariser Platz. The sun was coming out from behind the ubiquitous clouds; it was absolutely gorgeous day. My daughter spotted a group of people standing on risers on the western side of the wall, peering across the Brandenburg Gate and looking our way. I recall she said: “What are they doing?” And I replied: “They are looking at us, we are a curiosity, we are like prisoners behind a wall. And they look at us, they know people here are not free.” Of course we were diplomats and we could leave, but East Germans weren’t. The kids were fascinated with the idea that we were among the prisoners.

We joined Maria Magdalena church in our Pankow neighborhood just down the street from our home at Platanenstrasse 93. Shortly after we joined the parish, first communion was celebrated and there were six or seven kids taking their first communion. A couple of the children were our children’s age and the four struck up a friendship. Our two asked the others how they felt about being prisoners. They explored the East Germans’ reasons for attending church, which they learned was tolerated but discouraged by the government. The kids who were confirmed in the Christian Church were taking not only vow for their Christian beliefs but they were also taking a vow that would exclude them from high school, exclude them from good jobs, university and certain careers. Christians were discriminated against by the communist government, which would not let them go to higher education, unless for some other reason, they had other connections. Our children were becoming politically aware as they explored this “communist” life that their new friends had.

Our children also played with another group of East German neighborhood children, who were not in the church. They played together until the Father came home, discovered our children in his apartment and demanded to know whose children they were. When he found out they were Americans he was extremely nervous because he could lose his job or be imprisoned for contacts with Westerners. Our kids left and we did not see the other two children until about two years later when we were leaving. They were still in the neighborhood, but obviously the Father was very concerned about being accused of connections with Americans. Those penalties imposed by the communists had a chilling effect that let a strong impression on all of us. That was our introduction as a family to this place of the communist paradise.

In addition, in front of our house we had People’s Policeman (Volkspolizist), who patrolled the block to check on our visitors. We also had a *Schwarze Pumpe* gas company man, who came into the house each day to check to see if the gas was working. Of course we recognized that the

telephones were bugged and that we were occasionally being trailed. It wasn't funny, but it was strange. We tried to accommodate ourselves to be aware of this new security context and how it affected our lives. We had a cook and a couple of household staff, all of whom either reported to the East German State Security, the Stasi, or were informal co-workers of the secret police. We were well covered in every aspect.

Q: During this period events started to take over, but around that time when you arrived, the GDR was unchangeable, was it solid?

BINDENAGEL: That was the conventional wisdom. If the Soviet Union was the "Evil Empire," the GDR was its heart. Reagan may have made some new openings as he did in June 1987 when he challenged Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall, but the view that East Germany was evil was still potent. Nevertheless, between Reagan's confrontation and Gorbachev's Glasnost and Perestroika, there was something in the air. Gorbachev had proposed restructuring the Soviet economy, Perestroika, and creating more openness in the society, Glasnost. I recall he gave a speech at the UN General Assembly, I don't remember the date exactly, comparing himself to Franklin Roosevelt. He praised Franklin Roosevelt for the reforms that he had made during the Great Depression that saved capitalism, and Gorbachev envisioned himself doing the same for communism. He would make this great reform and the socialist state would continue, reformed but it would last forever. Well, those two policies were opposed adamantly by Erich Honecker, who believed quite the opposite. If you began this process you would never maintain control, Honecker maintained and he defied Gorbachev. This defiance was done at great risk because the GDR was totally dependent on Gorbachev; in true sense it was a satellite of the Soviet Union. East Germany had no political legitimacy from its people; it was dependent on the military support of the Russians.

Q: Let's talk about... There was an Embassy at this point. Who was the Ambassador, and where were you located and how did you operate?

BINDENAGEL: The Embassy was on Neuestatische Kirchstrasse, two blocks North and East from the Brandenburg Gate, just around the corner from the Soviet Embassy, which was on Unter den Linden in sight of the Brandenburg Gate. The American Ambassador was Richard Barkley, I was DCM and Jon Greenwald was the Political Counselor. Reno Harnish was the Economics Officer and was later replaced by Mike Mozur. We had those six Foreign Service Officers and were a very small operation. Mary Rose Brandt was the Consular Officer, Gerry Werner was the Public Affairs Officer.

Q: When you arrived there, how did we deal with the GDR government?

BINDENAGEL: The Ambassador met with the members of the Politburo on an irregular basis. Jon Greenwald in the Political Section met with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs America Section that dealt with relations with the U.S. Beyond that there was very little official contact. We dealt with the dissidents and the church and we had a person, Emre Lipping, who was in charge of that portfolio and attended church meetings and gatherings of dissidents. The GDR even had officials, including State Secretary Gysi, in charge of church affairs. However, for us the GDR remained a "closed" society with little possibility for contacts.

Q: Were there other, British and French Embassies doing some of the same things you were doing?

BINDENAGEL: Very much the same thing. The German Permanent Representative from West Germany was doing somewhat different things; they were more deeply engaged in trying to find out what the society was doing. They also had many more resources and access because they were spending a lot of money in GDR.

Q: During this time were we not trying to open up and spend more money, I mean, was this time almost a watching brief would you say?

BINDENAGEL: It was very much a watching brief. We had Leipzig fair, which was still our main bilateral activity. We did have lot of commercial contacts with the East Germans. We had a congressional delegation that came in March shortly after I got there, headed by John LaFalce from Buffalo, New York. They had a good round of talks. We met with Egon Krenz, who was Honecker's deputy, Congressmen LaFalce met with several bankers and other kinds of economic people, we had some consular issues but they were very individualistic. Politically, we had dialogue on CSCE because they were a part of that process. But otherwise, we were more interested in what they were doing domestically. How would Honecker react to Gorbachev's moves? The SED, communist party, was planning a party convention in 1990; we thought there would be perhaps a leadership change in GDR. After President Bush had come into office in January, we had gone through a policy review regarding East Germany. In our deliberations, Jon Greenwald proposed the basic theme: "If the GDR would to change their policy and leadership perhaps then we could make some kind of opening to them." What could we do? We could intensify our trade relations, we could be more actively engaged with them on CSCE." That was our thinking in spring on 1989. These policy reviews were called in Washington "status quo plus." We weren't talking about any initiatives, or any other new policies with the GDR.

Q: What was our view of Honecker?

BINDENAGEL: We really didn't like the East German communist leader Erich Honecker. Honecker sought an invitation to the United States and had sent one of his ideologists, Otto Reinhold to Washington in 1988 when I was on the Canadian Desk. Reinhold was followed by Herman Axen, his foreign policy guru. Honecker badly wanted to have a visit with us to gain some legitimacy for his regime. We frankly had policy debates over whether we wanted anything to do with them. We demanded that they rescind their "shot to kill" order at the Berlin Wall, and to abolish minimum currency exchange requirements so that there would be more free flow of people, and a whole series of other policies. The Washington Post came out in the spring of '89 and had an interview with Honecker, which was his effort to go to Washington. He had been to Paris, he had been to Bonn, he was going to Holland, so the crowning event of his life and the legitimacy, was to go to the U.S. We just weren't interested.

Q: What about getting out and around?

BINDENAGEL: Getting out and around was no problem for us. We were not under any

restrictions for meeting people so Ambassador Barkley was out a lot, had plant visits and talked to local leaders and things. John Greenwald as well. As a traditional DCM, I stayed in Berlin most of the time myself running the operation, trying to give some coherence to what we were producing.

Q: What about life there? Shopping, and that sort of thing at that time? Meeting with the local people, shopkeepers, etc.

BINDENAGEL: East Berlin was a difficult place for American diplomats. In the first instance, the contact with East Germans was very limited. We had contact in our church and a few people from there are our veterinarian, a few people in the neighborhood who were curious but very leery, shop keepers are all communists, there is no contact there. The shopping itself in the GDR was pretty abysmal, particularly since we had access to West Berlin. But living in East Berlin and trying to contact people in East Berlin and then going to *Ku'dam* in West Berlin, and seeing this opulence and this wonderful success story of western society, made it very difficult to go back. Our colleagues in West Berlin, who were in the "Occupation" housing, lived in rather large houses, had all kinds of creature comforts of home, and a very nice lifestyle. In some sense, they took on the attributes of those who were the wealthy cousins and we were the poor cousins, living in the poor section of Berlin. There was a tension that existed between the two missions. You could say that we were tainted by our association with the communists. I would argue, although I can't prove it, that assignment to East Berlin had a negative affect on people's assignments in the bureau and on their careers afterward. The tension was such that many of us preferred not to go to West Berlin, only for some specific "Western" shopping or dining need.

I met regularly in West Berlin with the Minister from the German Permanent Representation Office, Joerg von Studnitz, and our French and British counterparts. We shared our conversations and exchanged notes on a regular basis on the developing revolution in the GDR. We sensed that that was the most important contribution that we could make, was by living there and whatever contact, limited as it was that we had, it was still more than anyone else had, and we could make that contribution to judgements.

Q: Will you tell about developments? We're talking about within months while you were there?

BINDENAGEL: Right. The process of political deterioration began to accelerate at the time that we came. Not that there is any cause and effect, we just showed up. The first event that became for us significant was the May 7 local elections. They had community elections on that day. I was very curious of how this would work. I was invited the night before the election by Walter Andruczyn, who was visiting East Berlin. He had served in East Berlin before and he had invited me to meet Thomas Krueger, a young East German who had put together some people to do poll watching at various districts the next day during this communal election in Berlin. What the Krueger group wanted to do was to cover enough of the polls to enable them at the end of the day when the local polls closed to confirm the numbers given by the authorities. No one doubted the outcome for the GDR "National List." When the poll watchers finished collecting all these numbers and compared them with what the official results were in the newspaper the next day, trouble began. I thought it seemed rather reasonable democratic action, but this was a totalitarian system and challenging or checking on the government was a rather risky thing to do. But it was

a fascinating night, listening to these stories to these young people.

I was so curious that the next day after church I said to my family: "Well let's go down to our polling place, and let's see what this election is all about." So we traipsed down to Blumenthalstrasse, the kindergarten that had been converted for the day into a polling place, walked in the door, Jean kind of looked around, kind of, "We're here, can we do this?" "Oh, sure:" I replied and we went inside. I took out my East German ID card and showed it to the person who was running the place. I said, "We're here, we're American diplomats, we live down the street, and we wanted to see how this election works. Can you take a couple of minutes and tell us?" They were quite shocked and surprised, and yet they were very friendly. There were three people sitting at the table and they said, "We have this book of registry, so when people come in and show us their ID card, and we check to see if they are on the registrar. Then we give them a ballot." Then the voters were to walk across the room to a table. As they walked across the room, they passed six or seven people sitting in front of them. Just sitting there. All you have to do is fold this ballot. On the ballot there was one list; there was nothing to check or anything, just the list. It was called the National List and had all the names of all parties, affiliations behind the individual candidates, but they had only one list. All you did was fold this, walk past these officials and drop it in the ballot box. Being a "fair" system, if you did not want to vote for somebody, you could go a little bit further, and turn left, and stop at a table. The table was private. It looked like they had taken an old door and cut it into three pieces so you could put it on the side so you could have a private vote and you could line through anybody you didn't like. And then fold up your ballot, drop it in the box, and walk out in front of the assembled panel. These people were, of course, all neighbors who knew the voters and would report you to the Stasi. I thought, this was a rather intimidating system, but fascinating. The next day the results were published. Not surprisingly, the national list received 98% of the vote. However, my new friends, the Thomas Krueger gang, announced that their tally didn't match the one of the government. It was only 85% or so in the districts they had watched, instead of 98%. Plenty to win, but not valid.

So began the process. Police came to visit them, they were harassed, some were arrested. They were not held in jail, but they were not free and this intimidation process began. They had challenged the GDR beyond the limits of toleration accepted by the GDR. The next step was for the GDR to just lay down the law. But then the events of May turned attention to China. Gorbachev visited China and he was going to talk about Glasnost and Perestroika in China where the democracy demonstrations on Tiananmen Square in Beijing had seized the world's attention. Gorbachev had to be taken in a back door to meet the Chinese leadership. Pictures flashed across the TV screen in the GDR as well, of how a communist government dealt with the demonstrators who went to the streets. By June 4, 1989 tanks rolled killing people, many were arrested. This Chinese repression of a "counterrevolution" obviously suited Honecker because the next day or a few days later he invited the Chinese Foreign Minister who was in Moscow to come to East Berlin. To send a very strong signal to the domestic population there: "If you guys fool around with us, you are counterrevolutionaries, we like the way Chinese treated their counterrevolutionaries." That threat became the discussion on the street of what was happening.

About the same time, there was another visitor to East Berlin. His name was Mengistu. He was from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. While he was in East Berlin there was a coup attempt against his

government in Addis Ababa. It failed. He went back to Ethiopia and the message that the GDR released in June was:

“You know, this coup attempt against this communist leader failed because he had 150 East German Stasi security specialists. If any of you in the Central Committee decide me, I, Honecker, should not be your leader anymore, remember, I have Stasi, I have my state security people. Don’t fool with me.”

So there we had two examples of the budding revolutionary debate. I mean, hindsight is much clearer. At that time in fact I came back to Washington for a visit and had dinner with former Berlin Governing Mayor Eberhard Diepgen here in Washington at a German Embassy Officer’s home. We talked about this very thing. He had been the mayor of West Berlin. He just lost the mayor’s job in January to SPD leader Mr. [Walter] Momper, who was the West Berlin mayor in 1989-1990. We chatted about the situation in East Germany and he agreed that the impending crisis in East German was threatening.

In the summer Honecker went to the meeting of Warsaw Pact in Romania, got sick, and came back for medical treatment. The thought in the government was: “Okay, maybe we won’t have to have a counterrevolutionary movement; maybe the threat will just go away.” Honecker left Günther Mittag in charge. Günther Mittag was an old-line communist but he was “acting” so he didn’t have the same kind of authority as Honecker. However, to keep the threat against the counterrevolutionaries strong, Honecker sent Egon Krenz, his likely successor to China to reinforce the message that the GDR would treat challenges to the SED the same way that the Chinese had on Tiananmen Square.

During that summer, one event captured the debate for us. The same East German protector of the communist ideology and who had been in Washington in 1988 clearing the way for a Honecker visit, Otto Reinhold, spoke to the counterrevolutionary issue on his August 1989 radio-show. On the radio-show he would normally give ideological announcements and arguments for debate. In August 1989, he proposed a rhetorical question addressing both Gorbachev’s Perestroika and those who wished for West German-like economic reform (and prosperity) when he said: “What reason would a capitalist East Germany have to exist next to a capitalist West Germany?” The answer was easy. None, of course, and therefore Reinhold went on to argue that they would have to remain communist. However, his question was more penetrating than at first noticed. Well, if you frame a question like that, you can just stop with the ‘none’, because there is no reason for the GDR to exist if it were to be capitalist (and prosperous). Therefore the question became: “Well, should we be capitalist or not?” So Reinhold promoted that debate about the capitalist future of the GDR that became the center of attention.

Q: You talk about the center of attention. Were you finding through one source or another that East Germans were talking about this?

BINDENAGEL: This was not a national movement. Very few individuals dared to challenge the East German Authorities. Those that were, were the people like Thomas Krueger, and Ruth and Hans Misselwitz. Ruth Misselwitz was the Lutheran minister in the Pankow Lutheran church. Her husband had visited Washington in 1988 and I met him during his year-long

exchange with the Lutheran Church. Their children and his wife were not allowed to leave the country and that deeply impressed me. They were brave enough to talk about the repression in the GDR. Ruth is one of the most impressive revolutionaries that I met during this period. As they moved through this debate, it was really only a small elite that was actively resisting. But the point was we were on the ground hearing that something was going on, and we wanted to know what how they would challenge the East German government.

At the same time, obviously somewhere outside of where we were in our little world, the debate was what's happening in Eastern Europe, there's change, the Washington Post and Herald Tribune ran an editorial in August 1989, which stated the conventional wisdom. If the Soviet Union were to intervene anywhere to defend its interests it would be in the GDR. And they are willing to do act to defend their interests. That's what we believed, that's what we've been taught for all of our cold war experience and that was the framework. If the Soviets were to intervene then we would be facing a confrontation and such a confrontation, if you follow the cold war thinking, would lead to an uprising in the GDR, followed by the Soviet Union crushing the dissidents and then attacking the West. That was the worst case scenario, but that was the game plan for the World War III, that I could attest from my Army experience. That scenario was the context for the fledgling revolution in East Germany.

That revolution began with a few demonstrations that had also been a part of this anti-nuclear, anti-missile deployment protests in West Berlin. One major effort was undertaken by a Lutheran Pastor, Christian Führer, from the Nikolai Church in Leipzig. Führer had begun a protest movement, sanctioned by the GDR in the early 1980s, to fight the deployment of the U.S. neutron bomb back in 1978. He was only able to continue in this little circle with the encouragement or at least tacit support of GDR, which was given because Führer's group was anti-Western. As the debate evolved through the deployment and withdrawal of the Neutron Bomb and then turned against the deployment of U.S. Pershing missiles. This little group also transformed and began to question the SS-4 Soviet short-range missiles in Germany as well as the SS-23. As the debates against the deployment the GDR reached out in 1989, Gorbachev had nearly four years of the new policy changes in the Soviet Union, Glasnost and Perestroika. The East German protest movement used Glasnost to protest without confrontation. Demonstrations at Nikolai Kirche in Leipzig became the focal point of demonstrations every Monday night to speak out for peace for freedom of travel guaranteed by the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. Every Monday night at six o'clock, at 5 o'clock they would have a vigil, which grew in intensity as the GDR arrested some of the protesters. The vigil added a plea for their release. After the vigil the protestors would march outside, careful to talk about renewal of the GDR, not revolution.

Q: While they were doing this were you all sort of taking soundings and including help from our intelligence sources, finding out what was going? I mean, did you have any feel for the ferment from intelligence source or from personal Embassy observations?

BINDENAGEL: Yes, we had a sense that much was changing. We had Embassy officers, secretaries and visitors in Leipzig to watch the demonstrations and to talk to the demonstrators. Imre Lipping was our man in Leipzig and he reported that the demonstrators were very serious. However, their theme was renewal of the GDR. They didn't want to talk about revolution because that would lead to accusations they were counter-revolutionaries and they would face

certain arrest, even death as in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. The demonstrators told us that one Monday the husband would participate in the demonstration and his wife would stay at home with the children. The following week the wife would go to the demonstration and the husband stayed at home. The fear they felt was intense; they feared for their lives. This fear was real, although it was not a subject covered much in the press.

The demonstrations seemed to be peaceful, but the question was always when do the security forces move against them and crush them, because at that moment of truth there was only one historical example in East German history – June 17, 1953 when Soviet tanks rolled and crushed a worker's uprising. A few hundred to few thousand people participated in the September 1989 Leipzig Monday night demonstrations. The focal point of political events swayed between Leipzig and Berlin where Honecker prepared for the 40th anniversary of the GDR. Soviet President Gorbachev was coming to Berlin on the 6th of October to celebrate East Germany's 40th anniversary. We assumed that Gorbachev would demand Honecker accept Glasnost and Perestroika or would not endorse Honecker as East Germany's leader, which would signal the beginning of change of leadership. We had this discussion in the Embassy, Jon Greenwald was looking at the party itself, and saying, "They know that Honecker's time is coming to an end, and he is opposed to Glasnost and Perestroika." Jon asked if Gorbachev would give him a nudge and make way for the next generation. Gorbachev wanted Hans Modrow to be his man because Modrow was close to Gorbachev and believed in Glasnost and Perestroika. Honecker knew this relationship was threatening to him and didn't want Modrow anywhere near Berlin. He kept him in Dresden as the SED leader there, away from the Central Committee and the Politburo. Honecker knew if Modrow were in the Politburo, Gorbachev would have his man in place to follow Honecker and proceed with the renewal of the GDR. This internal battle was very intense and all eyes turned to Gorbachev's visit as the determining event in the life of the GDR, which also reflected our view that East Germany was not legitimate; that it existed because the Soviets supported it.

The 40th anniversary of the GDR became the demarcation between continuation or renewal of the GDR and revolution. That summer young East Germans headed off on vacation to Hungary with the intent of never returning. The Hungarians had clipped the wire off the Iron Curtain in May, and by July or August there were several hundred GDR citizens in Hungary. Ambassador Barkley and I went to have coffee with Wolfgang Vogel at his modest lakeside cottage. Wolfgang Vogel was Honecker's lawyer and had negotiated spy exchanges. He had worked with Ambassador Barkley when I was in Bonn as one of Barkley's political officer. He was famous for the exchange of U-2 pilot Gary Powers, who was shot down over the Soviet Union, and for the freedom on Nathan Sharansky as well as dozens of other dissidents and spies. That August we asked him about the East Germans who were caught in Hungary. He understood that the Hungarians had signed back to the UN Convention on Refugees, which had meant that they would not return people fleeing from communism if they said they were refugees. This was significant because the Warsaw Pact required the Hungarians to return the fleeing East Germans. We reasoned that if Honecker's lawyer knew that this issue was there, he knew that his boss Honecker had a problem keeping his youth in country. The Hungarians did just what I would argue Gorbachev wanted them to do; they acted independently to support Glasnost and Perestroika. They could be more open and reformed, but still communist. They didn't need to fear these young people and could tweak Honecker's rejection of Glasnost. The Hungarian action

had nothing to do with the West in my view, it had everything to do with Gorbachev and Glasnost and Perestroika. Although I must add that German Foreign Minister Genscher was astute and exploited the situation to get the East Germans out; the East Germans were immediately eligible for West German citizenship. In any case, the Hungarians let these young East Germans go and they arrived in Bergenland, Austria with some fanfare. The Hungarians obviously, with hindsight, underestimated what releasing these people would release in political fallout. They didn't make it clear that they were making a statement in support of Glasnost and against Honecker's recalcitrance, they just let these people go and signaled their support for freedom of travel.

Q: I take it Honecker at this point was sort of an anachronism with in the Block? He was the worst figure as far as people, he had no popularity...?

BINDENAGEL: That's right. He and the Czech leader were the two pro-Stalinist leaders still resisting Glasnost. They were the two stalwarts to Stalinism, and Gorbachev had to encourage them to go. The Hungarians led the way by doing accepting Glasnost and that had encouraged everybody. In the back of our minds we knew that the Poles had begun the revolution in 1980 with Solidarity. The East Germans, and there were million East Germans who had signed up to immigrate, started to pour over the Hungarian and Czechoslovakian borders. On October 3rd, just before the 40th anniversary the GDR closed their border. That is they had a visa requirement for Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The U.S. Embassy in East Berlin was immediately affected on the night of the 3rd of October. During the day 18 people were leaving the GDR and were turned back at the border because they didn't have visas. They didn't go home however, they arrived in Berlin and went to the Permanent Representation Office of West Germany seeking to emigrate. The West German Mission had been closed since July 1989 because over 100 refugees had sought the same route to freedom and it took my friend Joerg von Studnitz months to win exit visas for them. On October 3 these new group turned to the American Embassy. They arrived at the American Embassy late in the day, and knocked on the door. A consul came out to meet them and said: "What are you doing?" As he opened the door they rushed in and the moment was captured on television. There were five children under five and 13 adults. They told us that they wanted out of the GDR because they knew that after the 40th anniversary the security forces would crush them and they would never get out of East Germany. They feared that the American embassy was their only chance to flee after being turned back at the border. I reported to Ambassador Barkley and he immediately called Wolfgang Vogel to inform him that we had these people in the U.S. Embassy. He asked for some assistance and told Vogel that he thought it appropriate that they leave. Working with Mary Rose Brandt, the Consul General, we got their names and their identification, and Mary Rose Brandt took the names to Vogel's office in the Reilerstrasse. Vogel went through the process of getting approval from the Stasi and Honecker. The East Germans stayed overnight in the front hall outside the "hardline" we used for security. We went shopping for them to get some food and took care of them.

At the same time outside the Embassy and around in East Berlin were 60 or 70 TV crews preparing for 40th anniversary with nothing to do. We didn't think that they could see inside the building but we didn't know. In the morning there was a news report that there were these people in the Embassy.

Q: Whose news?

BINDENAGEL: German, but it didn't matter. It was a West Berlin news service. I think what happened there was a journalist inside. As I came down I recall a journalist sitting inside the lobby, who didn't say anything and left. The next day we had the spotlight of the world turned on us. Suddenly we had 200 people outside the Embassy trying to get in. The building itself was an old building, which was built in the 1880s. After the Second World War it had been the home of East German craftsman guild; we had taken it over in 1974 when we established diplomatic relations with East Germany. The front door was cut from a wooden frame in the center archway and it was very unstable. Although we had asked the State Department for money to replace it with something more stable, we had to live with the shaky portal. The refugees were between this wobbly door and the hard line security parameter, which they obviously could not pass. We had no choice but to keep them in the very front entry where this door could actually fall on them, if it came to a confrontation.

In the morning two hundred people converged on the embassy and stood outside our door. I went out in the late morning to Vogel's office and he gave me this pad of little pieces of paper with his signature on it, and name of each of the fleeing East Germans, which was their free pass to get out.

Then when I returned to the Embassy to give out the passes, the question became whether we could convince these people that this slip of paper was real. By about 3 o'clock in the afternoon or even earlier, the 200 people outside were getting restless, and they were right up against the building. As DCM, I took one of the most difficult decisions and called the East German Foreign Office and I said, "We need to maintain the access to the building, could you have the demonstrators move on the other side of the street? We don't want you to disperse them, it's fine that they demonstrate, but we need access, we can't get access." I knew the danger of that decision when they loved that idea that the Americans asked for the Volkspolizei to move against East Germans. They ordered in the Volkspolizei to come and force the 200 people back across the street, but still in front of the embassy.

As the "Vopos [German guards]" were moving the crowd, a woman sat down on the sidewalk with her kids. The Vopos returned for her, picked her up and put her on the back of a police truck. The whole scene was eerily reminiscent of the Nazis and the transports during the Holocaust. The entire event was filmed by TV crews and was shown immediately on television, including CNN. I was inside the chancery building so I couldn't see what was going on outside, nor was I watching television so I couldn't see what was showing on television, but the TV crews covered all angles. We still had the eighteen fleeing Germans to set free with their Vogel exit passes and could not open the doors without expecting a rush from the still assembled demonstrators across the street. About 4 o'clock, I decided that we had to close the embassy for the day. I told Ambassador Barkley: "What we really need to do is close the Embassy and people would perhaps go home so we could get these 18 people out." Well, the word that we were closing reached the demonstrators outside of the building and also the television crews, which reported immediately and surprised the State Department. Jim Dobbins, the European Bureau Deputy Assistant Secretary called before I could get from the front door to my office. He was

outraged and irate. Apparently, he had just heard it from the Secretary's office and they were yelling at him, and he was yelling at me. They assumed that we were closing the embassy permanently, as the West Germans had done earlier and to do so needed a decision by the State Department. I explained dangers of the door, the crowd of demonstrators seeking to force their way into the embassy and tried to reassure him. I said: "Jim, it's 4 o'clock, we'll be open tomorrow, we're not closing like the West German mission, we just need to provided for the safety of these people we are helping to flee East Germany..." He was still not happy, but given assurance that we were just closing early for the day and not permanently shutting, he reluctantly accepted my report. We wanted to maintain an open Embassy and had no argument with Washington. Ambassador Barkley also went back to Vogel and asked him to take into consideration any of the demonstrators who also applied for exit visas and asked that they be treated favorably. Vogel gave us assurances that the message would be delivered and told Barkley that he had already identified the woman and children, who were loaded on the police truck to get them exit visas. After we closed for the day, we were able to let the East Germans out without incident as they made their way to West Berlin and freedom. That facilitation was the kind of role we could play in this revolution.

Q: When you say you got them out, what did you do?

BINDENAGEL: We just opened the door, they had decide for themselves to walk out on their own. We were not going to force anybody out. We had to convince them that what we had done was legitimate. Wolfgang Vogel called and he talked directly to them, explaining that they had to believe in this piece of paper and that voice on the phone (Vogel's) had negotiated a free passage for themselves and their husbands and wives.

Q: Did somebody go with them to see if they got out?

BINDENAGEL: No, we didn't, but we had no feedback; they either left or they were happy. However, for us the issue was not to repeat an earlier incident in the same embassy when a fleeing East German was turned away and immediately arrested by the East German police. Not repeating that nightmare was always the question for us. We would not expel people from the Embassy, nor could we give them asylum nor could we guarantee their immigration. We could only act as a facilitator between them and the GDR government, in this case with Wolfgang Vogel. We had found Wolfgang Vogel over the many years we dealt with him a very honest, straightforward man, even if he was dealing with the devil as Erich Honecker's lawyer. Vogel was still a respected person.

Q: And they got out?

BINDENAGEL: They got out. I know some of them got out and I assume the rest of them did too.

Q: Then what happened?

BINDENAGEL: By then we were already noticing that the revolution was like a video flashing before our eyes, all the demonstrations and activities had been set on fast forward and the

revolution was going 24 hours a day. It became very hard for us to keep up with all of these events that kept occurring. The next big event was the Fortieth Anniversary of the German Democratic Republic when Honecker would receive Soviet President Gorbachev in East Berlin. Barkley was invited to a State Dinner for Gorbachev and other communist dignitaries like Nicaraguan Daniel Ortega and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. The communists all came.

Honecker had a torchlight parade - Fackelzug - that evening on the 7th. The embassy staff was in the Embassy and gathered there in the Political Section with Political Counselor Jon Greenwald. On the street the Free Democratic East German Youth (FDJ), wearing their blue shirts and carrying torches, marched in a torch light parade. Like Hitler's Jugend, the FDJ marched by the Brandenburg gate. They marched around the Embassy, beginning at their assembly point behind the Embassy at the Metropole Hotel. Once their torches were lit, they marched in front of the Embassy turned left and marched down Unter den Linden where Honecker was standing on risers in front of the Kronprinzenpalais. Honecker was glassy-eyed, kind of aged, with his almost mechanical arm waving at them. The FDJ looked happy and cheerful as they marched. Whether they were acting or really having fun, it was hard to tell. The torches were impressive and it looked like there were hundreds of thousands of them. Actually, maybe ten thousand that were marching around but in a circle repeatedly around the U.S. Embassy. What was terror under Hitler seemed to be a farce under Honecker; the Fackelzug evoked mixed emotions.

The mood in East Berlin that night was very eerie, and it was at that evening that Honecker and Gorbachev met. Even the message that came out of that meeting was a riddle. We understood that Gorbachev had said to Honecker: "Those who come too late will be punished by history." What does this mean? We could only assume that it meant that either Honecker changed and took Glasnost and Perestroika, or he would be punished and be over. Gorbachev then went into the streets and had some interviews that were shown on television. In theory these were real East Germans talking to him, I doubted it. The questions Gorbachev was asked about the problems in the GDR. His comment that he wished the Soviets had East German difficulties later appeared on television, so I'm sure it was all staged. His message was delivered and he left.

The minute he left that evening on 7th of October there was a demonstration at the Gethsemane Church, which was between my house and the Embassy. As I drove home that evening about 8 o'clock, the demonstrators blocked the street. The church is one block back from the Schöenhauserallee and the demonstrators, who were numbered thousands had poured out into that street. I stopped, because I couldn't get through, rolled down my window and asked what was going on. As I chatted with some of these demonstrators, I learned of their fears of a crackdown by the East Germans now that Gorbachev was gone. After they moved aside, I drove home.

During that night the people's police moved against these demonstrators, they had trucks with big shovels in the front, they had dogs, they arrested about a thousand people. They took them to various staging areas just as the East Germans thought it would happen. They were interrogated, they were mistreated, no one was killed, but the stage was set. People understood that the crunch was coming. This was now the time for the security forces to confront the demonstrators and take the Chinese solution. So tensions rose dramatically.

The previous Sunday at our church, Maria Magdalena in Pankow, the priest at the end of the service said there would be gathering of the members of the parish to talk about the debate over

the “renewal of the GDR,” code words for what was to become the revolution. After that Saturday night, the 7th of October events could not be contained even with Catholic Church discussions for peaceful action of renewal. On the 8th of October I took my family to church. At the end of that church service the pastor said, “The mass has ended and you can go, but a member of the parish would like to read a letter.” There had been a discussion out in the church circles that they needed to take action (Catholics, unlike the Lutherans, were not politically active in the GDR). Writing a letter seemed to be a reasonable, not provocative thing to do. No one left the church. This parishioner got up and in front of the church and said: “We met, we talked about the renewal of our country and what we needed to do. We decided we would write this letter to head of the People’s Chamber, Volkskammer, the parliament. They are supposed to be representing us. We wrote this letter. ‘Dear Mr. Sinderman...’” He went on and said something like, “We demand the separation of the SED, the East German Communist Party, from the government, we demand SED out of our schools, we demand the right to pursue our religion.” I was thinking: “This is like St. Paul’s Cathedral in Frankfurt in 1848. This is serious. This man is declaring himself and anybody who signs this as an enemy of the East Germans. He brought the letter to the back of the church and he said, ‘I don’t want any scribbling, I want to be able to read your name and address.’” A lot of people, but not everyone, signed it. Then they went outside to the courtyard around the church and now they didn’t know what to do. They knew they would be reported on by their friends and neighbors and expected visits by the Stasi. Slowly they got their courage and they walked outside of their church. And nothing happened to them.

On Monday night, October 9, 1989 there were protest vigils at the Gethsemane Church in Berlin, and as always in Leipzig and Dresden as well as other places around the country. The vigil at the Gethsemane Church was one at the same church that had been attacked by the police on Saturday night. The Maria Magdalena parishioner went to the Gethsemane Church. I’m told that he got up and said, “We are with you.” He was a Catholic and Catholics were renown for not being political at all and for tolerating all, while the Protestants had fought for their role in the society to some degree of success or not. He said, “We join with you in this effort.”

Such vigils after October 7, and reports like this, whether this report was totally accurate or not, signaled the change from renewal to revolution, although honestly we did not yet see what would come out of this mess. There was unity among the dissidents after the attacks by the police on October 7 as well as the sense that confrontation was coming and would end in a very unpleasant way. There seemed to be no alternative, and the dissidents had to stick to what they believed in. On Monday, the focus turned to Leipzig. The demonstration in Leipzig on October 9, 1989 was the largest. In the month of September the numbers went from a few thousand, to tens of thousands, to hundreds of thousands. On October 9th we really feared that now there would be a confrontation. The six leading figures from the community met in the afternoon, among them were Kurt Mazur, the director of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, who currently today is the director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Kurt Mazur, the SED East German Secretary for Leipzig, a cabaretist, a couple of communists and police representatives set down at a table to discuss what they could do. They really didn’t have authority from Berlin to do anything because they had to get from Berlin permission to prevent the demonstration. However, if the situation got out of hand the Volkspolizei would intervene and Honecker’s counter-revolutionaries would be put down first in Leipzig on October 9th. The risks confrontation were known knew already

on October 3rd, when the GDR imposed a visa requirement on East Germans traveling to Czechoslovakia or Hungary. The SED was greatly embarrassed by the trainload of East German “refugees,” who had been released from the West German Embassy in Prague. The Honecker regime demanded that the train pass through East Germany and the Germans get papers from the GDR as they went to Hof in West Germany. The train was blocked in Dresden and there had been a confrontation in Dresden at the train station. Police used tear gas and clubs to clear the tracks to move away other East Germans wanting to get on the train. All sides were very much on a verge of a violent confrontation.

The six men gathered in Leipzig on the afternoon of October 9 decided they needed to act. Kurt Mazur agreed to make a statement, which he would tape on a little cassette and would allow it to be played on the radio. The others would not stop it from being played. What is still not clear in my mind, because we were not there, was whether or not police agreed, tolerated, or simply ignored the plan to broadcast the Mazur message calling for no violence. The tape was played shortly before the Nikolaikirche vigil that evening. The tape basically said “demonstrate, no violence.” Unstated was “the police will not do violence against you.” As a result a huge demonstration occurred with perhaps one hundred and fifty thousand people, who marched around the center ring of Leipzig. There was no serious, violent confrontation, although there were some isolated confrontations on the fringes.

Then the crises moved from the street back to the SED and the Central Committee and back into the Politburo. That week Honecker demanded that the counter-revolutionary acts had to cease. The next week in Leipzig the demonstration numbers doubled and two days later, on Wednesday the 18th, Honecker was deposed.

At that point the focus was totally on the Politburo. Egon Krenz took over from Honecker, who was deposed. I was in my office speaking with a journalist from the Wall Street Journal when I received the call that Honecker was deposed. I noted the change to the journalist, who reported it without attribution. Ambassador Barkley was at the barber and I reached him during his haircut. We hurriedly tried to determine the meaning of the change in the Politburo.

Egon Krenz we noted did not fire all members of the Honecker Politburo, he got rid of only half of them. We determined that he already immediately didn’t have any credibility with the man in the street. Then the focus began in that Politburo to seek to establish legitimacy and get the people with them. They were nervous about the demonstrations, dissident activity and so many youth escaping their paradise. We as well as they were focused on how the SED would address the concerns of the people out on the street who wanted the freedom to travel. The idea created by the Politburo was to revise the travel law allowing more travel with the hope that changes would take care of the question of the refugees and so forth. On the 6th of November, the GDR announced a revised travel law in their newspaper, *Neues Deutschland*. At the same time the Premier, their head of government, Willie Stoff, resigned, and became acting, interim Premier.

Ambassador Barkley came into the Embassy briefing that morning and asked what was going on. It seemed that he couldn’t get to the embassy because there were demonstrations. He wanted to know what was going on. It was a fascinating staff meeting. Jon Greenwald and I were already chatting and Jon reported that the SED had changed the travel law, and that they had really

liberalized the travel regime. He was certain they were trying to make travel a reality. We set out to find out what the demonstrations were about during the day. We were surprised to see that the people rejected the changes to the travel law as too little, too late. The dissidents were emboldened by what they had achieved. They had rid the GDR of Honecker; however, they now had this weak guy Krenz, whose government moved to change the travel law but they didn't like it. They wanted more. This of course caused panic in the SED and the Politburo met again on the 9th. It was the day to consider among other things more changes to the travel law.

That afternoon I went out to Aspen Institute in West Berlin for a reception, in honor of Hildegard Boucsein, who David Anderson had been chosen as his deputy director. David was a retired Foreign Service Officer, and former U.S. Ambassador to Yugoslavia. He hosted this reception for his deputy, and everyone came. There were mayors of East Berlin, West Berlin, there were all the military commanders from the West, all the political leaders. It was clear later to all of us that nobody had an inkling of what was about to occur that evening. At the end of the reception Wolfgang Vogel asked if I could give him a ride downtown to his car which was in central Berlin, so I said "Of course." We drove together to the Ku'dam and on our way to get his car he told me about the GDR lawyers collegium. They had met that day and recommended to the Politburo changes to the travel law that would resolve this confrontation and help get the process back on track. I dropped him off on the Invalidenstrasse, where he told me later he had gone across there in 1961 and saw Soviet tanks stationed as the Berlin Wall was built. On November 9, 1989 he had crossed to see Trabants lined up and demonstrators already gathering.

Q: Trabants being?

BINDENAGEL: The little East German car, two-cycled car made of plasticized pressed wood, with a little lawn-mower-like engine that spewed out a mixture of gasoline and oil. It was the symbol of the economy. It worked but you wouldn't want to have one. I went back into the Embassy with my hot news to find Jon Greenwald and his crew excited. They just heard an announcement by East German [Guenther] Schabowski, who had said something like "If you want to go to the West, you get the visa and you can go to the West. If you want to immigrate, the GDR will set up a new office to process immigration immediately." Jon said: "This announcement is unbelievable as well as the changes from the last couple of days." Jon sent Imre Lipping, a political officer, out to find out the text of the Schabowski announcement at the press center. He sent Heather Troutman, another political officer, out to Checkpoint Charlie to see what was happening. In the next hour or two we watched the second broadcast of this statement by Schabowski on the eight o'clock West German news, Tagesspiegel. Jon got the text and sent a cable immediately with the text. We called the Operations Center and the White House Situation Room to try to make sure they got the cable. I talked to Harry Gilmore who was the U.S. Minister in West Berlin and basically said "Harry, looks like you are going to have a lot of visitors soon, but we are not sure what it looks like, probably tomorrow or the next day when they start issuing visas."

As I drove up Schönhauserallee in East Berlin to Bornholmerstrasse, which is a checkpoint across the Berlin Wall where my children went from East Berlin to school in West Berlin, I saw Trabant automobiles parked haphazardly around the streets and a group of people standing in front of the gate. I heard them saying something, but I couldn't understand exactly what it was

they were yelling. I decided that I could watch them on television. I saw on the other side of the Wall a television crew with its lights on. I thought I could probably see this on television and besides I needed to get to a telephone. As soon as I arrived home around 10:00 pm, I got on the telephone and obviously made noise as I turned on the television. Jean, my wife, came in and said, "What are you doing?" I told her that something was going on at the Wall and we had to find out what was going on. She was concerned that our kids were sleeping, but I told her we had to do this as the Berlin Wall was being besieged. I called Ambassador Barkley and told him to turn on his television. He was incredulous and I told him he would not believe what was happening. I called Harry Gilmore to revise my earlier statements. I said, "Harry, remember I told you that you would go to be seeing lots of visitors maybe in the next few days. Well, they might be tonight. It looks like things are going to break loose, we don't know how it will happen."

We watched the TV, we saw those first people go through the Wall. We saw the lights come on in the neighborhood, we spent several hours talking, coordinating, it seemed to be going peacefully. I got a couple of hours of sleep, woke up my kids because they had to go to school. I put them put Annamarie, my daughter in the car with two other kids with some trepidation. I decided to drive behind them in my personal car to the same Bornholmerstrasse checkpoint. When we arrived, there were people everywhere at seven o'clock in the morning. There were people going back and forth, and yet they were very nice. They saw the red diplomatic license plate that indicated a diplomatic car that carried Annamarie, they moved aside and let her through. As she drove off through the Bornholmerstrasse into West Berlin, I said to myself: "Well, there she goes. Will I see her again? What's going on here?"

Shortly afterward, the GDR announced that their visa requirement, which had not been imposed overnight, would be required as of eight o'clock in the morning. I stayed at the checkpoint watching people coming back and forth. About 20 minutes to eight, there was a huge influx of people coming down the street to try to get across into West Berlin before the eight o'clock deadline for visas. When eight o'clock came the people were still everywhere, and in order to avoid a confrontation, the visa requirement time was moved to noon.

I went to the office, went through all of the activities we were doing. At noon the deadline was moved to Monday, and for us, the Berlin Wall had, as we had reported earlier, become irrelevant. The Wall had not only become irrelevant, the East German government had become irrelevant. They lost the authority of government to do basic things like issue visas. They had no control over that crucial aspect of their authority. The Soviets didn't intervene. We thought they would do something. They were clearly taken by surprise as East German government was taken by surprise what had occurred.

But that wasn't the end of the story. For weeks I tried to figure out who gave the order, why did they do this? We asked guards, we asked individuals, nobody had seemed to have given an order. I had been at Bornholmerstrasse, a checkpoint that was on a bridge over the S-Bahn train tracks and it had two or three police barracks in it. Driving across the checkpoint, I had seen that these barracks were filled with soldiers with rifles. I'd seen fire-hoses laid out next to these barracks in preparation to spray against people. The hoses were used on people as we saw on television at the Brandenburg Gate. I couldn't figure out what was happening. A couple of months later, Jean and I were over having coffee with some of the people from the church where we were, and we

were talking about his story. One of them got up and said, “Would you like to know what happened?” I said, “Of course, I want to know, I can’t figure this out.” This person went and got his East German identification card, which is a billfold-like picture passport. I opened it up and on one side there is a picture and on the other side is his name and date of birth. On the picture the guard at Bornholmerstrasse, where this person had been that night, had stamped across the picture an exit visa, making the ID invalid. He was thrown out! They expelled the first hundred or so people who were standing there that I had seen there that night. They threw them out and were intending to close the gate area to avoid a confrontation. Getting rid of the first demonstrators by expulsion was an expedient solution. But what went wrong?

What went wrong was on the other side of the street when they got through the gate was this guy with the camera. The camera team was from Spiegel Television I learned later, in fact several years later in Hamburg. I was telling the same story when Steven Aust of Spiegel stopped me before I said what I have just said and told me, “Would you like to know what happened,” and I said “Yes.” He told the same story. His TV crew was waiting on the other side, they filmed these people, they didn’t ask if they were expelled, they just filmed them. But then they went back after having collected these films and interviewed the guards and some of the people and had found that these people were indeed expelled.

The beauty of the multi-media world that we live in, the only thing that was in public domain was all these people were free. That’s why all the lights came on in the neighborhood, because they saw on television all these people were going and they got up and took the only chance they had for freedom. They knew the GDR would not give them visas, and decided to go on their own. When the visa requirement gave them the window. They poured into West Berlin, thinking it was over, that was the only chance they were getting. People were driving from miles outside Berlin to get there in time to go across because they thought it was the only chance in their life they would have to go to Berlin. And it was because the television only reported what they had seen and not the facts, and good that they didn’t in this case.

[Note: I would like to add my written recollections on the night the Berlin Wall fell, as contained in a speech I delivered at the University of Notre Dame on the Tenth Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall.]

The Fall of the Berlin Wall, Heroes of Bornholmerstrasse November 9, 1989

The Birth of the Berlin Republic

*A speech by Ambassador J.D. Bindenagel
former Deputy U.S. Ambassador to the German Democratic Republic*

Thank you, Professor Wegs, for the invitation to speak at the Nanovic Center for European Affairs. It is a rare pleasure for a practitioner of diplomacy to step back from the intense pressure of instant analysis and reflect on some of the implications of today’s politics on the ideas that shape our lives.

The major conflict of ideas that has shaped my career was the East-West confrontation between capitalism and communism. In fact, I have spent a majority of my professional career defending

freedom from the communist threat. The symbolic vortex of that conflict was at the Fulda Gap in Germany, where a million soldiers from NATO were lined up against a million soldiers from the Warsaw Pact ready to destroy the world. I myself was an infantry officer in Wuerzburg, Germany, near the Fulda Gap, this main Soviet invasion route across Central Europe.

Recently, a friend of mine, Major General Bruce Scott, recounted his briefing to newly commissioned army officers in this post-cold war world. General Scott was somewhat uncertain whether these new officers knew about the significance of the Fulda Gap, or even whether they knew if the Fulda Gap existed. When he voiced his concern in his briefing, a young lieutenant responded that he had just returned from a visit to Fulda, Germany, where they had built a new shopping center and he could assure the General that there was a Gap there. He had shopped there himself. How times have changed.

The division of Germany, Europe and the world into two fundamentally opposed ideologies prepared to destroy the world seems so distant, but the fear-filled emotion of the division of Europe in the Cold War has left lasting legacy for us. The division of Berlin, symbolized by the Berlin Wall, was for us a deeply terrorizing reminder of man's inhumanity to man.

During the first year of the Berlin Wall more than 50 people died trying to escape the communist paradise. On August 17, 1962, 18-year-old East Berliner Peter Fechter tried to escape near Checkpoint Charlie. As he climbed the Wall, his own East German border guards shot him. For hours he lay helpless and unattended at the foot of the Berlin Wall while he bled to death. The worldwide rejoicing at the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989 was easily understood everywhere as an end to this affront to the dignity of human beings everywhere. Throughout its 28-year existence, the Berlin Wall divided, but did not conquer the spirit of the Germans in the German Democratic Republic. The end of the Berlin Wall brought a new, reborn Germany – the Berlin Republic – dedicated to human dignity, founded in democratic institutions of the Bonn Republic and the democratic revolution in East Germany.

I was the deputy American ambassador in East Berlin when the Berlin Wall was breached. Later I was country director for Germany in the State Department and then deputy and acting American Ambassador in the Berlin Republic. The question most asked over the past decade was and is; "What is the Berlin Republic?" The following question was inevitably; "What does this new Germany, the Berlin Republic, mean to the United States?"

Although the revolution of 1989 was the last act in the cold war, no hot war ensued. Now the Berlin Republic has begun to take its rightful place in Europe; recently Chancellor Schroeder described it as a major European power. Germany has undoubtedly become a major European power deploying its military forces in combat alongside its NATO allies for the first time since World War II and modernizing its economy to compete globally. I would like to explore with you today my observations on the Berlin Republic and its implications for German-American relations.

The future of our relations with Germany depends on our shared values, our shared interests and our common solutions to issues in European security, economic reform and global issues.

Founding Myths of the Berlin Republic

In order to analyze these issues, I would like to turn to some of the founding myths of the Berlin Republic.

The political culture inherited by the Berlin Republic is one of continuity and discontinuity. The Federal Republic's Basic law, created fifty years ago, embodies the country's continuity in democratic institutions from the Bonn Republic. The Democratic Revolution of 1989 led to the democratic government in 1990 that ended the German Democratic Republic and swept away most of the East German institutions – political, social and economic – only the political party of the East, the re-christened Socialist Unity Party, now the Party of Democratic Socialism, has remained.

The common commitment to core values of freedom, as demonstrated by the 1989 Revolutionary movement decrying the GDR Travel Law and the respect for human dignity, in remembrance of those who died in the Holocaust, embodied in Article I of the Basic Law and captured in the motto "Nie Wieder Auschwitz" unite the halves of the formerly divided county.

Democratic institutions legitimized by popular sovereignty in the March 18, 1990 election in the GDR that gave a mandate for German unity and in the September, 1998 election in the Berlin Republic that defeated a sitting government for the first time in contemporary German history.

Belief in the Social Market Economy that formed the basis for the transfer of wealth, at an annual rate of \$100 billion per year, from the western to the eastern states to fund unfunded social security, unemployment compensation, retraining programs and infrastructure.

Shared History with the United States

The United States shares with the Berlin Republic common commitments to freedom, the respect for human dignity, democratic institutions and belief in the market economy. We also share contemporary history.

Beginning with Secretary of State James F. Byrnes Speech of Hope in Stuttgart in 1946 which offered Germany a place in the community of nations again, the United States stood up to defend Berlin from Soviet attack beginning with the Berlin Airlift in 1948. On June 17, 1953 the East Germans rebelled against their Soviet occupiers and their effort for freedom was brutally crushed. After the Berlin Wall was built in 1961, it became a symbol for our troubled times. President John F. Kennedy won our hearts and those of the Germans when he said that free men everywhere would be proud to say that they were "Berliner." For ten years we negotiated with the Soviets to create stability in Berlin and Germany, eventually signing the Quadripartite Agreement in 1972. In the 1980s we deployed Pershing missiles to defend Germany and Europe against the Soviet SS-20 rockets that were aimed at Germany. By 1987 President Reagan called on President Gorbachev, in the spirit of Glasnost and Perestroika to "Tear down this Wall." Just two years later the Germans in the GDR did just that in the Democratic Revolution of 1989. Americans and Germans shared this history of Berlin and the fight for freedom.

We also lived up to our promises. It was American support for German unification that was the key element in completing the East German's peaceful, democratic revolution. We negotiated the 2+4 Agreement with the two Germanies and "Victorious Powers" of the Second World War, and on October 3, 1990 helped to bring the three parts of Germany together - the Federal Republic's forty-year-old democracy, the freedom-seeking East Germans and Berlin - to create a peaceful, democratic Germany in the heart of Europe. The Berlin Republic was born. And with the new Berlin Republic has come an enlarged NATO and many economic challenges; its new members can hope to enjoy some of the same freedom, peace and prosperity found in the Berlin Republic today.

The Heroes of Bornholmerstrasse – November 9, 1989

Let me share with you one anecdote that captures the spirit of freedom on the 1989 Revolution. I was a fortunate eyewitness when the Berlin Wall came tumbling down (Ich war dabei) twenty-eight years after the East German leader Walter Ulbricht erected this hated symbol of communism and division. I was the deputy American ambassador in East Berlin reporting on that democratic revolution that would bring down the Berlin Wall, help end the cold war and create a new order, in which Germany emerged once again united, sovereign and strong.

Throughout the year 1989, dramatic events stirred a new sense of freedom in the world and challenged the cold war. Soviet President Gorbachev began his Glasnost and Perestroika experiment. Students in China demonstrated for democracy on Tiananmen Square and were brutally crushed by communist tanks. In the two Germanies 2 million soldiers still stood face-to-face across the Berlin Wall ready for war.

On the night of November 9, 1989, the entire world held its breath waiting for the Soviet tanks to roll and crush the German revolutionaries as they had done in 1953. Although the Soviet tanks did not roll out, revolution has changed our world.

The United States throughout the Cold War preached self-determination in an effort to promote democracy movements and stationed millions of American soldiers in West Germany to deter a communist attack. East Europeans had repeatedly tried and failed to find freedom and break the yoke of communist rule. Despite failed attempts in East Germany in 1953, in Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and in Poland in 1980, in the summer of 1989 the Central Europeans tried again.

At the American Embassy in East Berlin, we knew that the Red Army's response with its million Soviet and East German soldiers deployed along the German-German border would determine the success or failure of this new democratic revolution. A Washington Post editorial in August that year reminded us that if the Soviet Union intervened anywhere in Europe to protect its interests, it would do so in East Germany.

Nevertheless, some East Germans wanted their freedom and sovereignty and were willing to demand some of their rights guaranteed in the Helsinki Final Act signed by their communist leader, Erich Honecker. These brave souls sought freedom to travel and abolishing the East German travel law became the symbolic cry for political freedom during their revolution. They

knew the words of President John Kennedy, that free men everywhere would be proud to call themselves Berliners, and they knew President Ronald Reagan's challenge to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall. They were testing that strong bond of common destiny in our commitment to the dignity of man, the rule of law, and freedom.

Events in the revolution were breathtaking. Tens of thousands of GDR citizens had fled to the West and a million more were seeking to emigrate. Demonstrations by thousands of demonstrators in the streets of Leipzig, Dresden and Berlin threatened the government and by October 18 had led to the ouster of German Communist leader Erich Honecker. The new GDR leader, Egon Krenz, was also a communist and desperately needed to establish control of the government and to win support of the people. We knew events could unravel the stability of the cold war and our embassy reported on November 6 that the GDR Politburo was changing the despised Travel Law and predicted hopefully that if such changes continued, the Berlin Wall would become "irrelevant."

Based on our embassy's reporting, President George Bush was told in his November 9 morning briefing by his intelligence briefer, that the GDR had opened possibilities for freer travel for its citizens and that the Berlin Wall might as a result become "irrelevant," the very description used by the American Embassy's Political Counselor Jon Greenwald report. Now was the time to determine whether this revolution fit the definition. I had never lived through a revolution and only knew the textbook definition. I was about to experience it very personally.

While, as Timothy Garton Ash has noted, a century was defeated at the polls, I believe that it was the democratic revolution that spread from Solidarity to the Kremlin and ended communism in Europe. It is in the aftermath of the end of the cold war that I have found the comments of Ralph Waldo Emerson about the American Revolution to capture the new dynamic of European politics at the end of the Millennium. He said, "If there is any one period one would desire to be born in, is it not the Age of Revolution, when the old and new stand side-by-side, when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope, when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new?"

It Began as Any Normal Day in the Revolution

Events during that Thursday in November were calm; President Gorbachev had ended his visit in honor of the fortieth anniversary of East Germany with a warning about the dramatic events East Germany saying, "Those who come too late will be punished by history." Little did we now that history was about to overtake us.

That same evening in Berlin I attended Aspen Institute Berlin Director David Anderson's reception for his new deputy, Hildegard Boucsein, with the mayors of East and West Berlin, the Allied Military Commanders, East German spy-swapping lawyer Wolfgang Vogel and many others. We were an unsuspecting group of insiders. What was about to happen at the Berlin Wall later on November 9, 1989 would be a surprise to us all.

At the end of the reception, East German lawyer Wolfgang Vogel, who had negotiated the freedom of Soviet dissident Sharansky and earlier the U-2 pilot downed over Russia, Gary

Powers, asked me for a ride to West Berlin where he had parked his car. Of course I was pleased to offer him a lift and to seek his assessment of the East German reaction to the changes in November 6 GDR Travel Law that had been rejected by thousands of demonstrators throughout the country. Vogel as Honecker's lawyer was most likely to know the GDR's next steps.

A few months earlier when U.S. Ambassador Richard Barkley and I visited Vogel at his modest home on the Titi Lake, he told us that the Hungarians would likely allow several hundred East Germans in Hungary escape to the West. The Hungarians had dramatically cut down the barbed wire fence along their border in May. Indeed, the Hungarian border was viewed as an escape hatch from the communist bloc and cutting down the fence launched a flood of refugees in late summer. The Hungarians were about to honor their new commitment to a UN convention on refugees and to ignore their obligations under the Warsaw Pact to return East Germans to the GDR. Vogel would surely clue me in on Politburo thinking about how to respond to the revolutionaries' demands for the right to travel freely.

On our way to the downtown West Berlin's heart on the Ku'dam, Vogel told me that the GDR attorney's collegium had met November 7-8 and proposed additional changes to the GDR Travel Law. Vogel thought the new changes, not yet announced, would satisfy East Germans' demand for more freedom of travel.

Back at the American Embassy

As I drove into East Berlin around seven-thirty, the acrid smell of sulfur from East Germany's brown coal met me. It was a knowing feeling that the smell brought to my nostrils; the smell clung everywhere, in my clothes surrounding the buildings. The smell of brown coal gave the whole of East Germany that sinister, dreary appearance that had become so familiar.

I went directly to the embassy where I found a greatly excited political section. They were stunned by East German government spokesman Guenther Schabowski's statement on television. He had told the world that the Politburo agreed to more changes in the Travel Law and East Germans could get visitor visas quickly (in kurzem) for travel to the West from their local "People's Police" and the GDR would open a new processing center to handle emigration cases immediately.

Although beyond anything we could have imagined, Schabowski's oral statement was open to widely varying interpretation. NBC anchorman, Tom Brokaw, who attended the Schabowski briefing, asked if this meant the Berlin Wall was open; Schabowski reportedly said; "Yes." He rushed to the western side of the Brandenburg Gate to announce to the world that the Berlin Wall was open. The East Germans heard; "Travel to the West is possible immediately." The revolution, once remarkably controlled, with its Monday night demonstrations in Leipzig and Dresden, seemed to be spinning out of control.

We sent one embassy political officer, Heather Troutman, directly to Checkpoint Charlie and another, Imre Lipping, to the GDR press center to get the text of the statement. While we were hunting down the travel law text, the first East Germans, attempting to cross without visas, were sent back home by the guards at Checkpoint Charlie who told them to first get visas. It seemed to

us that the GDR guards could keep things under control, while the new procedures were being worked out.

With the text of the announced freedom to travel and emigrate in hand, we translated it and cabled it to Washington. I telephoned the White House Situation Room and State Department Operations Center to make sure they had the report and to alert them to the latest developments. Then I called Ambassador Barkley and the American Minister in West Berlin Harry Gilmore, and we diplomats shared our quick assessment of the Politburo announcement. We thought the East Germans would get their visas and then head to West Berlin. Little did we know how quickly the East Germans would test the will of the border police to let them leave and return.

After assuring ourselves that we had reporting officers in place to follow events and had reported the latest news, I headed home to the near-in East Berlin suburb of Pankow around 10:00 PM. As I drove up Schönhauserallee in East Berlin I was surprised to see so many East German, plasticized pressed-wood Trabant automobiles seemingly abandoned near the Bornholmerstrasse checkpoint crossing over the S-Bahn train into West Berlin. At the end of the street near the checkpoint, I saw dozens of Germans standing at the barrier and shouting at the guards defending the crossing.

I knew the crossing well. I crossed it regularly; my children crossed there daily to attend the German-American John F. Kennedy Schule in Zehlendorf, West Berlin. Inside the crossing were barracks filled with armed border police. Fire hoses, like those used later at the Brandenburg Gate were carefully laid out in readiness to repel any wall jumpers. Across the checkpoint safely in the West, the bright lights of a TV camera crew, was poised on the bridge ready to instantaneously transmit pictures of this confrontation at the bridge around the world.

I hurried through the last few blocks to get home quickly. Inside, I turned on the television to see which pictures were being beamed at the East Germans from the camera I had seen. My wife Jean rushed in to the TV room worried I would wake our children. I explained the latest events and how our worry seemed to be turning into excitement as we witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall. I called Ambassador Barkley, Jon Greenwald our political counselor and Harry Gilmore in West Berlin. We knew events would soon envelop us.

The Berlin Wall Falls

*Within minutes the Berlin Wall was breached. First, a wave of East Berliners came through the Bornholmerstrasse checkpoint signaling freedom for all East Germans. They streamed across and their pictures were flashed around the world. They were free! But I had a sinking feeling. Did they have visas? What happened to the visa requirement? Who was in charge? **

A few hours later, around 6:30 A.M., I followed my third-grade daughter Annamarie's school van to Bornholmerstrasse on her way through the crowd to school in the West. Her van moved into the masses of people now streaming in both directions. Seeing the red diplomatic license plate, the people stepped aside to let her through. I stood there watching my child disappear into the West with some uncertainty of her fate. My son Carl was to follow in less than an hour.

GDR radio announced that visas were required to travel as of 8:00 am on November 10. I stayed at Bornholmerstrasse and as the hour approached the crowd grew larger and pressed against the checkpoint as panic spread. The fear of being shut in, of having missed the chance to see West Berlin before the GDR shut the gate, was palatable. Shortly before that appointed hour, that deadline was moved to noon. Later, the deadline was revised to Monday. However, by Monday the Krenz government had lost its legitimacy and its authority; the people had demanded and won their freedom. Power and authority had passed from the SED government to the people, who were now in charge. No one knew what would happen next.

No-mans-land and the Death Strip

We were all caught in the blurring pictures of the revolutionary video stuck on fast-forward. Events in those hours overwhelmed us with a mixture of anxiety, euphoria and hope for the future.

When our children, Annamarie and Carl, returned from the John F. Kennedy Schule in West Berlin, my wife, Jean, and I decided that we, too, would test the new openness of the Berlin Wall. We ventured down to the Wall at Eberswalderstrasse, where the buildings were in the East and the sidewalk was in West Berlin, and where terrible scenes of desperate people jumping to their freedom or death [took place] in 1961 when the Wall was built.

The “Bausoldaten,” soldiers on construction duty, were deconstructing the Berlin Wall at Eberwalderstrasse. They had already taken several three-meter tall, one-meter wide sections out of the Wall by the time we arrived. Lined up in front of this gaping hole were hundreds of East Germans dutifully waiting for the East German Volkspolizei to issue them visas in accordance with the November 9 Schabowski statement.

We had our diplomatic identity cards and proceeded to enter the no-mans-land through the new crossing point. As we, accompanied by our dog Willi, stepped into the eerie space between East and West, seven-year-old Carl exclaimed; “There are two walls.” Indeed, at the end of the no-mans-land stood towering above us was the whitewashed wall on the western side.

We crossed into West Berlin with numerous East Germans and were greeted with cheering West Berliners and a sense of time suspension. Disoriented, we found a playground for our children where they played while Jean and I tried to absorb the strangeness of standing in West Berlin amid so many East Germans. Unification had just happened among the Germans and we were witnessing the mixture of two conflicting systems separated for two generations. Berlin had become an East German city overnight.

After getting our personal bearings we turned back toward East Berlin and stepped back into the death strip on our way home. As we entered the forbidden zone an East German guard who blocked our way and demanded our passports approached us. When we produced our East German Diplomatic identity cards, he rejected them saying that the crossing was only for citizens of the German Democratic Republic. We argued that we, too, lived in East Germany despite the fact that it seemed incredible that any Westerner would voluntarily lived in that communist country. After some heated dialogue, we were allowed to pass. Stepping back into

East Berlin was like wandering into the twilight zone, the country had disappeared, and a revolution swept away the Berlin Wall and would soon sweep away the very existence of East Germany itself.

The End of East Germany

I knew East Germany's days were limited. Only intervention by the Soviets could prolong its agony. President Gorbachev risked Perestroika and Glasnost in Russia if he chose to intervene militarily in the GDR; he would lose East Germany if he did not. We had no idea of the next steps or how the revolution would play out.

While the world was caught up in the euphoria of the pictures at the Brandenburg Gate, President Bush instructed us that there would be no dancing on the Wall. The East Germans had won some freedom, but the revolution had unleashed the forces of history contained by the cold war.

Meeting with Gorbachev six months later, Gorbachev told President Bush that Germany could decide whether or not to join NATO. In the intervening months the greatest diplomatic venture since World War II was undertaken with the greatest skill. Germany, with the vision and skillful leadership of the American President and Chancellor Kohl, was unified and this millennium may end in peace with Europe whole and free.

Postscript

There is a postscript to this story that I would also like to share. I felt there were some unanswered questions about those first wall jumpers at Bornholmerstrasse checkpoint. Did they have visas? Just what did those guards with the hoses and rifles do to defend the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989? A few months after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Jean and I were having coffee with the Uwe Gerson family, friends from our local East German church. Among the guests were East Germans that had been among those at Bornholmerstrasse that night.

As we recounted this story, one of them asked if we knew what actually happened to the first freedom-seekers who burst into the lights of the Spiegel TV cameras and changed the course of history. Of course we did not and were intrigued to hear a first-hand account. Herr Gerson's brother took out his GDR identification card, a paper passport with a photograph on one side and his name typed on the other. Across the picture was a GDR exit visa stamp. A stamp that actually invalidated the I.D. card. It hit us. The first people crossing into the lights of the TV camera had been expelled! The GDR had tried to save itself from its discontented citizens by throwing the rascals out of the country. Be gone you revolutionaries, they must have said. The last laugh was on those guards. The television pictures of people held back by a hated system fleeing into freedom were too powerful to resist. The heroes of Bornholmerstrasse had taken their fate in their own hands. East Germany fell to the irrepressible human desire for freedom.*

The pictures were enough to rouse other East Germans from their sleep and head for the Berlin Wall. The numbers soon overwhelmed the guards and the East German government's implementation of its exit visa requirement was delayed and delayed. Meanwhile the Germans in

the GDR continued their revolution and took ownership of their country.

** Note: The Spiegel TV crew filming the East Germans great escape only reported the first Germans to flee were free. Steven Aust, editor of the Spiegel told me in October 1996 that he had sent that crew to film the crossing and had later interviewed the guards who let the people into West Berlin. He confirmed that the first to cross into the West had been expelled by the East German guards.*

Conclusion

American support for German unification allowed the East German's peaceful, democratic revolution success. On October 3, 1990, they would join with the Federal Republic's forty-year-old democracy to create a peaceful, democratic Germany in the heart of Europe. The Berlin Republic was born.

Since then it is clear that the Berlin Republic, now under SPD Chancellor Schroeder, has accepted the responsibilities accruing to a major European power in providing security in southeaster Europe. The bombing war in Kosovo was also a seminal event in German politics. Along with the United States, Germany chose to lead our effort to stop the human rights abuses, ethnic cleansing that had echoes of Nazi atrocities. In fact, the elevation of human rights as a basis for armed intervention in violation of the sanctity of sovereignty will have lasting effect on political relations for the next Millennium. Some have argued that the intervention in Kosovo signaled the end, not of the cold war, but of the Westphalian Peace that has governed international relations for centuries.

In Germany the Kosovo decision is deeply rooted in the new political culture of the Berlin Republic. Not only must war not emanate from German soil, but as Foreign Minister Fischer has reminded us: „Nie Wieder Auschwitz“ is the motto that takes precedence over the sanctity of sovereignty. This political commitment to human rights is deeply embedded in the German „Basic Law“ in its respect for human dignity and is undoubtedly a founding myth of the Berlin Republic.

Along with the New Berlin Republic, the political world has changed fundamentally. The Soviet Union was swept away in revolution in 1991. NATO has enlarged its membership; NATO has intervened militarily with Bundeswehr forces to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. Former Warsaw Pact members can hope to enjoy some of the same freedom, peace and prosperity found in the Berlin Republic today. Europe has adopted the EURO as its unified currency.

Q: While this revolution was going on, particularly at the early stages, this was a time when the mobs were building up, over a period of time these demonstrations and all, the scenario, all of us who were in the Foreign Service and anyone else who I brought it up with, this was going to happen, it was going to build up, there was going to be an explosion, the East Germans have been trying to get out, the government will try to stop them, the West Germans, with or without our consent are not going to let this happen, they are going to maybe storm in or something like

that, and the Soviets were come in and World War III. So you are sitting there, watching what in our old scenario was World War III beginning to develop and the end of civilization as we know it. What were you reporting back? Were we just sort of reporting, and was there anything come from Washington, or were we looking at Soviet tanks and East German tanks, what was the Embassy doing?

BINDENAGEL: I can't speak for Washington, but at the Embassy we were inundating the government with individual reports of what was occurring. There were demonstrations on Alexanderplatz, which were put down by East Germans. We knew that the National Volks Army was on alert but not engaged. We focused on the connection between the Soviet army and the NVA, the East German Army. The escalation steps were well known and the "People's Police" on the streets were the first line of defense. If that line was breached, then you go to the "Betriebskampfgruppen" or militia. The militia appeared during the Gorbachev visit. The militia were mostly old guys in National Guard-like uniforms, they looked like Army and they had Czech weapons as they were wandering around the streets. These were the guys that had marched down Unter den Linden to set up the Berlin Wall - the Anti-fascist protective Wall - in 1961. We watched them appear on the streets and looked for signs of NVA deployments, however, we never did see any Army on the streets. We wondered where the Russians were and found them still in their barracks. Nevertheless, we were nervous. We were all very nervous, but we watched that to the extent that seven or eight embassy officers could have access to see what was going on. But we were the diplomats on the ground and were right there to see all these demonstrations. We saw where the chain of violence might occur and reported on developments daily.

We did have some frantic questions from Washington. Once there were news-reports out of Washington in the middle of the night. I recall being asked about a confrontation with a Soviet tank in Bernau. Somebody obviously reported this event but it was very hard to find out what had occurred. It took us a day to find out that the mayor from the small town of Bernau outside of Berlin wanted to move a World War II trophy tank that was on a pedestal in a downtown square to some other sight. The confrontation was apparent Soviet dismay with the mayor.

There were reports of East Germans having fights with Russians near their commissary, but they were Russians married to Germans. Those incidents turned out as far as we could determine as domestic or personal quarrels, not political incidents. Later there was another report in the middle of the night when I was called by the State Department Operations Center about a group of East Germans attacking a Soviet military installation in the Harz Mountains. I was in Berlin and the Harz Mountains are not nearby and told the Ops Center the we would find what we could. We usually talked to working journalist to expand our coverage of events and our network of contacts. In this case I turned on the radio and I heard a nighttime BBC report that had that part of the report, there was a confrontation of East Germans with the Soviet installation in the Harz Mountains. The report went on to say that this installation was a radio antenna site and the East German was telling the Russians that some day this land will be our country again. I called the Operations Center and asked if they want to check that report as well and that seemed to settle that rumor. In reality, the point was that we were very tense. We were doing little things to control rumors, and reporting furiously on bigger things like the demonstrations and debates inside the SED, trying to find any indication that we were crossing that threshold of dissent to

revolution and we were extremely nervous.

Washington only began to wake up to the dangers of the changes on that night of November 9. All the reporting that we have done seemed to have been swallowed up ahead of time. Although I learned later that the President's morning briefer on November 9 had reported to the President our assessment of the November 6 changes in the GDR travel law, which we said would make the Berlin Wall irrelevant. Washington knew there were changes. In all honesty, we did not predict a revolution, you couldn't have predicted a revolution. We didn't know when the confrontation would happen, we simply tried to keep track of things. But I tell you, after the 9th of November, Washington turned its attention to every little event that was about to occur in East Germany.

The next major political event for us occurred a month later when Secretary of State James Baker came to West Berlin to give a speech on U.S. policy in Europe, focusing on NATO, the EU and OSCE. At this point in November after the Wall had been breached, we did a report to the State Department making some suggestions of kinds of initiatives we could take to gain control of this situation and Baker would include a restatement of our policy on German unification. We suggested new initiatives; my favorite was to re-open our Consulate in Leipzig, which was the heroic city of the demonstrations and symbolic of the coming revolution with Nikolaikirche vigils and Maestro Mazur's timely intervention to prevent violence. We had another advantage. As part of our rights negotiated in our diplomatic recognition of the GDR in 1974, we agreed that the GDR could open an office in New York and we would have the right to a second office in East Germany. We also suggested initiating conversations with upcoming communist leaders because we were waiting for a new leadership to follow Glasnost and Perestroika, opening relations with the West.

One of the suggestions we made was have Secretary Baker visit with the East German leadership. By that time Hans Modrow, the friend of Gorbachev, was named Premier and took office on 18th of November. We saw this appointment as an opportunity to pursue Glasnost in the GDR and to find out if Glasnost and Perestroika had a chance after Honecker. We argued that a meeting with Modrow would be important. Never in history of the GDR had a US Secretary of State visited the GDR. The highest-ranking official had been John Whitehead, Deputy Secretary of State. So we would be breaking new ground in having a higher level official visit and send the signal that the U.S. was prepared to do business with a new regime. I called Jim Collins, one of Baker's Deputy Executive Secretaries and my former boss from the Operations Center. I called him repeatedly and told him that we really want Baker to come. We thought a visit was just the right thing with the debate in East Germany moving toward free elections. We argued that if the GDR had free elections, the communists would be defeated. He told me that the argument in Washington was not so clear and warned that if I wanted an answer immediately, the answer would be an emphatic "No!" I accepted the wait and declined Jim's offer to keep the possibility of a visit alive.

Baker came to West Berlin on the evening of December 11th. Ambassador Barkley was hosting dinner for Congressman Gephardt in East Berlin with prominent East German leaders, including Deputy Premier Christa Luft. Baker called Barkley to West Berlin to meet with him and he left the dinner. As his replacement I enjoyed the lively conversation in his absence about supporting

Perestroika and Luft's proposal that the U.S. support joint ventures with GDR companies, of course with 49% foreign ownership. Barkley's meeting with Baker included General Walters, who was Ambassador Walters from West Germany. They discussed whether or not the Secretary should go to meet with the East German leadership. Ambassador Dick Walters had a very good argument in that he said if Baker went, he would be seen supporting the communist leadership and reinforcing their hold on power. Walters argued that Baker should not go to East Berlin. Barkley argued that the new GDR leadership was committed to elections and if they have actually free and fair elections, they are finished. Afterward the dynamics in the GDR will change in our favor. Baker had a clear presentation from both his ambassadors in the Germanies who were speaking really from the two very different perspectives. General Walters speaking from the World War II and onward experience, a very legitimate point of view, and Barkley from his experience of living in revolutionary times when all politics were beginning to change. Baker dismissed the two Ambassadors and then told Under Secretary of State Bob Zoellick to tell Barkley that he would come to East Berlin after his speech the next day.

When Ambassador Barkley came back to our dinner about 10 o'clock at night, he pulled me aside and informed me of the Secretary's decision to visit the next day. Our tiny embassy was to host the Secretary of State in East Germany he told me. I was delighted, but quite aware that no secretary had ever been there before and that we were short on time to find someone for him to meet. Barkley and I conferred and I set about to find a host.

We went over to the dinner table, adjourned for coffee, and Barkley asked Modrow's deputy, Christa Luft, if she would call the Premier and ask him to meet Baker the next day. Recognizing the validity of Walters' point of view, Baker said that he also wanted to meet with the church leaders who were leading the protests and running the revolution. I called Imre Lipping, who was covering the politics of the churches and asked him to invite Bishop Leich of Eisenach. When Imre called back and said the Bishop was unavailable, we called and made an arrangement to meet at the Potsdam Nikolaikirche with Manfred Stolpe, who was an East German church leader at that time and who later became Minister President of Brandenburg. They both agreed.

Secretary Baker sent Karen Grooms to meet with us the next morning, we went to the site visit. Anne Bodine, our administrative officer, and Karen put together this visit in less than a day. The work may have been painful, but the pain was short. It was really fun in a fascinating way. Baker had a speech in West Berlin and delivered U.S. policy on the architecture of CSCE, of European Union and NATO. And then he added a part, which we had also suggested, we'd hoped he would even say something like German unification. One of the "back-channels" I had was with the State Department Policy Planning Staff and most of my conversations were with Jim Holmes on a secure line. Jim Holmes was clearly heard by Baker and Zoellick and the policy planning office was influential in getting our message to the secretary. Our request to restate U.S. policy in support of German unification won Baker's approval, but he had four conditions. Among them were continued German membership to NATO.

Anyway, after his speech in West Berlin, Baker's motorcade, big Mercedes cars and West Berlin police paddy wagons drove off with their big blue lights and sirens. They arrived at the Glieneckebrücke, this spy-exchange bridge, where Nathan Sharansky, the Soviet dissident, had been exchanged as well as U-2 pilot Gary Powers. The Motorcade stops and of course the West

Berlin escorts cannot cross over the bridge past the Soviet sentry. All of these impressive Mercedes police cars and the paddy wagons had to stop and just the American cars go across. They were met on the other side by the other German police car, the Wartburg, which is a little tiny Fiat like thing that sported a little tiny blue light, maybe 20 watts. They drove up to the Interhotel Potsdam where Baker met with Modrow. I met the party in the hotel, where I have chatted with Modrow. When Baker arrived, Modrow made the point that Americans should support the DGR in Perestroika. The East Germans wanted to make these changes, and promised 49% joint ventures with American to get the economy going, which would be good for all. Baker made one point in reply that after the GDR elections, we'll be glad to talk to you about Perestroika. Baker then talked about U.S. support for German unification and Modrow looked surprised and asked what about German unification?

As background I must say that Modrow had given his inaugural speech in the Volkskammer on November 18th saying that perhaps two Germanies could have a "Vertragsgemeinschaft," a "contractual agreement" but not unification. Also on 28th of November, West German Chancellor Kohl had given a speech calling for a confederation of German states, as an interim phase before discussing unification. The United States seemed to be ahead of both German parties as they were moving very quickly toward their own unification.

Q: Between the time when the Wall sort of opened up and the Baker visit, what was happening as far as, was the Wall open, were the people going back and forth?

BINDENAGEL: The GDR over the weekend of November 9-12, 1989 agreed to open 20 or more crossing points through the Berlin Wall. The next day, on November 10th, I took Jean, our two kids and our dog down to Bernauerstrasse, where the sidewalk was in West Berlin and the building was in East Berlin. The pictures of people jumping out windows to freedom in West Berlin when the Wall went up were world famous. That morning we started to cross the Wall with a long line of people getting visas. The police were stamping visas for everybody, but since we had our GDR pass and we could go back and forth through the other checkpoints, and we simply proceeded through the Wall. We didn't get in line because we didn't have our passports to obtain a visa. We walked through no-man's-land into West Berlin, and as we crossed Carl, my son exclaimed that there we really two walls. One was on the East Berlin side, which was three slabs of concrete laid sideways on top of each other, then came the death strip, and across the death strip plowed areas with raked sand, mines, sensors, razor fences and towers. There was also a road for the guards to patrol the death strip. As we stepped into this eerie area my son said, "Gee, there are two walls. Look at all this." The West Berlin, that Wall was one that you saw everywhere with its murals memorialized was made of poured concrete with a big foot on it. That's the West Berlin Wall. We strolled into West Berlin, where the people cheered. It felt a little uncomfortable. We only spent a few minutes at a playground there where we let the kids play for a while, then we came back. As we came back, the GDR guards wouldn't let us pass into East Berlin. And they started arguing at this crossing point that the promise was only for the GDR citizens. But we argued that we also lived there, and I showed them my ID card. I said "Well, where do you think we live? We live in East Berlin." They then let us through. I told the story to Ambassador Barkley; he tried it on Saturday and he had to go through three levels of command before he could get back. The East Germans opened several crossing points and activity then began. Film crews filmed the East Germans euphoria of travel and openness with

East Berliner going to West, lining up for “Greeting Money” - a hundred marks - and the buying forbidden fruit, symbolized mostly by bananas. You could buy bananas rarely in the GDR and bananas became the symbol of the change. Walking down the Ku’dam, people got bananas. They missed the whole revolution, and suddenly it was peaceful and people were coming and going to West Berlin. Things began to change. In GDR cities round table governments were formed to follow the Polish model placing local citizens along with the SED functionaries together to govern. Of course, the rubric was on renewing the GDR. There was never talked about revolution - revolution in German is a dirty word. It’s a very difficult, violent and destructive event. The roundtable discussion was about the renewal of the GDR.

However, just before Secretary Baker came to the GDR, just a few days before, on the weekend of 7th-8th of December, one of West Berlin Mission Minister Harry Gilmore’s friends, and a West German SPD member visited Rostock, in East Germany. He reported back to Harry that he had seen the roundtable there and noted that city governments were collapsing. He really feared, as he told Harry, that East Germany was on the verge of civil war. Harry did what every good political officer should do, and reported this story to Washington. However, he didn’t give us the courtesy of informing us that he was reporting this report about the GDR, nor did he comment in his report about the validity or meaning of what was going on. Of course, he wasn’t really in a position to comment on another country: he just sent the cable off to Washington. The lights lit up in Washington at the National Military Command Center, the Ops Center, the White House Situation Room and the CIA Command Center like you wouldn’t believe. This is the scenario painted of the Operations Plan for World War III, uprising in East Germany - here it comes!

When we got this cable and I called the political section - Jon Greenwald had already left for home, and Emre Lipping joined me and Mike Mozur, the Economics Counselor to give me an instant analysis of the West Berlin report. They wrote a very long cable very quickly and did a great job of explaining developments in the GDR. I took the report to Ambassador Barkley and we talked about how do we present the analysis. We agreed that, “The only thing that counts is the summary.” If we did not get the story right and Barkley argued that the current draft was not right, it would not work. He turned to me to go back and rewrite the summary. In a few short paragraphs I wrote “The situation in the GDR is serious, the city governments are collapsing but roundtable governments are taking over, and yes the garbage is still being collected and demonstrations happen on Monday nights. The pace of this revolution is breathtaking.” Then I sent the cable to Washington, hoping to reassure the government that World War III was not breaking out, at least not yet.

Before Baker left for Berlin, he met with the Washington Post editorial board. On his way to the editorial board he stopped by the Operations Center, where they gave him an update of overnight events so he wouldn’t get blind-sighted about crucial development. The Ops Center had seen our cable analyzing the prospects for Civil War in East Germany and they gave him a copy. Now James Baker is a very smart man, and he folded up this cable and put it in his pocket. Perhaps that was not kosher, but it is a very smart thing to do because when meeting with the Washington Post editorial board about his trip and NATO, they asked him: “What are these reports about the deterioration, or unrest in the GDR?” Being a smart politician as well, he reached into his pocket and said, “Let me tell you what Mr. Barkley’s Embassy in East Berlin has to say about this situation.” He read the summary, and that ended the question. Obviously the journalists took

very good notes because the next day the summary appeared in the Washington Post, almost verbatim. The following day it appeared in Neues Deutschland, the communist newspaper in the GDR, on page 8, as I discovered reading ND. I reacted immediately, "Good Grief, this is a translation, what's going on here?" I ran over to Barkley, and I said "Look at this, this is our cable." I got on the phone, called the German desk. They said, "Oh, yes, didn't you see that? We thought that was great." "Well you didn't even tell me!" Anyway, I guess it was the Secretary who released it, so it was okay. That was what was happening between those periods, November 9th and December 12th.

Q: I think this is probably a good place to stop. So we finished the Baker visit. And we'll pick it up after that.

Today is the April 8, 1998. J.D., again the Baker visit was when?

BINDENAGEL: December 12th, 1989 in Potsdam.

Q: After Baker left, what was happening? How was Baker received?

BINDENAGEL: The conclusion was a great one. We had not anticipate much interest in the press. The GDR was in its glory on November 9th, when the Wall came down, and after that it seemed to have passed from the daily news as the revolution spread throughout the rest of the Central Europe. However, the Secretary had about 20 or 30 press traveling with him and much to our surprise as Secretary went into his meeting with Modrow, the press gathered outside and it had grown to about 130 of journalists. The Secretary came out and said "We have an announcement to make, about open and free elections." Modrow announced that elections were planned for May 6, 1990. Then he tried to turn to a new debate. However, Perestroika, Glasnost, the policies of Gorbachev were put on the back burner. The focus was then on elections in the GDR. Would there be elections, and if so, when. May 6th 1990, they were planned.

Politics in January were working on two tracks. One was the unification track that Baker had mentioned in the meetings. The U.S. was for unification; the GDR revolutionaries were still for the renewal of the GDR. And Modrow in January, as Premier Modrow and with the PDS, the Party of Democratic Socialism, ahead of the pack on unification and renewal. And the event that had happened just before that, if I may back up a bit to December 21st.

On December 21st, the politics of unification really became apparent. West German Chancellor Kohl had visited Dresden in East Germany on the 19th, for his first visit. Baker had come on December 12th, Kohl on December 19th, and then on December 21st President Mitterrand, all visiting East Germany. However, Mitterrand's visit was a return visit for the state visit that Erich Honecker, the GDR leader, had made to Paris. While we were promoting unification and Kohl confederation, Mitterrand was promoting two Germanies. He had given a speech just before that in Kiev, arguing the case for two Germanies, the British were also for divided Germany and wished for two Germanies, which were better than one Germany. My good friend, the DCM of

the Soviet Embassy, Igor Maksimichev was giving a speech, the same speech in several places, once at Aspen Institute Berlin, talking about the rise of the Fourth Reich. So the U.S. was rather isolated in politics around unification. Here was Mitterrand coming to East Berlin, meeting with Egon Krenz, speaking at the University in Leipzig and then hosting a Gala in East Berlin.

Unfortunately for me the Mitterrand Gala was the same evening as the Embassy Christmas party. We had prepared some good lyrical songs and we were going to have a blast. I was invited to the reception for Mitterrand, but decided that as much as I liked the Embassy party, this Mitterrand party would be a rather interesting evening. I went to the Palast Hotel, which was next to the German Cathedral of the Prussian Hohenzollerns, I walked in as Margo Honecker, Mrs. Honecker, the Education Minister, assembled with other members of the Politburo. The leader of the Communist Party was about to be chosen that night was there. He was Gregor Gysi, the son of Klaus Gysi, the State Secretary for Church Affairs who was an acquaintance of Ambassador Burns, was about to be named head of the Communist Party. It was an exciting evening. As Mitterrand seemed to be giving the PDS, the SED the follow-on party of democratic socialism reform, socialists, support for the GDR as a separate State from the Federal Republic. Mitterrand came gave his speech and didn't stay too long, but the air was filled with excitement. A new party the, East German Social Democratic Party, had been founded and the leader of the Social Democratic Party was there was well, Ibrahim Böhme. Ibrahim Böhme was thought to be a real revolutionary, however, as it turned out a few months later he was really an agent of the East German State Security, or Stasi. The end of the GDR was beginning to become very clear. The question then for us was, "Would it hold?" Could you avoid the questions of civil war, as it had been raised just before the Baker visit? As the month went on, the next day in fact a very important event happened on December 22nd.

The Brandenburg Gate was opened for pedestrian traffic. There were crossing points on both sides of the Brandenburg gate. Symbolically the opening was very important, as the President, Richard von Weizsäcker, had said often, "As long as the Brandenburg Gate remained closed, the German question remains open." And then suddenly on December 22nd, the Brandenburg gate was open, as soon as Mitterrand had left. Resolving the German question was on the political agenda. What happened in January was fascinating, because...

Q: But let me stop at this point J.D. Was there any debate within your group of the people you were talking to, on the American side and then others, at this sort of Mitterrand time, would say, "What's that for the U.S., maybe it's a good idea to keep Germany divided?"

BINDENAGEL: You know, that was an interesting question, and I thought there would be more debate. But once Baker had made his speech, President had endorsed unification, there was very little visible debate that we could at least see sitting in East Berlin. It seemed that the President had taken a leadership decision, in spite of what the British were saying and their concerns, the French and their concerns, the Russians, they all seemed to be historical concerns. President Bush focused on our commitment to West Germany, the democracy that had been built up and the fact that we'd had something like 15 million soldiers in West Germany. It seemed to be that constituency in the U.S. that he touched, it was very strong and powerful one, and there wasn't very much debate about the U.S. supporting German unification.

There were others that did object to unification. I met during this period twice with the Brussels representative of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), Maram Stern. He met with the East German Foreign Minister Fischer, raised concerns about German reunification and encouraged the East Germans not to move so quickly. This lack of support for German unification became of course a serious point of contention later when the GDR record became available and known to Chancellor Kohl. Some years later when asked about the WJC and unification, Kohl revealed the contents of the conversations between the World Jewish Congress and Fischer. Kohl's relations with the WJC were soured in a very important way as a result. But despite the efforts of people to delay and the concerns of others to prolong the division of Germany, events on the ground were moving very quickly.

Q: Everyone was being behind the times, things were taking over. Traditionally we think of the French as playing the spoiler and just going off in the different track, but we generally agree with the British and the British may have wanted to move a little slower. Was it the feeling that the French were playing the usual spoiler role or was this more serious than that?

BINDENAGEL: The power of European historical experience was very evident in all of their arguments. There was a very deep, deep, deep concern about a powerful Germany in the center of Europe, uncontrolled, not a part of a greater element in itself. Even in our own pronouncements, if you look at Secretary Baker's December 1989 speech and you will find that we conditioned our support for German unification, particularly on Germany remaining in NATO. Giving Germany a place in Europe was a very strong theme that ran through the entire debate. For us, NATO, for Germany, for Helmut Kohl, the answer was the European Union or how to embed Germany in European Union. Chancellor Kohl, during the debates that came after the Fall of the Wall, made several concessions of German sovereignty in order to have Germany have a place in Europe. Most important one perhaps in this point in history was his decision to propose German economic monetary union to become a European monetary union, which led to the introduction of a new currency, the "Euro." Kohl put European monetary union on the table; he didn't negotiate it of course until much later.

Q: Moving then to the events of January 1990?

BINDENAGEL: In January we faced many very fascinating events. I knew Prime Minister Hans Modrow well and his leadership was key to the events. He was a member of the PDS, Party of Democratic Socialism, which was the successor to the Communist Party in Germany. Modrow was a very close friend of Gorbachev, with whom he vacationed. Modrow wanted a separate East Germany, although in his opening speech to the Volkskammer, the Parliament, he called for a confederation or what he called for a "Vertragsgemeinschaft" with West Germany. It could be literally translated as "contractual community or federation" of German states, a point that Kohl picked up on later, on November 28th when he talked about his "Ten-point Plan" for German reunification. In January however, there was a surge in popular support for Modrow prior to the GDR election, and he hoped that this popularity would help him win those elections. However, Modrow made what I considered a fatal error; he decided to not abolish the internal state security system, the Stasi office that kept track of everyone. He decided, based on an argument that every country had an espionage fighting secret service, that one element of the hated Stasi, the Staatssicherheit, needed to remain, although the internal security mandate would be curtailed.

The new office would be the external arm of the Stasi, renamed the “Amt für National Sicherheit.” The moment he took that decision, the political support he had been building simply evaporated.

After his support disappeared, stability of the GDR was again threatened and by the end of January, he advanced the date of elections to March 18, 1990 from his call for elections for May 6th, as he had informed Secretary Baker only a month earlier. Modrow’s support was waning and his ability to carry on the campaign was slipping away. Modrow needed to have an earlier election so that he could have a chance to continue governing.

Fascinating events began to occur with increased rapidity. People began to doubt the stability in the GDR. The next brilliant move to exploit the opportunity, if I may say so was done by Horst Teltschik, who was the West German the national security adviser to Helmut Kohl. On the first weekend in February, as the Chancellor was planning to go visit Gorbachev, Teltschik declared that East Germany would be unable to pay its bills within 24 hours – “*Die DDR wurde Zahlungsunfähig...*” Of course, it was a rather stark assertion, based a little bit on fact, but a brilliant political move, because it brought into question the entire financial situation of the GDR. Not so much for the GDR, which was teetering on bankruptcy since 1983 when Franz Josef Strauss bailed them out with a one billion-mark loan, but for Gorbachev. Chancellor Kohl did not need to pose to Gorbachev the question: “Will you pay for the GDR?” Teltschik’s question in the press posed it for Kohl before the Chancellor visited Gorbachev. During that visit Gorbachev told Kohl that German unification was a possibility that could be acceptable in Gorbachev’s eyes. The shocking news for us was that Gorbachev even talked about unity of Germany. The existence of the GDR was based entirely on a sovereignty that grew out of the military force of the Soviet Union, and Gorbachev’s musings of German unification were devastating blows to the GDR. East German leadership, including Modrow could only understand that Gorbachev would not use the Russian military to sustain the GDR. That conclusion was read everywhere and accelerated the process of unification dramatically. I was at a conference of the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik in Pullach when the announcement of Gorbachev’s statement came over the television. Immediately, the Germans in the room grasped the significance of the statement and were jubilant. Horst Teltschik won my greatest admiration for his daring statements that had dominated our conversations. I had to content myself in responding to Michael Stürmer’s demands that we open our consulate in Dresden – the heart of German culture, not in Leipzig. Jim Dobbins, Deputy Assistant Secretary was at the meeting and called on me to defend my decision in favor of Leipzig, which I defended easily as Leipzig was the Heroic City of the unfolding revolution.

About the same time, President Bush was meeting with leaders in Ottawa for an open-skies conference. There the unification policy was born. That policy was directed from Washington, and we watched the results of the revolution move from our hands in East Germany to the capable hands of Secretary Baker, Dr. Condeleeza Rice, Robert Zoellick, Bob Blackwill and Phil Zelikow, who were working with their counterparts in West Germany. After the March 18th election when the East German revolutionaries were elected, they joined in the negotiations as well and the talks became known as the “Two plus Four process.”

This reference to the Four Allied Powers that were victorious in World War II and were

responsible for Berlin and Germany as a whole, reminds me of an incident that occurred in West Germany, in West Berlin. In December, just prior to Baker's Berlin visit, Ambassador Walters, seeing that the situation was very unstable, took an initiative to call the four Allied ambassadors responsible for Berlin - the U.K., France, the USSR and the U.S. - to get together. He proposed meeting to discuss an on-going topic the "Berlin Initiative" at the old Allied Kommandatura building, in West Berlin which hadn't been used since 1948 when the Soviets marched out. The four Ambassadors arrived and had their picture taken, which appeared in the press. They didn't have much discussion, but the symbolic value of the four victorious powers of World War II meeting to decide the fate of Germany was too much. West German Foreign Minister Genscher was furious and I'm sure, although I wasn't part of it, I'm sure he shared his ire with Mr. Baker.

That led to the question who will make the decision about German reunification, and in the open-skies meeting that was taking place in Ottawa, formulation was proposed by Genscher that we should call this process "Two plus Four." That is the two German states would take their sovereign decisions and the four victorious powers by the right of the conquest in the World War II would participate in that process. The agreement itself would become a surrogate for a peace-treaty with Germany. There in Ottawa, the U.S. along with its other allies launched the "Two plus Four" unification process. Embassy East Berlin was brought back into the picture to support the Washington-based talks.

On March 18, 1990, Lothar De Maizière, Christian Democrat, was elected the first and only democratically Prime Minister of the GDR. Marcus Meckel, SPD and a Lutheran Minister, was named Foreign Minister. De Maizière was of the CDU, Mr. Meckel was a social democrat and Meckel chose as his deputy Hans Misselwitz. I had met Hans Misselwitz in Washington in 1988 when Hans came as a guest of the United Christian Church. He had been a chemist; however, he had decided he was too revolutionary to be a chemist and so he couldn't have a career in chemistry. He had changed careers and had just completed his studies at a theological seminary. He was married to Ruth Misselwitz and he was able to take a year with the United Christian Church and had come to Arlington, Virginia, where he was to study for a year. The East Germans forbid travel to the U.S. by his wife and his children. We met several times at the home of a German pastor, Berndt Wrede, in Arlington, Virginia, and we had some wonderful conversations about the dissident movement in the GDR, which served me well before I went to East Berlin.

After the March 18th election Misselwitz was State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry. We had many conversations and I had open access to the East German Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the 2+4 negotiations to discuss East German positions, however, the U.S. government saw little role for the GDR negotiators. This was due in part to their inexperience and their desire to take Polish positions to the table as their own. Washington talked almost exclusively with Genscher.

Marcus Meckel the GDR Foreign Minister, the first, last and only democratic Foreign Minister, had unification ideas that were really not in tune with the rest of us. This is 1990, before the Soviet Union disappeared, before the Warsaw Pact disappeared. Although the GDR was withdrawing from the Warsaw pact in order to join the rest of Germany, Poland was still in that orbit. Misselwitz and Meckel tried to engage with their Polish friends, with whom they had a revolutionary period in the Solidarity movement and had worked very closely, and as they came

into more power they wanted to put the Polish agenda on the German unification talks. We did not.

Q: Is this the border firm between Germany and Poland?

BINDENAGEL: Actually, you raise a very interesting question. The Polish-German border was unsettled. In fact, all of Germany was unsettled, the borders of Germany were from 1937 and became one of the key issues decided in "Two plus Four" talks. The decision was Germany would be made up of three parts, that is West Germany, East Germany and Berlin. The Germans were to renounce their claim to those parts of Poland, which had been Germany. Those parts of Germany that were under the administrative control of the Soviet Union since the end of the war, that is Königsberg, or Kaliningrad, were left outside the three named parts of united Germany. At some point at the next ten or twenty years this issue of the status of Kaliningrad will come back again. We know that in the "Two plus Four" agreement Kaliningrad is not part of Germany but we also know that it isn't a contiguous part of Russia. Corridors, like that from Russia through Lithuania - the Danzig Corridor or the Berlin Access Routes - have always caused problems. The Danzig corridor that played a role in World War II, the Berlin corridor that played a role in western access to West Berlin and in German unification. The Russians have to now drive through Belarus or Lithuania to get to their territory there in Kaliningrad. But I digress.

We saw many events around "Two plus Four" as very important events.

Q: What were you getting from the people you were talking to from our Embassy in Bonn, about the role of Genscher? Did Kohl and Genscher seem to be on the same path or was one leading the other? How was that duality viewed?

BINDENAGEL: Our Embassy in Bonn and our Embassy in Berlin were worlds apart. Communication between the two Embassies took really place through Mr. Zoellick, or Mr. Blackwell, whenever we were informed. There was very little direct discussion. I participated in as a staff member, not at the table, in the "Two plus Four" meetings that took place in East Berlin. But having served in Germany many years I knew many people and with two of them we talked informally to keep track of what was being said. The East Germans were running their government but had to ask what Genscher was doing and why he did what he did. The basic East German contribution was to make the 2+4 agreement possible in the first instance, not in the details of unification.

Q: What was the feeling about Genscher that you were picking up? Was he a driving force?

BINDENAGEL: Genscher was certainly a driving force and the strongest drive that he tested, although it never went very far, was to insure German unification by considering not having Germany in NATO. This idea was bandied about and was quickly shot down, but it was out there as an idea that could be perhaps resurrected at some point and it made us very nervous.

Q: I was going to say, that would have made everyone nervous, because this would have meant a Germany with its own armed forces, a powerful Germany not under any sort of overall control.

BINDENAGEL: Exactly. Our policy was built on the idea that although Germany was sovereign and could decide its own fate, however, we expected that they would find their fate with us in NATO. Alternatives to German NATO membership were very unsettling; that view was shared throughout Germany. Other issues, more fun. Once when we had “Two plus Four” negotiating session in East Berlin with Bob Zoellick. We had a very interesting “Two plus Four” discussion at Schloss Niederschonhausen. I was fascinated by our equally unbending approach to the Russians, whose rigid positions seemed so out of place. The presentations were very stiff and formal with little movement from any position. The fun came afterward. Mr. Zoellick wanted to visit the headquarters of the East German Army, the NVA (Nationale Volksarmee), and meet with the Minister of Defense, the newly elected democratic Minister of Defense, Mr. Rainer Eppelmann. Mr. Eppelmann and his NVA were headquartered in Strasbourg outside of Berlin because Berlin was “demilitarized” by the victorious powers from World War II. I had the task to escort Zoellick from East Berlin, through the GDR to Strasbourg, a circuitous route that was very time consuming. We followed the archaic Allied Power rules governing the divided city of Berlin, which in Berlin meant that Westerners had to leave Berlin from West Berlin, go out into the GDR, go all the way around Berlin and come to Strasbourg, rather than cutting through town. We were precluded from entering the GDR from East Berlin under these rules because there were no checkpoints marking the end of Berlin and consequently East Berlin appeared to be part of the GDR although the Allies refused to give recognition to East Berlin as the capital of the GDR. Such was the theology in “Berlinery.” We followed the rules, however, in order to make sure we arrived in Strasbourg in time we asked for East German police escort. Unlike the police escort that we thought we were going to get, we got a very conscientious policeman, or one who wanted to torpedo the visit. He drove a little less than the speed limit, which made us somewhat late, then he took us on what he thought to be a shortcut but it turned out to be a dead end and then we had to double back, and by the time we got to Strasbourg, Mr. Zoellick was steaming of course. Minister Eppelmann was also steaming and has just left without seeing Zoellick. It was a very instructive point about end of Berlinery. At least from Mr. Zoellick’s point of view these rules were finished, he would never travel under them again. We went straight back through Berlin to West Berlin. And indeed, the passing of Berlinery had started and would have a direct impact on how we were operating after the Fall of the Berlin Wall.

Q: Did you get any feel for how the East Germans, were they left differential towards the Soviets, were they looking after themselves all this time?

BINDENAGEL: After the democratic elections, the East Germans were looking to the Poles, to the West Germans to define their role. They were basically told by the West Germans what to do and were not able to get any international support for what they were doing. But there were fun events in this time of transition. Speaking of Strasbourg reminds me of the visit by Jim Woolsey, who was at that point negotiator for the Conventional Forces in Europe negotiations. He wanted to go to the same headquarters of the East German Army that Zoellick had attempted to visit. This time we were more successful. We arrived on time. We did the same Berlinery theological logistics all the way around Berlin, but we got there on time. We went into the NVA headquarters and were met by the East German colonels in uniform, who escorted us into the conference room. There we met with a young, 20-something year-old State Secretary Marzinek, who was a revolutionary, although he had served in the NVA. He and Mr. Woolsey had a correct and pleasant discussion, as these East German Officers looked on in bewilderment. They clearly

were baffled and uncertain about this American Ambassador talking directly to their State Secretary; it had never happened before. Jim Woolsey tells the story to this day. It was really funny. Strange world was coming, the world was coming apart, that's really what we were experiencing. That the old no longer fit, it was still in place, were would that world go?

Q: Were you getting a feeling at all from East Germans, were they concerned about their role in the former government, particularly Stasi, was this beginning to make people nervous?

BINDENAGEL: Absolutely. The nervousness increased as we got closer and closer to unification. However, the democratically elected Volkskammer decided to open the Stasi files themselves. They passed a law and began the process of historical examination that led in some cases to recrimination, but the process was an historical examination. After unification the law was passed again in the Bundestag creating the same law into law for all Germany. So that historical review process began already in the first months of unification. There were exposés of people like Ibrahim Böhme, the leader of the social democrats. Yes, there were scandals. Ron Brown had come and visited us at this time...

Q: He was Secretary of Commerce.

BINDENAGEL: He was later Secretary of Commerce. He and his son wanted to see some of these revolutionaries and I took him out and we went to a church basement we met some revolutionaries, including Wolfgang Schnur. Unfortunately, Schnur turned out to be a Stasi agent! I later found that such revelations were common. Several of the people that I dealt with, in fact, somebody working at USIS, Steven Laufer, who had been also a speech writer for Berlin Governing Mayor Diepgen, claimed to be a South African, turned out was not only Stasi but was actually an agent for the KGB. He was working at the Press Section in the American House in West Berlin. There was always the question of who worked for the Stasi. In the Embassy itself, our employees were all from the "Dienstleistungsamt" or the DLA, the East German Labor Office. Every one of them reported to State Security, and as unification was nearing, many of them confessed to us that they were reporting to the Stasi. Of course, they did it only because they had to if they were to keep their jobs. Others were embarrassed, some quit and disappeared, some denied that they ever did anything to harm us. Our own household staff told us almost immediately that they were interviewed regularly about what we were doing, what we said, there were wiretaps on our phones and so on. Stasi surveillance was very much a part of the fabric of life and it was a very serious problem.

Q: Was our Embassy in Berlin, were you feeling more and more a kind of observer to things that were happening?

BINDENAGEL: Yes, the Embassy was very much sidetracked in fomenting or supporting the revolution. The Embassy in East Berlin never really was able to play much of a role domestically except on occasional interventions in unification process. But what we did do is report on events with our analysis and work with Washington to support the unification process. We worked closely with the democratically elected Prime Minister to GDR Lothar De Maizière. We brought the highest U.S. visitor to the GDR, Secretary Baker. Although he had come to visit under the old government, he helped move the elections forward and supported unification. We tried to

work very closely to get a visit with President Bush, which was not possible. However, we were able to win an invitation for De Maizière, the democratically elected Prime Minister, to visit President Bush. Working with Robert Hutchins, at the NSC's European Office, we worked very hard to arrange visit and talked about how to win GDR support for the 2+4 talks outcome. We wanted to recognize not what the Embassy had done but rather what the East German revolutionaries had actually achieved. They elected a democratic government with a mandate for unification with Germany. President Bush in June of 1990 did receive Prime Minister De Maizière in the White House and made the right point that the U.S. recognized not only the West German role, but also what the East Germans had done to achieve the end of division of Germany. I was very pleased as we saw the end of division of Europe that we had recognized some of the revolutionaries that helped make it possible. This was a very important symbolic message that was overlooked in the shuffle of papers moving through June 1990, which was a very important month in German unification.

At the end of the month German economic monetary union took place, where East German currency was abolished, and exchanged for German, D-Marks at three different exchange rates. In the night of June 30-July 1, armored cars moved through the quiet streets of Berlin with police escorts, sirens screaming. Overnight the D-Mark was delivered and at effective rate of 1.8 East marks to the D-Mark. The D-Mark put East German industry out of business overnight. The conversion raised prices way beyond the market value of anything the East Germans could produce. It gave some cash to individuals, their savings were converted at 1:1. The used car market was exploding, you could make a lot of money selling used cars, computers and stereos. It also sealed the fate of East Germany. There was no economy left, East Germany was disappearing on the way to unification. The NVA military was free from the Soviets, but had no role. The place really was unraveling.

Q: I would have thought that you all in Berlin would have been following the economy very closely, because if all of the sudden the so-called independent country loses its currency, as was in those days, today with Euro coming in it's a bit different, but in those days that's as much sovereignty as you could possibly give up.

BINDENAGEL: Absolutely. And we did follow events very closely; we reported on the effects of what was happening. We reported on collapse of companies and efforts to deal with the debt issues of companies, which were converted at the same exchange rate, including debt. As a result companies couldn't sell anything and their debt was higher than they could ever repay. We spent a lot of time trying to work with them to see what could be done to support new investment. We did a lot to try to see if American business would be interested.

In the postal, area, as they moved through unification, East German Postal Minister, Fischer I think was his name, proposed the idea they keep East German postal system, which also included telecommunications, separate for ten years from the Bundespost in order to modernize it. We had 15 or so American companies absolutely clamoring to get into that piece of Germany, to bring in cellular and digital phones, to bring in fiber-optic cable, to move this new Germany into the 21st century and to have a piece of action. The Federal Post Ministry in West Germany was, however, much stronger and in negotiations this idea was squashed. In fact I received an irate phone call from Mannesmann which had an American company as a subcontractor, very irate, screaming at

me, what I was doing trying to cut them out of the market and so on. To which I could only explain that we had 15 American companies that were willing to do things other than lay copper cable which is what they still had in stock and they started to do until they ran out. Nevertheless, the Germans combined the two postal services into one postal area, and kept our companies out at initial stages of unification. It caused a lot of bad blood in 1990 period. But yet, we did follow the economy very closely.

Q: Were we as aware during this period before of how almost abysmal the production of the GDR was? Or was this beginning to surface, because we always thought of the GDR as being a crown jewel of Soviet Block economy and that kind of blinded our eyes to what was being produced, or how was that dealt with at this time?

BINDENAGEL: The state of the East German economy was fascinating. The first fact was that the people ate well; they had cars and they had electricity and they lived better than anywhere else in the Soviet Union. The second fact was that all statistics, including environmental statistics, were all top-secret. That secrecy covered everything from industrial production to public health; all statistics were kept secret. We, the West, were then shown the exemplary examples of East German productivity. With its secrecy the GDR had in this totalitarian system, they simply controlled information, which prevented a transparent examination of the economy. There were a few industries, which were really stellar industries, for example the computer-chip industry. Honecker touted the expertise in the computer field by praising the manufacture of a microchip, which was ridiculed privately as “the world’s largest microchip.” Nevertheless, it was in that industry, right at the time of 1989 revolution that the GDR had been able to reverse-engineer a 386 IBM computer. I visited the factory and met with the engineers after unification and they were very proud of their achievement. It was the GDR, as they asserted, that kept all the Soviet component parts for East Bloc computer systems working. Despite the West’s export control regime, Coordinating Committee (COCOM), they had been able to get access to Western computers and the technology to crack the system. However, such successes were exceptional. In more traditional industries we knew the situation was much worse. The roads were deteriorating and were generally in a bad shape. The railroads and the two automobile companies were of poor quality. Factories spewed out effluents damaging the environment. Waldsterben, death of the forests, was a great concern. But as long as all of the data was classified, some of it “Top Secret,” our analysis was something that was based on intangibles. The intangible that made East Germany work was “Vitamin B.” Vitamin B, stood for “Beziehung” or “contacts” and was a kind field expediency to correct problems but was not evident. For example, you could not see them take a shovel and make a plow out of it. You couldn’t see it. You couldn’t see bartering trade that would bring things from the West to get in the crucial materials that you needed in order to keep producing. The system only worked on “Vitamin B,” on contacts, personal relationships, that were everywhere.

Q: The Italians call this Vitamin B “arrangiarsi,” which means “to make arrangements.”

BINDENAGEL: That’s it! But if you’re an economist, you simply can’t say “I don’t have any statistics, however, I have seen a couple of really great examples of economic efficiency. Anecdotally, this place works.” Unfortunately, that was the basis of much of our economic calculations. The East Germans knew that they had a 2/3rds economy, not some economic

miracle.

One joke circulated at the time along these lines:

East German manager meets a Japanese manager (at the time the powerhouse economy was Japan.) The East German expresses his awe and admiration for the Japanese economy and asks the Japanese manager to lift the cloud of bewilderment and tell him the Japanese secret. The proud Japanese manager looks at the forlorn East German and declares: "Our secret is quite simple. We work one-third of the time for ourselves, one-third of the time for our company and one-third of the time for the Emperor." "Eureka," exclaims the East German manager, "Now I understand. We, too, work one-third of the time for ourselves, one-third of the time for our company and we have no emperor!"

Of course when the unification process took place, there was much more transparency. We started seeing these dismal factories and we said, "How does this work? This is a factory built in 1880 and it's still using the same equipment! I wonder why the Soviets didn't take it with them!" And then we saw that the special cases were few. The monetary unification took place and the Vitamin B relationships disappeared. There was no way that they could barter and the economy began to collapse. When we came to look more closely at the economy, we did not see the "Beziehungen" that had kept it together. The relationships simply weren't there. And then we were roundly criticized; the criticism was, "How could you ever believe that anything could ever work in such an economy? This is stupid you didn't see this disaster coming." Well, it wasn't stupid, it was a closed society, cloaked in secrecy and functioning on this field expediency. We made the best analysis based on very limited knowledge and defended our efforts. Of course, we should have seen, we should have known more, but we didn't, and when the collapse came it came very rapidly and very deeply, and the place was very much shut down. Some of the collapse was also induced by the introduction of the D-Mark, which converted East German debt into hard currency that none of these companies could pay. That currency conversion contributed to the collapse of the East German economy, even when none of us mourned its disappearance.

Q: During this time, we're up to the summer of 1990, was the Embassy sort of trying to play catch-up, where things happening so fast...? Were you for one thing seeing yourself as worked out of a job?

BINDENAGEL: As a matter of fact, it was a fascinating time. Since humor often reflects reality better than analysis, let me recall two jokes that were circulating at the time. One was a reference to Otto von Bismarck. During the fall of '89 and through the spring of '90, events were happening so fast that the present was blurred. The comment on the time was: "Bismarck said; 'When the world comes to an end, we will all go to Mecklenburg, because everything happens there 100 years later.'" We heard that comment and said, "Okay, what's happening in Mecklenburg?" Indeed, Mecklenburg is a distant province in the North where it is quiet and often behind the times. My ancestors came from Mecklenburg-Vor Pommern.

Q: That being in East Germany?

BINDENAGEL: Yes, it was an East German State. The quote offered us a perspective on time. As demonstrations were taking place in the fall of 1989 we watched those in Leipzig in particular. It was a fast-paced and very exciting time in Leipzig, in Dresden and even in Plauen, a small border town of 50,000 people where some 100,000 demonstrators gathered one night. East Germany was literally exploding with demonstrations. When we looked at Mecklenburg in that period of September-October 1989, we were astonished to see demonstrations had already appeared in Mecklenburg. Recalling the Bismarck quote, we made a little calculation and said, "If two weeks after the big demonstrations in Leipzig, there are demonstrations in Mecklenburg, then two weeks equals a hundred years. Maybe the world is indeed coming to an end." That was the feeling that we had as we watched the end of the Cold War.

The speed of events was like being on a video, watching yourself on a video stuck on 'fast forward'. Fast forward was stuck for months. When you went to sleep by the time you woke up the next day, your world was totally disorientated. I must have asked myself daily: "Where are we in this movie, where are we in this play?" Each day I needed to find my spot just to know where to hop back on into the movie. The movie kept on moving, all the way through the summer.

All activity was not revolutionary however. On the other hand, in the summer of 1990 we had begun working with George Ward, Embassy Bonn DCM, to structure a new Embassy office in Berlin. We cut some positions and we set up the staffing patterns. Of course I knew that after unification, my position as deputy would be redundant, because obviously the deputy in Bonn would be the deputy for all of Germany. But because there were so many things going on we thought that the unification wouldn't come until January of '91, and that there would be a few administrative things that needed to be dealt with as we tried to put these two missions together. That was a mistake on my part.

I went to California to visit my in-laws, with my family, we came back in late July, early August. In the meantime Saddam Hussein had invaded Kuwait on August 2nd. Why was that important? It was important because in the GDR all of the Middle Eastern terrorists had bases and were working from GDR. One time after the democratic government was elected, I went to visit the Interior Minister of the GDR, with an official visitor about the East German involvement in the LaBelle Disco bombing in West Berlin. [Interior] Minister Peter-Michael Diestel was sitting across the table and we were talking about terrorists and the LaBelle Disco bombing.

Q: This was the bombing of a nightclub in Berlin by the Libyans, some 10 years before.

BINDENAGEL: Exactly, the bombing was in the mid-1980s and at least one American was killed. We were looking for the information on the Libyans, because they, like the Iraqis, were operating from East Germany. Our conversation about the LaBelle Disco bombing, went well. Later, the Germans worked closely with me to arrest and convict several people involved in this terrorist act, but that's another story.

Diestel, the Minister, and his East German policemen, who were still part of this Stasi organization, suddenly sat back and said; "I have a report it's an interesting one. You asked about terrorism and we have a more recent, a new one to report." He went to the next room and

asked someone to bring him that report. He put down this report in front of me and said: "Since the outbreak of the Golf War we've been getting these reports in here is one of them. This is a report of a Middle Eastern-looking person driving a West German rented car, filming a residence, casing a place. We suspect that he is setting up an assassination." And I replied: "Can I see the report? I would be very interested." I looked at the address, and the address was my house. I asked the minister, Mr. Diestel, "Would you mind if I had a copy of this report? This is where I live!" He said, "Of course not" and gave me a copy. I alerted our security people and at that point my life in East Berlin changed. Under threat our West Berlin colleagues, who had treated us in communist East Germany as second, poor cousins apparently felt some pity on me. For my remaining time in the last few days in the GDR, and gave me a partially armored car to drive around in. We also undertook some other security precautions because timing of the threat was linked to the U.S. invasion of Iraq. My children remember vividly this time because I would no longer say goodbye to them at the front door as I had done even through the revolution. I simply did not want them exposed to danger if an assassination attempt was made as I left the house.

One most rewarding decision taken by the Department of State before the GDR disappeared was the creation of a new consulate in Leipzig. Ambassador Barkley proposed opening a Leipzig consulate right after the fall of the Berlin Wall and before Baker's December 1989 visit to East Berlin. He wanted to take the initiative on several ideas and one of those was opening a Consulate in Leipzig. We suggested opening a Consulate in Leipzig or better said, reopening the consulate we had in Leipzig until 1940. That consulate was started with an American of German descent, Frederick Liszt, who was from Recklingshausen. He had emigrated to the U.S. because of his radical pro-capitalist views. While in the U.S. he learned railroad business from Harriman. And then he came back to Germany with the title of Consul. He wanted to find a job where he would be recognized as U.S. Consul. He tried Berlin, but was rejected. Then he went to Leipzig where his main activity was building the first railroad between Leipzig and Dresden. He became the first American Consul. We thought there was a historical connection, which was nice, but more important, opening the consulate was a way of saying, "Thank you, here are the heroes of 1989 revolution, heroic city of Leipzig." Leipziger went to the streets in the thousands and hundreds of thousands and brought down the communist system. We wanted to be on record of having said "America stands for those who demand their freedom."

The Department of State decision was not so easy. We had already argued for a decision in November 1989 and had no answer. Luckily a friend of mine, Bill Inglee, from the House of Representatives, where I had been a Congressional Fellow, visited East Berlin in January 1990. This staff member and I were talking and I told him about his proposal for a Consulate in Leipzig. He said, "that's very interesting. We should have that, that's a very good thing." So in February 1990, Secretary Baker was testifying before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Bill had written a question for Mr. Baker, and the question was, "Mr. Secretary, are you opening Consulates in Bratislava, Kiev and Leipzig?" Bratislava had been a major discussion, "Kiev" had also been under discussion for a very long time, but Leipzig was apparently new. The Secretary's response was, "Leipzig?" with a big question mark on it. But since the transcript came out with a period, I got immediately a call from the East German Foreign Office saying "you're opening a Consulate in Leipzig, are you?" They had received the message and they understood immediately why we were doing this, "You are doing this because of the demonstrators!" "Yes,

we could do that” was my reply. We had no problem opening a second office in GDR, because in 1974 when we negotiated diplomatic recognition of East Germany, the GDR wanted an office in New York. We conceded that point to get the title to our property on Pariserplatz next to the Brandenburg Gate. This person from the East German Foreign Office told me immediately, “No problem, I understand you have the right to have a Consulate.” So we began the process of finding the Consulate, getting the State Department to say “yes,” since the Secretary had said “yes,” so to speak. The State Department didn’t like this idea, and they didn’t understand it. They said, “Why are you trying to open a consulate in Leipzig?”

Jim Dobbins came to Germany where I saw him in Bavaria. He was Assistant Secretary by then in the European Bureau. We had this conference and Michael Stürmer, a professor from Ingolstadt, said, “Why are you doing this Consulate in Leipzig, you should be doing it in Dresden, that’s the heart of Saxony, heart of Germany as well, that’s where all the activity is?” Dobbins turned to me and said “You explain it, it’s your idea!” So I explained that we were trying to do it for political statement and that this is a very important one, we had a Consulate there before and wished to send a political message in support of freedom. Dobbins stated that the Department of State would approve this Consulate in Leipzig, but we will review it in six years. Meaning, in administrative parlance that the State Department would close it in six years because Germany will be united and we won’t need Consulates any more.

Another highlight that I had was regaining the title for the U.S. property at Pariserplatz. I went over to the East German Foreign Ministry on the request of the State Department administrative side, for a copy of our title to that property. The Director General, Mr. Neumann, came to the Embassy. He had never been to the American Embassy. This was after the elections and I received him in our small visitors’ room for his presentation of the title of that property next to the Brandenburg Gate, Pariserplatz 2. He was nervous about his own future and talked of his cabin in the woods where he would retire. He showed me the city plan of Berlin with the surrounding property near Pariserplatz. I was excited because we could rebuild our Embassy in the heart of united Germany, I hope.

Q: Had we been trying to do anything about these terrorists, middle Eastern and other terrorist who had been trained in East Germany? Was that a bone of contention or not? Even prior to all these things?

BINDENAGEL: Prior to the democratic election of March 18, 1990 the GDR would not entertain any discussion with the United States on such matters. We raised the La Belle bombing after the change of government because we attributed the bombing directly to the GDR. We had tried to discuss the issue for years, but they had gone nowhere. What we didn’t know was that the West German terrorists, who had killed American soldiers and many leading German politicians and businessmen, were being harbored by the GDR. After unification these terrorists were exposed. Terrorism became a very serious problem for us but we really had very much success.

Q: How do things play out here? We’re towards the end of ’90?

BINDENAGEL: Right. By end of 1990 we had opened our Consulate in Leipzig (in September

1990). German unification came on the 3rd of October, along with it the pink slips from our own government as East Germany disappeared and the U.S. Embassy closed. I left few weeks later. Ambassador Barkley left almost immediately, because this country had disappeared and he really had no role. And after getting my own pink slip from the head of our Mission in West Berlin, Harry Gilmore, I left shortly thereafter returning to Washington in January. I left in November, took a short leave and reported for duty in January.

Q: What was the general feeling about whither Germany with this East Germany when you left?

BINDENAGEL: There was a lot of optimism that unification would bring prosperity to the former East Germany. There were no regrets at the passing of the communist dictatorship. On the night of German unification there was a huge celebration in downtown Berlin. In Embassy Berlin we had a party ourselves, an awards ceremony for our troops that had delivered so much during the revolution. We had a lot of meritorious honor awards and other awards were given out. And then as the night wore on, the real jubilation was on the other side of the Brandenburg Gate at the Reichstag, where the Chancellor raised the German flag. Jean and I walked from the U.S. Embassy to the GDR after the party through the Brandenburg Gate surrounded by the cheering crowd. I felt a great sense of accomplishment tinged with anger at the clumsy way my own colleagues from West Germany dismissed us in the East, as if we were tainted by serving in a communist country. We sensed that the tremendous satisfaction and hope of unification, and the idea that in a few years West German capital and East German capability would make Germany united, wealthy and rich. Our own treatment foreshadowed the dashing of hope that occurred over the next five years. Revolution swept away the communists, but soon other problems would become very difficult.

Q: During these events was there much interest on the part of Congressmen or in a way had it sort of fallen of the screen and they were looking at sexier places or something? How did you feel about it?

BINDENAGEL: For a brief moment we were in the spotlight. Congressmen came in droves. We must have had 90 Members of the House and 30 or 40 Senators, coming in the period between the fall of the Wall, the 10th of November to March when the East Germans voted. Several of them were very influential and wanted to see for themselves before they decided on own opinions and own conclusions about the revolution, unification and the future of Europe. A couple of them were really fun.

One was on December 2nd, 3rd, 4th 1989, when Senator Pell led a Senate Foreign Relations Committee delegation to Berlin. We met them at the airport, there were a number of Senators. Senator Garn was there; I don't remember them all. We brought them to the Ambassador's residence for a relatively small we had a dinner planned. We could accommodate only a small group including the Senators, two staff members, two people from the Embassy (the Ambassador and myself) in order to maximize the guests from the East German Foreign ministry and many of the revolutionaries that we'd known. Gathering all these people in the same place made for an absolutely delightful time, rather like the round-table government that was taking over the GDR. We lost several of the communist guests, particularly members of the Volkskammer and Politburo who did not come. We were very disappointed that they didn't come, we had counted

on them to help us understand the gravity of the revolution. There were other communists and the Foreign Office types, but not the members of the Parliament. What we learned however was that there was a special session of the Central Committee to revise the Constitution, deleting the monopoly of the power of the communist party in the GDR Constitution, as an effort to save the communists. It was a desperate act, doomed to failure. For us we lost our guests, but it was a fascinating time. Congressmen, Senators interacted with the revolutionaries and communists who did come. I joined in a conversation with Senator Garn and Schorlemmer, a radical who regaled us with stories of the revolution.

The next day the Congressional Delegation had a whole set of briefings in West Berlin and then on Saturday night about 11 o'clock Senator Lugar's assistant, Ken Myers called me. I had been unable to accommodate all the staff at the dinner and they were rather upset. In fact, when I announced that we had only two seats for staff at the dinner one of them told me that I would never be confirmed for anything because they would remember for as long as they lived that I had prevented them from attending the Ambassador's dinner. In an effort to make peace, Senator Pell asked that I come and join them on Sunday. Of course I accepted. They were in West Berlin and were going to take a tour of Berlin. I joined them on their tour bus, the ten Senators or so, and we toured a little bit of West Berlin before crossing Checkpoint Charlie. There, as we crossed into East Berlin, the Army major, was giving them a Cold War U.S. Army talk about divided Berlin. The briefing could have been dated in 1965, and had no relevance to anything that had happened in the last few weeks of revolution.

So I took the microphone from her and said; "Would you mind if I continued? I would be delighted to conduct the rest of the tour." While they wanted to go see the house where the capitulation of World War II had been signed, I agreed that that site was interesting. However, I suggested that en route we had to see the sites of the revolution. We had to go to Alexanderplatz, where I told them about demonstrations that took place on Alexanderplatz; how the East Germans marched down the main street, Unter den Linden, past the Parliament Volkskammer – Palast der Republik building. As they moved toward Martini church en route to the Brandenburg Gate, the demonstrators heard "To the Gate." I only saw this three times myself, but there where all kinds of demonstrations, where the provocateurs in this crowd, not revolutionaries, would say "To the gate!" I surmised they were provocateurs because the Brandenburg Gate, near our Embassy, was guarded by police who filled trucks waiting for the confrontation. It was a set up, and the police were preparing to confront the demonstrators and brutally take care of them. However, the leaders of the demonstrations, ministers and some demonstrators themselves, were able to force the crowd to stop and turn into the big parking lot, in front of Honecker's office, sit down and light candles.

I wanted the Senators to hear these stories, such as how the Fernsehturm, the TV tower, had for several weeks jammed news reports of the West Berlin radio station of 100.6, whose very conservative news programming angered the GDR. I wanted to take them to the Gethsemane Church, near Schönhauserallee. There I said; "Here at this church were the Monday night Lutheran vigils for the political prisoners in the GDR who were held as demonstrations continued in Berlin. I recalled the day, October 7, 1989 that Gorbachev had said to Honecker, 'Those who come too late will be punished by history.' After Gorbachev's comment the same evening there was a demonstration at this, the Gethsemane church, with thousands of East

Germans. The East German police that had moved against them with clubs, dogs and trucks with snow shovels on the front to disperse them. I wanted the Senators to get a sense of the revolution that breached the Berlin Wall.

We went to a few other places before heading out to the Soviet military district to see the Museum where the Nazi's signed the capitulation. As we were driving along Karl Marx Allee, suddenly a policeman stops us, stops all the traffic, and I thought; "What have we done now?" I got out of the bus, went over to the policeman, and I said with a tone of authority; "What's going on here?!" He replied rather sheepishly: "It's not my fault, we didn't do it, we had nothing to do with it." At this point, I saw people coming up from the underground walkways, and lining up to block the street. It dawned on me immediately. Ruth Misselwitz, the wife of the soon-to-be State Secretary in the democratically elected GDR and also pastor at the Pankow Lutheran Church, had told me couple of weeks before that she was helping to organize a 'human chain' of protestors from the northern part of East Germany all the way to the Alps. She said the theme was "Renewal of the GDR."

What we were witnessing as the people poured out of the ground was this human chain. I rushed back to the bus and said, "I'm sorry about the delay, but if you want to see a demonstration, let's go right now. If you come off the bus, we will be able to go talk to these people and see the revolution in progress." I worried only a moment. At that point if it was going to be violent it was going to be violent, but it wasn't. Senators and their staff were engaged with these people and trying to understand. They asked: "Why are you out here, what are you doing?" The demonstrators were lighting their candles, but remained silent, because they are supposed to be silent. Everyone was taking pictures. The human chain began at noon; at 12:15, the demonstrators disappeared; they just went away. It was amazing. All the organizing had been done by the word of mouth, and there were millions of people there that day. Reluctantly, we climbed back on the bus and went to this house of capitulation. The Nazi capitulation was an anticlimax, after seeing the revolution in action.

Q: I'm sure it was.

BINDENAGEL: I redeemed myself with the staff; I guess. *[laughter]* Those were really the kinds of events that were pouring out all the time.

J. MICHAEL SPRINGMANN
Political/Economic Officer
Stuttgart (1989-1991)

J. Michael Springmann was born in Washington, DC and attended Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. He received a master's degree from Catholic University and joined the Foreign Service in 1967. He began his career in the Department of Commerce and later served overseas in Germany, India, and Saudi Arabia. Mr. Springmann was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1994.

Q: Well, you went to Stuttgart when?

SPRINGMANN: I went there in 1989.

Q: And you were there from when to when?

SPRINGMANN: From about May of '89 to June of '91. I was the political-economic officer there.

Q: We had a Consulate General there at that time. Who was the Consul General?

SPRINGMANN: When I got there it was Phil Griffin, who had spent a lot of time in the Middle East and who went from Consul General in Stuttgart to Consul General in Jeddah a couple of months after I was there.

Q: And then who took over?

SPRINGMANN: The next guy was Doug Jones, and he was there for less than a year. The story given out was that they had asked him to move to Bonn as political counselor, which didn't seem to hold water. Everybody wondered about the whole story there. He was one of these people who spent most of his career in Washington. As was Day Mount, his successor, who had worked for NSA at Bad Aibling, and who also spent most of his career in Washington.

Q: What type of work were you doing there. What were your main concerns while you were there?

SPRINGMANN: Reporting on political developments, elections, what the farther right wing party, the Republikaner, were doing. They were seriously embarrassing the right of center CDU/FDP coalition government. Looking into the Green Party which was a farther left party that was seriously embarrassing the SDP, which was the left of center party. Plus economic reporting about what the local business community was doing, taxation policies, plans to tax cars using the autobahn, and that kind of thing. Went into such details even of looking into the locally expanding transportation network, and the local airport.

Q: What was your impression of the German economy?

SPRINGMANN: When I got there it was the same impression I had when I had been there some 10-15 years previously, that the economy existed without any real means of support. You sort of had this pass through system where the labor unions wanted raises, so they got raises, and the manufacturers pass these along to the consumers, who then demanded another raise from their boss to pay for what they were buying. And you wondered how long this spiral could keep going, and yet it seemed to work. Everybody had their huge fat markup, you had waiting lists for years for certain models of Mercedes Benz cars. And I thought with unification it some ways it would be a shot in the arm for the German economy because you'd have to rebuild all this decayed infrastructure in Eastern Germany.

Q: It's hard to say, but right now in '94 it's sort of coming apart.

SPRINGMANN: In some ways it's coming apart because you've got this idiot Kohl and his hidebound rigid government that couldn't decide what they wanted to do with Eastern Germany. They made the snap decision to keep the East Germans sitting at home by giving them a parity of one East German mark to one West German mark, with limitations on many marks you could exchange at what rate. They apparently had not had a clue in the world as to what this would do to business accounting where you had this monumental debt in play money which suddenly turned into real red ink. This caused immense shakeups in business and causing a lot to go under, causing a huge rise in unemployment.

Q: As an economic-political officer how would you spend your day? I mean, how would you get around, what would you do?

SPRINGMANN: I would either be making appointments for people to contact, or going out to meetings with contacts, would be reading the papers, reading the press, writing articles on things that were developing, calling people to check facts. I did a fair amount of reporting on what they called the Uebersiedler, people who were moving from Eastern Germany to Western Germany. And then I did some reporting on the ethnic Germans from what used to be Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union moving into Germany. I interviewed a bunch of them, and interviewed a several organizations dealing with them.

Q: Were you there when the Berlin wall came down?

SPRINGMANN: Yes, I was.

Q: What was the reaction in your lot?

SPRINGMANN: Kind of skeptical, actually. People who were personal contacts whom I'd known for years, as well as people I had just met were not sure if they liked it, it was a major change. And a lot of people were downright hostile to the East Germans.

Q: Why the hostility?

SPRINGMANN: Well, they were seen as foreigners, they weren't really Germans because they'd lived in this compartmentalized hermetically sealed environment for nearly 50 years.

Q: How were the people who were moving in? You must have been getting people coming from Czechoslovakia, from East Germany through Czechoslovakia, how were the Germans who were coming in from the East being settled? How was that being taken care of?

SPRINGMANN: They had a number of regional resettlement centers that would process them. They were trying to parcel them out amongst the various German states. And they were given housing subsidies, and they were given employment subsidies, they were helped to find work. And the ethnic West Germans, the Einheimischen they called them, very much resented a lot of

this stuff. They said, geez, nobody helped me get a job after the war when Germany was in ruins. They very much resented paying taxes to support these people.

Q: What was the predominant party?

SPRINGMANN: Stuttgart was the capital of Baden Wurttemberg, pulled together from the Archduchy Baden and the Kingdom of Wurttemberg. It was basically a very conservative CDU oriented state. For 20 years the CDU had a lock on the parliament and the minister president, the governor. And you had Manfred Rommel, the general's son as mayor of Stuttgart for a number of years. He was regarded as being left of center, but palatable to most of the people because of his family ties. While I was there the Republikaner were campaigning actively but they were not permitted to hold meetings in public places.

Q: This was considered to be a right wing organization?

SPRINGMANN: It's farther right, they call it a right extremist, but I have yet to have anybody explain this to me. I have repeatedly challenged people to justify their remarks that these are neo-Nazis. In fact, I challenged the Army intelligence officer assigned to the consulate, he called this a neo-Nazi movement. I said, fine, give me some specifics. What is it that they've done? Because they were repeatedly investigated by the German internal security service, and the CDU and its government came up empty every time.

Q: How come they could refuse to have party rallies?

SPRINGMANN: They never explained it to me. I kept asking people, why can't these people meet? Why are you closing it off? Their argument, which I challenged Otto Graf von Lamsdorf, the former economics minister once in Washington, on this. He said, because it would be violent. And I said, who is going to be violent? Because when I've been to these rallies, the only violent people were the leftists who were throwing horse shit and rocks and bottles, and everything else at these people. I went to one of their rallies, and I was never so glad as to get inside with all these bad right wing Republikaner in my life. Because they had a very quiet orderly meeting.

Bull Connor down south was just not clever enough. He should have told Martin Luther King and all the Freedom Riders that they couldn't have parade permits because there might be a possibility of violence by people who didn't support integration.

Q: How were we reporting it?

SPRINGMANN: They kept slanting the reporting. They didn't want me to report the facts. In fact, I wrote a cable about a political meeting that, between the lines, was very critical of Rommel. It never got sent until I changed it, at the Consul General's insistence, so that the facts were altered. At that time there were at least a dozen people running for Lord Mayor of Stuttgart. All sorts of lunatic fringe people, such as the Remstal Rebel, a loud mouth from out in the country. Plus some genuine neo-Nazi people, plus the Greens, and the Republikaner, and a bunch of other people. And they let the crackpots speak, the Remstal Rebel, and the Greens and the standard parties, the CDU and the FDP. But when it came time for the Republikaner to speak,

and present their platform, left wing rowdies in the audience yelled and screamed and wouldn't let them be heard. Rommel and the police permitted this to go on for nearly half an hour without trying to shut these characters up. Eventually they were escorted out of the room, and people in the audience said, fine, bring back Rolf Schlierer, the Republikaner leader, he's running for mayor, we want to hear him talk. And Rommel said, no, we're not going to do this, we're going to close the meeting right now. The entire audience was furious. And I reported this. And State (or at least the Consul General) didn't want this. I was criticizing Rommel, I was criticizing a friend of the United States. And I said, I'm sorry. This is the way it is. If you want to talk about neo-Nazis, you're going to have to talk about the people who won't permit an alternative political view be heard. That is not parliamentary democracy. Mount didn't want to hear any part of it.

Q: Were there any problems at that point with skinheads? These were young kids who went around and beat up mainly foreigners.

SPRINGMANN: You had a couple incidents of that, they'd beat up somebody on a railway platform.

Q: What was your impression of particularly the Turks, and other people who had been working in Germany for 30-40 years. While you were observing it, was there any integration there, or movement in?

SPRINGMANN: Not really. Let me finish the one thought on the Republikaner, and then I'll go on to the Turks because I was in with a bunch of their people as well. I was roundly criticized in the consulate for meeting with the Republikaner. I figured it was my job to meet with every political party as long as they were not on the proscribed list. I was told not to invite them to any of my functions for fear of offending the established parties. They didn't want me to meet with them at the consulate, and so on. And after I left, these people they wouldn't touch with a ten foot pole upset the apple cart in the state elections. They became the third strongest party in the state. I don't know what the Consulate's doing now since they wouldn't meet with these people. Now they're going to have to deal with them.

But with the Turks and things, I had an interesting conversation with some Turks in Saudi Arabia before I left. They said they understood exactly what the problem was in Germany. They didn't like the way the Germans treated the Turks, but they said the basis for it was that they had taken a whole boat load of Turks when they had this economic miracle going and needed workers, and they imported them. But they said they got these people from Anatolia, and from the hinterlands in Turkey. They had never been to a Turkish city in their lives, and suddenly were dumped into Germany which practically invented the 20th century all by itself. And they could see why they had problems. And when I was there the first time there were always articles in the paper about not being able to digest the Turks, and what they wanted to do with the Gastarbeiter. When I came back, they still hadn't figured out what to do with them. Only there were more and more of them now, and they were pushing for separate German passports. They wanted dual citizenship in effect. Whereas Turkey and Germany and just about every country in the world, except the United States, insists you belong to one country or the other, you can't do both. And they were very hot about that.

There were more and more Turks visible I noticed. I dealt with the FDP on occasion, and there was a Turk who was sort of a minor functionary in the youth movement of that party. They'd had a Turk at the consulate when I left the first time and she was very nice, when I came back she was quite obnoxious. She'd learned a lot of bad things from the Americans. She was married to a German and was extremely critical of Germans and Germany, which I had not heard from her before. Then I talked to her uncle who was a leader amongst the local Turkish movement, and he had mentioned that numbers were on their side. That more and more Turks and other Gastarbeiter multiplied, essentially taking over the cities. And he gave me a set of figures from the German economic statistics book, that showed, for example, in Stuttgart under the age of 45 if you counted all of the foreigners excluding the Americans in the Armed Forces, and the French in the Armed Forces, non-Germans made up almost a fifth of the people in and around Stuttgart. And the guy told me in some cities like Mainz, it was a 50% of the population.

Q: Did we get involved, just watching and reporting on this?

SPRINGMANN: Yes, because it affected German domestic politics, and German economics. I remember going through factories in Baden Wurttemberg, seeing signs on the shop floor in English, French, and Turkish, and Greek, and I guess Serbo Croatian.

Q: Were there any other major things that you were dealing with, or happening, during that time there?

SPRINGMANN: The big thing was basically the indigestible minorities, and the flood of ethnic Germans from Eastern Germany and lands to the east, and the business of the Berlin wall.

Q: Obviously there was within the American official community of which you were a part, with the fall of the Berlin wall, and change, there had to be quite a bit of euphoria to begin with.

SPRINGMANN: Yes and no. It was euphoria maybe in other parts of the country, maybe euphoria that was stage-managed for television. I remember well going down to the Volks Fest in Stuttgart and talking to a bunch of people at the various tables, and saying, what do you think of this Germany unification? And they didn't think much of it. They were not Germans, I think they were Yugoslavs, they didn't think much of it at all. Then I watched the television proceedings in Berlin and they had all the flags, and people cheering, and I said, this is pretty good. And then I happened to be sitting up on the porch while this was going on, and I opened up the window to see what the rest of the city was doing, and you heard the odd firecracker going off, you'd see the odd rocket, but by and large it was fairly quiet, and nowhere near the euphoria you heard in Stuttgart when Germany won the World Football Cup.

Q: Well, first things first.

SPRINGMANN: The other thing I noticed was at the consulate it was very withdrawn inward looking consulate. Nobody entertained. I had to fight to get any kind of representational funds. And they wouldn't give me enough space to perform my function. I had previously written and said, this is what I want to do. And they said, we'll give you your predecessors two-bedroom apartment. And once I arrived I found there was an empty three-bedroom apartment in the same

building. They were giving single women, with no representational responsibilities in the consular section entire houses. And I fought to meet people, and I fought to meet successor generation, the younger people in Germany. And I kept seeing when the few people did entertain, they were simply having over the people that had been hanging around the edge of the Americans for 50 years. And they were totally out of touch with reality.

ANTHONY C. ZINNI
Deputy Director of Operations for the European Command
Stuttgart (1989-1991)

General Zinni was born and raised in Pennsylvania. After graduating from Vallenova College he joined the Marines, which became his lifelong career. His distinguish career took him to Vietnam, Okinawa, Philippines and Germany, where he served in senior level positions. Attaining the rank of General, Zinni served as Commander-in-Chief of CENTCOM, where he was deeply involved in worldwide missions including Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan. General Zinnia was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.

Q: We'll turn to the problem of the Kurds. Where were you at that time?

ZINNI: I was the deputy director of operations for the European Command in Stuttgart Germany and when the Gulf War kicked off, we put units into Turkey to conduct airstrikes and special operations out of Turkey into Iraq, mainly in the north. I was involved in the planning that went down called Proven Force, the operation out of there, flew some missions with them, worked with some of the special forces and others down there and had also worked in bringing Patriot units down. I went down into Israel when we brought the Patriot units.

Q: Did you initially when you were working on the Turkish thing, were the Turks sort of with us at that time?

ZINNI: I think when we first were sort of thinking about opening up a second front, first of all, from the European command perspective we had to be very careful in that, you know, we were going to do everything to support General Schwarzkopf and Central Command. General Galvin who is our boss says, "Give him anything he wants." This was unusual for European Command because in the Cold War we were the ones supported. Everything came to us. Now, for the first time, we are supporting somebody else and things were leaving us that were coming in so it was an adjustment to make. We sent units down, Seventh Corps, I mean, most of the heavy units came out of European Command. The idea of opening a second front was a little bit sensitive, first of all, from the military perspective, in that General Galvin wanted to be sure it was acceptable to General Schwarzkopf. General Schwarzkopf said, "Sure. We could open up a second front and it makes sense." And then the question became could we sell the Turks on this? We went down to see then Ambassador Mort Abramowitz, who was ambassador to Turkey. Marc Grossman was DCM. Frankly, I thought the Turks would never buy this. Well, the first thing Ambassador Abramowitz said was, "Yes, it could be possible if we do this right." Then I

watched him. He, working with the Turkish government convinced them to do this. The Turks obviously wanted Patriots and other things for their own protection and security and obviously, there was some quid for that. I think they were very worried about their relationship with the Kurds in the north, border controls and that sort of thing. They suffered a lot economically for that commitment because the oil and gas trade that was going back and forth across the border was stopped and halted. We tried when we went in, in the aftermath, to work with the Kurds to ensure that we did as much as we can to help support the Turkish economy. In other words, when we started feeding the Kurds and other things we, and actually was in our interest, taxpayer interests, we went to local trucks for transportation, local foodstuffs which are more in line with their cultural food and actually much cheaper than providing MRE's by airdrop.

Q: So you came back. How were you looking at Yugoslavia? Was somebody sitting around making plans for Yugoslavia?

ZINNI: No. We were seeing the beginnings of things falling apart. We were starting up this; well, first of all, I got pulled off on another mission, on Operation Provide Hope in the former Soviet Union. Secretary Baker wanted to start, or he titled an international Marshall Plan, to work with the republics of the former Soviet Union to sort of build a relationship. General Galvin wanted it to connect military to military to ensure that the Russian military wasn't going to go back and try to snap things back, that this sense of hey, the winners in this are the Soviet people, they're friends, there are no winners and losers in this. So when I came back I immediately got sent to join Rich Armitage. We were running a goodwill military mission where we were taking the medical and food and other stocks we had stored for the Cold War in the mountains of Germany in Pirmasens and other places and we were moving it to the capitals of the republics for orphanages and the needy as a goodwill gesture. We were running that military operation out of EUCOM and I was coordinating it for EUCOM. We were based out of Frankfurt with Armitage and his team and I was then assigned to his team. We were working with the government, especially the Russian government, and trying to work with them on bringing in some investment, on trying to convince them to move the ruble to a convertible currency, to bring in some assistance and help and then moving toward international auditing standards, working some humanitarian efforts. Armitage was going around Europe and other places to try to create this international support for like a Marshall Plan to help them build this bridge. We could never generate that international support but I was caught up for about six or seven months doing that.

Q: What was your role?

ZINNI: I was officially the military coordinator where there was a need for a military mission like Operation Provide Hope where we did the airlift, we did the supplies, the military supplies, and delivered them the medicine and if there was any other military requirements. You know, support requirement.

I was also working the military to military contacts under General Galvin and General McCarthy, our deputy commander, where we were going over a number of other NATO generals connecting with the Russian military, holding a series of conferences the theme of which was to sort of share with them how militaries function in a democracy, building communications and

bridges. So I was doing both those efforts.

And then Armitage sort of brought me into the inner circle of his team and so I was involved in some of the other economic and humanitarian issues. As you know, we were beginning to look at mortality rates and medical conditions throughout. The Russians were opening up much of their stuff to see where we could be of assistance. I had another nonmilitary effort in working with Armitage too in that area.

Q: And this was a little later, but Europeans were saying Yugoslavia is our problem and we'll take care of it.

ZINNI: I don't think it was that clear. Germany was in the midst of trying to figure out reunification. Kohl was announcing the mark was going to be equivalent, that they're going to retire senior officers but keep the Eastern European military mechanism. There were so many things going on. I don't think anybody was that focused on it and was willing to commit to it. There were too many things going on that were affecting the military and the politics and everything else in Europe. It was in a state. It was an interesting time.

HELEN WEINLAND
Senat Liaison Officer
Berlin (1989-1991)

Ms. Weinland was born and raised in New York and educated at Mount Holyoke College and Ohio State University. Entering the Foreign Service in 1974, she served in Zurich, Berlin and Prague and at a number of African posts, including Lagos, Nigeria; Kigali, Rwanda as Deputy Chief of Mission and Kaduna, Nigeria, where she served as Consul General. She also served in Washington as Desk Officer for the Philippines, Nigeria and Zimbabwe as well as Officer for United Nations Affairs. Ms. Weinland was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2009.

Q: So you went to Berlin?

WEINLAND: In the summer of '89.

Q: That was a good time to go.

WEINLAND: Yes. The border between Hungary and Austria had just opened up and everybody was saying, "Oh, Helen. You're going to go and bring down the Berlin Wall" and "Ha, ha" and I said, "Oh, never, never, never. East Germany is a totally different animal from Hungary."

Q: Your job was what?

WEINLAND: I was what was called the Senat Liaison Officer (SLO). We still maintained a

military occupation and we were the mission in the American sector. There were also the British sector and the French sector, and each of the three Western powers that had missions in the western part of Berlin had officers with similar titles, so we met in triads. My French colleague and my British colleague and I all met as the Senat liaison officers. We all had offices in Schöneberg city hall and we met once a week, first among ourselves and then with the man in the Berlin government with whom we liaised. All through the mission there were similar things; there were legal advisers, French, British, American legal advisers, each mission had somebody who coordinated with the Soviets in their sector, and so on and so forth.

Our job as SLOs was to be the point officers for issues between our missions, united in a sense, and the government of the city of Berlin. Of course, we had never recognized the division of the city, so in our view the mayor was the governing mayor of Berlin. We met with somebody on his staff every week as well as a civil servant in the city administration.

We also attended all the meetings of the house of representatives of Berlin, a legislative assembly. Berlin was not part of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG); it was in Germany but it was not legally a part of the FRG, and therefore, any legislation that was passed in Berlin had to be vetted by our legal advisers, who all took a very close look at legislation that was passed in the Federal Republic and decided whether or not it could be what was called “taken over” into Berlin as valid legislation within Berlin. There were occasions where we would say, “Well, here is a piece of legislation but we control all the air space over Berlin. You have no authority whatsoever over the air space over Berlin. That’s an allied prerogative.”

If it were legislation about barge canal traffic and stuff like that, we had certain exceptions we made for how barges could move on the canals.

Berlin was a demilitarized city so anything that smacked of anything military in Berlin we would nix. I think it was true we couldn’t even, that nobody from the Federal Republic could visit Berlin in a German FRG uniform. If they came, they had to come as civilians.

It all seemed so antiquated by 1989 but we still all had to live by all these odd conventions because we had never signed a treaty to end the war.

Q: So you were there from the summer of '89 until when?

WEINLAND: Until the spring of '91.

I arrived in July of 1989. At that point it looked as though things were going to go on as they had been. I went around and I did my protocol visits with all the members of the Senat, which was actually the city executive body, it wasn’t a legislative body. I went and called on various other people I had to deal with. Each month the chairmanship of the three allies changed hands, so in August our mission became the chairman mission of the three. Because we were waiting still for a new political counselor, or whatever his title was in Berlin, I was acting political counselor. So I actually had two different things I was the chair of in these triads which was a little nerve-racking since I had been there all of a week or so. Anyway, we muddled through and I got good advice and people helped out.

In October the East German government (German Democratic Republic or DDR) celebrated its 40th anniversary. Opposition to that regime had been building steadily ever since the Hungarian border had opened. East Germans were free to travel to Czechoslovakia still, whose border with the west was still closed, and there was a large number of people who had jumped over the fence behind West German Embassy in Prague. I think at one time there were up to 3,000 people camped out in the embassy garden waiting disposition of what was going to happen to them, refusing to leave. Finally a deal was worked out, whereby they could be put on a train that would go back through Berlin or East Germany and then on to West Germany. That was really only a band-aid kind of solution, of course, because 3,000 more could jump over the fence at any time. They wanted to clear that problem up before this big anniversary celebration. There was beginning to be some internal opposition building up in East Germany itself, which was stronger in Leipzig than in Berlin.

Q: This is the Leipzig candlelight marches?

WEINLAND: Yes, outside the big church in the center of town. There was much less of it in Berlin. There was a little bit in Berlin but much more in Leipzig. So that was going on and the authorities of the GDR were trying to figure what to do about that.

I wasn't reporting from East Berlin so I can't tell you all the ins and outs but it was clear that this was getting to be a real volcano simmering under the surface. I understand what happened was that they had invited Gorbachev, of course, to come and be part of the 40th anniversary. I believe the East German officials, including President Honecker, who was by then practically dead, the guy looked like a cadaver, said to Gorbachev, "We need your help. This is getting out of hand." And Gorbachev said, "Not it; it's your problem." The Soviets could not hold out against what was going on everywhere. Poland was beginning to rumble, Czechoslovakia was getting a little restive and so on, but the GDR managed to carry off the 40th anniversary.

Not too long after that, Honecker stepped down and they brought in a somewhat younger guy, but still a communist, by the name of Modrow. There began to be much more active opposition. You know, it's like any situation of this kind when you make some kind of concession, you change your policy a little bit, and you think you are going to then be able to hold the new line. You never can, unless you are willing to use extreme force, which clearly they were not going to do, so that simply emboldened more and more oppositional activity in Leipzig. Then it began to spread to Berlin.

It was clear one of the biggest, most common demands was that people be free to travel, that they just felt that they were in a prison and they wanted to be able to go to the West to visit, to visit relatives, to study maybe, whatever, to shop.

The pressure was really, really building. First they called a meeting of some party organization and the decision was to fiddle a little bit with the travel restrictions; the public reaction was, essentially, "It's not enough." The pressure continued to build all through October and so the government called a meeting of the Central Committee, which, I think, was about 200 people. So they had a two-day meeting of the Central Committee, November 8 and 9.

At the end of it, Schabowski, who was the Central Committee member from Berlin, came out to give a press conference. Of course, there were press people from the West as well from the Eastern bloc. I watched him on TV. I got home from work that night and turned on the TV and I watched him. He was reading from a piece of paper the decisions of the Central Committee, stating that citizens of the DDR would be allowed to travel freely to the West and they would not be required to have any special passports or anything.

Then somebody asked him a follow-up question and said, "When do these regulations go into effect?" He had no answer. We would never send anybody out in the State Department without a briefing book saying if you are asked this question, this is what you answer, but he didn't have an answer. He looked up and this sort of scared rabbit look in his eyes and he said, "Well, I guess from right now."

I was sitting there, I was in a bathrobe, sort of lounging in front of the TV and I thought, "What? Should I clean out my ears? What did I just hear?"

Then they cut to the studio where they had the governing mayor, Walter Momper, and he was like a kid on Christmas night, just white with excitement. I thought, "I really did hear that."

I rushed to the phone and called up the man who was the mission duty officer, who happened to be another political officer in my section. I said, "John, I don't know if you have been listening to the news and know what's happening." He said, "Oh, you mean that Soviet plane that strayed into allied air space?" (That was something we fairly often had to handle when we were duty officers). I said, "No. No. They have just opened the Berlin Wall." He said, "What?" "Yes. I think somebody needs to call Checkpoint Charlie." I think the army probably already had word of it. They must have been already figuring out what to do but when you watch what happened later that evening on the TV, this whole group of people arrived at Checkpoint Charlie and said, "They just announced we can all go to the West." So maybe 250, maybe 300 people standing there yelling, "We want to go to the West. They have just told us we have permission to go to the West." And there are maybe ten guards guarding the gate. They did a rapid calculation and said, "Pass."

And that's how the Berlin Wall opened up. Nobody knew it was going to happen. Berlin authorities didn't know, the East Germans didn't really know, we didn't know, nobody knew.

Q: OK, let's take it and move over to your place. What did you all do in our mission? Was a meeting called to discuss what the hell do we do now?

WEINLAND: The next day was a Friday, and it was the holiday before Veterans' Day. Veterans' Day was on Saturday so this was the 10th of November, and it was an American holiday, but of course, we all had to work. We were sending "situation reports" (sitreps) every hour or two, what the Berlin authorities were telling our minister and what the minister was telling the Berlin authorities, what the security people were finding out from the security people in the Berlin government and so on.

Q: But all this time an avalanche of people was coming in?

WEINLAND: All over the city, everywhere.

Q: So you are talking about something which nobody had any control over, it was just happening.

WEINLAND: One of our standard procedures had been that every time there had been contacts between the Berlin city government and the government on the other side of the Wall, with their counterparts, such meetings were all very carefully prepared. Weeks of effort went into writing papers and memoranda, and it was all vetted by all the allies and carefully orchestrated.

I don't know if you have interviewed Harry Gilmore who was our minister. The governing mayor, Momper, was obviously talking to Harry all the time in the first few days and also to the British and French ministers. Momper's message was, "We can't wait a minute. We've got to get our security people together with the security people from East Berlin. We've got thousands of people flooding around, half of them are drunk, the *Volkspolizei* (VoPos, East German police) don't have any real orders what to do. We've got to get the security people coordinating and we've got to open up some more crossing points in the Wall" because there were only about two or three official crossing points prior to November 9.

There was no way we could say, "No. You can't go talk to your East Berlin counterparts." Obviously, we had to approve that.

At this point I was sent off to the House of Representatives at city hall, where I had my office. A special session of the House of Representatives had been convened. I was sent out to cover what was going on there. Of course, we had no cell phones, no walkie talkies, in those days. There I was, running back to my office to call back to mission headquarters, so I was running all over the place, reporting on what was being discussed in the House of Representatives. Every hour they wanted a briefing from the city hall about what was going on to wrap into these sitreps.

It was clear by the middle of the day that there would be a big demonstration in that plaza in front of Schöneberg city hall that night. People like Willie Brandt, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who was then the foreign minister of West Germany, the governing mayor, the president of the House of Representatives, all sorts of notables were going to speak to the crowd.

With my British counterpart (I don't recall that our French colleague was with us at that time) John Freeman and his wife, who was German born, the three of us all stood at the back of the enormous crowd that pretty much filled that entire, large plaza and listened to the speeches, which were, of course, highly emotional. You know – "I never thought I would live to see the day" kinds of speeches. The mood in the crowd was just absolutely euphoric, absolutely euphoric. And everyone there knew that Berlin was the center of the day's event, that the opening of the Wall concentrated the entire world's attention on Berlin.

Sometime during that first week or so, I remember saying to the senior of the FSNs who worked for me, a good friend and more or less my age, "You know, Erika. This isn't going to be easy.

There are all kinds of problems ahead, and this isn't going to be easy." She said, "Let us just enjoy this. We will get to the hard part later." I said, "Fair enough."

Q: Was there concern that there might be second thoughts on the part of the East Germans, that they might try to shut the Wall down again?

WEINLAND: I don't think so. I don't think they could have.

Q: Well, but things had gone so far that it just wasn't going to happen?

WEINLAND: I don't recall that anybody ever said that that might be a possibility. I think there was some fear for a couple of days that some of the VoPos on the other side or even army people, if they brought them in, might fire on people, that there could be a violent incident. That was why the police on both sides really wanted to talk to each other at the highest level to make sure nothing bad happened.

Q: Were the police talking?

WEINLAND: It was so bizarre. I mean there was just no way that this thing was not going to go forward, as far as I can judge from my memory of it and even understood at the time. First of all, the genie was out of the bottle in Poland and Hungary by this time. Gorbachev was well installed in the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union wasn't going to help any of these guys out. How could you put the cork back in the bottle if you didn't have an army that was fully behind the idea of smashing it down?

Q: What was happening in Czechoslovakia?

WEINLAND: This would have been the 10th of November and of course, there was continuing boiling around under the surface in Czechoslovakia but the Velvet Revolution, so called, didn't really occur until the end of that month in November.

Q: This was the guy with the keys.

WEINLAND: Late November. Yes, the keys, the vigil, all that came later than the opening of the Wall, but again, had its own momentum. I am an historian by training. I really believe in the revolution of rising expectations and when you say to somebody, "You can go to the West", you know, then the next thing he is going to say is, "Well, why can't I go and live there and earn my living there?" It was an irresistible thing.

The mission headquarters and the Schöneberg City Hall were a long way away from the actual Wall so I didn't even get up there until Sunday.

Q: What was happening along the border between East and West Germany, not Berlin? Was there anything happening there?

WEINLAND: Oh, yes. I think all the fences were coming down. People were moving back and

forth across that border as well. I can't remember what sequence and how quickly it happened, but I am pretty sure when the Wall opened, and they said citizens of the DDR could travel, they didn't have to go through Berlin to travel. They could just walk across into Hanover or other crossing points along the border between the two Germanies.

I am trying to think of what else happened that weekend, when it first happened.

Of course they also opened the border on the other side, the west side of Berlin, where the Glienicke Bridge leads into Potsdam -- you know, The Spy Who Came in from the Cold, and the other movies that had the spy exchanges across that border. That was opened the same weekend. I remember going out there either Friday or Saturday night and standing and watching people moving back and forth across that bridge.

Sunday I went up to see the Wall for myself. They had just opened a new crossing point that's in what is now Potsdamer Platz, and there was a constant stream of traffic in both directions -- people coming over and people returning with sacks of bananas and other things that were unavailable in the east. In fact, a lot of the grocery stores were giving things away. There was a Burger King stand giving away free hamburgers. That opening was in the British sector so the British were handing out tea from a little army canteen. West Berliners were standing there with flowers, handing a flower to everybody coming through. And then there were these little cars, these Trabants. You could hear them putt, putt, putting all around town, pouring out a noxious cloud of fumes.

One Trabant actually stopped. I was with the legal adviser from our mission. The people in the car stopped us and said, "We don't know how to get back home. Where can we get back through the Wall?" They had maps, but only of East Berlin. They didn't have any West Berlin streets on their maps and they couldn't figure out where the opening might be, so we had to tell them how to get home. It was an absolutely insane period.

I'll say this one thing and then we can go into the details of it in another session, maybe.

We had the embassy in East Berlin, we had the mission in West Berlin and we had the embassy in Bonn, three American establishments, all of which were pretty big. Of the three, we at the mission in West Berlin were the only ones who said, "Germany is uniting and it's uniting as we are standing here." The embassy in East Germany continued to believe for quite a long time that there was a so-called third way, that somehow the Communist government would morph into a vaguely Christian Democratic or Social Democratic looking entity and it would survive as a separate country.

The embassy in Bonn was listening to German Chancellor Kohl, who was saying, "Well, yes, we'll unify, but we will take ten years to do it" and so that was what the reporting from Bonn was saying. Germany will ultimately be one country again, but it will be a long, guided, carefully controlled, developmental process. We in Berlin were the ones that said, "Get ready, guys. This train is coming down the track fast." We pride ourselves, those of us who were there, we pride ourselves in saying we called it right.

Q: Where did you go from Berlin?

WEINLAND: Kaduna.

Q: We are talking about the morning after in Berlin, the Wall has fallen, people are flowing back and forth. Was this sort of, what is going to happen here, because at the time it was not at all clear that Germany, the Germanys would be unified. Could you describe that kind of limbo that things were in right at the beginning? You know, from the perspective of you all in Berlin.

WEINLAND: Obviously, the first few days we didn't know what was going to be happening, but it began to be very clear, particularly within Berlin, it would not be possible to have two cities where there was really one, once the police were not tasked with keeping it separate. There were all kinds of issues that, once the Wall was open, had to be addressed, like the intercity transportation system, the security system with the police, fire companies and hospitals, and all these kinds of things. Once you had no Wall, there was no rationale for keeping these as separate systems governed by two different countries.

You also have to remember that Berlin was entirely within East Germany; there was no border in Berlin with the Federal Republic of Germany so that if you did not unite the city and the country, you would have this very strange anomaly of a slice of pie that wasn't really governed by either of the two countries.

It fairly quickly became apparent to us at the mission in west Berlin that this was not going to be a workable situation. At the same time, the chancellor, Helmut Kohl, in the Federal Republic of Germany, was pressing, was saying "Well, we're going to take this very slowly and we'll establish some ties and we'll do a little bit here and a little bit there and our business people will start investing some money." They were looking at the years. Our ambassador in Bonn,

Q: Vernon Walters.

WEINLAND: yes, Vernon Walters and he was, of course, talking often with Kohl and the other members of the government and he subscribed to that theory. There was a little bit of tension between us and the embassy, which nominally was in charge.

Internally, within the embassy, there was also a question that became more and more pressing as things went on, which was what the configuration of the American presence in Germany would be, because you can't maintain two very large diplomatic missions within the same city as any rational way of using your resources. That was also a question that was hanging out there after we began to assess what was going on.

Q: Knowing bureaucracies, and how bureaucratic the Germans can be, I can see this must have been wrenching to them. It must have been difficult for them, and for you as well, to rethink all the bureaucratic arrangements that had grown up over the years.

WEINLAND: Well, the trouble was there were all these regulations on us as members of the military mission: where we could travel, which checkpoints we could or could not cross. We had

to follow the rules that had existed, even after they didn't make any sense. And so we would say, "Well why can't we go over the Bornholmer Strasse crossing point? It's closer to where we live than Checkpoint Charlie." All these kinds of questions about outdated rules, "Why can't we take the S-Bahn over to Unter den Linden?" and all kinds of odd things began to come up and they just got worse as time went on.

My job was to be the working level person who liaised with the Berlin government. The Berlin government, in the eyes of the Western allies, the British, the French and the Americans, was the legitimate government for the entire city of Berlin. It had left the traditional city hall, which was in the Soviet sector and therefore in East Berlin, on the other side of the Wall in 1948, when there had been such violent demonstrations and other pressures on them that they could no longer function. That is when they had moved into the city hall of one of the 12 districts in the western part of the city, in the American sector, in Schöneberg. Of course, after the Wall opened, all the people in the Berlin government were saying, "How do we interface with the people who are in the Berlin government in East Berlin? Where is the real legitimate government here? How are we going to function? It is not acceptable that we would just split the city in half and they'd carry on over there and we'd carry on over here."

So there were legal problems that were pretty thorny and also these practical problems of public security and public services.

I will add one small note that was of interest to me because I was always interested in religious arrangements in the countries I served in. That was that the Catholic diocese had never acknowledged the splitting of the city. The Catholic cathedral was also in the eastern Soviet sector, and there had been a very special dispensation that permitted the bishop occasionally to come to the West to visit the rest of his diocese. That was another example of the kinds of institutional anomalies that the splitting of the city had brought about.

So we were wrestling with all these issues. I have to say, I can no longer, 20 years later, really recover the chronology of how things changed. The Wall opened on the night of November 9th. Gradually, more openings were made in the Wall so that it was easier for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic to move across from one side of the city to the other. One of the strange anomalies was that while East Berliners were able to come to the West part of the city, there were still certain restrictions on the West Berliners and on West Germans from the Federal Republic of Germany traveling into the East. That took maybe two or three months to resolve.

In March of 1990, I had an American citizen friend visiting me. (I have to say, I accumulated many, many close friends during this time because everybody in the world wanted to come and see what was going on in Berlin. I had a steady stream of house guests.) Just to give you some idea of the anomalies, a visitor came toward the end of March and he and I and my senior assistant, a citizen of the Federal Republic and also a West Berliner, wanted to go have a picnic at a lake in East Berlin. We went to one of the crossing points that I only recently had been given permission to use.

In the traditional way that members of the U.S. military mission went from the West to the East, we were not permitted to have any contact whatsoever, even spoken contact, with the VoPos in

East Berlin who controlled that side of the crossing point. All we could do was take our military ID card and hold it up to the window of the car, which had to be closed.

My American friend, of course, was traveling on an American passport; he was not an American working for the government, so he had a passport, and my German assistant had a German ID card. She had to get out of the car and walk to the other side of the border because she was not allowed to cross in a military mission vehicle; my vehicle had military mission plates. She had to walk over. The American friend presented his passport and was able to hand it out physically to the VoPo and get it back, but I still had to do the military mission thing of putting my pass up to the window. This was the kind of weird combination of procedures that existed for some time after the Wall opened.

Q: What had happened? I mean, there were East German guards at these openings?

WEINLAND: There were still guards, yes.

Q: They just waved all the citizens through?

WEINLAND: Yes. They would just wave you through.

Q: But you all had to go through?

WEINLAND: Yes, my assistant still had to present ID in order to cross that crossing point. Previously, she would not have been allowed to cross it at all without a huge amount of paperwork and applying for a visas and all that kind of rigamarole, so this was something of an improvement but not a huge one.

Q: Were the police, the VoPos, were they still carrying Kalashnikovs?

WEINLAND: I can't remember, but probably not.

Q: I would have thought it would have been a much more relaxed sort of thing.

WEINLAND: Yes, but still we were under all these restrictions. I can remember having friends visiting me in January. We went up to the part of the Wall that is right behind the *Reichstagsgebaeude*, the former parliament building. There was an opening that had been carved out by what we called the "wall peckers", the people with the chisels and hammers. He started to walk through and I said, "I can't go through that. I have to go through an officially recognized crossing point."

I had two friends who came sometime in say late June or early July, and we wanted to visit Potsdam where there are these wonderful palaces of Frederick the Great. With the first set of visitors, we had to stop at Checkpoint Bravo, the checkpoint between West Berlin and East Germany on the western side of the city. We had to stop at a shed there for them to get visas for all their family. I still used my military pass, although I did not have to have a visa as had been the case prior to November 1989.

About two weeks later I had another American visitor. We wanted to do more or less the same thing, and I said, "We have to stop here to get you a visa," so we stopped at the shed. No one was there. It was locked, it was closed. I said, "Well, I guess we just keep going."

Q: It sounds like, having served in Germany, you and the mission had really caught the German infection of bureaucracy. Leaving the decks of the Titanic, and there is a German man there, first checking off and turning your deck chair in and all this before getting on a lifeboat.

WEINLAND: It felt that way, yes.

To back up, where all this had come from was what we called it the "Berlin theology." It had developed when it was clear the city was dividing into an eastern, Soviet sector and the three western sectors, something that happened gradually in the 1940s. There had never been a treaty ending the war or even until 1972, I believe it was, a treaty more or less regularizing the relationships between the four different allies of the war. In order to preserve our status and our right to operate in Berlin, these procedures had become crucially important during and after the Berlin Airlift in '48-49. This was why all these little technicalities had grown up; why we were not allowed to speak to the VoPos, because in our theology, they had no right to control that border. In our view, that was a Soviet responsibility, and we kept saying to the Soviets, "What happens in this sector is your problem, not the problem of the German Democratic Republic.

Q: All of this very important because there was a fear of salami tactics, cutting away the rights of access. The Soviets were playing the same game. They were trying to get us to concede certain things so that eventually the western allies would leave.

WEINLAND: The Berliners who had lived there through the war and after knew that what we were doing was preserving their freedom. Younger people who moved up there when it became attractive to do so, because the rents were low and there was no draft in Berlin because it was a demilitarized city, and they could get cheap lofts if they were artists or musicians or didn't have a lot of money and so on, found it an attractive place to live and they got big tax breaks for doing so. They were less enamored of some of these regulations, but for the older population, they realized that the rules were important.

We thought they were silly, too, but you know, but we also accepted that they represented important precedents that had to be maintained. When I drove from West Berlin to the Federal Republic of Germany, most westerners could use one of three routes; we were restricted to one route that went straight across in the center. We had to check in with the military at Checkpoint Bravo as we left the city and entered the German Democratic Republic. We went through a special lane that was controlled by the Soviets while everybody else went through regular customs border kinds of lanes, controlled by the East Germans.

The U.S. Military Police man who was checking me out said, "Return all salutes," and I said, "I'm not a military member of the mission. I am civilian." They never have any sense of humor. He said, "Return all salutes." And I said, "OK, OK." By gum, those Russians were there, snapping their hands up to their caps and I, in my blue jeans and T shirt, saluted right back.

It was important to maintain that, but after November 1989 all was now all in a terrible state of uncertainty and flux for the next eight months or so.

Q: During this time you were part of the country mission and all and a fairly senior officer. What were we doing? Were we sitting around saying, "OK, let's do this or that? Were we waiting for directions to come out of Bonn or were we planning on how to deal with your German counterparts? To be integrated? What were you doing?

WEINLAND: We all in the mission began to do two different things; I continued the work I had of liaising with the Berlin government, so we continued to have our weekly meetings. We continued to attend meetings of the house of assembly and so on. We also began to be much more traditional political and economic reporting officers. Reporting on political developments in Berlin was a more important part of my job at this point. One of the things I had to do was go to all the party conventions and hear what it was they were planning to do. There was a national election in December of 1990 but I can't remember if there was a local Berlin election before that. All of that was something we were doing that was more conventionally political and economic reporting.

We were, of course, talking all the time to the Berlin government about what was going on and at a certain point, and again here my chronology is a little shaky, at a certain point I was directed also to start covering the activities of the Berlin government in the Soviet sector. I was directed to go to the meetings of the House of Representatives of the other side of Berlin, which was still functioning as a separate government from the government in the West. I began to attend those sessions as well and to try to extend my contacts to the Berlin politicians.

Q: Were you stepping on the toes of our embassy in East Germany?

WEINLAND: No, because according to the Berlin theology, Berlin was one city and therefore, although Embassy Berlin was accredited to the German Democratic Republic, it was not allowed by us to report on events in Berlin itself. We never recognized the right of the East Germans to have their capital in the Soviet sector of Berlin. So the embassy was covering everything that was going on outside Berlin, but they were not permitted to contact the political parties in East Berlin, the house of assembly and so on.

Q: OK, let's go back before the Wall fell. Was it part of your job to go to East Berlin and to find out what these parties were doing?

WEINLAND: No.

Q: So this was sort of a vacuum.

WEINLAND: Well, they only had the Communist party.

Q: But still, you can only maybe have one party but you've still got political activity going on.

WEINLAND: That question makes me think that when I started to cover East Berlin, it must have been after March of 1990, because that was when the new government in all of the GDR was elected. Thomas de Maziere was elected the head of government in the GDR, from the Christian Democratic Party. This was the eastern branch of the same party as Helmut Kohl's, so there was now a Christian Democratic Party in the German Democratic Republic. I think it was in that election that they also elected a city government, which had probably had not been quite that well-defined up until then.

Our theory up until the opening of the Wall and then sort of vaguely going up toward those elections, our theory had been anything that happened in the eastern sector was the responsibility of the Soviets. So whenever there was something that happened in the eastern (Soviet) sector, we never went to the Berlin people there; we always went to the Soviets and said, "What is this going on? We hold you responsible for not shooting people at the Wall" and those sorts of things. All three western missions had an officer who was specifically charged to be the liaison with the Soviet authorities in East Berlin.

Q: Was there sort of any activity from our embassy in Bonn and our mission in Berlin saying, "How are we going to rationalize all this" or was this sort of on a day to day, saying well, let's try this, let's try that?

WEINLAND: I think a good deal of it was on a day-to-day basis because, of course, from the perspective of the embassy in East Berlin, there was going to continue to be a viable government in the German Democratic Republic. Our embassy officers in East Berlin thought it would change, it would become democratic, and they had the elections in March. The embassy began to establish relationships with the new government, with de Maziere and so on, but we still had this strange anomaly of Berlin. It couldn't work within that kind of system.

Q: No, and particularly, what was happening to the West as far as this border was concerned? Were West Germans coming through into East Germany? I mean, was the whole thing sort of dissolving?

WEINLAND: Yes. Among other things, you needed to have political parties to have the election in March and the political parties in the Federal Republic of Germany, West Germany, were helping establish the new parties in the East. They were sending various kinds of party organizers, advisers and so on and so forth. There was, of course, a surviving party that grew out of the former Communist Party, the PDS, the Party of Democratic Socialism. It was made up of former communists who were finding it rather convenient to become democrats at that point. There was a CDU, Christian Democrats, there was SDP, the Social Democrat Party, from the West, there were the Greens who were trying to make headway in the East, so all the western parties were cooperating across boundaries and helping out like-minded citizens in the East.

And of course, Angela Merkel who is currently the chancellor of Germany, comes out of that Eastern CDU.

Again, my chronology is a little off, but fairly early on in this process, the two governments announced -- I think it was even before the elections of March -- they announced that they would

unify the two currencies. The East German currency was virtually worthless, so they decided the West German mark would be extended to East Germany. They negotiated the arrangements by which things would be bought up at what rate and converted over to West German marks. That was to become effective I think on the first of July. They were working out the technicalities of changing over the currency like that. That can be a very complicated process.

Q: Were the files of the secret police coming open or had that happened while you were there?

WEINLAND: That happened while I was there. I can't remember if it was before or after March. Of course, those files contained huge amounts of information. It sounds as though, of all the eastern countries, East Germany had more informants per thousand inhabitants of any of the former Warsaw Pact members. Almost as soon as the Wall opened, groups of anti-communists broke into the offices of the Stasi (East German secret police), broke open the files, and in some cases threw them out the windows or burned them.

Q: Germans being Germans, everything was documented. We are still living off the German, Berlin documents from Nazi times.

WEINLAND: Those documents, of course, were in West Berlin. That was an important archive, and quite a number of Americans were working there.

Q: How about the German officials you had been dealing with? Were they getting restive about wanting to rationalize the administration of the city?

WEINLAND: Yes, but the first huge step that had to happen was that we had to end the war.

Q: You're talking about World War II?

WEINLAND: We're talking about World War II, which really officially ended only in June of 1990. The four allies, including the Soviet Union, were engaged in extremely intense negotiation about how that would take place. Did we need a treaty? Yes, we did. Who would sign it? What would the future arrangements be for the various armed forces that would remain stationed all throughout Germany, both East and West? What would be the role of the Warsaw Pact and NATO? Would NATO be extended to the East, would the Warsaw Pact continue to control the Eastern part of Germany?

Those were obviously very tense questions, and even the Western allies did not agree entirely on how it should happen. I think the Americans were more eager to get it properly resolved quickly than either the English or the French, but eventually we came to an understanding that it had to be done. A lot of our time in the spring of 1990 was to prepare for a ceremony that would be held in Berlin where the four foreign ministers of the World War II allies plus the two foreign ministers of the still-existing two Germanys, would all meet and sign a treaty document that would give full sovereignty to both the GDR and to Federal Republic of Germany. By June, everybody agreed on the terms on by which that would happen.

So in June of 1990 James Baker, our secretary of state at that time, came to Berlin as did all the

other foreign ministers. The only part of it that I witnessed, which was sort of fun, was the decommissioning of Checkpoint Charlie. We had a somewhat odd commandant of the American troops. There was about a 5,000 troop Berlin brigade. He was the commandant of that brigade, and he had wanted to be the kind of big star at this event. You know, it was *his* crossing point. Then Mr. Baker decided that that would be a great photo op for him, so our unfortunate general had to take second place. He wasn't even the chairman commandant that particular month. As I said, there was a system of rotating chairmanships among the three western allies, and our commandant was not the chairman in June, so he didn't even get to make the big speech from the military side. I think it was the English who did.

They brought everybody together, each foreign minister made a speech standing in front of the shed where Checkpoint Charlie on the Western side was based, and then while the band played "Up, Up and Away," they lifted the shed off its moorings and swung it off to the side of the street. One of my friends in the Berlin brigade told me later that they had practiced at four in the morning to make sure they didn't drop it on anybody's head. It was not the first time that shed had been pulled off its little island in the middle of the road. But you know, it was a very moving ceremony.

Q: Somebody might not think about this. As they were trying to put this together another factor was the fact that the French and the British really weren't delighted about this. They had had some problems in Germany previously. We were much more eager. Did you have a feeling that we were, even at your level that we had the ball and we were running with it and every once in a while the British would sort of say, "God, slow down."?

WEINLAND: Every once in a while in the meetings we had between the three Senat liaison officers . . . particularly my British colleague who was a closer friend and we were able to rib each other; our French colleague whose command of English obviously wasn't as good as ours would begin to get a little worried, you know as we would be teasing and ribbing, laughing at each other . . . At some point my British colleague came to one of these meetings and he said, "Is it true that your commandant is planning to preside over the decommissioning of Checkpoint Charlie"? This was the first I heard of it. I mean, we hadn't had any scuttlebutt within our mission that this was happening. So I said, "Uhhhh." Apparently, John's commandant was somewhat nervous about the fact that our guy might be seizing the limelight and playing the liberator as opposed to the French and German commandants.

I think there was some nervousness and certainly Mrs. Thatcher was a little bit dubious about the negotiations.

There was also tension between the Germans and the British and French because they had very different ideas about the expansion both of the European Union and also NATO. The French supported the idea of what was called the 'wide shallow' theory which was that you would bring a lot of new countries into the EU but it wouldn't be that serious and deep an integration of all the economies and so on, whereas the Germans were driving much more for a deeper and tighter union.

When I lived in Berlin it was clear to me that a lot of my German friends, particularly some of

the younger ones, didn't really trust themselves. They knew their terrible history, of course and they felt that they needed the security of some outside braking system, that they were always just a little bit nervous of what their country might get up to, and that there might come a time when that militarism and xenophobia would raise its ugly head again. There was always a kind of lack of confidence in their own democratization that struck me and upset me because I felt that they were essentially as democratic and committed to a democratic system as we were.

Q: What were you getting from your German colleagues in the Berlin government?

WEINLAND: I think they knew that they were going to unify and there began to be a lot of pressures on us; when are you leaving? They knew as well as we that it was not going to be possible to run that city as two separate entities and so a lot of our conversations were, "Well, we're planning to take this initiative and that initiative" and so on. Essentially, we were in a sort of put up or shut up mode. Sometimes we had to put up but essentially we shut up.

One of the big issues that came up was an initiative from West Germany -- so we had relatively little input -- that had to do with landing rights and overflight rights for non-allied aircraft. Up to this time, no aircraft other than airlines or military aircraft belonging either to Americans, British or French could land at either of the two airports in Berlin. Lufthansa was, of course, just crazy to get in on the act, and we really had a lot of pressure from the CEO of Lufthansa and from the German aviation people who wanted to start Lufthansa service to Berlin. We resisted it because we knew that the Russians would get upset if it happened before we had the treaty signed and delivered. It wasn't that we had anything against Lufthansa but essentially, TWA, Air France and British Air landed at Tegel airport and that was it.

One of the few ways in which the Russians continued to cooperate in four power control in Berlin was in air traffic control. There were always Russians present at the building in West Berlin where the air controllers controlled all the traffic coming in and out of the city, and so we didn't want to screw that up until we had an agreement.

Q: What about the U-Bahn?

WEINLAND: Oh, yes, the U-Bahn. There was one S-Bahn line that went all the way through, and that was the one to Friedrichstrasse station where there was a passport control and a border crossing. We Americans were on a line of the U-Bahn, the underground railroad, Metro, or whatever you call it here. The one that went by where I lived had originally gone all the way over into East Berlin to one of the outer sections of East Berlin; that tunnel had been blocked and the rails had been torn up for a couple of miles. It now ended in West Berlin and picked up again in East Berlin, so that opening that connection and also one of the big S-Bahn lines further to the south, those were priorities. Otherwise, you had to go up into the city, switch over somewhere and then take the S-Bahn that did go to Friedrichstrasse, and it added a half hour to the trip.

Q: So that was done rather quickly?

WEINLAND: Yes, It was a huge job, so I don't know that it was finished by the time I left, but yes, they began to work on the plans for that pretty quickly.

Q: What about the canals?

WEINLAND: I don't believe the canals were ever blocked and closed. I am trying to think. Our commandant had a boat and my two colleagues told me they would really like to have one of our weekly meetings or monthly lunches or something take place on the boat because it was such fun to go from the Wannsee through the canal system and past the East German parliament. I am pretty sure we were able to navigate all the way into the eastern part of the city.

You know that Berlin is built on a shallow sand plain with an extremely high water table; I think the water table is only about six to twelve feet underneath the street level so this whole system of canals is a very important link through the city and helps to keep the water levels regulated.

Q: Did you notice much of a divide between Osis and the Wessis, I mean the East Germans and the West Germans? Were you able to figure out the reactions?

WEINLAND: Well, there was both the internal issue, which became much more important as we got toward October but there was also the general issue. I think more in Berlin than in the Federal Republic of Germany there was sensitivity to the fact that there was a great disparity in income and political development and all kinds of other factors. There grew up not too slowly, it came pretty fast, a resentment on the part of the East Germans of what they considered very high handed and bossy West German behavior. There was a kind of an attitude on the part of the West German businessmen and potential investors and even party people and so on that, "We know how to run things so just get out of our way and we'll come in and solve all these problems." The Osis, the Easterners, began to say, "You know, we're not stupid and we have some of our own ideas and particularly, we have systems of taking care of people with pensions and health systems and all these kinds of things that aren't all bad. We'd like to talk about these things and not just have the steamroller come in from the West."

A sidelight of this issue is that in spring 1990 I went to Czechoslovakia to see a friend and I said, "You know, it's too bad you don't have a big, rich uncle in the West to help you get onto your feet." She said, "I'm glad we are doing it on our own. I wouldn't want to have to put up with what the East Germans are having to put up with." So even people in Czechoslovakia, who were also going through their own very difficult transition, felt that.

The real problem was the German Democratic Republic had an industrial infrastructure that was disastrous; first of all, it was terribly polluting, they depended on a lot of brown coal, they didn't care where they dumped chemical wastes and all these environmental problems, and they also had huge, very inefficient factories. The Westerners were right in a way that they knew better how to calculate cost benefits and do budgeting and so on because that never was a major consideration of the eastern countries.

I went around, fairly late in the game, I think it was after unification, to call on the head of the CDU in the Berlin parliament, not the whole country, just the Berlin CDU, the Christian Democrats, whom I always found much more unpleasant than the Social Democrats. I went into his office with my assistant and I asked, "I am sort of interested to know, is this party congress

that is coming up, how are you going to do this? How will you get together with the CDU from the east?" I can't even remember what the particular issues were. He essentially said to me, "What are you wasting my time for, asking me these dumb questions?" I said, "Well, I mean one of the things that occurs to me is that there is a certain set of issues and that it may not work quite as smoothly as you think. As you come to unify the party, there may be certain kinds of issues . . ." and I can't remember what they were. He actually backed off and said, "Oh, OK. I see what you are getting at." There was an interest in the East in having a helping hand, but they resented very deeply the manner in which it was extended.

Internally, between the mission and the embassy there was a terrific problem because we had a lot of Germans working in our mission because it was a big operation. I think there were about 277, what we call Foreign Service Nationals. In the East they did not have any sort of traditional Foreign Service Nationals as a security measure; they brought in American contractors to do a lot of the sort of routine work of either analyzing, reading newspapers and translating and certain kinds of protocol and secretarial work and also guards and all those kinds of employees.

But once we got past October 1990 and Germany was unified, we now had a fairly large embassy in East Berlin and we had a mission in West Berlin. The mission in West Berlin no longer had any work to do, of the kind that had existed, that we were traditionally expected to perform. We were obviously going to have just one office.

It was a very delicate thing, because it was being driven from Bonn, which was making the decision about what the staffing pattern would be in this new entity. They drew up all the position descriptions and advertised them so that the 277 people working for us in the West were bidding on 77 jobs that were going to continue to exist once we had a unified consulate general. There was incredible tension in our mission about who was going to get those 77 jobs. All of us who were supervising these various people -- I supervised three people -- we were all, of course, writing glowing reports about how our person was best suited to do X, Y or Z. The day the letters came out saying either, "Thank you for applying, but we don't have a position for you" or "We are happy to offer you this position," was a very bad day. The people who lost out were very nasty to the people who won out. They couldn't rejoice in their success because they had lost their jobs. I was very fortunate, because all three of the people who worked for me were kept on; two of them are still working in the new embassy. That was another part of unification that was very stressful on everybody.

I guess I should get a little bit into October because after the signing of the treaty

Q: That's October, 1990?

WEINLAND: 1990, after the signing of the treaty in June, then it was full speed ahead. By then it was clear that German unification was going to occur on their national day in October, so we had to prepare to get out of our offices and all the rest of it. All through that summer there was very heavy activity, reassigning as many Americans who could be reassigned quickly, to get them out of the way so we didn't have totally redundant positions. I was going to have to stay on until the next spring. I was worried about what I would do when I was no longer Senat liaison officer. We were going to have about two or three more political officers than we really needed.

Where we would work was another huge issue. We had an embassy building in East Berlin; where we were working in West Berlin was called headquarters building. It had been a huge building built under the Nazis as the headquarters of the Luftwaffe in the Berlin region. It wasn't the whole Luftwaffe, but it was for the Berlin region so it was a huge pile of stone, fairly far out toward the western edge of town. The embassy building in East Berlin was not too far from the Brandenburg Gate so that was fairly centrally located.

The question was, would we move over to the East? Well, if you moved over to the East, there were no computers available in your office; you had to go to a few computers that were in a classified, secure area. In West Berlin I had my own computer station in my office. The telephone system in the East was pretty bad, and this was before there were such things as cell phones readily available. It just seemed a nightmare of communications problems. Although I was assigned to an office in the East, which I was to share with a college intern even though I was the second ranking person in the section, I just said, "I think I will just continue to work here."

We had all these problems like where our mail was delivered. There were classified couriers who had to come over once a day with the classified stuff. I really feel even though I was being badgered by both our wonderful minister and also by my immediate boss, the political counselor, I feel I did the right thing because I just felt easier having a better communication system.

I had been in Nigeria before being in Berlin. One of the things I had learned there was how to work around a non-functioning communications system, which was just to go physically, get a driver, and go physically to the place where you wanted to meet somebody. If he was there, you'd meet him and if he wasn't, you'd leave a note and say, "I'll be back Tuesday at 10" or something. The thing that amused me -- or gave me this wonderful German word *Schadenfreude*, a rejoicing in the sufferings of others -- or increased my *Schadenfreude* was that the people who were working in the eastern part of the city, who had never served in a third world country, they were all a part of the "German Club" (they just moved from one German post to the next), they would just throw up their hands and say, "I can't get hold of anybody. I don't know how to find this guy. His telephone doesn't work. My telephone doesn't work." I said, "Well, get in a car and go to his office." "Oh." So that was sort of fun for me to needle them that way.

After October, we were gearing up for all-German elections in December of 1990, now that the country was unified. I had now become a pure political officer and that meant I was reporting on all the political activity in Berlin. Others were reporting on various outlying states. At that point I was working hard to continue meeting political leaders from the East. I was also attending party congresses in both East and West, going to political rallies to judge the size of the crowd and what kinds of election promises were being made and so on. It was a lot of fun; I really enjoyed political reporting work when I was in the Foreign Service. This was a really good time and place to be doing that kind of work.

The elections were in December. I can remember going to someplace where the returns were coming in. Under the German system -- and this is common in a lot of places where there is a parliamentary system rather than a system like ours -- a political party often has to achieve a certain percentage in an election in order to have any seats at all in the parliament. The German

system is complicated because the parties draw up lists of candidates and so, say, your party wins 15% of the seats and there are 100 seats in whatever the body is, you get 15 seats, so the top 15 people on your list get into the parliament. At that time in Germany the minimum percentage was 5%, so if a party fell below 5% of the vote, it got no seats.

I can remember the shock on the face of the Green Party leader. That party had been a sizeable force, actually, in the Berlin House of Representatives because it was the coalition partner that put the SDP into the majority, so it was in coalition in the government. I can remember seeing the look on his face when he began to realize the Greens were going to come in under 5%.

The CDU won those elections with a fairly good majority, which really was a portent of the future and caused a lot of realignment, in both East and West, in how they were going to set up their government.

Once the elections were over, I really didn't have any job at all. There wasn't anything left to report on. Berlin was now a backwater, it wasn't yet the capital. There wasn't anything there that was all that interesting to anybody in Washington. So the economic officer, who was equally underemployed, and I cooked up a scheme to travel all around eastern Germany and Berlin and talk to leaders of the major religious groups about the unification of all the Catholics, the Protestants and some of the other smaller groups, how they were doing it, what the various dynamics of their unification were as an example of the problems of unifying the country.

That actually turned out to be an interesting project. It kept us busy for a couple of months, tooling around and talking to people.

One of the things that came to light was that in the Federal Republic of Germany, still today, there exists what is called the religious tax. If you are a practicing member of a faith community, when you first go to work, you say for example, "I am a member of the Reform Church and I want to pay the religious tax and I designate my share of it to go to the Reform Church." The government takes 7% of the income tax you pay to the central government and pays it to whatever denomination you indicate. From that, the religious authorities pay the clergy. Thus, the clergy are paid from funds collected by the secular tax authorities rather than from donations from the members of the church directly to that particular parish or whatever.

If you interviewed West German religious leaders or people in West Berlin who were members of churches and asked, "Well, do you think they are going to extend this tax and put this in effect in East Germany?" they'd say, "Of course, how else?" This is a wonderful thing about bureaucrats: "How else would you do it?" There is only one way to do something, so that's it.

Then you would go to the East. The situation in the East was entirely different because under the Communists, the churches had been entirely responsible for the payment of their clergy, upkeep of their buildings, many of which were of course, very beautiful and old and all the other things that they had to pay for.

The other thing that was troubling to the religious leaders in the East was that under communism, being active religiously was an important way to resist the domination of the government. So if

you were anti-communist and you didn't want to actually go out and throw bricks at the party headquarters, often people would join a church as a quiet and somewhat sanctioned form of resistance. That motivation was now gone, and the churches were finding that their congregations were beginning to drop off because that extra motivation was gone. You would go around and ask, "Are you going to have this religious tax?" And they'd say, "Well, you know, we really like the fact that we are independent and that we get to raise our own money and we get to decide how we are going to spend it within our congregations."

So there was this kind of tension going on. I think ultimately, after we left, I think it did fall out in the direction of paying the religious tax. There were issues that really showed the *Ossi-Wessi* split that were quite interesting as we worked on that report.

The other thing was that in the West, as in this country, many social services are delivered by faith communities so hospital visitation and hospital chaplaincy, running nursery schools and those kinds of things in education, doing social service work among disadvantaged youth -- all these kinds of things had not been possible under the communist regime. That was all a part of the party's responsibility. The party was now no longer in charge so a lot of the churches in the East were beginning to say, "We are going to have to take on these functions of Christian education and so on. We need to think of how we are going to pay for all this and how we will reorient our mission."

So it was an interesting project that took us a couple of months and brought us up to May when I left.

Let me give you one final little anecdote. About two weeks before I was leaving, which would have been in May, I went to East Berlin to do some administrative work around my move. I was riding back on the S-Bahn, and sitting right across from me was someone who had been one of my contacts in city hall when I was doing my liaison work. I said, "How is it all going, Mr. X? Everything OK?" He said, "Well, we are starting to move people over to the East and some of the people you need to work with are here and some of the people are there." I said, "Yes, the same thing is happening with us. I am actually about to leave, but I knew it was time to leave about two weeks ago when I went to the ladies' room and it was locked." They were closing down Headquarters Berlin.

GEORGE F. WARD
Deputy Chief of Mission
Bonn (1989-1992)

Ambassador Ward was born and raised in New York City. He attended the University of Rochester and entered the US Marine Corps in 1965. Four years later, in 1969, he entered the Foreign Service and began a career which took him to Germany and Italy. He also held an ambassadorship to Namibia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2001.

Q: You went to Bonn in 1989. This was the year of miracles. You went there when?

WARD: I got there on July 3, 1989.

Q: Walters had said the Wall was coming down. What was your gut feeling?

WARD: My gut feeling, to be quite honest, was that he was wrong. I didn't see change happening that fast. Germans of my generation were expressing great doubts about speedy unification. They saw financial problems, economic problems. They were, as Germans often are, very self-absorbed. They were absorbed with their own problems. They were reluctant to see West Germany taking on the responsibility for uniting the country. Plus, early on, there were few indications that much was happening inside East Germany, although that changed very quickly as the old order in Hungary and Czechoslovakia began to come apart. Then you saw in the summer and early fall of 1989 peaceful protests. You saw East Germans fleeing the country to get to Hungary, to get to Czechoslovakia. You saw East Germans flooding into West German embassies in Hungary and Czechoslovakia and the East German government finally relenting and allowing those people to have passage through to the West. The pace of change accelerated. In August 1989, Ambassador Walters was interviewed by one of the German radio networks and was asked if he could foresee unification of Germany within five years. He gave a very short answer, saying basically, "Yes, I can foresee that because the Gorbachev government is no longer willing to support its allies in other Warsaw Pact countries." Washington perceived that statement as too forward leaning. Secretary James Baker was reportedly unhappy with Walters, and Walters did not get much support in the front office of the European Bureau.

Q: When you got to Bonn, were developments in Eastern Europe engulfing the whole operation of the embassy?

WARD: It's a big embassy. The mission included many hundreds of Americans in several locations throughout Germany. Lots of things were happening. But certainly on the political side, developments that had to do with the so-called "German question" soon became dominant. It was a very exciting time. It was a great time to be in Germany, a great time to be DCM in Bonn. Things just accelerated beginning almost from the time I got there through 1989.

Q: As East Germans were fleeing out of the country and going to Czechoslovakia and Hungary, was there concern that this is all great, but all of a sudden, the East German government may come down very hard and no matter what the Soviet Union does and we might have real fighting in the streets in Berlin and it would be hard to restrain West Germans from going to help? This had been the scenario since 1953.

WARD: There was such a concern. In fact, the East Germans did use repressive force against demonstrations in some instances. But at a deeper level, events were making the possibility of a Soviet intervention less and less likely. Gorbachev's major priority was to reform the Soviet system at least to the extent necessary for economic survival. By the time Gorbachev visited East Berlin for an anniversary day in 1989, the tide had turned. Gorbachev told Honecker that the Soviet Union would not intervene to settle East German problems. Looking back, that policy statement has to be seen as a key one. At that point, East Germany was alone. They knew better

than we did just how weak they were. The East German economy was a shell.

Q: Yes. Everybody thought it was much better than it really was, maybe because they were doing well in contrast to the rest of the Warsaw Pact.

WARD: At one point, East Germany was rated as the seventh largest industrial power in the world. When the Wall came down, and we could see what East Germany was really like, there was very little within East Germany that was economically useful. We cooperated with the Germans in a very large-scale program aimed at privatizing and selling off industrial resources in East Germany to those who were willing to buy them and modernize them. The embassy's commercial and economic sections did a tremendous job in publicizing these opportunities, and there were some American firms that stepped in and bought at bargain basement prices various facilities. But there were few real going concerns, companies that could be productive from day one. There were a couple of exceptions – the Zeitz optical works at Jena in Thuringia thrived almost from the beginning. But the automobile plants, the large steel plants, and other large industrial installations were worth only their scrap value. It turned out that I was able in this period to begin to visit relatives that I had in East Germany, where my grandmother had been born. It seemed to me that many of the horror stories that we had heard about what life had been like under a communist system were true. Industrial pollution was incredible. One relative, a second cousin, in East Germany was basically disabled because of industrial pollution. Environmental and safety problems in East German plants were the rule. The Bonneville Company was looking at buying some East German power plants. I talked with an engineer who went through these plants. He said, "From a safety point of view, any U.S. utility would have had to have closed those power plants. At one point, there was a hole in the floor without a fence around it, where you would have fallen into an open furnace." There was no effective environmental protection. The environmental hazards and workers' safety hazards were criminal.

Q: When you think about the disaster that that whole system was... As things were developing in the Eastern Bloc, were we on high alert? Was there a point where we said, "Hey, this is it?"

WARD: Not in a military sense. I don't recall at any point our being seriously alarmed about the possibility of conflict. There was a tense moment a couple of days after the opening of the Wall, when the Soviet Union approached us through the Berlin Group and asked for a meeting of the four powers in the Kommandatura building in Berlin. There had not been a four-power meeting in that building over forty years, so great symbolism was involved, memories of the occupation. The Soviets stated to us that they were concerned that unrest in Eastern Germany would threaten the security of their stationed forces. Walters, after consulting with the Department and after a great deal of thought, made the decision to go forward with the meeting. The four allied ambassadors met in Berlin. The German government was very angry about this. They felt that at a time when Germany was being liberated, when Germany was pointing toward unification, when the sovereignty of Germany was emerging for the first time in almost 50 years, this meeting symbolized the past. There was a photo taken of the four ambassadors on the steps of the Kommandatura building. It was published on the front page of many newspapers. One German foreign office type said to me, "Look at these four old men. They symbolize the past. They're as tired as the past." It was a judgment call on our part. At the time, we were the only one of the four powers to have doubts about the wisdom of the meeting. Even the British and

French valued that gathering as an assertion of the allied role in Germany.

Q: What was the purpose of the meeting?

WARD: The Soviets were making noises that they were afraid things were going to get out of hand. Harry Gilmore, our very capable minister in Berlin, told us that his Soviet contacts there were very nervous. In Germany as a whole, our forces did not feel the threat had increased.

Q: You had these Russian troops, a major army, sitting there.

WARD: You had a major army with a lot of modern weapons manned by young and increasingly disaffected Soviet soldiers. It was an unstable situation. So we agreed to have the meeting, which was aimed at ensuring that the situation would remain calm, that security would be maintained, and that the agreements among allies would be carried out. It was the only meeting that took place. We didn't agree to another. I think that Walters agreed to the meeting because he felt the moment was particularly delicate and demanded a degree of support for Soviet morale. Their world was, after all, coming apart. In the immediate aftermath of the meeting, I thought that perhaps we had made a mistake. Later, I realized that given the role the Soviets would have to play in German unification, it was the right thing to do.

Q: From the way it's described, it sounds like it made sense. It's not much fun to have a major army sitting there with a population revolting against what you stand for and to keep your troops in line and not somehow or other get involved.

WARD: And the western allies were able to say, "Look, we don't have any military designs in this situation. We want the situation to unfold peacefully, democratically, and we don't have any intention of using our forces for anything other than to protect the security of Berlin," which was their traditional role.

Q: I think this is a good point to stop.

Today is September 27, 2001. Why don't we talk a bit about November 1989. There had been a meeting in the Kommandatura.

WARD: Four Power meetings at the ambassadorial level had been suspended long ago. The meeting in the *Kommandatura* went on for a couple of hours, and no concrete agreements were reached. Everyone agreed that it was important to maintain peace in and around Berlin and that military action should not be taken. But the Soviets also used the meeting as a platform to reassert their role in Berlin. The German officials interpreted the photograph of the Four-Power ambassadors that was taken on the steps of the *Kommandatura* as a statement that change was not welcome. In the case of the United States, nothing could have been further from the truth. The United States and Ambassador Walters had made clear from the start that we very much supported unification of Germany. That was not the case for the other three powers. The reaction of the British and French at first was that things were moving fast, perhaps too fast, that the

implications of a united Germany for Europe needed to be carefully considered, and that the process should move fairly slowly. I don't think we disagreed with the analysis that all of these questions needed to be considered very carefully, but we also recognized that you can't slow history or people down, nor was that in our interest. The British, despite what I understand to have been Margaret Thatcher's quite marked hesitancy at the beginning, fairly rapidly came over more toward our view of the situation. The French lagged considerably. Their attitudes needed to be taken into account. Of course, the Soviet Union, especially at the outset, was very interested in preserving East Germany as a country that would somehow play a sovereign role.

Q: You say there were some incidents when the Wall was opening.

WARD: There was no significant violence. However, the western side of the Berlin Wall was technically in East Germany. That is, when the East Germans built the Wall, they built it on East German territory. So both sides of the Wall in a technical sense were in the East. You had on the night of November 9-10 this great flow across the Wall. Most of the East Berliners went back home that night. People almost immediately began literally chipping away at the wall. The next day and for a couple of days afterwards, we heard reports that perhaps the East Germans would try to roll the opening back. The opening appears to have occurred because of a misinterpretation of a district police official of a decision by the East German leadership to liberalize foreign travel. The district commander decided that the decision meant that anyone who wanted to leave could do so immediately. The world should be grateful for this apparent accident. In the days after November 10, the representatives of the western powers in Berlin did take steps to try to avoid any incidents that might have served as a pretext to roll back the opening. For example, at one point, the western powers made an effort that turned out to be very half-hearted to stop people from chipping away at the Wall because it was technically East German property. It didn't have any real impact except perhaps on those officials and their dependents who might otherwise have personally taken a sledgehammer to the Wall. You can't stand against the tide of history.

Q: What were people in our mission doing? What were you doing?

WARD: We were having the Marine birthday ball on November 9th and I learned about the opening while we were at the Ball. Walters immediately wanted to go to Berlin. It was his first instinct. In his memoir of his tenure as ambassador, which was published in Germany but not in the United States, he relates that his first thought was to go to Berlin. He decided to remain in Bonn on November 10th. I thought that was the right decision. At such a key moment, it was important to have the ambassador available in Bonn. We didn't know exactly what was happening. From Bonn, he could communicate with Washington, stay in contact with the German Chancellor and Foreign Minister, provide advice, and be in constant touch with our very capable team in West Berlin. By November 11th, Walters could no longer resist the urge to be part of history, and left Bonn for Berlin. By then, the situation was a little clearer. He was moved by what he saw happening in Berlin. He tells a story that is quite interesting and evocative of the mood of the times. Apparently, he got to Berlin and went to the Friederichstrasse bridge, which is where many of the spy exchanges had taken place, a bridge between East Berlin and West Berlin. There, he found a man from Hamburg who had come to Berlin with a truckload of flowers. The man gave a flower to every single person who crossed from the East to the West.

I can't stress enough the excellent job done by our Mission in West Berlin in reporting on the situation and also in recommending steps necessary to prevent any violence or misunderstandings between the East and West. Harry Gilmore deserves a lot of credit for that. The embassy after the opening of the Wall basically went into high gear and stayed there, not that we were on slow gear before then, in order to support the negotiations that came to be known as the "two-plus-four process." That expression meant the four allied powers plus the two Germanies. What evolved was a multi-tiered series of negotiations. Secretary Baker did not seem to share at the outset Ambassador Walters's view that we should do everything in our power to promote rapid German unification. Secretary Baker clearly favored a more cautious approach. In retrospect, his approach was wise in that the British, French, and, most especially, the Russians needed to buy into a resolution of the situation. In addition to the major question of German unity, you had a history of allied agreements over almost half a century that needed to be revised or renegotiated. As I mentioned, the negotiations included several tiers: heads of government, foreign ministers, then people like Robert Zoellick, who was then the counselor of the State Department, and his counterparts. Zoellick coordinated the policy effort in Washington and the negotiations in the two-plus-four format. Bob Blackwill, who was senior director at the NSC, also played an important role. Condoleeza Rice, who at the time worked for Blackwill, was part of the team, as was Ray Seitz, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. Phil Zelikow, who teaches at a university, was the junior member of the Washington-based two-plus-four team and later became the historian of the process. At the time, he was a Foreign Service Officer assigned to the NSC staff.

The role of the embassy during this time was to take the lead where it was appropriate and to support the two-plus-four team otherwise. We took the lead on issues such as status of forces. It quickly became clear that upon unification Germany, it would be necessary to have a new Status of Forces agreement that recognized German sovereignty. We also had the lead on some of the issues that involved allied rights and practices in Berlin. We unilaterally suspended our exercise of some allied rights almost immediately. The four-power rights in Berlin were in theory very extensive, but in practice had diminished over the decades. But even as late as 1989, they included various privileges that seemed even then anachronistic, like free passes on the Berlin transportation system, free shoe repair, fresh flowers in senior officer residences provided by the Germans, etc. The Berlin police reported daily on police activities to the public safety advisor at the United States mission and the other missions. The German budget for allied expenses in Berlin was quite large. Walters immediately saw that many of these practices were no longer appropriate and took immediate steps to cut away many perquisites. On the more substantive side, there were issues like control of civil aviation. As the situation began to evolve, it was clear that airspace control procedures needed revision. For decades, flights into and out of Berlin had been handled through an institution called the BASC [Berlin Air Safety Center], which was a sort of paper-based air control center. It consisted of four teams of military officers who sat around a table and passed strips of paper between themselves to inform each other about flights into and out of Berlin air space. It worked satisfactorily for many years, but it was based on the system of four power rights. The western allies had come to accept over the years a limitation not to fly above 10,000 feet. This was a mistake that made for uncomfortable and inefficient air service once jets came into use. We in the embassy took the lead on negotiations on civil aviation, stationing and on some other subjects. I was the senior U.S. negotiator for the initial

status of forces talks and for civil aviation. Simultaneously, there were negotiations going in capitals on the modalities for German unification. The latter process was been well documented in books by Horst Teltschik, Chancellor Kohl's national security adviser, and by Phil Zelikow and Condoleeza Rice.

Q: What were you getting from your German colleagues? Were they seeing a united Germany? Were they concerned that this might cause greater problems? One of the big concerns for us always has been that somehow or another the Soviets might cut a deal where Germany would say, "Okay, we'll be united, but we'll be out of NATO."

WARD: First of all, when rumblings of the crumbling of East Germany began to be felt in West Germany – beginning in the spring and summer of 1989 you had streams of refugees getting out of East Germany and going into Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and from there into Western Germany – I found among West Germans both in and out of government widespread reluctance about and even opposition to the idea of unification. Middle-class Germany was pretty comfortable and self satisfied. Germans had grown used to the status quo. They felt that long-term processes were headed in the right direction, and there was no reason to rush. Very few people sensed the need for urgency. Fortunately, one of those who did was Helmut Kohl. So, right after the fall of the Wall, you began to see within the German government a division of opinion. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the brilliant and politically adept chief of the Free Democratic Party, the Liberal Party, had led the German foreign ministry for many years. Polls often showed him to be the most popular politician in Germany. More than anyone else in the German government, he was identified with the incremental policy, *Ostpolitik*, that aimed at making the inner-German border meaningless over time in the context of a united Europe. He saw the CSCE process as crucial. CSCE, which was basically unknown in the U.S., was front-page news in Germany. At the outset, the foreign ministry very much reflected Genscher's views and wanted to go slow. People at the Foreign Ministry were also much more willing than the Chancellor was to contemplate Germany changing its role in NATO or even leaving NATO. There were a couple of indications in late 1989 that Genscher may have favored or at least contemplated a neutral status for Germany. I don't think that Chancellor Kohl ever considered such a position. Kohl's chief advisers, Horst Teltschik and Peter Hartmann, were very solid.

Q: Were we pressing and saying, "For God's sakes, fellows, stay in NATO?" Were we pushing all the buttons we could within the German government to show that we thought that a neutral Germany would be a disaster?

WARD: Absolutely. Certainly the embassy represented that view and so did the State Department. President Bush endorsed Ambassador Walters's approach in a couple of hand-written letters. These letters were written, I believe, to bolster Walters's morale at a time when the Ambassador was seriously considering resigning because he felt that Secretary Baker had no confidence in him and was cutting him out of the action. In those communications, Bush made it very clear that he favored German unification only within the context of the western alliance.

Q: German unification within the context of the Western alliance was something out of Oz. It came about. When you think about it, it certainly didn't look particularly assured.

WARD: That's right. And there probably were some on the U.S. team who thought that it wouldn't happen that cleanly. Certainly our embassy in East Berlin didn't. The analysis of our embassy in East Berlin, led by Ambassador Dick Barkley, was that East Germany was a viable country that should democratize, and that it would be in the interest of the West at least for a while to preserve a functioning and democratic East Germany.

On the German side, let me give you one example of the way some Germans looked at this process. Fairly early on, we started informal conversations between the western troop stationing powers and the West German government on a new Status of Forces agreement. The German principal representative in these conversations, which were initially not formal negotiations, was the deputy legal advisor of the German government, a man named Eitel, who was a good friend. Deputy chiefs of mission and military representatives represented the eight Western troop stationing states. In the first session of those talks, the German side indicated that in the future when Germany became unified, members of western forces would need visas to visit the five eastern states of Germany. This was a position that horrified us. In fact, I could hardly believe what I was hearing. I think a couple of things were at work in this very short-lived position. One was that it was very difficult for people in the German foreign ministry, led by Genscher, to believe that Germany really could be unified and not change its status somehow within NATO. They were constantly thinking, "What price would we pay to the Soviet Union?" Secondly, Germany expected some sort of concrete acknowledgment by the troop stationing countries that Germany was really going to be fully sovereign and that there would be no longer anything such as four power rights and responsibilities. The direct demand for visas fell away very quickly when: a) we reacted sharply to it, and b) we made very clear that we understood Germany was going to be fully sovereign. The other part of it, Germany's consciousness of the price that the Soviets would demand, was a theme that lasted throughout these negotiations and in fact was reflected in the final agreements. Indeed, in the final agreements, the western powers agreed that they would not move their forces into the new *Laender* as military units; there would be no stationing of NATO forces in the new states. Secondly, even official visits by forces would need to be approved on a case-by-case basis. This approval process became an inconvenience. Once Germany was unified, the first thing every East German town wanted was a concert by a U.S. Army band. But the U.S. Army band was not allowed to go to the five new *Laender* except on an exceptional basis. We eventually worked out a special, streamlined approval process for trips by Army bands to the former East Germany. Over time, approval became semi-automatic. I have no idea what the status is today. I'm sure many of these arrangements have changed. But the point of substance was that the German foreign ministry was way behind others in one sense and ahead of others in another sense – behind in recognizing that Germany was going to be unified, in understanding where history was taking this country, but ahead of it in understanding that you would have to pay a price to the Soviet Union. The price paid to the Soviet Union turned out to be actually much lower than one might have thought. The deal was arrived at through some very adroit diplomacy on the part of Washington, Paris, and London, but also through the efforts of Kohl. The Chancellor more than any other German understood that he was in an historical sweet spot, that the external and internal factors were at the moment right for unification. However, he knew that circumstances might change abruptly. So he was willing both to pay a relatively high monetary price for unification. He also made statements that were clearly overoptimistic but that perhaps needed to be made at that time. I remember when he said, "In five years, there will be a blooming economic landscape in eastern Germany." It's been a lot more than five years, and it's

not quite blooming yet. But he created this sense of optimism. He is a huge man physically. He created this dynamic image of optimism and positive movement that permeated the country. Germany's left loved to denigrate Kohl as a country bumpkin in much the same way that the American way criticized President Reagan as a dim wit. The left was wrong in both cases.

Kohl moved prospects of unification forward considerably during his meetings with Gorbachev in February 1990. They met in a *dacha* away from Moscow. Kohl and Gorbachev had very long conversations in which Kohl indicated that he was willing to provide very significant economic aid to the Soviet Union, and Gorbachev ended by giving a green light to German unification within NATO. That was a very important element of the deal that was closed in May or June, when the Two-plus-Four agreements were signed. They were ratified sometime later. The United States was the first country to ratify the Two-plus-Four Agreements. I had the pleasure to go with Walters to hand Genscher the U.S. instrument of ratification. It was an instance in which our Senate worked with remarkable speed. Our ratification arrangements were more complicated than anyone else's, and we got it done first. But the deal that Kohl and Gorbachev struck was essential to the overall Two-plus-Four Agreements that produced German unity.

Q: When it was just getting together, what were the roles of the British and the French?

WARD: The British and French weren't quite where we were at the beginning certainly. Maggie Thatcher was reported as expressing deep reservations about German unity. Clearly the French were reluctant. The British relatively quickly understood that the United States was going to be a strong backer of unity, and they also analyzed realistically where events were taking the situation. Within a couple of months after the Wall came down, they were playing a very constructive role. As often happens, the French had their particular concerns. I'm sure that imbedded historical memories of the wars they had fought with Germany were lurking in the background. With unification, France would lose its position as the largest country in Europe. A united Germany would have over 80 million people compared to France's 56 million. Therefore, the French dragged their feet.

Q: Were you all working with the various delegations? What were people doing when it wasn't just the foreign ministers?

WARD: There were constant talks between members of the two-plus-four teams. Zoellick, Seitz, Blackwill, Rice, and Zelikow often visited Bonn and Berlin. We spent a lot of time supporting their efforts. Personally, I spent quite a bit of time touching base with the principal German negotiators in Bonn and reporting these conversations to our two-plus-four team. We were called upon to make many demarches in connection with the negotiations. The political and economic reporting workload increased considerably. In that period, I saw Horst Teltschik, who had not always been accessible previously, quite often. We kept me abreast of the Germans' conversations with Soviet leaders. It was a very active time.

Q: Were actions on the ground beginning to move events, the movement of people and the opening of borders?

WARD: People started to vote with their feet on November 9th and continued thereafter. West

Germans also began to move into East Germany. I would travel into East Germany whenever possible, so I had a snapshot every few weeks of the way the situation was changing. The first indications of capitalism seemed to be the import of western cigarettes, alcohol, used cars (mostly “lemons”), and bananas, things the East Germans had been denied and things they didn’t know enough about. They didn’t have real automobiles. The automobiles they had were the miserable Trabants that had two-stroke engines. They didn’t know how to judge a used car, so every lemon in Europe headed to East Germany and was promptly sold. The East Germans had some money because they were permitted to exchange a limited number of East Marks for West Marks on a one-to-one basis. You’d see little signs stuck in the dirt by the road for cigarettes or used cars. Then you began to see computer software signs. It was interesting to see capitalism beginning to grow. Then Home Depot-type stores started to proliferate. There were huge traffic jams around the latter as the East Germans began to buy materials to fix up their houses. The gray streets of Dresden, Leipzig, and East Berlin began to bloom with color. Unfortunately, quite a few home improvement companies from West Germany that weren’t very scrupulous sold new kitchens and new heating systems and new bathrooms to East Germans for vastly more than they were worth. You began to hear stories of sophisticated, sharp, and dishonest West Germans taking advantage of hardworking, simple East Germans. This theme carried through to the present.

In March 1990, there were the first free elections in East Germany; the first and last. Our embassy in East Berlin followed the electoral campaign very closely, as did we. The states that made up East Germany were known even back in the day of the Weimar Republic as socialist leaning, especially Saxony. So, the embassy in East Berlin reported that the Social Democrats and Socialists were going to do really well, and you would probably have a government in East Germany that would be unlike the government in West Germany. It would be a government of the non-communist left. Most of us in the embassy in Bonn agreed with that election analysis. We had an election pool within the embassy betting on what the percentages of the various parties would be. Walters at the beginning said, “It’s not going to happen that way. Any party that has ‘social’ or ‘socialist’ in its name is going to get creamed in this election. People don’t want that. They’ve had it for 50 years.” Unfortunately for Walters, we persuaded him that he was wrong, and he changed his wager very late in the campaign. Had he not, he would have won the pool hands down. Every party that had “social” or “socialist” in its name did very poorly. A Christian Democratic-dominated government emerged in East Berlin. That made doing business between East and West Germany much easier and was another nail in the coffin of East Germany. If they were voting for Christian Democrats in East Germany, then why do you need a separate government there?

Q: It also would have allayed the fears of the CDU-dominated Bundestag of “Hell, we don’t want all these socialists coming in.” These were their brethren coming in, although I assume they really weren’t the same, were they?

WARD: They were an odd collection of people. The communist government, the SED-dominated government in East Germany, basically maintained puppet opposition parties, one of which was named the CDU. So some of the people who went into the CDU in East Germany were the old CDUers; they were puppet CDUers. Then there were a lot of new people. It was an odd collection of people. Walters was a man of great wisdom, and his point was on target. The

East Germans weren't voting for people. They were voting against the communists. The first elected prime minister of East Germany, Demaziere, tended to look lost and out of place in photographs. He was a modest man, a well-meaning man, and not an ex-stooge for the communists. But he had very little impact in the two-plus-four negotiations. It was clear from the outset that he wasn't going to represent an East Germany that had any object other than unification. When unification happened in October, the members of the East German parliament that were elected in March became members of the *Bundestag* in Bonn. There was not a new election for the *Bundestag* right away. The Easterners moved into the *Bundestag* as members on the basis of their election in March

Q: Was everybody looking at Czechoslovakia and Poland, figuring out what this was going to mean? Also, you had Soviet troops on the ground there.

WARD: That was a very important part of the diplomacy. One point that our team made clear to Kohl, although I think Kohl already knew this, was that Germany could not be united unless its relationships with Poland were placed on a better footing.

Q: What were the relations?

WARD: There was great historical enmity, Germany having invaded Poland. There needed to be a German-Polish agreement on the border. You had millions of West Germans who were refugees from the former German lands in Russia and in Poland. Every year, they'd get together in big rallies and talk about going home. So, one of the very tough domestic issues that the Kohl government had to confront was how to keep these tendencies within bounds. Although it was evident to any dispassionate observer that Germany could not be unified within the borders of 1939, the irredentist leaders who had supported the CDU and CSU over the years wanted more. So, Kohl had to do a very adroit dance. Genscher also played an important role. They succeeded in negotiating an agreement with Poland that recognized Poland within its borders, recognized the Oder-Neisse line as the border between Germany and Poland. That was one of the keys that unlocked the way to unification. The entire saga was the most interesting diplomatic situation I was ever involved in. There were so many boxes to be checked, agreements to be reached. In essence, we were completing the peace process for World War II.

Q: Were we concerned about the Soviet troops there? Did we feel the Soviet army was with Gorbachev?

WARD: There was intense concern at the beginning that some Soviet commander might do something rash out of a sense of humiliation. This was pretty quickly dispelled when Gorbachev made clear that he was committed to a peaceful resolution of the situation. I remember that once it became possible for us to travel freely in East Germany, the Russian army that had seemed like such a giant suddenly seemed pitiful. You would see young soldiers clothed in the middle of the summer with their heavy woolen uniforms standing around shiftlessly. They didn't know what to do. They didn't have a mission anymore. I remember visiting Leipzig. There was still a Soviet garrison in the town. I talked with the commander of the German forces. He said the Russians had basically walled themselves off. There was no longer any communication with the outside. They weren't threatening, but they weren't communicating either. One of the prices that

Germany paid for unification was tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars spent in building housing for the Soviet forces that had to return to Russia. The Germans basically paid for unification.

Q: You've got East German sensitivities and Soviet sensitivities, as well as Polish and Czech. I can see where we wanted to keep particularly American politicians and also commentators and so on from going in and crowing and talking about how great we were and "Look what we've done for you poor benighted people." This wouldn't have been helpful.

WARD: It wouldn't have been, but I can't recall anyone trying to do that. I recall just the opposite. There is one evening that I remember that occurred at my residence when we had as dinner guests a visiting delegation of U.S. congressmen and former members of Congress. It was just after unification, when the former members of the East German legislature had just joined the Bundestag. We included a number of former East German legislators in the dinner. It was fascinating. The East Germans were clearly watching the relationship between the Americans and the West Germans. One later told me that they thought that it would be like the relationship between the East Germans and the Russians, in which there was a "friendship," an institutional relationship, but not real closeness. They saw just the opposite. My wife was instrumental in this. One of the congressmen told her that he liked to sing. Then she found out that the wife of another former member of Congress was a talented pianist. So, she asked the congressman to sing. He said, "Only if someone plays the piano." The wife volunteered to play the piano. What ensued was sort of an impromptu musical evening with Americans singing some of our songs and teaching the Germans. Then the Germans all got together, East and West. They all knew the same words to the same songs. They could also sing, something I cannot say for the Americans. It was striking. The Germans had been apart for 45 years, but had not forgotten their shared music. Afterwards, one of the East Germans said to me that the informal interaction between Americans and West Germans had been a revelation that helped him realize that there really was a friendship between the United States and the Federal Republic, one that had been built up over decades.

Q: Was there anyone on the American side who was not with the program?

WARD: There certainly were differences of opinion between our embassy and the embassy in East Berlin and differences of approach. I think they were in error in asserting that there was much in East Germany worthy of emulation in the West. They probably think that our analysis was flawed. But I can't recall anybody who actively sought to obstruct the process. This was a story without any real villains. There were difficult personalities. I think it was to the credit of President Bush, who gave the right direction.

Q: There was talk, people saying, "Oh, you've got to get out to West Berlin and dance on the Wall."

WARD: You need to talk to Harry Gilmore about this. Harry was concerned about the possibility of such displays. He was concerned about excess jubilation. He did take steps to curb that among official Americans and troops. Dick Barkley had another concern that started before the fall of the Wall. Because East German goods could be bought cheaply with hard currencies, there were

great bargains to be found in East Berlin. The U.S. Army had been running for years shopping expeditions into East Berlin. On the basis of our four-power rights, soldiers and dependents would come in busloads and buy out all the shops. Dick, I think rightly, viewed that as not conducive to good relationships and worked to curtail the shopping tours. The Army did not stop them, but they may have reduced the frequency at some point.

Q: You were mentioning that Dick Barkley and his embassy in East Germany were not always on the same wavelength. What was your experience?

WARD: I think it was very much a case of where you sit determining where you stand. Dick had trouble shifting gears once the unification train began to move. Prior to the fall of the Wall, he was very actively seeking to open up a new relationship between East Germany and the United States that would promote democratization. His embassy did a superb job of covering the East German opposition. His team included J.D. Bindenagel as DCM and Jon Greenwald as political counselor. They got permission to open a consulate in Leipzig, the center of protest. Once the Wall came down, it was evident to us in Bonn that events were outpacing our policy of promoting gradual change in the East. I can remember a principal officers conference in Garmisch to which we had invited a representative of the embassy in East Berlin. During the discussions, that representative asserted that it was important not to lose the positive social advances that the East Germans had made. Walters, who rarely showed his emotions in his facial expressions, sort of sat back and said in a matter of fact manner, "Could you tell me what those were?" Our friend from East Berlin appeared never to have considered that question before and said, "Well, they have a wonderful system of kindergartens." Everybody sort of looked around. That's one vignette that illustrates the contrast between the two missions.

The difference of approach between the embassies in Bonn and East Berlin was evident in an incident that occurred at a higher level – you'll find it in both Walters's book in German and in the book by Zelikow and Rice on the subject – when Secretary Baker came to Berlin after the opening of the Wall and before the March 1990 free election in East Germany. A communist figurehead named Modrow was still prime minister in East Germany. The question of whether Baker should pay a call on Modrow arose. Walters said basically, "Modrow has been a communist apparatchik all his life; he is there temporarily. He will be swept away. No one will remember who he was. He doesn't matter. Visiting him would give him a stature that he doesn't deserve. We're going to have free elections. You shouldn't be visiting the communist leader." Dick Barkley represented the opposite view that East Germany was a fragile flower moving in a democratic direction. Modrow was the leader; you needed to show that you recognize him; you needed to go to visit him. Baker gave Walters the impression that he wouldn't visit Modrow and sent both ambassadors away. Later, Dick Barkley somehow got to see Baker again and persuaded the Secretary to see Modrow. When Baker and Barkley made that decision behind Walters's back, Walters almost resigned on the spot. He felt that Baker had not respected his views.

Q: Did you find yourself trying to calm things down?

WARD: Yes, that happened repeatedly, and I was ultimately unsuccessful. Walters first told me we was going to resign in August 1989, when he felt rebuked by Baker after the radio interview

in which Walters said that he could foresee a Germany united within five years – not three months, but five years. The press spokesman at the State Department made a statement to the effect that Ambassador Walters's words did necessarily represent the policy of the United States. In several instances, he felt rebuked by Baker, not supported by Baker, and cut off from accurate information about deliberations in Washington and in the two-plus-four talks. I can remember one awkward moment in the Ambassador's residence in Bonn when Bob Zoellick basically refused to brief Walters on the status of the two-plus-four talks. On a couple of occasions, Walters got notes from the President in which Bush expressed support.

Q: Baker had the reputation of having a small coterie around him – Zoellick, Margaret Tutwiler, and others who were around him and in a way were more protective of Baker than of American policy. It made for a rather frosty relationship with others. Of course, Walters was such a powerful figure in himself.

WARD: Walters and Baker were opposite personality types. Baker was extremely controlled, the ultimate lawyer, very careful with words, a person of not many words. And here is Walters, this gregarious, huge man of great wisdom and many, many words and stories and languages. Baker was a linear thinker who did business on a micro level. He looked at all the factors in the equation. Walters was a non-linear thinker who looked at the big picture. Of course, he read the current news, but what kept him up at night was reading history. For example, he sought to learn about Russia by reading accounts like that of the Marquis de Custine, who traveled through Russia in the early nineteenth century. He was passionate about history, about what the events of 200-300 years ago could tell us about contemporary problems. That was a very different approach from the Baker team approach. You needed both, but unfortunately they didn't get along. In the spring of 1991, after the Gulf War, Walters told the President that he would like to leave his post as soon as a successor could be named. He left in July.

You asked about relations between East and West Germany in terms of the U.S. diplomatic missions. There was one other aspect to this. You had the problem of staffing in Berlin. We had in Berlin a very large mission and a growing embassy. It was clear when we decided to open a unified office in Berlin that would be subordinate to the embassy in Bonn that we would need to cut staff. The view from the West was that most of the German employees in the East were reporting to the East German secret police. Many of them may have been secret police agents. Therefore, they should not be retained. The embassy in East Berlin had a different view. To resolve the problem of both American and German staffing, I met with the DCM from East Berlin and our Minister in West Berlin. We basically went position by position and defined our personnel needs for the new office in Berlin. Dick Barkley was not happy with the result. He, in fact, basically advocated retaining two ambassadors and two missions even in a unified Germany. That idea seemed to me then just as bizarre as it does today. Unfortunately, some people in the State Department thought it deserved consideration. I had a phone call from Jim Dobbins, who was the principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the European Bureau, who asked why the idea was so bad. After all, maybe there could be an ambassador in Berlin who was in charge of unification problems and another one in Bonn who would be the ambassador in Germany. I said that I didn't think that you needed two ambassadors, and that I thought Ambassador Walters would take the same position. The idea went away.

Q: We were adjusting.

WARD: Yes. Sometimes minds lag behind events. This was a case when history was moving faster than people's minds.

Q: What was your impression of Kohl? Was he the man of the hour?

WARD: Definitely. Kohl understood where this was heading. He was willing to make the political and financial investments to make it happen, and he realized that it had to happen quickly before something else intervened. In fact, had he waited, we would have had the Gulf War and then the breakup of Yugoslavia as additional problems.

Q: How did Kohl and Walters get along?

WARD: Famously. They're similar types, both large, gregarious people. They got along very well. Walters had access to him.

Q: How did Walters and Genscher get along?

WARD: They got along okay. They probably didn't relate as well instinctively to each other as Walters did with Kohl.

Q: What were our economic people saying as Kohl agreed to exchange marks on a one to one basis?

WARD: Our economists in both East and West were telling us how disastrous this was. In an economic sense, it was pretty expensive if not downright disastrous. But Kohl believed that it had to be done for political reasons. Sometimes you do things that are not economically wise out of political necessity, and then you pay a price. Germany has paid a price economically for this. Kohl and the CDU were eventually overcome, in part because of the economic cost of unification.

Q: You were there until when?

WARD: Until July 1992.

Q: Did you almost have to rein in our intelligence people, the station chief and so on? All of a sudden, you're going to have East Germany opening up. It was a treasure trove, but did you try to keep people from being overly greedy?

WARD: To say that we had to rein them in would imply that they were formerly under our control. Fortunately, however, our intelligence services played a constructive role. Given Walters' background, he had a very good relationship with the station chief, and so did I. I had confidence in the other representatives of intelligence and law enforcement who made up the country team. The station played a significant role, most of which is still classified. But there is one aspect that has been in the press and is worth noting. That is the fact that copies of the

records of the East German secret police, the *Stasi*, were acquired by the CIA. These records quickly became very important from both an intelligence and a law enforcement point of view.

Q: Like the Berlin Document Center, which housed the Nazi files.

WARD: Exactly. We seem at the end of wars, hot or cold, to be lucky in terms of records. The records of the Berlin Document Center are fascinating in themselves, but the Stasi records were even more important during the unification saga. One of the things that we soon discovered was that we had spies among our non-American employees in the embassy.

Q: Didn't you kind of know it?

WARD: We of course assumed that the Stasi had penetrated our staff, but did not have suspects. It turned out that a German woman employed by one of the Defense Department offices in the embassy had been an agent for 15-20 years, and was responsible for taking thousands of classified documents. Unfortunately, she had an American security clearance. There were a couple of other cases. There was a controversy between the FBI and the CIA over the records. The FBI wanted to gain access to the files for criminal investigative purposes, while the CIA wanted to keep them closely held for intelligence purposes.

Q: In turning people.

WARD: Right. The ambassador and I sought to mediate these disputes from time to time.

Q: Germany was unified on your watch?

WARD: Yes, in October 1990.

Q: How did this play out? Were we watching to make sure that we didn't take too much center stage?

WARD: That wasn't a problem. The Germans understood from the very start that the United States supported unification. By the time October came along, the hard work of the two-plus-four had been done. All the necessary agreements that replaced the post-World War II four-power agreements within Germany were in place. In some cases such as on troop stationing, these were temporary arrangements that had to be turned into treaties later. But I don't recall anyone needing to be reined in or crowing about our role. It was a German show. It was orchestrated as a German show.

Q: We had had a very significant presence in West Germany since 1945, particularly the Amerika Haus. I would think that we would want to do somewhat the equivalent in East Germany to bring them up to the same knowledge of the United States and its role with the rest of Germany.

WARD: Remember that East Germany had a smaller population than the largest West German state - 17 million people in a pretty small area. Dick Barkley had put in place a program to open

a consulate in Leipzig and also a cultural center. Of course, once unification happened, the large cultural facilities of the mission in Berlin became available to everybody. One touching incident occurred - I remember it from a cable Harry Gilmore sent. When the Wall opened, an East Berlin woman went back and returned library books to the American library in West Berlin that she had taken out before the Wall went up and had been unable to return. There were things like that. People remembered.

In the summer of 1990, before unification, and before the decision was made to move the capital to Berlin, we in Bonn understood where things were headed. Dick Imus, the minister for economic affairs, Harry Geisel, the minister-counselor for administration, and I got together and wrote a report called "Mission 2000." The report was a guide to restructuring the mission after unification. We posited, first of all, that the capital would move to Berlin, and that the embassy would have to follow. Then we recommended restructuring the mission, downsizing it severely, keeping the consulate in Leipzig open, closing some of the facilities in West Germany but keeping a large cultural presence in the country.

Q: This is not quite a propos but is something I've talked to a few people about. Did you notice there was a problem with Germany in the United States in that when Americans go to visit Europe, they go to England, France, Italy, and Spain, but Germany has a reputation as being a bit cold and expensive? Were we monitoring American tourism to Germany?

WARD: We didn't count tourists. We never felt alone there. We had a couple of hundred thousand soldiers and dependents there. So, Germany always felt like a place with a lot of Americans. I always had the impression that because so many Americans had served in Germany in the forces, that created a flow of tourists, both relatives visiting people in the forces and also people who had been in the forces coming back to visit. I never thought Germany was as expensive as France.

Q: Right afterwards, after the unification of Germany, was there a letdown about what to do next? You have this army sitting there. We knew where everything was, what we were after, and who the enemy was. It's all over now.

WARD: That started, but was quickly interrupted. Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in August 1990, even before Germany was unified. Then you had the Balkans begin to come apart. But there was a period in which we had a Foreign Service inspection and the inspectors were emphasizing to us that we really needed to transition to an embassy based on our economic relationship, that politics didn't matter anymore. Nothing could have been further from the truth in terms of what has mattered since. The German-American relationship was very important for shaping the NATO approach to the Balkans, and political relationships were the key to assembling the Gulf War coalition. It was a war for which we received so much financial assistance that we eventually had to prove to the Germans that we didn't make a profit. Frankly, I think that the Defense Department rolled into the cost of the Gulf War a lot of marginally related improvements to our bases in Germany. We certainly repaved a few runways on American airbases in Germany with German money during that time.

Q: What about when the Gulf War came? You were there when Saddam Hussein made his move.

How did we react right away? Did you work to get up support? Did the Germans jump right on board as far as condemning this?

WARD: Official Germany jumped right on board right away. Of course, the left didn't. As soon as we began to move forces into the Gulf area, we started to get protests. There was a peace camp set up next to the embassy, a fairly large group of people who sat outside our gates and demonstrated every day. Then the Red Army faction, the RAF, launched an attack against the embassy with automatic weapons. The embassy sits along the Rhine. They pulled up a car on the other side of the Rhine, and like good Germans put out warning triangles to stop traffic. They took a couple of sandbags that they had brought with them and put them on a wall, and then used them as supports for two automatic rifles, with which they fired about 270 rounds at the embassy at about 7:00 pm. Luckily, there were only 75 people in the building. At about 6:45, the ambassador had gone home. At about 6:50, I had followed him out the door. I got home at about 7:00. My wife was on the phone with a good friend, the wife of my Canadian colleague, who lived near the embassy, who was saying, "Peggy, your embassy is being attacked." Peggy looked at me coming in the door and said, "Oh, no, that can't be true because George is here." I said, "Thanks for the faith in me, but maybe I'd better call the embassy." I called Post 1, the Marine guard. Because I didn't want to appear alarmist, I asked only if anything unusual was happening. The guard said something like, "Yes, Sir, we're getting shot at." It was very interesting. The incident started and ended within about two minutes. From both U.S. sources and German police sources, we had reports, later proven false, of people in the woods shooting at us for hours afterwards, so people were down on the floor in the embassy for hours. The attack caused a siege mentality among the American community in Bonn. People felt really threatened. We did everything we could to beef up security, especially at the school. People were fearful for their kids' lives. Of course, once you put police with weapons in the open at a school, the fear gets even higher. We had a lot of town meetings, a lot of sessions with people to try to allay concerns. Even so, we had some people who really did some fairly irrational things – hoarding groceries, sending their families home.

Q: On the Gulf War, what was the task of the embassy?

WARD: The task of the embassy was to: a) work with the Germans to ensure that we could flow forces out of Germany to the Gulf without difficulty, and b) to gain German financial and material support for the war. For example, Germany placed its railways and barge services at our disposal, gave us the highest priority. They allowed us to load our tanks and armored personnel carriers [APCs] on barges, on trains, with ammunition and fuel uploaded, which is normally not done. It was unusual, but needed to happen because these were vehicles going directly to war. They needed to be ready when they rolled off the ship. So, you saw a constant flow of barges loaded with U.S. military equipment going along the Rhine toward the North Sea and the ports. That was a big job.

The Germans made a large financial contribution to the war. They did not contribute combat forces, but they did provide chemical and biological weapons detection units.

They had an excellent vehicle, called the *Fuchs* (Fox), which was designed for that purpose. We arranged to get some of those quickly into our inventory.

Q: Chemical warfare was a very distinct possibility.

WARD: Yes. So those capabilities were very important.

Q: What was Genscher's role in this? How did you find him?

WARD: He was during the Gulf episode very supportive. I can't recall any special difficulties. The Germans did virtually everything we asked. They made exceptions that they never would have contemplated in a normal situation for our forces; they did everything they could.

Q: Did the war play on CNN?

WARD: Yes.

Q: This was the first really televised war.

WARD: Yes. Everybody watched it.

Q: How about the peace movement? Did that dissipate after a while?

WARD: They stayed around. We had demonstrations throughout the time. The German peace movement tends to be persistent.

Q: I think it gives people a chance to put on costumes.

WARD: It didn't represent a major German point of view at the time.

Q: Did Yugoslavia start to come apart when you were there?

WARD: Yes.

Q: This is very important. As a Yugoslav hand, I've interviewed Warren Zimmermann and spent a lot of time in Yugoslavia. Genscher does not come across as the number one hero.

WARD: And neither do the Germans, but neither were we. It was an episode worth thinking about. As Yugoslavia started to fall apart, we in the embassy got very little either in terms of information or instructions to present demarches. I assumed that this was because someone else was staying in touch with the Germans at a high level. In the major European embassies, you have "cabinet lines," direct hookups between the NSC and the National Security Advisors on the European side, and between the heads of government and the President. So, I figured, if we're not discussing these important matters where we clearly have differences of view with the Germans, then this must be being done at a very high level. That illusion was swept away one day in early December 1991, when with the EU, led by the Germans, was on the verge of recognizing Croatia and Slovenia. Kohl's coalition partner, the Bavarian CSU, was pushing particularly hard for this. We received an instruction from the Department to go and tell the

Germans in no uncertain terms not to go forward with recognition, to stop doing what they were doing. I was absolutely dismayed. I felt, here we were, not having had the kind of discussions you need to prepare the ground, and we were being asked to present an ultimatum. I delivered that demarche to Jurgen Chrobog, who was political director then and later ambassador to Washington. Chrobog, who became a good friend, later told me, "George, I almost gave you that paper back and told you to leave my office." He was so angry, and I think justly so, because he felt that, here are these Americans, who have not involved us in a dialogue about the future of Yugoslavia in the way they should have, coming in to tell me the day before an important EU meeting is going to happen not to execute the policy that we have carefully planned. The next day, the Germans did exactly what they had planned. They led the EU in the decision to recognize Croatia and Slovenia. We followed suit by recognizing Bosnia.

Q: Often, Genscher has been played as the bad guy, saying this was his thing, but this thing came out of the CSU and not the FDP.

WARD: Yes. Croatia, being a Catholic country, had a lot of influence in the CSU. I know that the CSU pushed hard. Genscher may also have for other reasons.

Q: You never know on these things.

WARD: I'll never forget how strongly Chrobog made his points with me. The ministry always reflected Genscher's views very carefully. But it wasn't simply a Genscher thing.

Q: For somebody who is reading this, CSU stood for what?

WARD: The Christian Social Union, the Bavarian wing of the Christian Democrats. They're a separate party.

Q: In other words, the subject of Yugoslavia had not been raised.

WARD: The subject had come up, but at the level of first secretary, maybe political counselor. We never had received instructions sufficient to discuss policy in any depth. I think Washington was distracted and hoped the problem would go away. You had the unification of Germany that was still being completed. You had the Soviet Union beginning to fall apart. And you had a war.

Q: Of course, James Baker one day said, "We don't have a dog in that fight."

WARD: Then you had Jacques Poos, the Luxembourg prime minister and President of the European Union. He said something like, "Now is the hour of Europe, not the hour of the United States." Baker must have thought, "Wonderful. I don't want this to be the hour of the United States either. Let's forget about it."

Q: I can remember talking to Larry Eagleburger, another Yugoslav hand. We were saying, "Well, let the Europeans take care of this. It's none of our business."

WARD: The lesson still to this day is that nothing gets done on the security side in Europe unless

the U.S. takes the lead. Two administrations tried to evade that truth.

Q: With disastrous results.

WARD: For a lot of people.

JON GUNDERSEN
Regional Security Officer
Frankfurt (1990)

Mr. Gundersen was born and raised in New York and educated at George Washington University, the University of Oslo International School, Stanford University and the National War College. Entering the State Department in 1973, he served abroad in Moscow, Stockholm and Frankfurt. At Reykjavik and Tallinn he was Chargé d'affaires, in Oslo, Deputy Chief of Mission, and in Kiev, Consul General. In assignments at the State Department in Washington, Mr. Gundersen dealt with a variety of matters, including arms control, anti-terrorism and Balkan issues. Mr. Gundersen was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2012.

GUNDERSEN: Well, because I had worked political-military issues and knew military people, I wasn't surprised by much. I gained great respect for the officers who were there. I had time to do a lot of reading and get in shape. When you're working at a desk you don't have as much time for that. So I did enjoy the time..

After the War College I took a not very traditional assignment. It was a senior flag-rank position (I was still an FS-01). I was stationed in Frankfurt as head of what they called a FEST team – I can't go into the specifics of the job, but I was head of an interagency team, including the most sensitive military and intelligence counter-terrorism assets. I was responsible for Europe and Middle East. My cover title was Regional Security Officer for Frankfurt.

Q: Ooh! What was the situation when you took the job? You took it when?

GUNDERSEN: In '89, right out of the War College?

Q: What was the situation you saw, regarding your future job?

GUNDERSEN: You know how these assignments are somewhat fixed in advance. When I heard about the job, I can't talk about the details, it sounded fascinating. It involved in counter-terrorism and black programs.

Q: I realize we have to avoid discussing classified material. Can we talk about the mega picture? What was behind this?

GUNDERSEN: I would like to say I saw al Qaeda coming up, but I did not. There was hostage

taking going on at the time. There were radical movements and there were remnants of radical movements in Europe, the Red Army *Faction*, the Red Brigades, the Baader-Meinhof Gang.

So, working with local governments, I dealt with those issues. By the way, most of the governments we worked with did not want it known they were working closely with the Americans. So we kept it clandestine – successfully, I think. For example, we knew that there was growing militancy in Algeria and other places. So we did certain exercises and were involved in certain programs. I was the chief of an interagency team that flew around.

But I can't say I saw this growing Islamic militancy or anything like that.

Q: Did you see the intelligence and police forces of Europe being both aware and capable of dealing with the situation? They had gone through the Red Brigades, the Japanese Red Army and all this. Was this by this time a pretty well honed apparatus?

GUNDERSEN: I think it was. By this time they did have better control of the situation, unlike ten years prior. They had better intelligence and cooperation across national lines.

I worked with the Interior Ministries, because there were only a few people who know about our operation in each country.

So we had close connections and were largely successful. I think that's one of the reasons they disbanded this unit eventually, because it was very costly and had accomplished its main missions. In other words, it was suspended and everyone seemed to be pleased.

But the best thing I took away from the assignment was my wife, Eike, who is German. I met her in Frankfurt. The Consul General in Frankfurt, which is a very big post, as you know, and one of the biggest in the world, because it's a regional center, was the only person at Post, who was briefed about our activity, so I would debrief him on a regular basis. My wife worked as a Foreign Service National at the Consulate. So I met my wife there and that's the biggest thing I took away from the assignment.

Q: My first post was Frankfurt, back in '55. It wasn't as much a regional center, but it was a major post.

GUNDERSEN: Germany must have been different in '55 – still recovering from the war. I should mention that I was actually assigned as the first Consul General to Kiev, Ukraine out of the War College. We were opening up a consulate there. We'd been trying to do this for awhile

Q: In the works for

GUNDERSEN: For 15 years and I knew the guys who'd been previously assigned but never got there, because something bad would always happen in US-Soviet relations and canceling the opening of the Consulate in Kiev and a Soviet Consulate in New York was a convenient measure both sides could take to show their displeasure..

So I was assigned that job. In the meantime, they were protracted negotiations. So I was given the job in Frankfurt in the interim.

Just as I was given the job in Frankfurt and paneled, they needed me to go to the Ukraine, because they thought they finally had agreement finalized to open the post. So I was assigned and panel to Kiev.

So I had two jobs and the two parts of the Department responsible for these two areas fought over me, but S/CT *i.e.*, the State Department office responsible for counter-terrorism policy, who reported directly to the Secretary, said, "Well, we need him more," so I went to Frankfurt. As I said., without this bureaucratic tug of war, I would not have met my wife – so, for once, good things can come out of the bureaucracy.

And when they finally came to agreement about with Soviets about opening the consulate in Kiev, I was pulled from the Frankfurt assignment to go directly to Kiev.

Q: This was when?

GUNDERSEN: This was in late 1990.

SHIRLEY ELIZABETH BARNES
Counselor for Administration
East Berlin (1990-1992)

Ambassador Barnes was born in Florida and raised in Florida and New York City. She was educated at City College of New York and at Columbia and Boston Universities. Before entering the Foreign Service in 1984, Ambassador Barnes worked with the Ford Foundation in Africa and was active in African American women's organizations and in the advertising business. In the Foreign Service she served in Strasbourg, Dakar, East Berlin and in the State Department in Washington. In 1998 she was appointed Ambassador to Madagascar, where she served until 2001. Ambassador Barnes was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004.

Q: What were you doing in Berlin?

BARNES: Oh, let's see. I was going to be the admin counselor in the East Berlin. That's what happened, it wasn't the gulf war, it was the fall of the Berlin wall that looked like it was going to come up and happen, probably while I was still at the war college. I bid on and got this admin post in Berlin which was supposed to be one of the best jobs in the Foreign Service. Everything was paid for. Few people know this, but the German government paid for the occupation of Western Germany and of Berlin. So they paid for the Russian sector and the French and the Brits and we the Americans, everything, your housing, everything. You got on their metro or their subway.

Q: U-Bahn

BARNES: It was U-Bahn. You got on and you showed your pass. Whether you were with a civilian job or a military job. It was paradise and I had a great house. But before I left I had said, “hey well now, wait a minute” I asked my people over in the assignments and all of these folks, “What’s going to happen? Are they going to close down? I mean what’s going to happen, are they going to have this wall come down and what’s going to happen to Berlin?” Nothing, nothing, go on out there. So about 18 months after I was there, well the wall came down just before I left, but then they unified Germany while I was there, so I was there for the unification. It was great, euphoric, etc. but it became obvious that they were going to shut it down. They decided and this was the—excuse me—stupid policy of Holbrooke and all these others that, you know what? The Germans think ill of us so we’re going to get out, we’re not going to keep ... but we had a fabulous presence ... on Clayallee; beautiful, beautiful thing there where the military—U.S. military general—for all occupied Berlin had his headquarters here and U.S. mission had her/his headquarters here. Beautiful space; everything you ever wanted, we gave it up. I kept saying, don’t do this. Then we started selling off our property there which were some of the most fabulous houses in the world. The Germans said, “Keep it! Don’t ... we want your presence here!” We sold it there on ... 30 cents on the dollar, when we were selling it back. It was the most tragic thing that happened and our ambassador in Berlin kept saying, “we don’t want to...” Who’s the guy that died?

Q: Oh, yes.

BARNES: General what’s his name...?

Q: General Walters.

BARNES: Oh yeah, he was. We don’t want to make waves. We want the Germans to see that we’re getting out. We had this little ratty place in East Berlin that was an embassy. I had to start firing about 70% of my staff, which was the most tragic thing in the world to do once I was in there. We had to let go of all these people and come up with plans. To tear down our embassy and our presence because we were going to move into this little dinky place in East Berlin. That was going to be our embassy. The worst administrative mistake in modern, Foreign Service history. Now, Harry Geisel said, he was out of the admin council. But he was under the gun for these people and it was the way to go, it was right. We got rid of some of the best property in the world. The Germans didn’t want us to get rid of it, they said, “you maintain it and everything’s so great.” All the military housing. We moved people because of the square footage thing into these little dinky ex-military things which is nothing but demoralizing people when they have to move into these little houses that lieutenants used to live in. It was awful and we downsized our presence there and went. They were sitting on top of each other, I was so happy because I found out I got the axe too, which I felt was going to happen. The guy that was over in East Berlin, they made him the administrative counselor. They said, “Shirley, sorry.” Nobody every said, “We got another job for you, what about this?”

I came back; I didn’t know where I was going. They just said, “out of here.” That’s when I got in

an appointment through a friend who knew the secretary of the director general of the Foreign Service who was then Ed Perkins. I said, "I don't know what I'm going to do, I don't have an assignment." And people were coming into my office because they had just gotten cable saying, "Your job is cut." I mean people were ready to commit suicide. They didn't have any jobs. These were political officers; these were all kinds of people. Well we just left there and said, "Goodbye you're folding up. Tell the people ..." And most Europeans, they, like Japanese even though it's changed now; you keep your job for life. These are people who had been there at that mission for 20 and 30 years and just to tell them, "We're going to work out a plan and we're going to have a couple of ways to see whether or not you can get a different job." These people looked at me like a piece of crap. Nobody even did that at me. I had to suggest and keep yelling back to Washington, do something for these people! Do something for me! What's going to happen to all of us?

They had cut the personnel officer's job before I got to post—and I said, "I think you're such a disservice because we downsized the most important person that this post is going to need—the personnel officer." Turns out they had to get someone out of retirement to come there, short term which became longer and longer, for her to work out what we're going to do with these people. It was a massacre. It was the most demoralizing thing. We got rid of 2/3rds of the people that were over in our part in West Berlin. And everybody used to hate us anyway because we lived like little princes and princesses.

So they all tried to get into this place over in East Berlin which was too small and falling apart and they were spread out all over Berlin the rest of them. Finally today, what's happened in Berlin? They're finally ... they're building a new chancellery. They could have that place on Clayallee and if necessary ... the Germans said, "Well expand it if you need more space," or whatever.

A waste of U.S. taxpayer dollars and nobody will ever 'fess up, "yeah we made a mistake." Never.

Anyway, I was there for 18 months in Berlin and then from Berlin I came back here and I said, "I don't have a job. I don't know what I'm supposed to do next." Ambassador Perkins said, "Well I don't know what we'll do but here's the list before it comes out. Check off some things and we'll see what we can do." And that's why I said, "Oh boy, Strasbourg," I said, "well I'll never get that." He said, "Look, you shouldn't think like that. Put down everything that you would like!" I put Strasbourg down. That's when I went to Strasbourg, after I left Berlin. So I was about 18, 19 months at the most in Berlin and from there I went to Strasbourg.

PIERRE SHOSTAL
Consul General
Frankfurt (1990-1993)

Pierre Shostal was born in Paris in 1937. He graduated from Yale in 1956 and from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1958. His postings include

Leopoldville, Kinshasa, Brussels, Lilongwe, Moscow, Kigali, Hamburg and Frankfurt. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 16, 1997.

SHOSTAL: This is the summer of 1990. I went from there to Frankfurt as Consul General, arriving there at the end of the summer. That was a particularly interesting and active period.

Q: You were there from 1990 until when?

SHOSTAL: Until the summer of '93. The reason I say it was a particularly active and interesting period was that two major events coincided, both of which had a significant impact on Germany and particularly us at the Consulate. One was of course, German unification. That took place October 3, 1990, a few weeks after I arrived. But, at the same time you had the military buildup for our deployment to the Persian Gulf, the Desert Storm operation and a large number of the troops and the equipment that went to the Gulf came out of Germany and particularly came out of the Frankfurt area.

Q: Which was the center of the old American zone?

SHOSTAL: That's right. The center of the old American occupation zone. In fact, the American Army Headquarters in Frankfurt was located in the building that had been formerly occupied by a German chemical concern.

Q: The I.G. Farben Building.

SHOSTAL: The I.G. Farben Building, that's right. So, the connection between the United States Army and Germany was very visible during this period.

Q: Let's talk about the post just for a minute. I started out my career, in fact I took my Foreign Service exam when I was in the Air Force (I was an enlisted man in Frankfurt) at the Consulate General and then my first posting abroad was Frankfurt, which was at one point probably one of the major entry points for new officers, because we had a very large contingent in Germany and I think Frankfurt was one of our big posts. Did you find Frankfurt was getting a significant number of Junior Officers or not?

SHOSTAL: Well, we had some Junior Officers, but what characterized Frankfurt at the time I was there was rather that this was very much a multiagency operation. In terms of numbers, the State contingent was really not all that large. We had a small political section, a couple of economic officers, and probably about a dozen Consular Officers. So, it was sort of a medium size State representation. But, you had very large representations from, for example, the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration), which had a large presence because of regional responsibilities covering Europe, Africa, Middle East. Also the General Accounting Office and DEA. These various agencies used Frankfurt for a couple of reasons. One, because of the airport, was ease of travel in and out of Frankfurt. The second was the fact that we owned a housing area where they had largely free housing. So, it proved to be an almost irresistible magnet for these other agencies. A substantial part of my problem was trying to make sure that people were not working at cross purposes that what they were doing would not upset the relationship with our

German hosts. Particularly important at that particular time was our relationship with the military and I set that as a kind of personal priority, working with the Commander of the Army Fifth Corps, which was the one headquartered in Frankfurt, as well as with the Commander of the Rhine Main Air Base. I wanted to do what we could do to make things as smooth as possible for the deployment and for supporting the troops. For example, dealing with local and regional German authorities and trying to get as much support from them as we could. Also, working with the Germans to try to help take care of the family members of the soldiers who were deployed. I spent a great deal of time working, for example, with the U.S.O., the organization that takes care of soldiers and their families welfare, as a way of being supportive to the deployment.

Q: How did the Gulf War, we're talking about the 1990-'91 actions when Iraq invaded Kuwait and we sent a mass of troops down to Saudi Arabia eventually to fight there. How did this play in your part of Germany?

SHOSTAL: We covered essentially three German states, Hesse, Rhineland Palatinate and Saarland. That was very interesting to observe. You recall that after World War II, the United States tried to help reeducate Germany so that it wouldn't become a militaristic power again. And, in a sense we succeeded, I think almost too well. What existed in Germany by the late '80s or 1990, was a rather strong and wide instinct toward pacifism or at least an allergy toward military action. That spread pretty wide across the political spectrum and, once the combat phase of the Gulf War began, you had a large number of demonstrations protesting against the war, condemning the United States for taking military action against Iraq. That phase lasted for several days and then suddenly it stopped in very dramatic fashion. What happened was, that several days into the war, after we had started our aerial bombing, Iraq retaliated by shooting Scud missiles against Israel. The big fear at that time was that they might have poison gas that would cause a large numbers of losses. But, it was the image of Iraqi Scuds possibly carrying poison gas which mobilized German opinion, this time in favor of what we were doing, because it touched a very raw nerve. One of the most interesting days I've ever spent was the day that the Scud attack began. Frankfurt has a rather small Jewish community and many of them now are East Europeans, particularly Russian Jews. They organized a demonstration on the day that the Scuds started to attack Israel, supporting Israel and supporting the United States. It began as a rather small demonstration. As it approached the Consulate, which was the destination for the demonstration, other people, Germans, began to join the demonstration. So what started out as a very small demonstration, became within a couple of hours a very large event and really changed German attitudes on the Gulf War.

Q: Did you find within the, you might say the more professional ranks of people, any change, because the war went well and it looked like we knew what we were doing?

SHOSTAL: I certainly did. That was also something that you could see in different ways across the political spectrum in Germany. On the Right there was a renewed respect for American military capability. But, even more interesting was the reaction that you could see on the Left where people who had been very prominent a few years earlier in the anti- Vietnam and the so-called peace movement in Germany, began to wrestle with the problem of pacifism in the face of evil. In the case of Iraq you're faced with an evil regime which was trying to subjugate its neighbors. I think more intelligent and reflective members of the Left who observed this,

recognized that if you gave no military response that would abet what an evil regime was doing and contradict some of their basic principles of human rights and human dignity. So, some of these people, who had been very critical of our efforts in Vietnam, swung behind us and were in favor of our military action. Many have come around, for example, to supporting NATO as something which is a necessary institution in a world which is still far from peaceful.

Q: Was there any concern, as we moved our major forces out of Germany, that they weren't coming back? Was there any either dislocation or joy or what have you about that?

SHOSTAL: Well, there was very little joy. It's ironic, because a few years earlier before the end of the Cold War, in the mid to late '80s there had been quite a lot of friction involving things like, low level flights by American jet fighters training in Germany or damage done by tanks in field exercises, those kind of things. Especially, firing exercises at night. The Germans liked their peace and quiet, especially at night and on Sundays. So, there had been a lot of tension over those kind of things. Interestingly enough, during the Gulf War we were able to tell our German friends: look, our troops performed so well precisely because they had been able to train in your country, firing at night for example. Much of the combat in the Gulf took place at night. So, that helped neutralize that kind of friction, but more important was the fact that many troops never came back. With a sharp drop in the number of troops, there was less training and less interference with German life. There was another side effect which was interesting and that was the economic fact that areas, particularly west of Frankfurt in the Rhineland which are in German terms relatively poor areas were very dependent on the American bases for their economic prosperity. When these troops did not come back there was a lot of anxiety about how to adjust. We tried at the Consulate and in the Department, working with the Pentagon, to be helpful and find ways in which to help cushion the impact of the troop departure. For example, in the city Main, there was a large U.S. Army facility whose job was to repair and maintain large vehicles, tanks and army personnel carriers and things like that. Well, the need for that facility disappeared when the troops didn't come back. But, we were able to work out an arrangement whereby the German contractor was able to take over some of the equipment that base had so as to work on civilian vehicles. It was done in a way which was at no cost to the U.S. taxpayer and just made good sense. We also worked with one of the state governments on the conversion of a U.S. military air base to a civilian air field. Through those kinds of things I think we played a helpful role.

Q: What was the political situation in Hesse and Rhineland Palatinate and Saarland?

SHOSTAL: Well, through much of the 1980s the Social Democrats, which were an opposition party for most of that period in Bonn, achieved power in all of these states or had control of the state governments of all of these states. This represented a peculiar German phenomenon of divided government with the federal government being controlled by the Christian Democrats and their Free Democratic partners, but most of the state governments, including the ones we were responsible for, were controlled by the Social Democrats. In some cases working with the Green party, in other cases working with the Free Democrats in different kinds of coalitions. Particularly interesting were some of the people that I dealt with during that period. Perhaps the most interesting one was the leader of the Greens, the Green party in Hesse, a man named Joschka Fischer who is now the national leader of the Greens in Bonn and an extremely bright,

articulate and intelligent politician. He is in many respects perhaps the most creative politician on the German scene today, one who accomplished the impressive feat of turning the Greens from a protest movement in German politics to an almost mainstream party which today is seriously talked about as a candidate for being a partner in a governing coalition in Bonn. I think to a large extent that's the result of his work. I also got to know the man who became the challenger to Helmut Kohl in the 1994 Federal election, Rudolph Sharping. He was the Prime Minister of the state of Rhineland Palatinate. He was a sort of staid, hard working politician, not terribly imaginative who turned out not to be a very successful rival to Kohl in the elections.

Q: How did you find, you'd been in and out of Germany over a period of time, the attitude toward the United States by this time?

SHOSTAL: Well, that's a very complex question. It depends really at what level, what level of society or even what issue you're looking at, because attitudes vary. Overall though, I would say that there was very little really harsh anti-Americanism in the population, but there were mixed feelings. For example, during the period when we were having a lot of military exercises and little level jet flights, a lot of irritation. Also, among business people at that time, and this sounds strange today in the late '90s, but at that time in the late '80s early '90s there was a rather condescending view of American economic capability and effectiveness. There was a view that Germany really had all the answers or most of the answers on how to manage an economy and the feeling that the United States was somewhat lax, for example, in dealing with inflation, that American firms were not very good at strategic planning and that they really had quite a lot to learn from Germany. It was an attitude, by the way, which I think was reflected even as late as 1992 in Bill Clinton, who held Germany up as a kind of example or model.

Q: Well, both Germany and Japan seemed to be on a roll and we were feeling a little bit, as if we ought to do something.

SHOSTAL: That somewhat condescending view of American economic performance really began to change around 1992, as Germany entered a recession, it's most serious post-war recession. We were emerging from our somewhat milder recession, and the American economy began to show impressive gains in productivity, ability to keep inflation down, the kind of things that we see today. I find that German attitudes toward specific aspects of American society tend to be characterized by sharp swings of the pendulum between admiration, sometimes overdrawn, and condescension and condemnation, again overdrawn. There's a kind of emotional component in the way that many Germans look at the United States.

Q: Were you, particularly your economic officers, looking at the German economy and the way that it was put together? I came back around '93 and spent one night, and it happened to be a Saturday night, in Frankfurt staying with some German friends. I was sort of amused to see that if you go down to the main part of town, the place was still shut on a Saturday night. Some people were wandering around, no shops were open, and I thought, my God, if the German business people can't respond to obvious demands there's a problem. Could you talk about your view of the German economy at that point?

SHOSTAL: I think that was a very perceptive insight on your part. Very much a part of the

German economic dilemma was the overregulation of the economy. They weren't open because it was the law: they couldn't be open. There are a lot of historical and sociological reasons for this, even an economic interest involved in keeping things that way. But, we certainly were looking at that kind of problem, the overregulation of the economy. We were working on this with the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany to look at why it was that American firms were increasingly finding Germany an unattractive place in which to invest. Many of the reasons were overregulation, high taxes, difficulty of starting up ventures because of the inflexibility of the capital market. All those kinds of things we were very much aware of and analyzing and I think that Germans today are very aware of those kinds of problems. In the Spring of this year, April 1997, the German President, whose office is ceremonial, but who acts as a kind of spokesman for the country and national gadfly gave a speech in which he really raked the country over the coals for precisely these kinds of problems. In addition to the things that we've just talked about, he criticized the educational system, comparing all of these rigidities in Germany unfavorably with the flexibility that you find in the American system. I think too there's in Germany a pendulum swing phenomenon in which when the Germans get down on themselves, they really get down on themselves and when they're up, they're really up.

Q: What about the students and all? It all seems to me, and not only the students, but sort of the hangers on around the students. I think we've talked about this before, but at this point in time they all seemed to be able to get to demonstrations out on ideological reasons and all that you never could get in the United States. I mean it's just different. What was your contact with the students and what was your impression of them?

SHOSTAL: We did quite a bit with students. For example, at the America House, and I would visit the Frankfurt University, which had by the way a tradition of being a radical left institution, but also some of the other universities and business schools. I think that the 1990s generation of students, and already beginning in the late '80s is much more pragmatic, more conservative, less ideological than the students of the so-called 1968 generation. Americans often have an image of German students which is really a kind of relic of the 1968 period, rather than a reflection of today's realities. I think you can see the same kind of swing toward more conservative attitudes, more focus on building a career. After all, Germany is a country of high unemployment. Those kinds of concerns are very much on young Germans' minds.

Q: What about the extreme Right? This is of course something that all of us coming out of the World War II generation look at with probably a closer eye than anything else. What was your impression about this?

SHOSTAL: I think this is one of the reasons why I'm fundamentally optimistic about the success of democracy in Germany. Germany, I think less than any other Western European country today, has a far Right political movement. The far Right is almost invisible, almost insignificant in German politics today. Unlike Austria, as I mentioned before; unlike France, unlike Belgium, unlike Italy, all of which have powerful far Right movements. You did have beginning in late '80s something of an upsurge in far Right political activity, which was encapsulated in a party called the Republicans, in German, Die Republikaner. I think that they were a reflection of a number of things that were going on at that time. First of all, a very large influx of foreigners, many of them coming from Eastern Europe. Some of them also coming from the Third World,

which increased anti-foreigner feelings with the German population. Then, in the early '90s with the recession that I mentioned, the Republikaner were able to exploit people's fears and anxieties and resentments against the EU and against foreigners. But, they never achieved what in German politics is critical mass, namely five percent of the vote, to get into the federal parliament. They did get into some local and state legislators, but even there since then, their totals have declined. So, I think that's, for me, an encouragement to think that the anti-extremist inoculation of Germany has been pretty successful.

Q: What about the universities, you know so often, and this includes the United States, but in Europe even more Marxist professors seemed to dominate the universities, particularly in the fields of literature, political thought and all that. Was that true then?

SHOSTAL: I think there's quite a bit of truth to that in Germany, at particular universities especially. Frankfurt, I mentioned; Bremen was another example. But I think there's a bit of the same kind of divide as in this country as well, that the 1968 generation, which is now sort of at its academic peak, has one set of attitudes. But the younger generation, their students, don't accept a lot of those same ideas. So, the worries that people had a few years ago that this 1968 generation would somehow indoctrinate students for many generations, this hasn't really happened.

Q: How about with the local Frankfurt government? Any problems getting people out of jail? Any consular problems or anything of that nature?

SHOSTAL: No. We had very good relations with them. In fact, one of the people whom we found most helpful to deal with in the Frankfurt government was a man who had been very prominent in the anti-Vietnam War movement and who had also achieved a degree of fame as a student in Paris who was one of the leaders of the anti-de Gaulle street demonstrations in 1968 in France.

Q: Was this Red Rudy or something?

SHOSTAL: This was Daniel Cohn-Bendit.

Q: Oh, yes. Who was Red Danny?

SHOSTAL: Red Danny because he has red hair, but that also referred to his political ideas at the time. Red Danny, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, has mellowed since then. By the time I got to know him he had become very much an America fan. He was one of the people that I was referring to, for example, who felt that the United States had definitely done the right thing in the Gulf. But, he also was trying to persuade other Germans that Germany should become a multicultural society like the United States by having a controlled immigration policy, a policy of naturalizing immigrants, which Germany is only now beginning to grope toward.

A policy of controlled immigration and naturalization which Germany is only beginning now to take timid steps toward. The traditional German attitude has been that people of German ancestry, even if they have not lived in Germany for many generations are the only Germans.

You can't become a German by just being born in the country. Naturalization, if you are a foreigner, has been very difficult to achieve.

Q: I know. One of my first jobs was baby birth officer and I would find children, because our law is either by place of birth or by relationship and sometimes they wouldn't meet the relationship requirement and they didn't have German blood and so you would have a stateless baby. And, trying to explain this to the Germans is very difficult.

SHOSTAL: Well, the Germans are beginning to move more in our direction, but that's going to be a long and difficult process.

Q: Did you find at the University level and elsewhere, an interest in how the United States works good and bad?

SHOSTAL: Yes and no, interestingly enough. At the student level, there's a lot of interest in the United States. After all, an awful lot of young Germans have traveled to the United States and have had some experience, some contact. Also, there was a lot of influence through the American presence, especially American military presence. The impact, for example of Armed Forces Radio, AFN. I never appreciated it until I got to Germany, especially to the Frankfurt area. It has really affected German's musical taste and spawned a desire to have a more relaxed lifestyle, a more American lifestyle among younger people. I think there is a real, widely held attraction toward American popular culture. At the same time, sometimes even with the same people, there can be a seemingly contradictory, condescending attitude toward the United States. In the early '90s, when I was last in Germany, the positive elements in the relationship and the positive feelings about the United States, really outweighed the negative ones.

Q: How did you operate as a Consul General? I mean, I won't say give me a typical day, but just to give a feel for it. Here is a major consular post and how would you operate?

SHOSTAL: It was a varied and complex job--that was one of the interesting things about it. Germany, having a very decentralized political system, meant that an awful lot of responsibility, power and economic activity took place not in Bonn, but at the regional level, the state level and even at the local level. This meant that you really had a whole menu of possible activities. You could start the day or start the week and ask, "well what am I going to do this week?" It turned out for me to be a really fascinating mixture of maintaining political contacts, contact with journalists, bankers, businessmen and university people. For example, a couple of the most important newspapers are headquartered in Frankfurt. In Mainz you have one of the national T.V. networks headquartered. You have, of course the banking industry which dominates Frankfurt. You have a certain amount of industry that has its headquarters there. You had at that time also, a very large American military presence. All of those activities meant that I could be doing something useful and interesting practically every hour of the day. What I did, how I used my time depended obviously on what the hot issues were. For example, if there was an election going on--and we had in 1990 a particularly interesting period of national elections and state elections--so we spent a lot of time following those. In what was of concern to the Bonn Embassy and to Washington, we tried to be supporting in our reporting and coordinate very closely with the Embassy. On the whole that relationship was a good one. I would consult very

often with the DCM, the Deputy Chief of Mission in Bonn, or the political counselor, economic counselor on what we were doing.

There was one problem that I think is worth noting, and I think it continues to be a problem--and that was with the Treasury Department. I regret to say it. I think that this is a relationship that has been a difficult one between the two departments here in Washington, because of different views of who was responsible for what. And, it manifested itself very much in my work in Frankfurt, which is a banking center, particularly being headquarters of the German equivalent of the Fed, the Bundesbank. The Treasury representative who was located, at that time, in Bonn, felt that the Bundesbank and the banking community generally were his exclusive domain. His view was that the consulate, although we had economic officers and I was interested in financial issues, really had no business at all butting into that business. That created quite a lot of tension which I felt was unnecessary, because I thought that we could really help each other, but that was not the view from the Treasury perspective.

Q: How would this manifest itself?

SHOSTAL: It manifested itself, for example, in the Treasury Attache's coming to Frankfurt and not informing me. I would hear about it later and that was at times embarrassing, because I would be talking to someone from the German banking community and he would say, "Oh, I told your Treasury colleague about this a week ago, didn't he tell you?" It would be that kind of thing. And, there were constant complaints from the Treasury Attache when I did some reporting on financial developments, which I felt that we were in a good position to do because we were in contact with these people. So, rather than what should have been a mutually supportive reporting and contact effort, resulted in a substantial amount of tension.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover do you think on the Frankfurt thing?

SHOSTAL: On Frankfurt, I think that really covers the main things.

Q: Okay. I just realized there's a really very important question that I forgot to ask. During this '90 to '93 period, what was your view and the attitude and response of your area to the German unification?

SHOSTAL: That is an important issue of course. Well, it changed. And, it changed really quite rapidly during the time that I was there. When I arrived, and for the first few weeks after that, there was quite a lot of euphoria about unification and Germans all being together finally again in one country. But that feeling dissipated really quite quickly for a variety of reasons. One, it became clear that the process of real unification, not just political unification, but of knitting the country together socially, economically, was going to be a very long drawn out and expensive process. Since that time, and already beginning in the early '90s, Germany has been spending about a hundred billion dollars a year on completing unification. That's a lot of money. And, of course it's been the West German taxpayer that's been paying this. So, it's not surprising that within a relatively short time that resentment started to surface. A resentment, which has by way, its mirror image in Eastern Germany. I found in talking to East Germans that they often feel that the West Germans are know-it-alls, arrogant and overbearing and all those kinds of things. So,

there was quite a lot of stereotyping among the public at large. Among business people, the attitude varied quite a bit. There were a few people, particularly those who had come from Eastern Germany in the early postwar period and then settled in the West and had done well, who felt a strong moral obligation to do something to help rebuild the Eastern part of the country. Others, and this was the more typical attitude in the business community, felt that they did have some moral obligation to help, but at some point that the obligation had to cease and business calculations really would have to predominate. I could really watch that process go on. Within a year or two, more and more businessmen were saying, we can't continue to sacrifice in the East if it's going to cost the company in business terms now. There were also variations with regard to the sector of business that you are talking about. The banks, for example, and some of the light consumer industries were quite happy to go into the East and found quickly that it was a money making proposition for them. But others, particularly large industrial companies, found that the market was too small and production costs too high to make it an attractive place for major investments.

Q: Was it at all a shock to realize how badly off East Germany was at that time? Because you know, we kind of played up East Germany in our own minds as being the most efficient sector of the whole Soviet empire.

SHOSTAL: That's right, and those same kinds of attitudes and views of East Germany existed in West Germany as well. I think there may have been even a certain feeling of national pride in the view that if anybody could make a central plan economy work, it would be Germans. But, when they lifted the roof and looked inside they discovered really what a catastrophe the economy was. There had been very little real investment throughout the communist period. They were kind of still living on the capital plant of the '20s and '30s that survived the war and survived Soviet reparations. So, it was very grim and that an attitude of shock and disillusionment set in pretty quickly.

Q: Did you find yourself either personally or sort of under instructions from the Embassy or Washington to play up that it's a great thing that Germany is together again, or did we just have sort of a watching brief?

SHOSTAL: I think the main idea that we had was to try to encourage the rebuilding of the East and to do this in a couple of sectors in particular. One, was to try, using rather limited budgetary means, to establish as much contact as possible with the East Germans. West Germans, as you pointed out had 40 to 50 years of very intense contact with the United States with Americans, whereas East Germans hadn't. We felt that there was a very important role for us to play in doing that. What that meant in practical terms was that resources, particularly USIA resources, were diverted from the Western part of the country to the Eastern part of the country. Exchange programs for example. A large share of them went to, understandably and I think correctly, to the Eastern part of the country. The other aspect of our approach or strategy was to try to encourage American businesses and German businesses to invest in the Eastern part of the country. There, I think that we've had limited success, because both American and German businesses of course have to look at the bottom line. Early on in 1990, even before political unification was completed, there was a political decision taken by the West German government to try to raise living standards and salaries in the Eastern part of the country as quickly as possible to West

Germany's level. This was done essentially to try to stabilize things in the Eastern part of the country so that people would stay there rather than come flooding massively to the West. But, the downside of that was that it raised production costs in East Germany very quickly, making it an unattractive place to invest, because you had the double disadvantages of high salaries and still inefficient productive capacity, which hadn't been upgraded yet. And, that continues to be a big problem.

Q: Were you watching how Germany was responding to the opening up of Eastern Europe as far as investment and all. Because, in a way one of the concerns and it still remains has been that if Germany reaches out its got the natural borders and the instincts to go to Eastern Europe. This may make France less of a partner and Britain less of a partner, and all of a sudden you've got a big booming Germany which dominates Eastern Europe. Was this something we were kind of looking at this time?

SHOSTAL: Personally, and I think generally people in the State Department who knew Germany, were not particularly worried about it. Our bigger concern was there wouldn't be enough German investment in places like Poland or the Czech Republic, because we knew that the needs were so great. I think if you look at today's debate on enlarging Europe through NATO enlargement, through EU enlargement, that really is the best answer to avoiding the creation of a Central and Eastern Europe that's dominated by Germany. If they're all part of the Western Club, integrated, politically, militarily, economically in the West, then there really shouldn't be a worry about Germany dominating part of Europe which somehow might drift off from the West and be troublesome. If enlargement of democratic Europe succeeds, then I think there really isn't a problem like that to worry about.

Q: Yes. Well, I think this of course, in a way, has been our traditional policy is to make sure that a Germany doesn't sail off on its own again. It's been up to now a very successful one.

SHOSTAL: So far it has been a very successful one. I think that, and here we are talking about current issues, the effort to achieve a common currency is of course a part of the strategy of involving Germany as much as possible with the rest of Europe. If there is a failure with that and a negative fallout in Germany and other countries, there might again be some worries about Germany sailing off by itself, but we'll have to wait and see on that issue.

DONALD B. KRUSCH
Minister/Counselor for Economic Affairs; Deputy Chief of Mission
Bonn (1990-1994)

Donald Krusch was born and raised in New York. He attended Harvard University and was part of the Marine Corps Reserves. He worked in a private business and on Wall Street before he entered the Foreign Service in 1966. He served in Switzerland, Hungary, the former USSR, Germany, and Belgium. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.

Q: You left there in 1990. This is probably a good place to stop. Where did you go after that?

KURSCH: I went to Bonn, Germany, as the Embassy Minister/Counselor for Economic Affairs..

Q: Alright, so we'll pick this up in 1990, in Germany.

KURSCH: OK.

Q: Great.

[pause in tape between interview session dates]

Q: Today is the 16th of October, 2003. Don, Germany is obviously is Bonn, but Bonn and when you went there, did you feel this was the last stage of the thing? Germany must have been fascinating in 1990.

KURSCH: Well, we went there right at the time of unification. The Wall had come down in November in the previous year, in '89. I got there in August and the GDR still formally existed. The reunification didn't take place until October 3rd, but of course everyone was waiting for it to happen. This was something for which we had waited a long time. It was a time of great excitement. And it was a very good time for the United States, because we had unhesitatingly supported German reunification, unlike our British and French friends. The French were always fond of saying, "We love Germany so much we're glad there are two of them." President Bush's support for unification had created much good will among the Germans. I, myself, had never served in Germany before. I had served in Switzerland in my first tour, and I felt quite fortunate to have been assigned to Bonn in such a senior position.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

KURSCH: The ambassador was a wonderful gentleman named Vernon Walters, who was something of a legend in his time. He had been an aide to General Eisenhower and as an aide to Gen. Mark Clark during WWII. Subsequently Walters had a very distinguished career as a defense attaché and had been in Paris during the time of the student uprisings in '68. It was rumored that DeGaulle even admired the way he spoke French, he spoke it so well. But he was a wonderful gentleman, a very, very kind and considerate person who if he heard anyone in this large embassy was in the hospital, he'd go and see them. He was just something of a past generation, but very good to be around. However, he was not an economist, and he made that rather clear.

Q: At least you weren't serving as an economist under Arthur Burns, which I was told was sort of a trial. [laughter]

KURSCH: Yes, I think I heard there that the person who had my position at that time wisely avoided economic debates with Ambassador Burns. As for my job in Bonn, it was primarily to manage the very large economic component of the embassy including all the economic agencies, and for some reason most of the law enforcement agencies, other than the FBI. So I looked after

customs, the drug enforcement administration, agriculture, treasury, and the commerce department. And not all of them readily accepted my management of them, except they had to deal with the DCM and the ambassador and to get into those offices, they had to at least work with us.

Q: Did you sense... I've just finished interviewing Dick Barclay who was our ambassador in East Germany at the time. He was saying, and this was really before your time... you arrived after, essentially... but he said that I think it was under Richard Burt had almost cleaned out the German experts who had been around for a long time from Bonn, so that our people in our mission in Berlin and in East Germany, that's where a lot of them ended up, so there's a lot more knowledge about Germany there than at Bonn. And that Vernon Walters was a real gentleman and a very smart person, but really wasn't a German hand either. So, did you sense that there was a lack of expertise on the German mission at that time?

KURSCH: Well, the mission was pretty deep. It was a large mission on my side of the house. Let me see, I'm trying to think how many of us... My deputy, Paul Pilkauskas, was a veteran EB officer, knew his trade policy very well. George Ward, the DCM, was an experienced European hand, was very strong on security policy. Walters, after all, had been around since the WWII and was greatly admired by the Germans for that. The fact that he'd had personal links to Eisenhower, was a big plus for him. No, looking back I don't recall a lack of expertise on Germany in our Embassy.

As I noted earlier, Walters was a very kindly presence who was like everyone's favorite uncle I recall that he made have gotten into trouble by certain public statements he made supporting reunification. The Bush administration was not terribly happy with this because they were trying to go very cautiously on the whole question of unification, and make sure that this could somehow take place in a context where you could keep all of Germany in NATO.... There was great fear that this might not come off.

Because of this there was tension between the embassy and Washington. Also, as I recall, the relationship between Embassy Bonn the US Embassy in East Berlin were not very good. East Berlin was being closed with unification and the tours of those assigned there were curtailed. This was a source of unhappiness. There was also a sense in Bonn that some of the US staff of Embassy East Berlin apologized too much for the GDR. This would have been a source of bad feeling.

Q: Sure.

KURSCH: In terms of people not knowing things, I think that's a pretty strong statement.

Q: Too strong a statement. It's just that we had developed over the years in Germany a very strong German core, and I guess maybe the time had come and it was beginning to dissolve. I mean, for people who had spent their entire careers practically in Germany.

KURSCH: Well, both Burt and Dobbins when they went out there were not German hands, neither of them spoke German. Although, I'm told that Jim Dobbins did quite an impressive job

learning German from scratch. My German teacher told me he was the best student she'd ever had, and indeed, he's a person of formidable intellectual ability. But, I can see and imagine the unhappiness that this must have provoked to have two people coming out there, neither of whom had a background in Germany. And, Germany, over the years, had been something of a special case, because even when we had political appointees there, it seems to me that many of them had had some association with Germany. Arthur Burns, was an outstanding example of this, although he was Austrian by background. Walters didn't have any particular affinity, relationship with Germany. He did speak some German. He started German, I guess, when he was a kid and he decided he wanted to get Kaiser Wilhelm's autograph. He was reading the Kaiser's memoirs when he was a young boy. So he wrote a letter to the Kaiser, who was then in exile in the Netherlands, and I guess got a letter back from the master of the court, the hofmeister, explaining that his majesty didn't give autographs. But he got the Kaiser's imperial card or something similar.

Q: Something like that.

KURSCH: Yes. 1

Q: When you went there, what was the thought, or what were you getting as economic minister? I mean a united Germany was in the air. It was going to be a fact, wasn't it?

KURSCH: Oh, it was a fact. I mean it was a fact economically when I arrived there.

Q: So what was the feeling about the absorption and what were you getting from East Germany. You know, it had been highly touted, and when they looked at it closely, it wasn't so good. So what were you getting? Had there been a different picture than you were seeing?

KURSCH: Well, East Germany certainly was much more bedraggled than we appreciated, including the German experts themselves. We talked earlier about expertise. The costs of the rebuilding East Germany had been grossly underestimated from the beginning, and the amount of time that it would take to rebuild had also been underestimated. If you looked at the comparative economic statistics, East Germany, as I recall, was listed as the tenth-largest economy in the world. But the country's basic infrastructure was rotting and the products that the GDR manufactured were totally uncompetitive. And then you had this decision to convert the East German Mark to West German Marks at the rate of 1-to-1, to give people spending money, as well as for psychological reasons. However, their productivity in the East was so low that there was no way that companies over there could survive with such an exchange rate. I'm wondering though, even if the rate had been 2-to-1, or 5-to-1, how much of East Germany's industry could have survived.

One of the things that in which I took great interest, was learning more about the East German economy, and I started traveling over there on a regular basis. I can remember doing it with at least two of my colleagues from the Embassy's other economic agencies. We had very senior representatives from commerce and from agriculture, so taking up where I left off in Hungary, where I used to travel around with a military attaché, I traveled to East Germany together with them. We took 2- and 3-day trips around to Eastern Germany, and took a look at the business

climate. On one trip we attended the groundbreaking for the new General Motors plant at Eisenach which was probably the most visible investment by a US company in East Germany. I wanted to be able to show the Germans how much Americans and our investors were doing in Eastern Germany, because there was this sense among the Germans that the United States should be doing more helping them rebuild and that we somehow owed it to them, because of what some saw a US responsibility for the long division of their country. I had a bit of problem with this point of view, but it was an attitude I encountered often, particularly among working people such as taxi drivers.

Q: With East Germans.

KURSCH: No. With West Germans. Many felt that somehow that the US was partially to blame for the fact that their country had been divided, and now we had an opportunity to in there and lead the pack on new investment investing and helping Germany to meet the enormous expenses of re-unification. And so, what I did was to start collecting information on all the American investment that had taken place in East Germany, and getting this in to the ambassador's speeches, especially after Ambassador Kimmitt got there in 1991. We were able to make a very credible case that the United States was, in fact, the leading foreign investor in Eastern Germany. So we were able to show, in fact, that we were helping to turn the place around.

Q: Looking at East Germany, and the history of very low productivity, and not the greatest products, what was there to induce American companies to invest, and what could you say honestly to people who were talking about investing there?

KURSCH: Well, I think it was clear that East Germany was going to have the highest per capita income in the former east bloc because of the assistance from the West. There were also significant tax breaks that the German government was offering to investors. Many American companies felt that it was important to establish a presence in this market of 17 million people. We also pointed out that the East Germans had a fair amount of expertise in dealing with the other countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. There were personal connections; there was knowledge of the Russian language. And for basic consumer products such as automobiles, for example, this is what people were spending their money on. Indeed, this Opel plant that General Motors put in at Eisenach, had a big demand for its products. All these East Germans were taking this money they were getting at 1-to-1 and buying cars. That was one of the more spectacular transformations, watching the disappearance of the old Eastern automobile stock and its replacement by world class automobiles.

Q: La Trava...

KURSCH: Trabants and Wartburgs. One small example, though, that sticks out in my mind, highlighting East Germany's low productivity was that Wartburg, which had its factory in Eisenach, produced 70,000 cars a year, with a workforce of 10,000. GM's plan was to produce 150,000 cars a years with a workforce of 2,000. This figures underscored to me the magnitude of difference in productivity between East and West..

Q: Yeah. Was there concern on our part about the German commitment in East Germany as far

as what it might do to the Germany economy as a whole, and also within Europe. It's a big engine that's driving a lot of Europe.

KURSCH: I think there was the realization that this was going to be a very big project. There was also the realization which was somewhat slow to come, or filter down, that our special relationship from the days of occupation were over. We immediately drew down the number of US forces we had in Germany, from 300,000 to about 100,000, and I'm convinced that we kept that 100,000 because it was a still six-figure number. That was a big change. Yet, I guess we had significant confidence in ourselves, as unification had come out so amazingly well for us. Here we had a united Germany that was in NATO. The first President Bush talked about "partners in leadership", that this new, united Germany would become the major partner for the US in continental Europe. I think we were quite upbeat about those possibilities. That continued into the Clinton administration. Things have changed more recently. But these were pretty heady times.

From the German perspective, what was interesting was how they weren't really quite ready for making broader international commitments. Because, at that time, we had the first Gulf War.

I can remember this one instance, I must have been charge d'affairs and was making my initial calls. We had received a request from the State Department to obtain foreign assistance to help move the Egyptian Third Army to the Gulf. We were supposed to talk to German officials about this. I remember being at the ministry of transportation making a courtesy calls, and my interlocutor was the acting minister at the time because of the summer vacation. I asked him for help or any thoughts he might have in dealing with Washington's request. He provided me with a list of Hamburg shipping companies.

Q: [laughter] Oh, God.

KURSCH: Finally, Secretary Baker came and appealed directly to Chancellor Kohl and received a 10 billion DM commitment from Germany to help with the expenses of the first Gulf War. But this was classic checkbook diplomacy from the German side. The notion that they could write checks and get out of a commitment of personnel was quite strong. The whole idea of sending troops to war was still very strange and unacceptable. I remember having lunch with a friend who was then the head of the American Studies department at the University of Bonn, shortly before the Gulf War started. He said to me "But surely you're not going to go to war. People don't go to war anymore." I answered, "Well, you heard what the President said, and you heard what the Secretary said, and unless Iraq pulls out of Kuwait, I see no alternative." He said, "You can't go to war over this" I replied "But that's what's going to happen." And this person was not a reflexive anti-American; but rather a conservative Christian Democrat. But it was an interesting reflection of the mentality at the time. There has been a big change since then. And the fact that the Germans, today, are one of the leaders of our joint military action in Afghanistan, just shows the enormous transformation that has taken place in a relatively short time.

Q: Yeah. What was your impression of the economic relationship when you arrived, you know, new boy on the block, between the United States and Germany, and its officials and what we were doing?

KURSCH: I think we had a pretty good relationship. This was the time, one of my top responsibilities was to get support from the German government for the successful completion Uruguay Round trade negotiations. We were pushing this very, very hard. Carla Hills was the US trade representative. The Germans used to call her Crowbar Carla, because she was a pretty tough lady. Still, the Germans, within the EU context, were among the most committed free traders. We had a coalition of Christian Democrats and Free Democrats and the Free Democrats controlled the economics ministry. They were quite committed to free trade and liberal economic policies. So, one of the things that I had to do was to try and push those connections as much as possible to try and get the Germans to speak out in an EU context and try to come up with positions that would be compatible with ours or at least provide a basis for further negotiations. It was clear that unless we in the EU reached an internal agreement, the Uruguay Round never would have been concluded. So I spent a lot of time on that. I'm happy to say that at the end of the day, we were successful. Although the French did not give the Bush administration the satisfaction of concluding an agreement on its watch; this was subsequently done in the next administration. I had very, very good ties with the German Ministry of Economics which was a very professional operation. This ministry had been founded by Ludwig Erhard after World War II, and it was a real honor to work with those people. When I think back at the level and quality of the people that I could deal with at my own rank, it was really a great privilege for me. I think particularly of Dr. Lorenz Schomerus, who was the assistant secretary responsible for international trade matters and international economics in the ministry and his team, who were a wonderful group.

Q: Did you find yourself having to deal with French influence? I mean, were we sort of fighting the French for the soul of Germany on, say, economic policy?

KURSCH: Well, the French would make these very strong appeals to European solidarity. On economic issues, the French, of course, had a rather protectionist outlook anyway, and I think they would appeal to Germany on for solidarity. The people I dealt with on the whole I think were more sympathetic intellectually to our positions on trade and economics. But they had to figure out how to bridge these gaps. Agriculture was a tricky issue, though, because the German agriculture is even more inefficient than that of France, so when you dealt with the German agricultural ministry, their priority was to protect small German farmers, particularly farmers in Bavaria, where there was a strong agricultural lobby. The CSU of Bavaria was a key coalition partner for the Kohl government so there were always these kinds of elements. Our agricultural attaché did not have an easy time. But I felt that the Germans had more of a feeling for us. We also were benefiting from the afterglow of all the support we'd given to Germany during the Cold War, and our unhesitatingly backing of German unification. But the Chancellor Kohl would say things such as, "Well, you have to understand that with France, you must take off your hat to Marianne three times before you can salute your own flag." And if I complained about the French to the Germans, they'd say, "What are you complaining to us for? We have to deal with them every day."

Q: [laughter]

KURSCH: There was this expectation among the French, which I found curious, that the

Germans would, of course, speak French, but they didn't feel any necessity to learn German. I discovered, to my amazement, their political counselor of their embassy in Bonn didn't speak German. For German speakers the French would usually find an Alsatian or two put into their embassy. The other thing was that French people did not tend to travel to Germany. Germans traveled to France a lot but this interest was not reciprocated by the French.

Q: Was there any concern on our part or on the Germans sort of on an official part, on the ties between Germany and the United States? They used to be really quite strong, really after WWII, mainly because so many troops went there. You know, I served my time in Germany, both in the consulate but also in the Air Force. And, an awful lot of people of my generation had spent time in Germany, but when it comes to vacation time for Americans, they head for Spain, Italy, and France. And, Germany had a reputation for being rather expensive. In other words, there didn't seem to be sort of the people-to-people connection that comes through tourism and all. Was that a concern?

KURSCH: Well, I think there was a recognition that things were going to change. We sense that when the embassy and the capital moved to Berlin, we would have a very different Germany than the divided Germany we'd be in since 1945. But this hadn't really happened yet, although we expected it. To deal with this, for example, we tried to send a disproportionate number of people from the eastern part of the country on our IV programs. When Richard Holbrooke was ambassador, he set up this American academy in Berlin, which seems to be quite successful and quite active. Holbrooke organized something called a New Traditions Conference in 1993. He brought in Henry Kissinger, an Chancellor Kohl attended. It was really quite spectacular. He brought in some of the top figures in American business: the chairman of IBM, Lou Gerstner; Jack Smith, the chairman of General Motors. He really did get big names. The whole idea behind this was how could we establish a different kind of relationship to deal with the inevitable changes. So it wasn't that we were unaware, but still, at the time, from '90 to '94, when I was in Germany and even after when I was on the desk, I think we still benefited from the afterglow of traditional relationship. When I think of my dealings with German military and the defense ministry—I was DCM for the last year and a half that I was in Germany—so much of the German military, in fact all the German pilots, had been trained in the United States. They still have a large base out in New Mexico. You just had all these personal ties. I think our military commanders in Germany, in general, did a terrific job in reaching out to the communities they were stationed in. The level of good will in places like Nuremberg between the people of the city and the military commands were quite striking to me.

Q: Well, did you feel that our military success in Desert Storm, the first Gulf War, also helped in a way? Because the military had gone through a period of sort of decline after Vietnam. There had been real problems with morale and conduct of the troops and all. This was sort of splendid performance. Did that resonate in Germany?

KURSCH: I think it resonated in a couple of ways. First, there was this strong pacifistic mentality, which was not just present on the left... There was a broad attitude that you can't solve problems through military means, and of course I think we demonstrated in the Gulf War that sometimes you have to do that. And we had been very successful, with a minimum of casualties. So, we came out of that affair somewhat vindicated.

It also showed the Germans that they had to play a broader role in the world. Of course, when the Balkan crisis came up later, they did. They sent troops down to the Balkans. So that was a big change in their attitude. I'm sorry could we go back to your question again?

Q: I was just wondering whether our military success, our army really, you know, showing its mettle. It was not just a... I'm sure the...showing it's a very effective instrument. Did that...?

KURSCH: Yes, I think, as I recall, it certainly did. There was, again, it was efficient, there was a minimum of number of casualties. We had the horrible spectacle of Saddam pulling out and burning all the oil wells in the Gulf, which was a great environmental catastrophe. The environment is big politics in Germany. So, I think on the whole we were vindicated.

I did have one unpleasant incident there. It's the closest I've ever come to getting killed in the Foreign Service to my knowledge. Right on the eve of the war, I believe it was Ash Wednesday, 1991, terrorists shot up our embassy. The Red Army faction shot at the embassy with about 200 armor-piercing bullets, and missed me by about a foot. I didn't realize it at the time how close they came to, but we hit the floor in our offices. It was about 7 o'clock at night and the bullets—you could see tracers, coming over our head. But we didn't realize they came right through the walls of the Embassy as well. One of them hit my secretary's computer. The secretary's computer was decorated by Ambassador Walters the following day as a war casualty.

Q: How did you find dealing with the green party and all? Were they sort of on an almost un-American course? Anti-American.

KURSCH: I didn't have a lot of dealing with the green party, with the exception of Joschka Fischer. I can remember going to ...

Q: He's now a foreign minister.

KURSCH: Yes. I can remember going to a presentation of his. The other person I remember is Daniel Cohn-Bendit, he was a Euro parliamentarian at the time.

Q: He was on both sides, both France and Germany.

KURSCH: Yes.

Q: Red Rudy

KURSCH: No, that was Rudy Deutchka. Cohn-Bendit was Danny the Red.

Q: Danny the Red. You're talking about '68, in France.

KURSCH: Right. But what I do remember is going to a presentation by Fischer when he had his costume on, battered dungarees, deliberately dressing down. But he certainly was a formidable intellect. I think we were at the time where the Greens were starting to turn themselves from a

movement into a genuine political party and alternative. You always had the factions within the green party whether... some of whom didn't want political power. But on my issues, I didn't really have an awful lot of contact with them that I can remember. I do recall those two particular events. One was just going to hear Cohn-Bendit speak at some event in Duisburg that the mayor invited us to. The other was this seminar with Fischer. I'm trying to think, don't recall that any of the German state governments were in coalition with the greens that I was dealing.

Q: Were there any major business problems that you had to deal with?

KURSCH: We had this situation in Eastern Germany where the authorities were trying to privatize a lot of the state properties. Of course, the German companies wanted first whack at this stuff and the most attractive deals. Despite all this talk of where are you Americans and why won't you come here and invest, there was a frequently a tendency by the Germans to leave us the scraps that they didn't want themselves.. We had a long fight over the privatization of the coal fields and properties around Leipzig. We had set up this small consulate general in Leibzig, which was very, very effective. Todd Becker was the consul general over there. I went over there a number of times, but we pushed very hard to make sure our US companies got equal treatment and that their proposals would be handled on a level playing ground. One thing I particularly remember doing with the help of a friend in the chancellor's office is smuggling the ambassador onto Chancellor Kohl's helicopter as they went down to dedicate this General Motors facility in Eisenach. Ambassador Kimmit, who spoke reasonable German, made the pitch to the Chancellor in the helicopter. He'd prepared this very carefully, and indeed, we were successful in winning that bid. I felt very good about that, because the Chancellor, I was told, gave the word that, "Hey, don't treat the Americans like this. Give them an equal shot." At least that was the feedback I got. So that was one concrete example I can think of how we probably made a difference. I don't know if the company ever appreciated that. But it gave me satisfaction.

Q: What about Germany's place in the European Union at that time? Were there any issues that we were concerned about that we had to work with or against Germany in that?

KURSCH: Well I think, as I said, the biggest issue that I worked on was the Uruguay Round trade issues. And there, we certainly saw Germany as a partner within the EU, because the philosophical orientation of the leadership was very much the way we'd wanted the EU to go. What was interesting in Germany at that time as that the trade unions were also free trade oriented, because Germany is the big exporting country of the EU. I remember going up to call on the head of the German trade union movement to make the pitch that they should come out and strongly support the Uruguay Round agreement. And, it seems to me, we got the trade unions and the Confederation of German Industry to sign a joint letter supporting this. Together they wrote to Chancellor Kohl and encouraged the conclusion of this agreement.

Another issue I did a considerable amount of work on was export controls. We were trying to prevent the sale of technologies that would be used for nuclear weapons production. I remember we were trying to block the construction of the Bashir reactor in Iran at the time. I worked a lot with the Ministry of Economics which also had the export control function in its portfolio. In this particular case the Germans were pretty cooperative, although they were not as vigorous in general on the whole subject of export controls as we would have been. The penalties for

violations, as I recall at the time, were much less strong than they would have been in the United States. We felt that Germany needed to be more vigorous in export control enforcement.

Q: Did you get any feel for... the movement was on for the adoption of the euro. How did we feel about it at the time you were there?

KURSCH: There was a big internal German debate on this. And, one could sense, politically, the euro was not popular, as the Deutschmark had been the key success symbol of the Federal Republic, of the Bonn republic. Emotionally, the mark was not something the Germans were keen to give up. On the other hand, and here is where I had great respect for Chancellor Kohl, and how he saw the Euro as a great European project. This was an opportunity to take Europe to a higher and more visible level of unity, and basically Kohl probably acted against the advice of many of his economic advisors... I recall that Mr. Tietmeyer, who was the head of the Bundesbank and probably then the most respected economic expert in Germany, was not enthusiastic about the common currency. But Kohl provided the political leadership to make this happen. My own sense was that this was the kind of measure that would be good for Europe and good for us. It made sense: if you have a common economic area, to have a common currency.

I was, and probably still am, a believer in the bicycle theory: or if you don't move forward, you move backwards. The temptation of various EU member states to play games with their currencies and engage in competitive devaluations for the purpose of promoting their export industries might have been difficult to overcome. As we see how southern countries, or even the French, have played games with inflation over the years and devaluations of their currencies, this could have been a real danger. So, it seemed to me at the time, that this move towards the creation of a common currency made sense. Now, what the Germans didn't see at the time, was the enormous difficulty they would have in rebuilding the East, and what a major drag that this would be on their overall economy. Now, it's also a drag, and we're seeing this now, on their ability to provide economic stimulus internally..

Q: My first post, back in 1955, was Frankfurt, and I was amused that they had very strict controls on when stores could be open and all that sort of stuff. And then going back there in '94, just an overnigher on a Saturday night, and seeing all the stores once again. These types of controls which are prevalent in France, even greater, did you see things as being a limitation?

KURSCH: Absolutely. I think it was the most visible manifestation of the difficulty in changing old habits in today's economic environment. It's remarkable. You're the owner of the store, and you own this property and you can't keep it open... and not only that, it's a drag on employment because people can certainly benefit from part-time jobs, or the ability to work weekends. That's something that the Germans had difficulty adapting to. The French may be a bit more adaptable in that regard. At least their closing hours are much less restricted.

Q: Yeah. I think you could only have sales at certain times in the year.

KURSCH: Right.

Q: It seems ridiculous. What about... this comes to productivity. Were you seeing a problem with

the Germans as their population gets older, and more and more gastarbeiter are doing the production work and all? Was this a problem?

KURSCH: What I remember were the very high costs of labor and the environmental restrictions, the kinds of work rules, and how these types of things were becoming an enormous burden for German manufacturers. On the other hand, the quality of product at the time was quite impressive. I also remember being very impressed by German small and middle sided manufacturers particularly these family companies. I had a fair amount of contact with them. I remember going out to such firms, one was a maker of precision instruments; another company made rollers for hospital beds. I got to know the owner of the latter company. They had a little, small plant in the United States. The Germans were so good at getting these to specialty markets, servicing their customers, and were so aggressive in marketing their products. They were really, and I think still are today, a very export-oriented economy. These middle-sized businesses in Germany were a cornerstone of the country's strength. The quality of their engineering... I was very, very impressed by it.

Q: Did you find yourself almost in competition of looking for American firms to invest, say, in Germany, instead of going into lower cost areas, like the Czech Republic or Hungary, or all of that?

KURSCH: Sure.

Q: Because you're talking about the high cost of labor and all these restrictions; I would think that this would be a disincentive for Americans...

KURSCH: You're right, and I think the companies that hadn't been in Germany were probably looking elsewhere in terms of investment. There is, for many companies, an advantage to be present on the market, particularly if they are already there. Ford, General Motors had big presences in Germany at the time. I think now they've cut back somewhat. You asked me about the gastarbeiter before. I would say on the whole, I was pretty much impressed with how immigrants to Germany, adapted to the to the norms of what was expected by their employers, at least in the workplace. And, there, I think is a strength in the country that may not be sufficiently recognized.

Q: In other words, they came up to the standards that one thinks of German workers doing.

KURSCH: I believe much better than might be commonly appreciated. That's my overall impression. Germany is a land of opportunity for an awful lot of people and has been for a long time such as people coming from Central Europe. If you look at the number of Polish names you see in Germany, or Hungarian names. A lot of the Turks in the country have integrated. We had Pakistani drivers who'd become German citizens, spoke very good German, had their little gardens out in back of their houses, that kind of thing. So an awful lot of that was happening. Germany is a much more multiethnic society than most Americans realize.

Q: How did you find, particularly in your DCM, this vast bureaucracy we'd established there? How did it work together? It must have been a pain in the neck to try to...

KURSCH: Perhaps the things I felt best about in my accomplishments as DCM was pushing to close the American embassy in Bonn, because there didn't seem to me any real need to continue this great embassy on the banks of the Rhine. We had a thousand people in it. Ambassador Holbrooke had also pushed very hard to reopen our consulate general in Dusseldorf, which the State Department didn't want to do. So, Dusseldorf became a foreign service commercial service post. But, it's there. In trying to determine if we should maintain a presence in Bonn I went through an whereby I sent questionnaires to every conceivable agency in our embassy,. I asked them how many people would they need in Berlin, and how many people would they need in Bonn if we were going to have to split operation? Of course, I came up with a greatly expanded staff. If I remember right, I think it was the US Air Force liaison office, telling me they'd need to double the size of their presence; —they had two in Bonn but they would now need four: two in Bonn and two in Berlin. So, I got all these questionnaires together. I said, "This is ridiculous. I think it's crazy for the State Department to maintain an large embassy in Bonn for a couple of single agencies who could make other arrangements. them. So, I announced one of the big weekly staff meetings day, that I saw no reason for the embassy to remain in Bonn when we moved to Berlin. And, boy, you could see these colonels—I had eight full colonels at my staff meeting—running for the telephones. That's the way it ended up. The other thing we did is that we set up a special administrative operation in Frankfurt to be associated with the consulate but not part of it, to staff international activity, primarily our operation in the newly-independent states and the Balkans. at that time. All these regional support personnel were charged to the American presence people in Germany. We looked and we had very high numbers, and an enormous embassy and we decided that had to find a way to reduce our presence. And we succeeded.

Q: Were there any other... In the first place, did you notice yourself, any change between the Bush administration and the Clinton administration when that came about? This would be in '93, I guess.

KURSCH: Well, certainly, it was a heady time for the Democrats coming in. What I do remember very distinctly was having Vernon Jordan make a trip to our post to scout us out, and him coming into my office and talking to me. I don't know quite what he was there for, but I think he was there in a semi-official capacity.

Q: He's a major figure in the Democratic Party

KURSCH: And a close friend of Bill's.

Q: Yeah. A close friend of Bill's, Bill's African-American lawyer in Washington

KURSCH: Right. A power broker of the first order. So we knew these changes were coming. We didn't know exactly what they would be. But, my sense was that President Clinton had a very strong interest in Germany. He had something of an affection for Germany. I'm not quite sure where it came from. He was rumored to speak a little bit of German. I know he was quite unhappy with the British, because John Major made the mistake of publicly endorsing Bush's reelection. That may have had something to do with it. But I also think that Kohl had been

around so long that maybe Clinton felt that having an elder statesman to whom he could turn gave him some reassurance.

Q: And, Kohl and Clinton were sort of two bigger-than-life politicians in a way.

KURSCH: Yes. Kohl was a big picture guy, and a wise man. Many German intellectuals made fun of him, but it seems to me, he was consistently more right than wrong. Certainly, the relationship in the early phases of the administration when I was still there was quite cordial. And then, very shortly before I left, President Clinton did come to Bonn and Berlin. So, that was, of course, was a very big event for us.

Q: How did that... You know, a new administration coming in, you usually have all the hangers-on having a wonderful time exerting their power. How did that work? What was the impact on you all?

KURSCH: Well, we had Dick Holbrooke as ambassador who was a very colorful figure in his own right, a dynamic figure. He did a couple of quite clever things. He had more experience in Asia than in Europe. The German were saying did they send an Ambassador with an Asian background?, And Holbrooke he had also wanted to go to Japan as ambassador, but former vice-president Mondale had been tapped, so the Germans felt that they were a bit shortchanged. One of the things I told Holbrooke when he came out was to make the Germans aware of his own German heritage, as his grandfather had fought for the Kaiser in WWI. He had this picture of his grandfather in uniform with one of those spiked German helmets. So I said o him, "Make sure that sits in your living room in a corner somewhere, but not too prominently. If they can see that, then they won't ask you why you don't speak German." And, indeed, I can still remember some military officer looking at that picture and they said, "Who's that?" I said, "Oh, that's the ambassador's grandfather."

Q: [laughter]

KURSCH: The other thing he did, though, that was quite clever, he brought out Fritz Stern, who was the top American academic writing about Germany and German history as his advisor. So he had this interesting little front office of Fritz Stern, Dan Hamilton, of SAIS, another eminent German scholar, although much younger than Stern. These were Holbrook's personal advisors. Indeed, Fritz Stern was quite fascinating. Just the ability I had to go in and talk to him if I had a question about something we were doing, I could go in and just go in, and I was calling him Fritz, "What do you think of this?" It gave me a lot of self-confidence, having him around. I think it was very good for the embassy in general.

Q: You left there in '94.

KURSCH: I left in '94.

Q: Before we move on, do you want to tell me about your trip to Hungary with a military attaché?

KURSCH: I got in the habit of going on a trip, one trip a year, with the Defense attaché to get a better feel for their responsibilities and the demands of requirements that the Defense Department placed upon them. I knew they were on the road all the time, but I wanted to see what, in fact, was it they did, and how strenuous it was. So, one year I did it with the Army, when the defense attaché was an Army colonel. So the next year, we had a new colonel, who was a female Air Force colonel. She was a real gung ho person.. Indeed, we went around the countryside and showed up at the edges of various bases with our gear. ... They knew all the back roads to get around to all these places. [laughter] I can remember on this one occasion, we got stuck in the mud.

Q: [laughter]

KURSCH: And we couldn't get out and we were there about 40 minutes. Finally this Hungarian security patrol, ununiformed but clearly identifiable approached us and said, "Can we help?" [laughter]

Q: [laughter]

KURSCH: But by that time I think we'd battened down any incriminating evidence in the back of our van. We were at the end of this Air Force runway. And thank God, the warrant officer in our group had figured out that our tire had been flattened. By the time our Hungarian friends came back we'd changed the tire and our vehicle was movable again, and these guys came back with more help but we were able to wave goodbye and thank them and sped out. But I was wondering whether I was going to get a summons one day from the foreign ministry and being asked, "Well Mr. Kursch, what were you doing down there at the edge of that Taszar Air Force base?" Fortunately this never happened. But I must say these experiences were good for developing a good working relationship with the military. I think I had these good relationships in both in Bonn and Budapest. I enjoyed working with our military colleagues a lot and I had a lot of respect for them.

JOHN NIX
Political Advisor
Berlin (1990-1994)

John Nix was born in Alabama in 1938. He attended the U.S. Military Academy and served in the U.S. Army from 1960 to 1971 as a major overseas. Upon entering the Foreign Service in 1971, his assignments abroad have included Nairobi, Moscow, Nicosia, Athens and Berlin. Mr. Nix was interviewed in 1994 by Raymond Ewing.

Q: In 1990, I believe, you went to Berlin.

NIX: That's right. I was planning to be DCM in Athens, but eventually I decided to take the job in Berlin, as it turned out, during a very exciting time. I got there just at the time of German

reunification.

Q: The Wall had come down?

NIX: The Wall had come down, but the official process of reunification, the Two Plus Four Talks, had not been completed yet. We actually supported the final stages of the Two Plus Four Talks after I arrived in Berlin. I took part in the final reunification ceremonies in the fall of 1990 in which the United States, Britain, and France turned over control of West Berlin to Germany for the first time since we began the occupation of Berlin after World War II.

Q: Was it at that point that the American embassy to the German Democratic Republic in East Berlin closed?

NIX: It ceased to exist officially at midnight on October 3, 1990. The ambassador and all the staff gathered in the basement of the embassy in their club and counted it down to the time when their status officially ended. I know the ambassador left the embassy at midnight and did not return. It was officially part of the Bonn embassy from that time.

Q: What was, the former...

NIX: Our former embassy in the GDR.

Q: But you were at the U.S. Mission?

NIX: Yes. I came in as part of the Occupation forces. I was the "political advisor" or POLAD in the U.S. mission in West Berlin. We knew at the time, of course, that we were going to reunify Berlin, we were going to unify the diplomatic presences there in the East and West. The decision was made by the ambassador that I would become the deputy to the principal officer after the combined missions were put together. Harry Gilmore, was the Minister in West Berlin at the time, and I was his deputy. He would take over and become what was called an "assistant chief of mission" to the ambassador in Bonn, not a deputy chief of mission, but an assistant chief of mission. I would become the deputy assistant chief of mission, the only one in the world. At any rate, that was to be the organizational side. The ambassador in East Berlin, Dick Barkley, was withdrawn. He stayed on physically a week or two, but he never came back to the embassy. The DCM over there stayed on temporarily just to help us transition in and then he departed. On the morning of October 4, Harry and I got in our limousines in West Berlin with our briefcases and drove over and took charge. It was kind of funny in retrospect that we got caught in a traffic jam about three blocks from the former embassy. It just wasn't moving. You can imagine these crossing points over the old Wall were just like bottlenecks. They really backed up and there was no way you could hack your way through, so we got out and walked. We showed up at the door of the embassy and nobody knew us, of course. We had to introduce ourselves to the Marine guards and say "We are now in charge here."

Q: The old East Berlin embassy was not a property that the U.S. government owned.

NIX: We had a long-term lease on it. It is a very nice building. Before the war, it was owned by

the Handworkers Guild, the artisans and handicrafts guild of Germany. It's only two blocks down Unter den Linden and one block over from the Brandenburg Gate. Harry and I walked over there and introduced ourselves to the staff and started briefing everybody on what the new procedures would be.

Q: That office eventually was closed down completely?

NIX: No, the Embassy Office is still in that building. For symbolic reasons, the decision was made to close down the office in West Berlin and move all of our remaining staff over to East Berlin to that building. This was a very controversial decision. You can still start fistfights about it to this day in Berlin about whether that was a good idea or not. But what's done is done.

The challenge for Harry and me was to come up with a way to combine the two diplomatic establishments and to keep morale from sinking. You had two proud organizations which had both served the U.S. government with distinction, but both of them were going out of business. Basically, we were coming up with a new organization which, while it would still have a large degree of importance, it would be a large mission, it would have a broad mandate, still it would have nowhere near the significance and the type of mandate that either of the two previous organizations had had. Plus, it would be much smaller. So, that involved letting a lot of people go.

Q: I guess the main responsibility of the new entity and the reason that it would continue to be special, that it would be a mission headed by an assistant chief of mission rather than a consulate general, was because the capital of unified Germany was in Bonn, but also in Berlin, and was going to be even more in Berlin as time went by.

NIX: The German constitution had always designated Berlin as the capital, but Bonn had become the seat of government. Now, this of course became a really emotional issue in Germany. It took a lengthy parliamentary debate and finally a very close vote before final determination was made that the government would move to Berlin. In other words, that the seat of government would also be in Berlin. There are a lot of regional rivalries in Germany. Many people still do not feel that the decision was the correct one.

Q: Yes, but of course Berlin during the Cold War was under four power responsibility, was a divided city, was somewhat vulnerable, certainly in particular periods.

NIX: This is true, but I think that a lot of people in West Germany felt that the West Berliners were coddled, if you will. They weren't subject to the draft. They got special salaries. They got special tax breaks. That money came out of the tax money of the West Germans. So, there were a lot of rivalries, plus the historic rivalry that the Rhineland is basically a Catholic region and Berlin is basically a Protestant region. Here in the United States, we tend to forget a lot of times how strong those kind of rivalries can be and how long-lasting they can be. But believe me, I've talked to really sophisticated people in Berlin. When the Bonn government started taking over Berlin, all the time people would shake their heads and look at me and say, "They're sending too many Catholics up there." That really is an interesting aspect of German society that's not known, I guess, a lot unless you talk to people behind the scenes. They don't talk about it a lot,

but there is an intense rivalry.

The decision was finally made that the seat of government was going to be Berlin. Then the problem became, how do we do it? When do we do it? How do we pay for it? What will be the mechanisms? The Bundestag came up with a sort of split decision. They were going to keep about half of the ministries in Bonn and were going to move half of the ministries to Berlin, to avoid upsetting the economy in Bonn and to avoid having to throw millions of people out of work. German workers are not as mobile as American workers. They won't move. They can't just say to the Defense Ministry "Move to Berlin" and expect the workers to move. Many will stay in Bonn anyway, even without a job.

Q: In terms of the U.S. government representation in Germany then, eventually the ambassador to Germany will be in Berlin presumably. There is a plan to build a new embassy building on property which, I guess, we've had for a long time, since before the war. Were you involved with that?

NIX: Yes, I think we all were. This was one of the major projects we had right after we got our new diplomatic representation up and running over there. The United States government owns the prime piece of undeveloped real estate in Europe. Why is it undeveloped? Well, as luck would have it, it sat within the dead zone of the Wall for the entire period of the Cold War. Even before the Wall was built in 1961, the area where our embassy had been before the war was so close to the Occupation dividing line that the Russians would never have allowed anything to be built there. It is directly beside Brandenburg Gate. We never gave up title to it. We were never asked to give up title to it. Nobody ever asked, so there it was. We still owned it. So, the question was, what do we want to do with it? Various delegations from FBO and others came out and looked at it and trudged around it and measured it and speculated about what could be built there.

Q: Was there a building there?

NIX: Nothing. There was absolutely nothing there. As a matter of fact, what we did was plant grass on it and put a little chain fence around it and put a plaque on it just so that people wouldn't think it was just a vacant lot: "The once and future home of the U.S. embassy in Berlin." Ambassador Kimmitt was there, the President of Germany, and the Mayor of Berlin, of course. It was quite a significant ceremony because, for one thing, I think, the Germans wanted to see us- That was before, by the way, the vote was taken on moving the seat of government. The Berliners really loved it because they wanted to see us commit to putting an embassy in Berlin. At any rate, now the plans have gone forward. A contract has been let for an architect. There were a lot of security considerations originally because the site is definitely not large enough to meet "Inman standards," that it have set back and so forth. But apparently, those are going out the window anyway because of lack of funding. So, I think a way has been found, at any rate, to build a very, very nice building there. I don't think it will be big enough to enclose our entire representation in Berlin, but it should be very impressive and you can't beat the location.

Q: One of the other things, of course, that happened in this period that you were there was that your office assumed responsibility for Eastern Germany in terms of political, economic reporting, is that right? How did you go about that?

NIX: That's right. One of our first jobs was to reach out, as that old American song goes, to the unknown citizens of Eastern Germany. We had very ample staffing, as you can imagine, because we were still combining two diplomatic establishments. Virtually everyone had his or her assignment extended to the following summer, so we had lots of people. So, we broke down Eastern Germany into various areas. We assigned people to every area and just put them on the road. We went out and started meeting people, started calling on people. A lot of people were very surprised to see an American. Communications were terrible. You couldn't make appointments in advance. You just went. If you couldn't meet anybody, you came back and wrote about what you saw. But it was tremendously interesting for these young people. Some of the best young officers I've ever seen we had in the embassy at that time. They were just enthralled by this challenge. They went out and did a fantastic job of writing up contact reports, reports about the state of the East German industry. Initially, the political situation was almost impossible to write about because it was so amorphous. It was just being made up as people went along. We did such a good job that we actually won the Director of Central Intelligence's award on a worldwide competition basis for our reporting that year, which was a very big shot in the arm for all these young political and economic officers. They all got a thousand dollars, each of them, and a very nice certificate.

Q: Your primary responsibility as the Deputy Assistant Chief of Mission during this period was pretty much managing or coordinating?

NIX: There were about three or four things I really focused on. Number one was our U.S. military establishment. I had direct responsibility for maintaining contacts with them. They were still occupying West Berlin.

Q: You continued to be the political advisor?

NIX: I continued to be their political advisor. We met regularly. I was their intermediary, if you will, with the German authorities. I even maintained an office in the military headquarters, my former office. I had two offices for a year, in other words. I had an office there with the military headquarters and I had an office in the old embassy to East Germany. That was a major part of my function. I also had to downsize the two missions. That was another thing I was assigned. I had to set up a system whereby we could fairly assess the qualifications of the employees we had and decide which ones would be put into the positions we had remaining and which ones would have to be let go.

Q: You're talking mostly at this point of German employees?

NIX: German employees, yes. The decision on the Americans had basically been made. But there were hundreds and hundreds of Germans. The mission in West Berlin was fat, to say the least. Obviously, all the costs were being paid by Occupation funds. They weren't being paid out of the U.S. budget.

Q: Did that cost sharing out of Occupation funds continue?

NIX: It continued on a limited basis. For example, my position continued to be funded by Occupation costs until the end of 1991. At that time, they took away my chauffeured Mercedes.

Q: And your house?

NIX: No, I kept my house, but the U.S. government started having to pay rent. The third task was basically organizing this outreach into Eastern Germany, which we described already. The fourth, which I think sort of comes out of the second one, was the terrible problem of addressing the many morale questions we had. This was a very, very difficult marriage. You were bringing people from West Berlin who had been concerned with nothing but the Occupation for years, their entire careers. Most of them had never been into East Germany or East Berlin. We had to put them to work in East Germany with people who had been living in what they considered a hardship post. Take, for example, housing alone. I had American staff like myself who were still living in the very, very plush housing of Western Berlin. I had American staff in the East who were living in rundown, beat up, bedraggled apartments which had been allocated to them by the East German authorities. You may say that that you would just close them down, but you can't do those kind of things overnight. I think it's great that we had this focused task, to send our people out to meet people in the hinterlands and so forth. I, for example, visited virtually every town in Eastern Germany during my four years. That kept us busy and provided a real task to focus on during that first year. Eventually, just before I left, I managed to get all of the old housing closed down and to get everybody on the American side moved into decent housing over in the West.

Q: But the office continued to be in the old East Berlin embassy?

NIX: Yes. I imagine it will stay there until the new embassy is up and running because the way the budget is these days, it costs a lot to move an embassy. I just don't see us doing it until the new embassy is ready.

Q: What happened to the residence of the ambassador to the German Democratic Republic?

NIX: Initially, we kept that. It was vacant for a year because Harry Gilmore didn't move over. When his replacement came in, he occupied it. Dick Miles went in there. I'm sure he would have stayed there, because he was quite happy out there. It was a huge place far out in Pankow, which is one of the remote districts of Berlin. But when he left suddenly to go take up a new post as ambassador to Azerbaijan, the new Principal Officer got approval from the ambassador to move over to the West. The long and short of it is, when we finally negotiated with the German government an exchange of properties so that we could get the properties that we need in West Berlin for the future of our diplomatic establishment, we included that residence in the package that we turned over to the Germans, along with a list of properties in Bonn, Frankfurt, Dusseldorf, Hamburg, and other sites in Germany. A mega swap was worked out. We didn't actually get down to figuring out dollar values because I don't think we would ever have come to the end of the negotiation. We gave them what we thought our minimum requirements were. We offered what we could possibly give up. The Germans were, I guess, grateful enough for our support since the second world war to accept it.

Q: Because we basically had two establishments in Berlin, we certainly could give up some properties without difficulty.

NIX: We owned virtually nothing in Berlin, only the Embassy site, the Ambassador's residence and the R.I.A.S. [Radio in the American Sector] antenna field.

Q: You were certainly there at a very important time in the history of Germany, probably one that many people had not anticipated was going to happen in their lifetime.

NIX: Absolutely. I was in Berlin twice during the Army. I actually happened to be there in the Army when the Wall was built in 1961. Over those years, since my wife is a Berliner, we have often gone back to Berlin, but I never could have predicted anything like this happening.

By the way, before we leave Berlin, I just want to mention the sort of culmination of the whole tour there was President Clinton's visit in 1994, which of course was the first visit by a U.S. president to a reunified Berlin. We arranged an itinerary so that he met with Chancellor Kohl in the Reichstag. Then they walked across and came through the Brandenburg Gate together, which again was a historical event because it was the first time an American president had walked through the Brandenburg Gate since the second world war. Then we had the major ceremony in Pariser Platz, which is just beyond the Brandenburg Gate. The German people rightly saw this as a recommitment of the U.S. government to Europe and to a united Germany, after the Cold War.

Q: And to Berlin, too, in a sense?

NIX: Yes. Berlin as the capital and center of united Germany.

Q: Today is the 15th of August 2001. There has been a long interval since our last conversation. John, when we finished before, we were talking about your final overseas assignment to Berlin, and you recalled that you left immediately after President Clinton's visit. Why don't you recall what year that was, and then let's talk about where you went from there.

NIX: That was July 1994. As I said previously, that was an historic occasion in the long-term context of our relationship with the City of Berlin, because not only was it the first time an American President had walked through the Brandenburg gate into Eastern Berlin since World War II, but it was also the end of our military involvement in Berlin, which had been a city under occupation since 1945. While President Clinton was there, he took the salute at the last official U.S. military parade in Berlin. It was a very emotional occasion and one that was obviously laden with historic implications. The Germans then moved on and have now established a fully reunited city and a reunited country.

Q: Were special arrangements made for you to stay for the Presidential visit, or did that just happen to coincide with your transfer date?

NIX: I was scheduled to transfer in the summer but, as normally happens in a high level visit like

this, everyone's transfer date is automatically postponed until after the end of the visit. It was no major adjustment, nor inconvenience, and worked out perfectly.

Q: At that time the Mission in Berlin was called the embassy?

NIX: It was called the Berlin Embassy office. It had been set up in 1990 on the presupposition, one can't say on certain knowledge, but on the presupposition that the government would eventually move from Bonn to Berlin, and the embassy would move to Berlin. So missions, as they were then represented in Berlin in 1990, at the time of reunification, were offered the option of establishing embassy offices or consulates. We felt, organizationally speaking, that it would be better to establish an embassy office because it would be administratively easier, we wouldn't have to establish a consulate then disestablish a consulate, and go through all the paper work. About 50% of the missions went one way and about 50% went the other way. It worked out well because we were directly under the supervision of the embassy in Bonn, but we were what was called a separate reporting office. I think the other two at that time that had the same status were Hong Kong and Jerusalem.

Q: Again, your title there was what?

NIX: My title was something they created especially for the post and was called "Deputy Assistant Chief of Missions," because the office was an embassy office and was not headed by a consul general. It was headed by an assistant chief of mission. That was another title that was created especially for that post.

Q: Okay, anything else that we should say? Was that a three year assignment?

NIX: That was a four year assignment. I would say, for me it was an emotional culmination of my career because, as you can see from the rest of this Oral History, I started in Berlin as a young army officer, I married a lady from Berlin, who is still my wife, and of course to be there and go through the whole reunification process, and to be one of the first diplomats to travel extensively in Eastern Germany after 1990, was something I'll never forget.

NELSON C. LEDSKY
Participant, German Reunification Discussion
Washington, DC 1991

Ambassador Ledsky was born in Cleveland, Ohio and was educated at Case Western Reserve University and Columbia University. After serving in the US Army, he joined the Foreign Service in 1957, serving in Georgetown, Guyana; Enugu, Nigeria; Bonn and Berlin, Germany and in the State Department in Washington. In his various assignments he was closely involved in matters concerning the status of Berlin and West Germany as well as on the persistent Greece-Turkey conflict over Cyprus. Among his other assignments, the Ambassador served on the Department's Policy Planning Staff. Ambassador

Ledsky was interviewed by Thomas Stern in 2003.

Q: That brings us up to 1991, when you went to work on the problem of the status of U.S. forces in Germany. How did that assignment fall to you?

LEDSKY: I was sitting peacefully in my office one day on the sixth floor. The Berlin Wall was falling, but I was still concentrating on Cyprus. A series of meetings were held at about this time in EUR concerning the end of the division between East and West Germany which would have required an end to the four power occupation rights in Germany. I was invited to some of those discussion. In retrospect, I see that I played my usual dissenting role, the minority view, trying to bring sanity to a chaotic environment. Philip _____, who now is a member of the 9/11 Commission, was a junior officer at the time and involved in these discussions. He was then the junior member of the German desk and was the note taker for these meetings. Eventually, Condi Rice wrote a book on German reunification, based in part on these notes. My name is mentioned in that book – as a small footnote – for my frequent and indiscriminate argumentation against the conventional wisdom.

As a result of those discussions, (the four plus two, i.e., Great Britain, the U.S., France, Russia and the two Germanies) negotiations were initiated. They took place in Germany. I had very little to do with them, except occasionally I was permitted to participate in the discussions about what might just have happened or was about to happen in these negotiations. On a couple of occasions, I was invited to go to Europe, to sit in the back row of the conference room and act as an advisor to the American delegation. On a couple of occasions, Ray Seitz was ill and unable to attend; then Jim Dobbins took the chair as the head of the U.S. delegation. I can't say that I had a major role in these negotiations; even the word 'minor' might be overstating the case, but I was present at several international meetings, as well as at meetings of the U.S. side.

In essence, I played a very small role in all of these deliberations. As the talks came to an end, the Germans again raised the question of whether U.S. forces could go into what had been East Germany. This issue had been an element of the four plus two talks, but no conclusions had been reached. The Germans asked that the "Status of Forces" agreement which had established rules for the disposition and behavior of American troops in West Germany be renegotiated. Ray Seitz, at some stage, asked me to go to Bonn to explore with the German government what it had in mind. I did do that. A couple of other State people and I went to the Foreign Ministry, which had requested that a formal negotiation be initiated to amend the existing "Status of Forces" agreement. This was the beginning of a long drawn-out affair. Bob Kimmitt was our ambassador at the time, and we discussed the Germans' request.

So the talks began. Somehow, the Embassy and the Department agreed that a special negotiator be appointed for these discussions. It was agreed that someone who knew Germany was required; that person would have to periodically go to Bonn to participate in what was foreseen as a long, protracted negotiation. Ray asked me whether I would be interested. Cyprus was not really keeping me very busy and I was somewhat bored, so I told him that I would conduct the negotiations. The negotiation actually became a multi-lateral one since it involved the British, the Canadians, the French, the Belgians and the Dutch, all of whom had military forces stationed in West Germany. All of the countries had a special representative, who would come from the

capital to participate in the negotiations, which lasted for about a year. We would meet for two or three days and then adjourn for consultations with our governments.

As a result, I took a series of trips to Germany in 1991 and 1992. We covered all the details from whether the U.S. would give up its special car license plates to environmental questions of whether we would take responsibility for any degradation that our people and equipment might have caused during the occupation period such as whether we would stop sending convoys on the Autobahn to training sites in southern Germany. There were dozens of questions of this kind that had to be discussed and settled. Some of the issues were very important, but many were just picayune. Many revolved around the fundamental question of U.S. liability for the consequences of occupation from 1945 to 1990. The Germans wanted us to pay for any damage or perceived degradation that might have occurred. The list was long since we had established bases in many parts of the country and had run military exercises continually.

The negotiations required a lot of travel around West Germany to USAEUR (United States Army Europe) and USAFE (United States Air Forces in Europe) headquarters so that these various issues could have the benefit of our own military's insights. An agreement was finally reached, although I believe a couple of issues were left unresolved at the time I left. A document was drafted, but to the best of my knowledge, it was never ratified, at least by the U.S. Senate. I don't even know whether it actually ever went into effect. I think the Department decided that in fact this was not the kind of agreement that required Senate approval. It was an executive agreement and the legal advisors felt that Congressional approval was not necessary. As far as I know, despite the lack of U.S. Senate ratification, both sides have abided by that agreement.

Q: What were the aims of each side in the negotiations?

LEDSKY: The West Germans clearly wanted to put the foreign forces, particularly ours, in a different status than the one they had enjoyed since the end of WW II. Their objective was to demonstrate to their own constituency that Germany was no longer occupied territory and that foreign forces had very limited, circumscribed roles and perhaps, most importantly, that these forces were subject to German authority in all circumstances. Our forces were in Germany on German sufferance – as a partner, but surely on their sufferance.

Our objective was to avoid any new financial liability and to maintain as many of our rights as we could. The military were concerned about their status in Germany. They wanted to maintain as much sovereignty as they could over the facilities that we were occupying. The Germans had suggested that they be permitted to police our facilities and even went as far as maintaining that they had a right to supervise the American schools. Our military were concerned that the Germans would become too intrusive.

My objective was to be seen as “giving ground” without really making any changes – or as few as we could get away with. In the end, we did give up some rights, but we basically preserved the status our forces had enjoyed and certainly did not lose any of the rights that were essential to the effective operations of our forces. Our military was reasonably satisfied with the outcome; they had been very nervous throughout the negotiations. They had been represented during the negotiations by a brigadier general and a couple of colonels, but were always afraid that the State

Department would sell them out. Before each negotiations session, I would go to Army or Air Force headquarters to meet with the commanding general or his deputy. Sometimes, Ambassador Kimmitt joined these conversations. That just shows the level of concern in the American diplomatic and military circles about these negotiations. Many of the issues, such as school supervision and driver's licenses may have seemed picayune when taken individually, but each had a potential impact on our military position in Germany and the lives of our soldiers and airmen. German laws were entirely different to ours in almost all areas dealing with day-to-day living. This made our internal debates very important. Furthermore, reaching agreement among the Americans was not an easy task.

We had problems with our allies, most of whom were willing to give up all of their rights, because essentially they really didn't care about remaining in Germany. So, they were of little, if any, help. I had a number of disagreements with the Belgians and the Canadians, who were prepared to accept everything the Germans proposed. The number of their forces was so small, they were considered inconsequential; their presence in Germany was not a military necessity. I don't know as a military matter that we would have cared if they had withdrawn from Germany, but they were at the negotiating table and therefore had a voice in the dialogue. I found them very difficult to deal with at times.

The negotiations lasted for a year plus. We would meet every three or four months for several days in Germany. At the beginning, the meetings took place more often, but then they took on a pace of their own. I think the German negotiators came to Washington once or twice; we went to the Pentagon for discussions. It was then that I met Dick Cheney, who was the secretary of defense at the time.

I should mention that I had great cooperation from Don Bandler, who was the political counselor at the embassy. I used to stay with him when I visited Bonn and dealt with him from Washington frequently. He was part of our negotiating team and kept track of all that was going on when I was not in Germany. Although the agreement was not finally agreed to while I was working on the problem, I don't believe that any changes were made after my departure. I think that perhaps the agreement was finally put into effect after I retired from the Foreign Service.

I enjoyed this negotiating experience. I was almost entirely on my own. I had a team that worked with me, on a part-time basis. All of us had other assignments, but that never interfered with our work on this "status of forces" agreement. I shuttled back and forth between Cyprus and Germany. Ray Seitz was great to work for and Jim Dobbins was also a great help.

I don't think that EUR or the Department really cared too much about these negotiations; it was DoD which of course had the greatest interest. The Pentagon kept very close track of me; I would see them before I would go to Germany, and after I returned, and often in between.

Q: One interesting aspect of base and "status of forces" agreements negotiations is that the agency which has essentially nothing at stake, i.e. the Department of State, is in the lead role, whereas the agency which has the most at stake, i.e., the Department of Defense, plays a secondary role.

LEDSKY: That was certainly true in the German negotiations. I was clearly the American delegate who made the negotiating decisions; it was not the U.S. military. I remember a couple of issues where I and the military did not see eye-to-eye. Ambassador Kimmitt and I went to military headquarters to tell them that we just couldn't support their position. The issues, which were then hardest to resolve, dealt with mundane daily living matters such as license plates, car inspections, and driver's licenses. Most of those related to motor transportation, both official and private, including the use of the highways. We used to have our own gasoline stations along the main roads, our own inspection system, and our own licensing system. The Germans wanted to end all of those processes, or rather, they wanted them incorporated into their own system.

Training grounds were also an issue, particularly since the Germans were continually bombarded by noise during exercises and also because these exercises degraded the environment. I think in this general area, our military was reasonably sensitive to these German concerns. They were more concerned that any revision in their practices might suggest that they were responsible for past degradations and therefore liable. They did not want to assume the potential burdens of law suits and wanted protection for indemnity claims based on past activities. This was therefore a very difficult area to find a compromise acceptable to our military and to the Germans; I could not very well argue with their basic goal and we had to find some way out of this dilemma.

I would like to make a final comment about the negotiations. One factor that made them interesting was the careful scrutiny that was given to the negotiations by other countries which have "status of forces" agreements with the Germans. That gave an extra dimension to the negotiations.

I brought to the table previous experience in these kinds of negotiations, i.e., the Greek and Turkish base negotiations. I was therefore familiar with our "status of forces" agreements with Turkey and Greece. The Pentagon was of course even more familiar with this since it had been involved in such negotiations with many countries around the world. There were officials, particularly lawyers, in the Pentagon who had spent most of their careers in such negotiations. There was no comparable expertise in the Department of State. Perhaps that is why I was chosen to head the negotiating delegation and why perhaps I was able to deal with the various issues more effectively than a senior official in EUR or in our embassy in Bonn. Perhaps this is why I was pursued for this assignment.

As I said earlier, I negotiated the "status of forces" agreement while also being the Cyprus coordinator, which was my last assignment in the Department.

RICHARD M. MILES
Assistant Chief of Mission
Berlin (1991-1992)

Ambassador Miles was born in Arkansas in 1937. He earned an associate degree from Bakersfield College, Bachelor's degree from University of California, Berkeley and a master's degree from Indiana University. He joined the Foreign

service in 1966. His overseas posts include Oslo, Belgrade, Moscow, Leningrad, Berlin, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria and Georgia. Ambassador Miles was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.

MILES: I went to Berlin. It was an unusual assignment and a very short one, unfortunately, or fortunately, depending on how you interpret it. The Berlin Wall had come down about a year before that and so the two Germanys were united. The German government decided early on that all of the missions in West Berlin had to close, legally, and all the embassies in former East Berlin had to close, legally, and then each country could decide for itself what it wanted to do about its representation in Berlin. It could open an embassy office, in which case, in essence, that office would be subordinate to Bonn, still the capital of Germany, and the ambassador, of course, would remain in Bonn until the German capital could be moved to Berlin. Or a country could open up a consulate general in Berlin and then it would be subordinate to Land Berlin and would have the same relationship to the embassy in Bonn that any consulate general would have. Most of the big powers went the embassy office route; the Russians did—still the Soviets at that time—and we did. And so Harry Gilmore, who had been the Mission Chief in West Berlin, became the Head of the Embassy Office in Berlin. I loved the title in German: “*Leiter der Aussenstelle der Botschaft*”—literally, “Head of the Outpost of the Embassy”. Harry kept his residence in West Berlin, where he had been living as Mission Chief, but he did have to move his office over from West Berlin to the former Embassy building in East Berlin.

When I came to replace Harry in the summer of '91, I thought it made more sense for me to live in West Berlin too, because that is where most of our business and most of our contacts were. But the State Department owned the residence property in East Berlin and they wanted to turn the property in West Berlin back to the German government. I thought this was a big mistake and I said so even while I was still in Leningrad, but, despite my pushing and prodding, I was forced to move into the residence of the former Ambassador in East Berlin. I had no problem working in East Berlin. I thought that was perfectly appropriate, and we kept the consular function and the administrative function over in the old Mission in West Berlin. We had our warehouse over in West Berlin, so we were using both the old and the new facilities. But Sharon and I did move into the former Ambassador's residence in East Berlin. And we had a very hard time getting West Berliners to come over to attend receptions or dinners or lunches or whatever. Some would come, but reluctantly. Many came, saying that that was the first time they had ever been into East Berlin even though the Wall had been down for a year. Palpably, the Wall was still there and anybody could tell when you went back and forth across the former border where the Wall had been and in many cases, physically, the Wall was still there. Some people refused to come over at all; they didn't feel comfortable going over into the East and they knew that all of Germany was united, but they preferred not to come and so this situation did present some difficulties at first. In the end it worked out pretty well and we had a lot of fun, in essence, helping to introduce West Berliners to East Berlin and to former East Germany. I had responsibility not just for U.S. policy in East Berlin but now all of Berlin and all of former East Germany with the slight exception of the *Länder* where the major cities of Leipzig and Dresden were. We were getting ready to open a consulate general down in Leipzig and while, nominally, I had authority there, in fact, Todd Becker, the guy who was going to become the Consul General was already on the scene down there so I deliberately put off visiting those cities thinking I had plenty of time to do it later. Todd would come and stay with me from time to time, do his reports, etc. So I had a

good idea of what was going on in that important region. Sharon and I stayed busy enough with all the rest of former East Germany to explore.

There were not any particular difficulties between us and the Germans and I had a good team at the Embassy Office. So Sharon and I spent a lot of time traveling around in former East Germany, including going to places where no American diplomat had ever been, like Peenemunde, the former rocket base in the Nazi period. The Soviets and then the East Germans had made that into an airbase and after the Wall came down, the West Germans used it as an incredibly large parking lot, I guess you would call it, onto which they brought every military truck and vehicle known to man from the former East German military stocks. It looked like a Richard Scarry military vehicle book for children because there was everything there from bridge laying trucks to smoke producing trucks to thousands of troop carrying trucks and the equivalent of our jeeps and that kind of thing. When you went up into the former control tower and looked out over this vast expanse, as far as the eye could see, there would be these now-obsolete and abandoned former East German trucks and other vehicles. And offshore, not very far from the airbase, there were a great many of the warships of the former East German Navy. It was an eerie sight, just row after row of these relatively small but still deadly military ships just rusting away. The German government was trying to sell these ships and the contents of the vehicle park to buyers out in the Third World.

On another excursion, I remember visiting an airfield not too far from Berlin where the West Germans had taken charge of the military airbase. A West German lieutenant colonel was in charge of the former East German pilots who were still there and still flying their Mig-29s, all of them now amalgamated into the German military service although they were still wearing their East German uniforms. Of course they had all been brought up in East Germany and they were still a little bit bewildered about everything that was going on. And so to observe all this and to talk directly to people who were making history every day was fascinating.

I was also able to visit Goering's former Luftwaffe command bunker, which was again not far from Berlin. I believe I was the first American ever to be in that bunker. It was down a country road not too far from Berlin. You drive along and turn into a lane that looks like any lane leading to some small farmhouse and, rather quickly, you come upon a relatively small house. It looked like someone's residence. You go in and then you go down, down, down, down, down in a large elevator and there is this enormous mini city underground. It had been built in the Nazi period and first the Soviets and then the East Germans had taken over and modernized it so that it was capable of resisting nuclear attack and chemical attack—huge pneumatically sealed doors, and the whole thing, or at least the central part of it, located on top of gigantic springs so that if a nuclear device went off in the air and the air pressure increased, the pressure would just push everything down against these giant springs and then the whole, enormous thing would come back up as the pressure eased. Now, that was truly amazing. The briefing that I received about how the facility was constructed and its function, all that was from an East German major still wearing his East German uniform. I asked him what was the strangest thing that had happened to him since the Wall had come down and the two Germanys had been united, and he said, "Briefing you, sir." I thought that was a good answer and I appreciated his candor.

Q: What was your impression of the police function? You know, there were two types of police.

One was sort of the secret police but the other one is the police that keep the traffic moving and maintain law and order. How did that work?

MILES: I didn't sense any problem at all from either the East or the West German police people. Of course, the vast bulk of the East German secret police simply lost their positions. For a long time, ever since 1945, we had technical liaison with the West Berlin police and after the Wall came down we simply extended that function to the East German police as well. These were professional police people whose job it was to maintain contact and, frankly, I don't know if the liaison officers are still there or not because they would be less needed in a united Germany. But at the time that I was there, when the essence of the two separate Germanys was still in the air, the liaison officers did play a useful role. I never sensed from them or from my own meetings with the police officials any difficulty whatsoever. The German police of various agencies were just carrying out their professional duties and, like most Germans, they were a little bit unsure of what was going on or how it would all work out, but they were trying to do the best they could. Of course they had money to do it. That is the big difference with the transformation in Germany compared to all these other former communist countries: they had a lot of money available to help bring about a transformation and unification of the two societies. Still, there were difficulties in terms of psychological attitude. Germans wrote a lot about that so I was reading in those wonderful German newspapers and magazines lots of stories about the difficulties between the East German and the West German attitudes toward work, toward family, toward home, toward friends, toward leisure time, toward foreign affairs, as far as that goes, and I suppose that this difference between the people from the two Germanys will take a couple of generations to work itself out.

The Germans in general, but certainly in Berlin, love to have formal balls. So every year around Christmas/New Year's, there would be one formal ball after another. I got permission from the State Department, as my predecessors had done, to accept the free tickets to these balls so that I could go. The tickets cost \$400 or \$500 a piece, and while I might have been able to afford to go to one myself, I remember going to seven of them over the season and I could not have afforded that. There would be the Policemen's Ball and the Lawyers' Ball and God knows what. I remember one of the fanciest ones I ever went to was the ADAC [*Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobile-Club*], the German Automobile Club Ball. Chancellor Kohl and his wife had attended the ADAC Ball as well and it happened that Sharon and I were going down in the elevator to leave at the same time that he and his wife were in the elevator, so it was just the four of us plus his bodyguard. I spoke tolerable German, so I said, "Well, I guess we are all going home." And he said, "Yes, we are going home tonight and I hope you had a nice time." And so on. And I said, "Well, the difference, *Herr Bundeskanzler* [Chancellor], is you are going west and I am going east; I live in Pankow." Pankow is the district in East Berlin where all the important East German officials had lived. The Chancellor and his wife got a kick out of that.

Q: Did you find yourself acting sort of as the matchmaker between East and West Germans?

MILES: No. No, they didn't need it. Well, matchmaker in the sense of—

Q: Well, I mean just bringing them together and—

MILES: Yes, OK. Just introducing people to each other. When we had visiting Americans who were interested in whatever—you know how Americans travel so much? I always liked to have them out to the residence, and if there was time we'd have a dinner or a reception or whatever they had time to do. We'd invite both West and East Germans to these events. So in that sense, yes, we did try to put people together. But the Germans were doing a lot of that too, so it was not a unique role that we were playing. I think maybe the only unique role I played in that regard was when the winemakers, Wente Brothers from California, came to one of the big agricultural fairs that was being held in West Berlin, which they had done since time out of mind. I suggested to them that this time they bring extra wine and that we have a reception at my house in the former East Berlin; a converted school. It was a big house, and we would invite some of the East German restaurateurs and wine makers so that they could have some exposure to American wine and American wine-making. Sharon and I were incredibly lucky to have one of the best chefs in Berlin, Werner Henkensiefken, at that time and he thought it was a fantastic idea. So we really made a nice evening out of that. That was the first and only time in my life I have actually seen a bottle of wine as big as one which the Wente Brothers brought out. It was one of those huge monster bottles of wine that you can't even handle. It's called a Nebuchadnezzar or something like that. I don't know why they even bother to put it up like that; it's kind of a sales gimmick, I guess. Anyhow, the Wente Brothers thought this promotion was a wonderful idea and they really got into it in a big way. They brought out plenty of samples of every variety of wine that they produced. There was more wine than you could shake a stick at. My chef had prepared a groaning board of different German breads, cold cuts, cheeses, etc., and everyone thoroughly enjoyed this Lucullan event. Quite a few bottles were left over for my representational use, so all this worked out to everyone's advantage.

Q: How did you find relations with the Embassy in Bonn?

MILES: Well, fine. Ambassador Kimmitt, Bob Kimmitt, was Ambassador for most of the time I was in Berlin. And the Ambassador before that was Vernon Walters, the famous linguist, who had been Permanent Representative to the UN and spoke pretty much all the romance languages plus German and Russian and I don't know what else.

Q: Vernon Walters.

MILES: Vernon Walters, yes. And he was just on his way out when I arrived. Walters was a great fan of Germany and spoke quite decent German and I think he felt rather hurt, the way he was pushed out. I mean, for all ambassadors, eventually their time comes to an end and they have to leave, but Vernon Walters thought somehow he was exempt from that rule, that he would be treated with a little more respect and courtesy. It's a fatal flaw of a lot of ambassadors, including unfortunately, Ambassador Walters. Anyhow, when he came over to Berlin a few times before he had to leave, he was always friendly as a pup and very interested in what we were doing and encouraging and, I must say, I sympathized with him when he was literally pushed out the door.

But then Bob Kimmitt came and Kimmitt worked harder than anyone I have ever known in my life to be a good ambassador. He had served in Germany in the Army. He had been a professional military officer, so he spoke some German and he was working hard at it. And he is a perfectionist. I mean, he gives the word "perfectionist" real meaning so that sometimes it was a

bit of a strain to handle his many visits to Berlin. Bonn was kind of dull compared to Berlin and both he and Vernon Walters liked very much to come over to Berlin. They had a little house there—the Ambassador kept a little residence there with a staff of a couple of people. Frankly, I thought that was kind of wasteful but that was the tradition in Berlin. I tried to borrow some of that staff too for use during my representational events but there was nothing doing on that, so they just sat there in between visits and twiddled their thumbs. They had the best jobs in Germany. But anyhow, Kimmitt made great use of the place and when he came over, there would be official programs, lunches, dinners, working breakfasts and whatnot, and he worked at all this very hard. I mean, he really covered the waterfront and he was very interested, also, in getting around East Germany. It was sometimes a race on my part to stay a step ahead of him. Sharon and I used to joke about it. I have a tendency to be a little bit lazy sometimes but I was not lazy in Germany, I will tell you. I had to run twice as hard just to keep up with Kimmitt and try to get out to these places before he would. I didn't want to have him be the one to introduce me to my own territory, you know.

Q: Yes.

MILES: So I really raced around that country. It's one of the reasons why Sharon and I did so much and saw so much on our own out there in such a short time. Trying to anticipate where Kimmitt might go next was not always an easy thing to do.

Q: What was the status of Soviet forces? Had they pulled out?

MILES: It was quite interesting because they were pulling out right in front of our eyes. I had a good relationship with the former Soviet Ambassador there, now reduced to being head of his Embassy Office. The Soviet Embassy Office was their huge former Chancery in East Berlin. I visited several of the military bases which the Soviet Army had just vacated where, and there is nothing novel about what I am going to say, but I saw with my own eyes how when they left, they would take, for example, the frame windows; they would literally take the window frame out of the wall—so you'd just be left with a hole in the wall where the window and the window frame and the window locks had been. They'd take the doorknobs and the hardware off of the door and leave the door but all the metal parts would be gone. They'd unscrew the electrical outlets and take out everything but the wire hanging from the outlet—just hanging there, a live wire hanging there. It was incredible what they would take. And the plumbing. What in the hell are you going to do with miles and miles of pipes from bathrooms and things, I have no idea but, boy, it all went onto the trucks and back to Mother Russia. And then at the same time these same Soviet military people were suffering because the Soviet system had almost totally broken down at that point. For example, we were still running Tempelhof Air Base as an air traffic control center and the Soviets had their airfield over in former East Berlin but technically we were doing the air traffic control for all Berlin and so, to make this work, the Commander at Tempelhof, an Air Force Colonel, agreed to bring in a detachment of about 100 Soviet air traffic controllers and house them at the Tempelhof airfield and that worked very well indeed. There were also French and British air traffic controllers lingering on there so you had Americans, French, British and now Soviet air traffic controllers all under the nominal command of this American colonel. He found that the Soviet troops did not have adequate rations and had no money to buy anything over in West Germany. So he took what amounted to a little slush

fund of his and fed the Soviet air traffic controllers for the duration of that program.

I had a reception at my house to commemorate the anniversary of the Berlin Airlift and we thought, well, times are changing, so as a courtesy, we will invite some of these Russians, the officers of the Soviet air traffic controller contingent out at Tempelhof. Some of the British and French people came all the way from England and France to attend this reception. These were people who had been with the Berlin Airlift back in 1948-49. At events like this, the American Commander of the Tempelhof Air Base would usually give the VIPs a metal replica of the *Luftbrücke* memorial, the air bridge memorial in Berlin. These were serious mementoes, the metal arch of the air bridge mounted on a wood base and weighing about three pounds. Anyhow, the American Commander actually gave the Commander of the Soviet air traffic controllers one of these *Luftbrücke* souvenirs. I thought it was just about the most ironic thing I ever saw in my life. And the Soviet Commander accepted it and was very grateful for it. I mean, times had changed and they were changing right in front of your eyes. It was an amazing thing.

Q: What was your impression of the economic decisions, the biggest one, of course, being the one for one currency exchange but other—but just what was being done from the West to bring East Germany into the economic system of the country? How did you see that working?

MILES: The West Germans did spend an enormous amount of money in that process. I had a pretty good relationship with Frau Breuel, who was the head of the *Treuhandanstalt* [German Government Privatization Agency], and who was working out of the old Reich Air Ministry in Berlin. It was ironic, I thought, that with all of the massive bombing that we had done in World War II we managed to avoid seriously damaging the enormous Reich Air Ministry and also Göring's wartime bunker. I don't know if they deliberately avoided them because they wanted to use them later or they just couldn't hit them. In any case they were still there and Frau Breuel was ensconced in that great example of fascist architecture, the former Reich Air Ministry. I always felt as though I was going back into a very unpleasant time when I walked through the huge doors of that building, but Frau Breuel was always very gracious—and also always very tired. She was a really decent woman who had a very bad press in Germany because you know when you start this privatization process in these former communist countries, it's going to be a messy business.

Q: Yes.

MILES: And especially the faster you are doing it, the messier it is. So a lot of money changed hands but also, in some cases, a lot of money did not change hands. There were accusations that valuable properties were being sold off for a pittance and so on. There were accusations of favoritism, but frankly, as far as I could tell—and I looked into it, and my people looked into it a lot because we were quite interested in it—there was no organized hanky panky on the part of the *Treuhandanstalt*. As far as I, as a layman, could tell, its operations were all very straight and aboveboard and I think the *Treuhandanstalt* did a magnificent job. But, as I said, Frau Breuel did get a very bad press in Germany.

Q: How long were you there?

MILES: Well, I was only there eight months because the Soviet Union collapsed in November/December of '91, and the countries formed on the basis of the republics of the former Soviet Union began to declare their independence and Baker, Secretary James Baker, wanted diplomatic representation out there like "Now!", so he sent Nick Salgo, Ambassador Salgo, on a whirlwind tour of all the new countries to find properties suitable for the chanceries and the ambassadors' residences. The ambassadors themselves were to follow in very short order. Nick, who was kind of a property czar in the State Department, was a wealthy Los Angeles real estate magnate who had been our Ambassador to Hungary. Happily, I knew Nick from when he had been the Ambassador to Hungary and I was in Belgrade as a junior officer. The Ambassador in Belgrade would send me out to the airport to meet Salgo when his private plane—well, I said he was wealthy—would touch down at the airport en route to Dubrovnik for the weekend. We renewed our acquaintance when he and his wife came for a visit when I was Consul General in Leningrad and they stayed at our residence. Anyhow, Baker sent Nick around to each one of these new independent states to sign leases for ambassadors' residences and chanceries. Poor Nick was out there about 24 hours in each one of these countries and signed millions of dollars worth of leases and whatnot and then the first tier of working level diplomats was sent out in mid-March of '92, which is pretty damn fast. I arrived in Baku on May 2, so they wasted no time in getting the ambassadors out there. I'd like to return to the story of Nick Salgo's property-acquisition trip to Baku later on.

I did want to mention one interesting event that occurred while I was in Berlin. Sharon had somehow gotten to know the Mayor of Köpenick, a historic town now located in East Berlin.

Q: There is a wonderful movie called Captain Von Köpenick.

MILES: That's right. Now, Köpenick used to be a separate little town, then it became a working class district of Berlin and it always had been kind of independent. Sharon and I liked it. We used to go down there, walk around and have lunch on a weekend. In short, there was a very pleasant old European atmosphere down there. Anyhow, Sharon somehow got to know the Mayor of Köpenick and he called her up one morning. We were on a road trip up north somewhere, I think, at one of the ports, Rostock, maybe, and he said, "We have been gathering relief supplies for Leningrad because the people there are in a very bad way." And we knew they were in a bad way because we had just left there a few months earlier. Then he said, "The Soviet Air Force was going to fly this stuff to Leningrad for us but because of their more pressing needs, flying the troops back home and all that, they told us that they can't do it and they have no money for gas, for trucks or anything, and some of the stuff that we have collected is perishable—pharmaceuticals and some food items—so can you help us?" Sharon immediately said "Yes," and then she said to me, "Can we make this happen?" And I said, "How much stuff does he have?" Well, he had an enormous amount of this stuff. And I thought, well, how am I going to do this? I don't want to organize a land convoy—too complicated. We can probably do it with airlift but we'll need a couple of planes or maybe one very large airplane. And so to make a long story short, we got an American Air Force C-5 to fly in—

Q: Biggest—

MILES: —the biggest one we had—and load this stuff up and fly it on to Leningrad. And in

order to do that, first of all, I had to get Ambassador Kimmitt's permission to proceed. That approval came immediately. Then the Air Force had to agree. They were actually eager to do it, it was kind of fun for them. This was a great PR thing. Now, we all know that nothing is simple in life so it turned out we had to get the Berlin Senat, the governing body of the city, to pass a waiver of the noise abatement and the anti-pollution requirements, and, of course, Berlin was going through a kind of a green phase right then. I remember being kind of shocked when I arrived in Berlin in '91 to find the grass growing wild in the median, you know, the space between the two sides of the boulevards and the reason was the Greens were in control of the politics there and they wouldn't allow the city to cut the grass. So it was a very green place.

Anyhow, the Berlin Senat agreed to waive all these restrictions for the C-5, an airplane which does make all the noise in the world and emits God knows how much pollution, and we had to get Tegel Airport, the main airport in West Berlin, to close down for three hours because of the size of this plane. And the Ambassador came over from Bonn, the band was there, the Mayor of Köpenick was there, the Mayor of Berlin, Diepgen, was there and it was really a big deal; a lot of fun, I must say, all the way around. And I don't know to what extent even a C-5 full of supplies helped the people of Leningrad. But it was a hell of a PR coup, I must say. I owe it all to Sharon and the U.S. Air Force—well, and to the good citizens of Köpenick who gathered all the stuff in the first place.

KATHERINE SCHWERING
Senior Economist, Germany Desk
Washington DC, 1992

Ms. Schwering was born in Wyoming and raised abroad and various localities in the US. She was educated at Northwestern University and Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). She joined Chase Bank, where she was trained as an international economist, and worked with them until joining the State Department in 1978. During her career Ms. Schwering worked primarily on international economic, monetary and terrorist matters in Washington and abroad. Her overseas posts were in Burundi, Yugoslavia and Turkey. Ms. Schwering was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: After Turkey you came back to Washington.

SCHWERING: April of '92 I was put temporarily on the German desk as the senior economist. There we had the great banana wars.

Q: Can you talk about the banana wars?

SCHWERING: This is where we in the E (Economic Bureau) were trying to get rid of protection of our various proxies in Central America. The EU (European Union) had arrangements with certain banana growing countries to subsidize their exports. However, we wanted free trade in bananas. This issue was on the front burner for most of the three months I was on the German

desk. I wrote talking points on bananas as I recall, for Eagleburger or whoever was being sent to Germany.

What was really difficult was this was the time Jim Baker and Bob Zoellick were there. I don't remember who the third member of the cabal was. Well, because they did not like Foreign Service officers, most of the staff of the seventh floor were children of administration officials, who were all in their mid 20s and who didn't have a clue as to what they were doing. As a consequence, I would constantly get these banana talking points sent back to me with suggestions for re-writing, by people who didn't know the issues. It was awful. It would sometimes take me 10 or 11 tries to get these talking points up to the principal who needed them. That was a huge waste of time. I don't think staffers should have line responsibility. These are not people who should have been deciding policy. Anyway, it was very bad in the State Department under Baker because the Foreign Service and the professionals were increasingly ignored.

VELLA G. MBENNA
Information Management Specialist
Bonn (1992-1993)

Vella Mbenna was born in Georgia in 1960. She attended Albany State College (Georgia) and graduated from Georgia Southern University. She entered the Foreign Service in 1989. Her overseas posts include Manila, Philippines; Lima, Peru; Bonn, Germany; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Beirut, Lebanon; Kampala, Uganda; Yaoundé, Cameroon, Freetown, Sierra Leone; Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo; Khartoum, Sudan; Kabul, Afghanistan and Tunis, Tunisia. She was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2016.

Q: Today is the 18th of February, 2016. Vella, you're off to Bonn, Germany. How long were you there?

MBENNA: Actually, probably about seven months.

Q: Now, you sort of screwed up your face. I take it that it wasn't your favorite spot?

MBENNA: No, it was not. It was one cold place, literally and figuratively speaking. The job wasn't very interesting. The discrimination continued. It just wasn't my cup of tea and I almost left the Foreign Service out of Bonn.

Q: What was your job?

MBENNA: I was still in the communications field; however, my duties were limited to minimal ones -- processing telegrams and copying most of the time -- and opportunities for professional development were non-existent.

Q: Wow! That was something else. With it being a big embassy, like London, there probably were an awful lot of telegrams to process.

MBENNA: Yes, we did -- A LOT! I mean someone had to process the telegrams and do the copying, but not the same people all the time. We had lots of experienced people there, even more experienced than me, but only one or two were assigned the bulk of the substantial work. I guess the supervisor did it to get them promoted since they were his friends. I did not mind processing traffic or copying, but it was all the time and the stress of doing this and the anger of being treated unfairly was a bad combination that made me know I had to leave sooner than later.

Q: Did your supervisor give you more duties? Did you ask for additional and substantive work? Was the supervisor open to suggestions or was it a no-discussion scenario?

MBENNA: It was quite obvious that the work distribution was skewed; nevertheless, I asked/begged for better work. It was not favorably heard. If anything, I believed he prayed for more cables to come in to keep me behind those machines and quiet. (Laughter) I even shared with him that my experience was vast and I had some technical skills picked up in Manila and Lima directly from State Department technicians. It still did not make a difference. So, no, he was not open for suggestions nor did he seem to care about how his staff felt. It was a bad situation and morale was the worse I had ever seen in the Foreign Service, at least mine was.

Q: Why did you not like what you were given to do?

MBENNA: It was a salt mine. You did what you were told by the immediate supervisor or his right hand man and kept your mouth shut. There was no discussion or rotation of duties that I recall. Most of my colleagues were old and waiting to retire, had a big family and were content, or with a medical clearance that limited them to places like Bonn. So, why in the heck was I there. Wow, I had made a bad decision but kept my mouth shut and did what I was told until it started affecting my health. I was stressed and the cardiologist told me that I had to leave the environment that was causing me the stress or I could have a heart attack. That is when I tried to get more duties because I knew that was the issue. When I saw that it was not going to happen, I started looking into how I could get out of the Foreign Service, go back to college for my Masters, and re-enter the Foreign Service later. Before my plan materialized, two volunteer cables came out for two assignments -- one for Guatemala and one for Beijing. A colleague, who was also not happy with the supervisor, and I decided to bid. I bid on Guatemala and he bid on Beijing. We went through the normal channels and lo and behold we got our assignments.

Q: What did the supervisor have to say about you wanting to leave?

MBENNA: Well, as you can imagine I was quite happy about the prospect of leaving. Then, the supervisor came back from a vacation in France to find two of his staff were leaving and all hell broke loose. He did not like the fact that we wanted out and had gone to the extent of requesting to leave, and especially while he was out of town. He read me the riot act and even threatened to call Washington to break my assignment to Guatemala. He really treated me with disrespect and for no good reason. In speaking to the colleague who got Beijing, I discovered that he got a simple slap on the wrist, but I got dragged through the mud like I was a criminal. Anyhow, he

did call Washington, but guess who he spoke with? He spoke with CDO Valdez from when I was in training and who bragged about me being the best in my training classes. He gave me a call and asked what in the heck was going on. I could not tell him much because I was still in shock, but I told him that I really wanted that assignment. He told me not to worry, it was mine and the orders were coming very soon to get me out of there.

Q: What about living there?

MBENNA: Living there? Well, I didn't like that either. One, I was in a small apartment and coming from Manila and Peru with a lot more living and entertaining space, I felt like I was living in a matchbox. Also, the people in Bonn had an aristocratic demeanor about them. They had a prejudice side to them in my opinion. I never heard racial slangs but the looks and service provided (or not provided) to me spoke more volume than spoken words. I think it was mostly Bonn because when we went to Frankfurt the climate of the people felt much more relaxed and we got good service. (laughter.) Nevertheless, I needed to leave the country because I was not happy and it was affecting my health. I did not even like the beer and sausages everyone raved about.

Q: I imagine so.

MBENNA: Let me mention something else about why I did not like Germany. The local folks in Bonn did not like kids, it seemed. It was quite obvious they liked dogs more than kids. Now, can you imagine how we (my black son and I) were treated (or not treated) when we went to a restaurants and businesses? (laughter/shaking of head.)

Q: How old was he?

MBENNA: He was about eight or nine. You know, I could not take him to certain restaurants because kids were not allowed, but guess what, dogs were. It wasn't a welcoming, friendly environment at all -- not towards me and definitely not towards my precious child. The whole assignment was a mess and just not welcoming.

Q: What did you do? I bet you started saying, "Get me the hell out of here, fast."

MBENNA: I spoke to the CPO after the conversation with the supervisor and told him about the call from my CDO. As I said previously, he was my previous section chief in Manila and the one who enticed me to come to Bonn. He claimed that he was not aware of the treatment. I told him not to intervene because there were already smart remarks being made that I was his girl. Girl, not as in girlfriend, but his girl because I was "smart" and would be an improvement to the office there in Bonn. That was probably the reason I was treated as such, I would hope so, but I truly believe it was my skin color and level of ambition. The CPO felt badly and told me to do what I needed to do because he wanted me to be happy and not leave the Foreign Service. Thus, I proceeded to my next assignment in Guatemala shortly after my orders arrived.

JOSEPH R. MCGHEE
Deputy Political Counselor
Bonn (1992-1995)

Joseph R. McGhee was born and raised in Pennsylvania. He attended Yale and Columbia University and entered the Foreign Service in 1975. He served in Rome, Prague, Panama City, and Bonn. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.

Q: You left in February of '92 to go to German training?

McGHEE: That's right.

Q: How long were you doing German training?

McGHEE: Until the summer, July of '92.

Q: What job were you going to?

McGHEE: Initially chief of the external section in embassy Bonn although I fairly quickly was shifted over to be deputy political counselor. This happened because my wife who had been a Foreign Service secretary for a long time was selected to become the personnel officer. She went into a year of personnel training and at the end of that year she was to go to Bonn. That was laid on and so when I was assigned to SOV it was a one year assignment. With my wife's assignment, I immediately started looking for something close by and in fact I found something in Bonn.

Q: You were in Bonn from the summer of '92 until when?

McGHEE: Summer of '95.

Q: As deputy political counselor what were your areas of dealing?

McGHEE: There was actually a long period in which I held down two jobs. I was still chief of the external section plus I was deputy counselor. As deputy counselor my job was to run the section. It was, and I think it still remains, the biggest political section in the world. At one point there were 28 people working there although I think the usual number is more like 22 or 23. There was a lot of coordinating and making sure people were getting things done on time; a lot of administrative headaches. I also had to continue running the external section which meant in particular Russia and Bosnia. I did that with the Germans almost constantly.

Q: Let's talk about the external relations and let's talk first about Russia. In the first place who was running the government in Bonn at the time?

McGHEE: Helmut Kohl and he is still doing it. He had been doing it for quite some time before I got there.

Q: What was the German policy towards Russia as we saw it at this '92 to '95 period?

McGHEE: When I said Russia, that is sort of short-hand for the entire Central European thing. The Germans at a very early stage were great proponents of expanding both NATO and the European Union eastward, NATO in particular. The Germans had their eye on bringing Poland into NATO because for historical reasons that we all know, they had this deep seated desire to get Germany off the NATO front line. From their point of view the best way to do it was to sign up the next door neighbor and let the next door neighbor be the front line. The Germans from very early on were big on bringing in Poland and the Czech Republic. Hungary was acceptable to them as a kind of afterthought even though it kind of floats out there.

One thing we did was to institute twice a year high level consultations on Russia and the newly independent Central and Eastern Europe with the Germans. They do one turn in Bonn and the next turn comes to Washington. We try to do them at the assistant secretary level or in any event very close to the assistant secretary level. These proved to be extraordinarily useful. Strobe Talbot came out and kicked them off.

Q: This was after the Clinton administration came in in January '93?

McGHEE: That's right, January of '93. The ambassador there was Robert Kimmitt who previously had been Under Secretary for Political Affairs and Kimmitt stayed on in Bonn into the summer of '93. The elections took place in '92. In that spring he wanted to put together a list of suggestions; steps that his successor ought to take to move the relationship ahead.

Remember that things with Germany were new or at least under review as well because Germany had changed substantially and was continuing to change with the addition of Eastern Germany. The proposal that I made on behalf of the external unit of the political section was that we establish formal consultations on Central and Eastern Europe with the Germans given its ongoing importance to us and its specific importance to the Germans, and the additional weight that Germany now carried within Europe. That was approved immediately by Kimmitt's successor who was Richard Holbrooke and so we got cracking on it right away. Holbrooke is not one to let any grass grow under his feet.

Q: Looking at Germany during this time on relations with Eastern Europe and Russia and the former Soviet states, were there any areas where we were significantly divergent from the German approach?

McGHEE: No. I would say that in general we saw eye-to-eye with the Germans on all of this. There was the perennial eternal problem of who is going to pay for all of this. We let it be known that we would be happy to see the Germans to pay for as much as possible if they could. Burden sharing was our sort of umbrella term for that kind of thing and we certainly wanted the Germans to get in there and start sharing some burdens. For the Germans it was tough because they were spending billions of marks or dollars to rehabilitate Eastern Germany and they continue to spend an enormous amount.

The problem was compounded by the fact that when the two countries were united, Helmut Kohl had decreed that the East German mark could be exchanged for West German marks on a one-to-one basis. They created this kind of huge inflationary fireball in Eastern Germany to start things out and then of course productivity in Eastern Germany was so much lower than it was in Western Germany that it was clear that one Oest mark was not near anything like one Deutsch mark. The deed was done and inflation got a big kick and then lots of manufacturing and other enterprises had to shut down in Eastern Germany because they couldn't compete. There were lots and lots of unemployed even with all the make work schemes etc. that the Germans had. It was costing the Germans quite a bit more than they ever imagined to reunify. They just didn't have that much more money available to spend further east.

Q: Was there any concern in the political section in any discussions you might have had at all about German playing a disproportionate role, or maybe a proportionate role, in Eastern Europe and the threat that Germany might get too powerful and leaving the UK and France in kind of a secondary role, looking towards the future?

McGHEE: It was a matter of concern among the East Europeans who have these sort of tribal memories about the Germans etc. that won't go away or at least won't go away easily and of course with the influx of private German investment immediately after reunification lots and lots of companies like say Volkswagen went to Prague. Volkswagen bought up Skoda which was the old Czech arms maker and that later itself became a car maker. Volkswagen began producing Skodas very cheaply, low labor costs, and of course other industries got the same idea. They had a highly skilled work force available in Prague and you could get them on the cheap. The East European, especially those that suffered so much under the Germans in World War II, were very concerned about the possibility that they would become beholden to, or dependent upon Germany.

I would say that even more concern about Germany's size comes from the other direction. In other words concern of the Brits, the French, the Italians and others that Germany would get so big that it becomes kind of a hegemonic power within the European Union, difficult for them to deal with and to get the type of say that they think they should have. Germany suddenly went from 60 million to 85 million and it was already the biggest country in the European Union but at least some of the others were within striking distance. Now Germany was just the giant.

Q: This was after the unification?

McGHEE: That's right, after the unification.

Q: With the Germans that you were talking to at the Foreign Ministry and elsewhere, was this a matter of discussion and concern of others?

McGHEE: No. I think that by and large the mood in the German Foreign Ministry was rather upbeat that Germany was now going to be playing a bigger and more important role in the world. It was viewed as kind of an opportunity by everyone in the Foreign Ministry.

Q: One of the things that has been said of a lot of countries, but particularly Germany, is that

when it gets power it can be terribly insensitive to the reaction that this power evokes with other people. Did you notice any of that?

McGHEE: You heard about complaints about this kind of thing on the part of the Germans but I don't think that overall the Germans are any worse than we are in this regard.

Q: On the external affairs, how was the French German access at this particular point?

McGHEE: It was in quite good shape. When I got there Mitterrand was still alive and of course Kohl and Mitterrand had this ongoing affaire d'etat, affair of the heart or of the state, I don't know which, but they got along very well. They saw each other two or three times a year. There was no problem that they couldn't talk over and work out. The election of Chirac maybe made this relationship a little bit chillier at least on that personal level but the fact is that the Germans still bend over backwards to accommodate the French in many ways and keep this sort of access alliance going as the main crux of the European Union and it still is.

Q: What was the feeling in our embassy in Bonn and all towards the European Union? Was there concern that this might get exclusive as far as the United States was concerned?

McGHEE: The U.S. policy has always been to favor European integration either via the EU or it's predecessors the EC, etc., etc. That remains our policy which is not to say there wasn't some concern down there about what it would mean for us if eventually, just to take an example, all of the European Union members suddenly had a single currency that was in size and volume, in reliability, perfectly prepared to take on some of the role that the dollar has always had in the world. These were questions that were of concern but they never really rose to the top because we don't operate that way. The crisis has to be tomorrow.

Q: What about on Bosnia, what were the events, problems, with regards to Bosnia during the time you were there?

McGHEE: There were two problems. One of them went back to the time of the breakup of Yugoslavia when the Germans jumped in ahead of everyone and recognized Croatia's independence and then subsequently recognized Bosnia rather forcing the hand of the European Community and of the Yugoslav's themselves. Actually they recognized Slovenia then Croatia and then eventually Bosnia. There was a lot of grouching afterwards that if the Germans had not jumped in there and done this that there might have been a negotiated solution at least between Croatia and Serbia. Be that as it may, they did what they did.

The next thing that happened of course was that the Bosnian war broke out. Yugoslavia fell apart, the Bosnian war broke out and then the initial reaction was that this was going to be a European problem. The Europeans had the WEU. They were at least ostensibly prepared to do something like this and so the EU voted to, in a sense, take this problem over. European troops were going to go in there and handle it and bring about the peace, separate the combatants, get a cease fire, etc., etc.

The Germans didn't join this force and so they sort of viewed all of the goings on with a kind of detachment because there were no Germans down there. As were we, they were highly critical of the way the European Union was doing this: they ought to be tougher and this and that. It was no embarrassment for the Germans because there were no Germans down there. The Germans didn't go until NATO stepped in and I-4 made it's first appearance. The Germans came in with some logistical help and they are involved in this now but I would say initially right out of the box they were rather detached about the whole thing and sort of viewed it philosophically you might say.

Q: When you arrived I think that things had already happened, but what was the word of wisdom of why had Germany recognized Slovenia and Croatia so quickly because this is often felt that this was not helpful at the time?

McGHEE: It think it was not helpful and it's something of a mystery why they insisted on doing this. The best idea I have heard in that regard is that it was sort of Hans Dietrich Genscher who was then the German Foreign Minister.

Q: And the head of the FDP so he had a small political base of his own but always there.

McGHEE: That's right. Genscher really fearing that if Germany didn't do it first someone else would squeeze in ahead of the, and so the Germans wanting to lead the pack on this simply began the recognitions.

Q: When you were there, this is '92 to '95, NATO did not go in at that point. It went in a little later or did it go in when you were there?

McGHEE: The initial NATO force went in while I was still in Germany, I-form went in during my last year. Before that there had been a lot of activity surrounding this. For instance you know that during the war there were these various Muslim enclaves in Bosnia that were effectively cut off by the Serbs and were trying to hold out against Serbian pressure. We ran a long, and in my view, very successful air-drop effort to parachute supplies, food stuffs and medical supplies into these isolate areas. They got pretty good at hitting what they were aiming at.

Q: Were you at all involved in our trying to get more commitment from the Germans to assist in Bosnia.

McGHEE: Absolutely. When NATO voted formally to become involved in Bosnia we went in and pitched the case very hard that this was where Germany should stand up and begin making an effort in the political and security area that was commensurate with its size and its level of economic activity, which they weren't doing. Eventually this resulted in about 800 German mechanics and other support personnel going off to Bosnia.

Q: While you were in Germany were you seeing a change in the sort of political atmosphere particularly as regards to international affairs, within Germany?

McGHEE: No. I would say that the Germans became a little more assertive during this period

and a little more active in areas outside of their normal sphere. I am talking about Kohl going to Asia and Africa and things like that that you just didn't see that often previously. Yes, there was an effort to be more assertive or at least to stand up and be counted on a range of issues.

Q: I am just wondering whether you saw any change because we have been so close for so long but mainly because the Germans have not tried to assert leadership in foreign affairs except when you get something like the recognition in Yugoslavia. I was wondering if we were beginning to hear that the relationship was going to be different?

McGHEE: I don't think so. Certainly not in any formal way that I am aware of.

Q: Our goals were pretty much alike anyway. You were there during the transition when the Clinton administration came in. Did you see any change?

McGHEE: We eventually got a change of ambassador but no, on the big issues there was no change, no appreciable change anyway.

Q: Was there any difference between the way that Robert Kimmitt and Richard Holbrooke ran the embassy?

McGHEE: Well of course Kimmitt was low key and very interested in detail. He studied hard for his meetings and wanted a lot of paper. Holbrooke was sort of a seat-of-the-pants sort of guy. He would take a look at your brief before he went in but then he usually had his own ideas about what he wanted to say. Needless to say his ideas prevailed but it would be difficult to conceive of two people who are less alike than were Kimmitt and Holbrooke in terms of the way they operated. But the job was what it was. I don't think that the policy itself in any major aspect changed substantially. No, pretty much it all just came over from Bush to Clinton unchanged. They wanted to do the same things.

Q: Within the political section, although you were dealing with external affairs you were also managing this large section, what was the feeling about Germany somewhat looking towards the future but even then the changes by this absorption of East Germany, was this making any difference in German policy would you say?

McGHEE: Other than the ones we've discussed which was that there was this somewhat timid effort on the part of the Germans to assert an influence more commensurate with their size, I would say nothing major.

Q: Were you keeping an eye on both the extreme right and the extreme left in Germany? Were they a force to be concerned about?

McGHEE: Some of the extreme left actually managed to slip into the Bundestag once in a while. We kept a much closer watch on the extreme right especially during those periods when it seemed Jewish synagogues, facilities, and buildings were coming under attack. We watched that and reported that very closely when it happened.

Q: But there was no concern that this was going to be a growing movement?

McGHEE: Not really that it was going to grow substantially but there was concern that around the fringes you could get these guys big enough to get over the five percent threshold in German politics and suddenly they would be represented in a bunch of places. But I would say that it was far from being an immediate threat. It wasn't something that was going to happen right away.

Q: You left the job in '95. Where did you go to then?

McGHEE: Rome.

Q: Rome. How many times now has this been?

McGHEE: Three.

Q: Three times that's maybe not quite a record but you were in Rome from '95 until?

McGHEE: '97.

Q: What were you doing in Rome?

McGHEE: Pol-mil counselor.

Q: Who was the ambassador during this time?

McGHEE: I forgot to mention that one thing that was going on in Germany that shouldn't be missed and that is draw-down.

Q: What do you mean by draw-down?

McGHEE: We went from about 270,000 troops when I arrived there to under 100,000 U.S. troops. This involved the closing of lots of bases and the consequences for local populations because the bases were big employers, etc., etc. The draw-down was a big deal when I was there.

Q: This was dictated from Washington I assume?

McGHEE: Dictated by hard money factors. Yes, this was something that Washington decided to do. The Germans had no qualms about it. They understood what was going on. Their only concern was to make it as painless as possible and so there was a committee set up. There were lots of advanced consultations before we would announce the base closure so that the local mayor would have a chance to pack his bags or whatever.

Q: A base closing in the United States is probably the most torturous process that we have in our entire political agenda. Did German politics enter into base closings at all? In other words, Kohl would say "don't close the base at Bitburg. Why don't you do it in Wertsburg" or something like that?

McGHEE: We never had anything like that happen. Although not from the federal level, but we got a lot of complaints from the vendor level over closure, some local ones but no overt accusations that we were somehow trying to help Kohl and harm someone else by the base selection.

Q: You managed to stay out of that can of worms.

McGHEE: All we needed was to have the local official forewarned when an announcement was going to come so that they could be ready to respond, that was the big concern.

RICHARD AKER
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Stuttgart (1992-1996)

Richard Aker was born in Arkansas in 1949. He graduated from University of Arkansas and then attended law school. He joined the United States Information Agency Foreign Service in 1978. His overseas assignments include Iran; Munich, Germany; Hong Kong; Durban, South Africa and Romania. Mr. Aker was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2010.

AKER: I did this until '92, the summer of '92, and then I went back to Germany.

Q: Where in Germany?

AKER: I went to Stuttgart.

Q: What were you doing in Stuttgart?

AKER: I was the PAO. It was available and I wanted to get back overseas after four years in DC.

Q: Stuttgart is Baden-Württemberg?

AKER: Yes, it's the capital.

Q: Where stood Baden-Württemberg politically at this time?

AKER: It was and is generally one of the more conservative and wealthiest German states, and of course it's where Mercedes-Benz is located, as well a lot of other large companies. It is probably, after Bavaria, the most conservative politically of all the states. Unlike Bavaria, which has its own separate party -- the Christian Social Union -- which is affiliated to, but not part of, the CDU -- the Christian Democratic Union, Baden-Württemberg is a stronghold of the CDU, the national party. At that point it was ruled by a coalition, which is one of the few times it's happened since the war. The CDU headed a grand coalition with the more leftist SPD (Social

Democratic Party). The Minister -President – governor – was from the CDU and the deputy Minister-President was from the SPD.

Q: Well did you have a green movement there?

AKER: Substantial, but it was not in power but it got considerable votes, and still does, in the 10 percent range, maybe, which is about as much as it gets anywhere in Germany.

And the FDP (Free Democratic Party), another small, more libertarian party, has its stronghold historically in Baden-Württemberg so they're also in the high single, sometimes double digits.

Q: Do we still have troops there?

AKER: Very few, but the headquarters of the U.S. European Command and also U.S. AFRICOM, the African Command, which was just set up in the last three or four years, are both in Vaihingen, which is part of Stuttgart. The most substantial troop presence we have in Baden-Württemberg is farther to the north in Heidelberg and Mannheim. The U.S. Army European Command is in Heidelberg. That's being moved to Wiesbaden now, in Hessen, but as of right three of the major commands outside of NATO Brussels are in Baden-Württemberg,

Q: You were there from when to when?

AKER: I was there for about 18 months, from the summer of '92 until early '94. At that point Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, who had just arrived, asked me to come up to Bonn to be the press attaché. I went off to Bonn and was there until late '96.

Q: Okay, well let's talk about the Stuttgart period. What were your main jobs?

AKER: Well we still had an America House there, which I was director of, among other things. Going back to what you were saying about closing posts in the West to help fund the East -- at this time we began closing some America Houses which had been institutions since the end of World War II and had played a major part in the so-called re-education of Germans -- as we called it-- in the late '40s and '50s. I was ordered to cut down the operations of the Stuttgart America House and to conduct a RIF (reduction in forces) of personnel. It wasn't my decision but I had to carry it out, I was the person who had to go tell the people you're fired. It was painful.

Q: Well did you have a feeling that we were beginning to lose the next generation of German students and all coming up?

AKER: When I was in Munich earlier, that was the last major period of the Cold War -- the arms race with the SS-20s and the Pershing and Cruise missiles. By the early '90s, the times had really changed. That was a different era. I think at that point we had a good relationship with younger people and the younger people had become much less political, more interested in business, start-ups, IT, this sort of thing. It was a much less political generation. So I guess this was after Generation X, this would be Generation Y or later and young people were not really that

interested in politics for the most part.

Q: Well I would think that there would be both excitement and disappointment, all sorts of emotions going on as East Germany was getting absorbed into West Germany; did we look upon this and say well, good luck fellas, and not try to get involved?

AKER: We did open a new consulate in Leipzig, which had been a center of protest movement in the old East Germany. One of the reasons we were cutting back on America Houses, etc., and closing a couple of posts was to help pay for the consulate in Leipzig as well as expand Berlin, which had become officially the capital, but neither the government nor the embassy had moved there yet. However, we were getting ready. We were beefing up operations in the East, and in most of our exchange programs the East had a higher quota and a higher priority. We were diverting resources to these. But again, not a lot. We were not throwing a lot of money into Western Europe, including Germany, anymore.

Q: Well I would have thought that we would have tried to transfer the America Houses over to the eastern side-

AKER: Well we didn't. We opened a consulate in Leipzig, but it was not large. It did not have an America House associated with it, because the whole America House concept, by this point in the '90s, was in decline, and not just in Germany. Umberto Eco, a writer whose book "The Name of the Rose" was very popular, wrote an essay about the closure of the American Cultural Center in Milan. I think it appeared in the "International Herald Tribune." It was a critique of US shortsightedness in cutting back on its cultural presence abroad.

This also tied in with the slow dying of USIA. Congress was not very interested in cultural diplomacy and thought it was a waste of money: "Germans have libraries, Italians have libraries. Why do we need to have another library there?" This was the attitude. So there was no constituency in Congress for doing anything cultural.

Jumping ahead to my most recent German experience, in 2006 we closed the America House in Berlin and then closed the last America House, in Frankfurt. After that, the Spanish embassy took over the Frankfurt property and made it into an Institute Cervantes. I thought it was very revealing. We are a wealthier, larger, and more important country than Spain, yet they had no problem getting the funding for a cultural institution. And this unilateral cutting back on our cultural presence overseas continues. The attitude I think many people had, especially on the Hill, was that everybody sees our television and films, they must know everything about us. That may be true but it doesn't necessarily always project the image we would like to present.

Q: No. Also the libraries and their activities were much more dynamic in the European context, particularly a place like Germany, than any German comparable institution. I mean, the ability to search for books on a shelf and take them out wasn't European.

AKER: The America House libraries had been great role models for German libraries in the postwar era. In Berlin, there was also the Amerika Gedenkbibliothek, the American Memorial Library, which I think was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation In 1954 in West Berlin and is

an icon to this day. The Germans ran it themselves, but we initially funded it and dictated how it would be run; it was open in the evening and offered free access to shelves and free lending. And until '61, when the Wall went up, people from all over Berlin, including East Berlin, could come in and use this library. People in Berlin still talk about how much they loved this library when they were kids and what it had meant to the city. After the Wall came down, people from the East showed up at the library with overdue books that they had checked out in 1961 and they couldn't back for 28 years. Of course, the fines were waived.

Anyway, we were getting out of the cultural affairs business. And not just in Europe.

Q: Was there a feeling that this was a very bad mistake?

AKER: I think there were people, even in USIA, who shared the view that it was fine to take this tough-minded approach. The argument -- beyond the fact that people, especially in Europe, had the resources to do this sort of thing themselves -- was that we needed to get out of our institutions and go out among the people instead of having people come to us, we needed to do things with co-sponsors. It forced us to be more proactive. I'm not sure it's particularly valid. It's true that institutions or buildings create a certain stasis and routine, but they also provide continuity and you just can't do things as consistently or regularly when you don't have a place to hang your hat. Although it's good to get out and share venues with co-sponsoring institutions, I'm not sure we do much more of that now than we did before we started closing the institutions that we had. But I don't mourn, on the other hand, the old America Houses because to some extent they were anachronistic.

Q: Were you sensing a new Germany with unification and or was this a continuation of the old West Germany?

AKER: I think mostly it's a continuation of the old West Germany. Essentially, it was a corporate takeover. West Germany was larger and more populous, and the West Germans certainly weren't interested in taking over any ideas, even some good ideas, from East Germany. I think reunification has worked incredibly well on the whole. It has been very expensive for the West Germans but now -- it's almost like the division never happened. Germans love to moan and groan about everything, but certainly, compared to almost everybody else in the former Soviet bloc, the East Germans came out best.

Q: When you were in Germany this second time around, this peculiar mixture of extreme right and extreme left, like the Baader-Meinhofs and the skinheads; were they running wild during your time there?

AKER: No but there was, the second time around, more of the skinhead sort of thing. There were occasional instances of violence against foreigners, particularly immigrants from visibly immigrants from visibly foreign backgrounds.

Q: You're talking about foreigners, you're really talking about Turks and others.

Yes. There were isolated but very well publicized attacks on foreigners, as the Germans called

them, even if they'd been there for generations. These attacks got a lot of attention in the media. But, at this point, there was very little leftist violence anymore. To the extent that there was violence, it was coming more from the skinheads.

Q: How did the Balkan conflict play in Germany while you were there?

AKER: Bosnia was in full swing and Ambassador Holbrooke went back to the Department in the autumn of '94 to be assistant secretary for Europe, primarily to address the Balkan conflict. He asked me to come back with him; I chose not to, even though it was a big mistake from a career point of view. (I didn't go, but stayed on as press attaché through the following Chuck Redman era.) I was at Holbrooke's residence every morning to do a press briefing and met many people there. He was very involved with people on their way to and from the Balkans: Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, who died on a trip to Sarajevo; Peter Galbraith, our ambassador to Croatia, who was a frequent Holbrooke houseguest; and many others. Germany was very involved in the whole mess. This continued during Ambassador Redman's tenure: I remember a lot of visitors and meetings in the run-up to the August 1995 Croatian offensive that kicked the Serbs out of the Krajina. You remember, there was a surprise Croatian offensive that drove thousands of ethnic Serbs out of Croatia back into Serbia.

There was an accident outside Sarajevo in which Robert Frasure and a couple of other senior people were killed. They had stopped in Bonn on the way. I had seen them in the ambassador's office a day or two before, so this very personal for me. Clearly, Germany was an important player in our covert support for the Croats and the Bosnian forces.

Q: Do you think that we were far too late in exerting real force into the peace efforts?

AKER: I don't know. I think even 15 years later it's hard to tell what sort of future Bosnia is going to have on its own, if it can ever have a future on its own. It's the Balkans in miniature in terms of complexity.

Q: Oh yes.

AKER: It's being held together by glue and an understood threat of force and each of the three main groups seems to be supported only by their own community. I'm not an expert on this, although later on in Romania I got involved a bit during the Kosovo campaign. But Bosnia still seems to me to be key. It may be a futile exercise. The Turks stayed there for several hundred years, the Austrians for about 50 and, of course, it was the proximate cause of World War I.

Q: Yes.

AKER: And the place is still a complete mess today.

Q: Yes, We've stopped the fighting but the tensions are still there.

AKER: Absolutely. It isn't talked about much because there hasn't been any overt fighting for a while, but it's a very tense situation. So I don't know if we should have got involved earlier or if

we should have not got involved at all.

Q: Yes. So how long were you in Bonn?

AKER: Until December of '96.

Q: What was your impression of Richard Holbrooke?

AKER: He has a larger-than-life personality. He really has charisma, an animal magnetism that is quite remarkable. And he is articulate; he has the ability to talk in sound bytes so he's very good in testimony and very good with the news media.

Q: Well, as his press officer, you were enmeshed in that; how did that work for you?

AKER: I got along great with him because he trusted me. He doesn't need a lot of public affairs support; he's so good by himself. He would invariably make a great impressions on the journalists, in terms of what they were interested in, which was a story. Good press made him happy, which made him happy with me even though I really had little to do with it. It was fun being around him because he was a great networker; he really knew anybody who was anybody in Washington and elsewhere.

Q: Yes.

AKER: Holbrooke was, and is, one of the more colorful diplomats of his time. You know, he was assistant secretary for East Asia under Carter; after being assistant secretary for Europe he was ambassador to the UN. Now he's special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He has always been in the news.

Q: Well he's a remarkable presence.

What was the feeling about moving to Berlin?

AKER: In Bonn the local population was very opposed during that period. There were regular demonstrations against the move, calling it a waste of money. Of course, the city and its surrounding area were afraid they would lose a lot of revenue.

I was always for the move to Berlin. I thought it made no sense to stay in Bonn. But the German government was carrying out the move in a very deliberate way. They didn't get around to actually moving until '98 or '99. At the same time, we moved the embassy as well. I thought they should have moved to Berlin much earlier just to get it over with. In the early and mid- '90s, they would fly bureaucrats back and forth all the time between Bonn and Berlin, which I thought was a waste of money. I felt that, once people actually moved to Berlin the issue would be dead because Berlin is incomparably a better place to be than Bonn. I lived later on in Berlin, there is just no comparison. Berlin is really one of the great cities.

Q: Well then, you left Bonn when?

AKER: I left Bonn in December '96 and was assigned to Bucharest.

JOHN HELM
Regional General Services Officer (NIS)
Bonn (1992-1996)

Mr. Helm was born and raised in Tennessee and educated at Carson Newman College. Entering the Foreign Service in 1973, he served in posts throughout the world, primarily in the field of Administration, including General Services, Communications and Foreign Buildings. His overseas posts include: Banjul, Gambia; Panama City, Panama; Seville, Spain; Quito, Ecuador; Mogadishu, Somalia; Tbilisi, Georgia; Bonn, Germany and San Salvador, El Salvador. His Washington assignments were also in the field of Administration. Mr. Helm was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004.

Q: You left there when?

HELM: August of '92. The whole time I was there I kept calling back to the department. Remember, I'm the guy with the InMarSat telephone. I was calling back to EUR saying, "What about my real job?" They said, "Well, we've decided to create this as a regional office in Moscow. Will you go to Moscow?" I said, "Certainly." The next week I call back and they said, "We've decided to put it in Istanbul." I said, "Great." A week later they said, "Thessaloniki, Greece." I said, "Fine, that's great, I'll move there." Every week it was a different place. Finally it was agreed that it was going to be in Frankfurt. Some time during the summer, the implementing order was done to create the New Post Support Unit. I was replaced by an Administrative Officer on permanent orders named Alan Greenfield, an excellent young officer, can't speak too highly of him. And I went off to be the regional GSO for the NIS. I came back to Washington for about two weeks, packed out, and moved to Bonn, Germany. When I got to Bonn, the good news was that they had room for us in the embassy building on the top floor. The bad news was that the top floor had been demolished for a construction project that was previously halted.

Q: Because the embassy was going to move to Berlin, was that it?

HELM: Right. So, they took me up there and said, "You can have this whole floor, but it's gutted." There was nothing there. It was a construction site, and not an especially tidy one at that. My first order of business was to get my office built. Cliff Tighe was the director. We were setting up almost an embassy admin unit in exile. We had a budget section, a personnel section, I was the GSO, we had a systems guy, and Cliff was going to be the equivalent of the admin counselor for this new post support unit. Cliff and I sat down and sketched up a little floor plan. They sent a group of people from WASHMAC, a contract construction group based in Washington - FBO operates this thing - and they built us an office in very short order. We brought some desks in from the Bonn warehouse, and while they were busy building the offices

we set up shop. If the guy said, “We’re going to build a wall here, you have to move your desk” I would simply drag the desk over a few feet and carry on. We got some pretty nice offices built.

The winter of ‘92-93 was especially difficult for the NIS posts. While I was in Georgia, one day I came out of the hotel to go for a walk, I tried to walk around during the day, see things, usually took somebody with me, a local who could tell me which parts of town to stay away from and could translate. Most of the Russian trucks were real beat up junkers. I went out there and here was a brand new European tractor-semi loaded with stuff. I tried to talk to the guys in English, to the translator in Russian; that didn’t work. They seemed to speak German, so I went back inside and found the secretary of the German embassy. At that time the German embassy was also in a hotel suite. She came out and translated. It turned out that these were East German truck drivers from Rostock, or at least they worked for a company in Rostock, and they’d driven the tractor-semi all the way from Rostock to Tbilisi. We were being told that it was absolutely impossible. Overland trucking couldn’t be done. Under no circumstances. And yet, here was a truck from Germany!

I wrote down all of their information and sent it off to ELSO, the European shipping office and said, “There’s this beautiful truck, and here’s the name of the company, their telephone number, and here’s the name of the owner of the company, and they can drive stuff to Georgia. We don’t have to bring it in military flights, or carry it in suitcases from Moscow.” Which is how we’d been getting everything. We were truly living off the land. When I got back to the States and then moved to Bonn, the first thing was to get things shipped out to these posts, especially the posts in Central Asia. Almaty, Bishkek, Dushanbe, they were really in trouble. As well as Yerevan. Yerevan was in serious trouble.

Q: In Armenia.

HELM: We couldn’t get things into those posts. They literally were living off the land. In Dushanbe it came down to the ambassador buying a cow and slaughtering it in the hotel parking lot in order for them to have meat. Through ELSO we got this trucking company. We’d been buying stuff hand over fist, and there was an office in Finland, called URSA, which had been the Moscow support office. URSA helped us get started in Bonn, and had been buying stuff for the posts. (Gerri Kamm was a young GSO in URSA and was one of the heroes of the early NIS operations). We couldn’t get it to them, but we’d sat down in Washington and had written a list of everything you need for an embassy. We said, we’re going to have 10-officer embassies. That means we need ten sets of office furniture, this many computers, typewriters, photo copiers, vehicles. We were going down the list, first from Washington, then from Helsinki, then from Bonn, buying all this stuff and having it delivered to ELSO. I had hundreds of tons of stuff at ELSO with no means to get it to the post.

We were just buying things. There were 14 posts; we bought ten Diebold safes for each post, 140 Diebold safes. This was when the electronic lock was brand new. All this stuff, materiel, equipment, supplies. I sat down and made a list of all the expendable supplies that a post would normally have: letterhead paper, bond paper, photocopy paper, pencils, pens, forms of every sort. I ordered all that stuff. It was all being collected at ELSO. We made arrangements with the trucking company in Rostock to send a truckload to each of the new countries. It was frightfully

expensive, but it was worth every penny for us. We filled up these big, (more than 40 foot long), tractor semis with the basics, and shipped it out. The trucks took off, and it was probably early November when they were leaving Antwerp to drive to Almaty. Our agreement was that they were going to leave there and drive straight through to the destinations. Well, that didn't happen.

They left and drove to Rostock and hung out there for a couple of weeks, we think. We're not really sure where they were. Then they started driving to their destinations. The truck that went to Moldova made it, the truck made it to Georgia, of course he made it to Kiev, made it to Baku. I think the truck made it to Ashgabat. But the trucks for Bishkek and Almaty - Dushanbe wasn't open at the time - got somewhere up north of the Caspian Sea and got snowed in, and with much effort were able to retreat to Volgograd, where they got snowed in. And that was the end of the line. Because of the break up of the Soviet Union, nobody was responsible to clear the snow on the highways. In all of those countries, the social services and technical services were breaking down. Everything needed for those embassies was stuck at an army base in Volgograd. We couldn't get the drivers back, we couldn't get the trucks back. That was it. I was meeting with and calling the owner of the trucking company. He was calling me. "What am I going to do? My trucks are stuck. I'm out of business until I get some trucks back." Other trucks had made it to places like Georgia, but couldn't get home. In some cases because of fighting along the way, in some cases because of weather.

So we had to work out an arrangement to pay subsistence for the drivers that were stuck out in the boondocks. Then we worked out a deal where we paid cash to a Russian colonel, and he was shuttling our stuff by air as training flights in Russian army aircraft. I'm quite sure he was pocketing the whole amount he was paid, but I got a receipt. That's all that counted. So we finally got the stuff through. But we realized then that we could not count on overland shipping. We started looking around for a means to ship stuff. We had no means of secure shipping, no way we could get any classified material, including cryptographic keying material, out to these places. The courier program refused to fly on Aeroflot - the "baby" Aeroflots; too dangerous from an aircraft falling out of the sky sense, and it was too dangerous from a control of the pouches sense. You just couldn't send even two guys with a pouch and have any assurance that it was really going to get there. So the agency was having a problem, we were having a problem, and they came to us and proposed that we become partners in the agency's aircraft. So we established a charter with a group called Rapid Air Transport.

Q: Sounds like Air America from my Vietnam days.

HELM: The same light airplane, the same blue stripe down the side, the same guys. RapAir, based out of their warehouse in Frankfurt. There were some problems. For example, all deliveries had to be made by a driver with a top secret clearance. We couldn't just send a German delivery truck to that facility. We had to help load the plane, and we had to provide a guard for the plane. And we had to pay about one third of the cost, which was three million dollars a year. But for three million dollars, we would get an L-100, which was a stretch C-130, one flight a month to each of the 14 posts. We got Europe to agree to this and to pony up 1.3 million dollars. I became the cover for the agency's plane. When I arrived in Bonn, I saw a fellow in the cafeteria my second or third day there who I had known from Somalia. His wife's a communicator, and he was a locally hired spouse; I didn't really tell you about him in the

Somalia part. He became my assistant. His name was Chris Peterson, died of cancer about a year ago. A great guy, would do absolutely anything. He drove back and forth with the truck from Bonn to Frankfurt. Some days I drove the truck. Taking the stuff from ELSO to load it on the plane. ELSO would ship it to Bonn, we'd load it on our truck, and drive it into that warehouse. When we got there we would physically build the pallets, big like floor sections with netting that go across the top. There wasn't any staff of people to do this. We would have the warehouse crew in Bonn load our truck; we would physically unload the truck, build the pallets, get the netting on them. There was an Air Force Sargeant who would certify them for air transport. They would deliver them over to Rhein-Main where they would be put on the L-100. In addition to that we made an arrangement with the commissary to sell food to these posts, and we were picking that food up at the commissary.

Now the problem was that the commissary had to have someone there who could pay for the food. The Air Force would take the food off of our truck and pack it, including frozen stuff - they had boxes of Styrofoam and dry ice to pack frozen food for shipment. The commissary back door was a hundred yards from the hangar's door. The commissary wouldn't deliver it, the Air Force wouldn't pick it up, and neither party would allow us to have a German come and transport it that hundred yards on base. It was the most knuckle-headed thing I ever saw. But I had this guy Chris with a truck. He would go to the commissary, pay for the food. Individuals would give checks to Chris when he delivered the food at their post, he'd deposit those checks, then write checks and buy the food. It was the craziest system you ever saw, probably illegal as all get-out, but it worked. Chris would load the food, drive the hundred yards, unload the food, go back and get another load. He would go down, spend a day or two a month driving back and forth a hundred yards with loads of food. There were no procedures for any of this. We invented it as we went along. It may not have been the optimum, the most bureaucratically appropriate, but we got the job done. That's what mattered to us. If we didn't send it, they didn't eat it.

Q: Were you feeling the pinch that the decision was made, I'd assume by Secretary Baker, not to ask for more funds for staffing these posts?

HELM: We were aware of that, but it worked in reverse for us. When Baker didn't staff the posts very well, that was fewer mouths that we had to feed. The European bureau gave us the complete budgets for all of those posts. Later we divided it between the Baltic posts and Kiev, serviced out of Helsinki, and the Caucasus and Central Asia posts serviced out of Bonn. Basically, we had as much money as we could spend. By keeping the posts small that first couple of years - we wouldn't have survived if they'd ballooned up the way they later did. It gave us a couple of years to establish the base, if you will, before the growth occurred.

Q: Did you have much problem with the local authorities - customs, all this - or was it fairly easy once you hit a country to get the stuff to the embassy?

HELM: It's amazing what a case of Johnny Walker scotch can do in the Soviet Union. Yes, we had trouble at the outset. They wouldn't give us access, and that was a problem. We had all of these very young junior officers as GSOs at the posts. They didn't have a clue, they didn't know how to operate in the big wide world. The poor folks were just being beaten around by the local bureaucracies right and left. My solution to this was basically to pay. There is a gratuities fund,

and I spread a lot of whiskey around in the former Soviet Union. The plane would land. We would go over and say, "Please send the fuel truck and sell us fuel for the aircraft." The fuel truck just wouldn't come. So you'd go over to the fuels office and find the truck driver and say, "Would you please come and fuel the airplane." The guy would just shrug his shoulders. He didn't care if he sold you fuel or didn't sell you fuel; he just didn't care. You would then say something like, "I'll give you a quart of Johnny Walker scotch if you'll come." The guy would be there instantly. And after the first time, you'd say, "Okay, now the next time we come, you got to come right out and meet us." And by golly, from that day forward he was there. Of course it cost you a bottle of scotch every time you landed. So, what's scotch cost? Not much. Not compared to the cost an extra hour of the plane sitting on the ground.

Q: It was fuel.

HELM: Well, it worked. It worked at the gatehouse, at the customs house, and after we'd done this cycle two or three times we even scaled back the "rewards." All of a sudden, after we developed a cycle that was routine, "We're going to come here every month, of course we're going to take care of you my good friend Igor," it all worked. There would be a courier on the plane who would hand the pouch to the embassy people, who were allowed to drive onto the airport right up to the back of the plane, the embassy would get a truck, we'd load the stuff for that embassy and fly to the next post. We would get a couple of posts, usually overnighted in Tashkent or Almaty, and fly back through Dushanbe. That was one of the runs. They'd be on the road for three days. They'd overnight usually once in Almaty and in Istanbul on the way back. There were some fuel and air distance, and crew rest limitations so we couldn't make it all the way back to Bonn from Dushanbe without stopping.

Q: You did this for how long?

HELM: '92 to '96.

Q: Did you have anything to do with our embassy in Bonn, or did you keep out of their way and they keep out of your way?

HELM: That's exactly right. I had a lot of interaction with the warehouse guys. We had a unit there that was created on our behalf for the most part called the Excess Property Unit, which still exists. If you remember, in '92, the military was downsizing. I don't know if you ever heard the term POMCUS (pre-positioning of material configured in unit sets). Don't ask me what it means. We had huge warehouses full of stuff that were there in preparation for World War III. The National Guard was supposed to fly over and land at these remote airfields and find vehicles and every kind of equipment you could need, and drive away with it and fight World War III. One of the problems we had was that there were no vehicles, and we couldn't get them. The Department bought two cars for each of the new posts and that was all they could have; they got a sedan and a little European Ford station wagon. They couldn't keep the Fords running; they just fell apart. The posts had no utility vehicles. The new posts didn't have a truck of any sort.

I went to the army to get excess POMCUS vehicles. Margaret Colianni was a procurement specialist at RPSO Bonn. Her husband Jeff Colianni had previously been in the Army as a supply

officer in Germany and had contacts and knowledge of the inner workings of the military excess property system. Jeff was a dependent spouse and was looking for work. So he proposed to set up a unit in the Regional Procurement office in Bonn (RPSO) which would go to these army DRMO (defense reutilization and marketing office) dumps, and get stuff that the State Department could use. Jeff and I went to this one POMCUS base and met with the top sergeant. We said, "Is there anything we can have?" He said, "Do you need vehicles?" We said, "Yes, that would be lovely, we need vehicles. What do you have?" He took us to an enormous warehouse. Think a building the size of a super Wal-Mart, filled, so full of vehicles that they'd had to scoot the last one in each row sideways with a forklift. From one end to the other, vehicles, pick-up trucks and Blazers. The military term is "cutvee". It's a Chevy Blazer 4x4 with military paint. Two-door, four seat SUV. All were 1985 models of Blazers and Silverados and they all had about 20 miles on the odometer.

The Sargeant asked, "How many do you want?" I said, "I'll take this row, this row and that row." He says, "Well you have to fill out these forms, and a letter, and an account number." Well, Jeff knew all about how to get the account number, and he wrote the letter. He did everything. And we got trucks. Ultimately, we got over 200 trucks from various POMCUS sites over the next couple of years. We were sending trucks all over Eastern Europe. We sent a bunch to Moscow. They came down and convoyed about 50 of them at one time. And we supplied these pick-up trucks and blazers to all of the new posts. We found a guy in Germany who would go to these sites with our letter of authorization and tow the trucks and Blazers to his shop. All of the rubber components were rotten, the tires, hoses, belts, certain mountings on the body. Everything rubber was rotten. He'd replace all that, and paint them white. They had some kind of chemical warfare coating which was a carcinogen. He had a permit from the Germans to work with this material. He would sand off this coating and paint them white or any other color you wanted, because they came camouflage. Then we were shipping them out to the posts as fast as we could. It was kind of fun calling places like Almaty and saying, "Wouldn't you like another half dozen pick up trucks?" "Oh, yes, certainly, that would be lovely, send them on."

Q: You'd put them on the plane?

HELM: A few times. But mainly, we shipped them overland. By the time that was working we were over to get overland shipping working, and railroad started working for us. So were supplying all these vehicles out to the NIS. One day Jeff came to me and he says, "I've got three fully-armored Mercedes sedan, do you want them?" I said, "Sure, bring them up." So we parked them up behind the embassy in Bonn. Another time he came to me and said, "We have an Expand-o-van." I have no idea what an Expand-o-van is, but, yes, I'll take it. So I had out behind the embassy in Bonn an army five-ton truck with a box bed that would expand sideways to become a mobile too shop, and three armored Mercedes sedans. They were in pretty rough shape.

Do you remember when Yasser Arafat came to Washington and kissed Begin on the cheek? What you didn't see was that Yasser Arafat's number one assistant handed the Secretary of State a shopping list and said, "If we're going to be good friends, you have to give me these things." The number one item on the list was an armored sedan. The Department sent a worldwide message asking if anyone had an armored sedan they could give to the Palestinians. I replied that

I had three Mercedes, but they were in pretty rough condition. The response back was almost immediate: "How rough?"

There was a company in Germany, the same one that had been renovating the pick-up trucks for us, whose specialty was taking old Mercedes sedans, completely stripping them, and rebuilding them. They came from his shop as virtually new cars. I contacted him and he agreed to give me a price on the Mercedes. We took the best of the lot, sent it down to him. The windshields on all three of the cars had become fogged. This is a common problem with armored windshields over time. It came back about \$30,000 to re-do the car including \$14,000 just for the windshield. I sent that back to the Department and they sent fiscal data almost immediately to get it done. When the car was ready, Chris Petersen and I went down and picked up the car. The company was near Munich. I drove the Mercedes back to Bonn. I put the Mercedes on the Autobahn and set it at a nice 160 kilometers an hour all the way back to Bonn. The car ran great, no vibrations, steady, rock solid. It was like a new car. We used our airplane and flew the Mercedes to Tel Aviv, and it became Yasser Arafat's car. A month or so later I saw on CNN (cable network news) where Arafat was arriving at some meeting, and I recognized the car.

GREG THIELMANN
Officer in Charge of German Affairs
Washington, DC (1993-1995)

Mr. Thielmann was born and raised in Iowa and was educated at Grinnell College and Princeton University. A specialist in Political-Military Affairs, he held a number of positions dealing with such matters as Strategic Proliferation, Arms Control and Missile Programs. He also served abroad at several posts in the capacity of Political Officer and Consular Officer. His last position was Chief, Office of Analysis for Strategic Proliferation and Military Affairs in State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

Q: Well, then in '93, you got a new administration coming in, the Clinton administration. What did you do?

THIELMANN: Well, that was when Toby Gati came to INR. But what I did in 1993 was to go to the European bureau and get a job as officer in charge of German affairs. I don't know if the position still exists or not. But it was an unusual position in that not very many country desk jobs involved supervision of only one country. As officer in charge of German affairs, I would supervise two more junior officers who worked full-time on West German (FRG) affairs. This was in an office that had previously dealt with all those esoterical issues like Berlin matters but also had the East German (GDR) account and Austria and Switzerland. Then there was also an economics officer who dealt with all of those countries. So in one sense I didn't really supervise all the people who were working on the German issues; the economic operation was separate. The office director and the deputy office director were themselves sometimes at least eighty percent focused on German affairs issues, but it was a job that I liked a lot because at least I had license to concern myself with anything having to do with Germany. It was one of those

occasions for trying to orchestrate the reporting out of what was still a significant number of constituent posts for one country. It was in a period of time where some of the new posts, like Leipzig, was very important for trying to keep track of what was happening in this new piece of Germany that had obviously a very different political culture than in the past.

Q: You were doing this in '93 to when?

THIELMANN: '93 to '95.

Q: In '93 when you took over, was Germany united by this time or what was happening?

THIELMANN: By that time Germany was united, and I'm trying to remember when the -- can't even remember what it was called, the Four Plus, the Four Plus Two or whatever -- we had these very sensitive negotiations to lay out the reunification or unification of the two Germanys. By the time I got there, it had all happened. I think that there were still some Russian soldiers on their way out. I'm not quite remembering the last withdrawal although I do remember that the Russians kept to the schedule, which was impressive. They got everyone out at the time they were supposed to have them out. But what was happening was of so much interest at the time. There was one Germany. There were these new German provinces in what had been East Germany like Saxony. When I say new, of course they were in many cases returning to a very old political identity, particularly in the case of Saxony. There was Saxony-Anhalt and Pomerania and Brandenburg and so forth. This was just really fascinating for anyone with a background in German affairs to see those old identities and the old way of doing things and even where German companies would traditionally be headquartered. Would the Dresdner Bank go back to Dresden for example? There were all those banks that had moved to Frankfurt and then had the option of locating in Berlin or one of the other places. So seeing how Germany was changing, seeing how the country would share the enormous costs of bringing East Germany and East German infrastructure into the very modern West German orbit was really fascinating as was seeing where the fissures in the society were, the so called Wall that the East Germans still had in the head. The resentment of East Germans toward the sense of superiority the West Germans had and what we would've seen in our post civil war context as carpetbaggers coming from one side to exploit opportunities on the other were also visible.

Q: When you took it over, did you feel that we were, you might say, overly optimistic about the integration of Germany or did you realize what a tough nut it was going to be. Because as we speak in 2005 there's a real divide still there. It hasn't moved together the way that at least I would've thought it would.

THIELMANN: I'm trying to recall the way we thought about at the time. I think some people thought that Chancellor Kohl was too optimistic about it, and of course, he was. Historically speaking, he used certain images about the East German landscape blooming. Some of the entrenched problems of having a whole generation of Germans raised in the socialist paradise model of low incentives to work and inefficiency and all those things were much harder to fix really than things like the transportation and communications infrastructure, which really was fixed in a spectacular way. People have commented that East Germany now has a more modern infrastructure than West Germany does because so much of it is new. I mean that was

enormously expensive, and it took years to work on. But you can point to concrete accomplishments there. If you look at what has happened to the human potential and the problem of high unemployment in large sections of Eastern Germany, it's been a real chronic problem and something that unification has not been terribly successful in achieving. So I think that the U.S. State Department's Germany analysts saw very realistically some of the problems that would lie ahead for Germany. I think in some ways the real Germany experts were probably pleasantly surprised at how successful some aspects of the unification were. I mean the Germans and their Germanic way were very thorough with a lot of the things that had to be done. There was in some senses even more of a German identity that was successfully appealed to than some people might have appreciated. So I think the kind of deep problems were foreseen by the U.S.-Germany experts, and if anything there was some pleasant surprise about how successful some aspects of unification went. But it was very important to have people on the ground and in contact with the new political elements and particularly important to have those who actually bridged that chain, the people who served in Germany in the late 1980s and who knew a lot of the protesters and everything.

Q: How did we see politics in Germany at that time, as regards their impact on American policies and interests?

THIELMANN: Well, what I remember most distinctly at the time was the great satisfaction in seeing Germany united. I think I may have mentioned this previously but from a Moscow perspective it was seeing the nervousness felt by France and Britain about unification, and the United States had none of those concerns about a looming Germany changing the power relationship. What was clearly different was the adjustment to a Germany that did not have to accept basically anything that the U.S. security required for existential reasons. Some in the U.S., and I think especially in the Pentagon were slow to appreciate the fact that a united Germany didn't have to accept sort of low flying jet aircraft or tanks churning up their farmer's fields anymore now that the threat was receding rapidly. With an independent Poland and everything, the Germans were just in a very different situation. The United States in my opinion wasn't as adept as it should have been in making an adjustment in our own minds about Germany. We should have more rapidly adjusted our own dealings with them and backed off from the somewhat imperious ways that we demanded cooperation from the Germans.

Q: Were we seeing a new German in its role in Europe now? I mean, did we see a Germany that was beginning to shuck off the almost subservient guilt of World War Two and say, yeah, we're a big powerful country and we have our own interests?

THIELMANN: I think there was a new Germany emerging, and of course one of those endlessly fascinating aspects of German affairs was to try to say how much is it new and how much is it old. It doesn't lend itself to easy generalizations. I think the roots of the Federal Republic of Germany that emerged after World War Two are very deep. The new unified Germany is a victory for that Western German model. There's no kind of halfway point between East and West Germany. I mean the West took over. We wouldn't usually say it that bluntly, but that's what happened. There are some negative consequences of that too in terms of alienation of some of the Eastern Germans. But I think it's very solidly rooted in the kind of western values that we always wanted Germany to have. Of course it's ironic that the U.S. has taken to complaining

about the Germans not being willing to have a large enough military and being too reluctant to go abroad in search of dragons to slay. There is terrible irony in that. So there's obviously some impatience on our part still for Germany not assuming it's full weight as an international actor. But there's also irritation on our part of Germany defining its own interests in any way on any occasion as being different from our own. So it's a little bit hard for us to have it both ways. I mean, what kind of Germany do we want after all?

But the combination of the German unification and the biological factor of the older generations dying off and Germany being run basically by people who don't have a memory of the war years, and increasingly don't even have a memory of the early post war years of hardship are creating a very different Germany than the previous one. It's manifested in such simple things as watching the Germans at a World Soccer Cup, seeing Germans waving flags or painting their face in the German colors. It's really extraordinary for people who have been German watchers in the post-World War Two era. As harmless and innocuous as those manifestations of nationalism are, the Germans just didn't do it. You'd be hard pressed to find a flag flying anywhere in Germany when I first went there in 1969.

So I see this as Germany becoming a normal country. I think it is most of the way to becoming a normal country, which doesn't mean Germany is avoiding the issue of war guilt. I mean Germany is still paying large sums of compensation for victims of the Nazi dictatorship even though, of course, Germany is often involved in action to limit the amount of payments it has to make. It often finds itself in the role of heavy in those arguments. But, if one takes any kind of a comparative look between Germany and Japan, Germany has dealt with its war guilt and Japan has not fully done so. East Germany has not fully dealt with its war guilt, but that's the consequence of the Communist leadership always blaming it all on the West Germans and saying that they, as the inheritors of the communist resistance, had nothing whatsoever to do with it. But then it became of course no accident that the skinheads and the fascists were much more prevalent in East Germany than West Germany, and in some sense the real inheritors of Nazi fascism are, have their roots in the impoverished part of East Germany.

Q: Was the role of France and Germany part of your portfolio? I mean there was a lot of effort on the part of the leaders of the two countries to create a solid political blockage. Did that come up?

THIELMANN: It came up. I guess I first had a full appreciation of that when I served in Germany in the '80s. The enormous contribution of the real sea change that was achieved originally in the coal and steel community after World War Two brought them into the same economic basket. But also those enormously successful and large-scale exchange programs that brought young Germans and Frenchmen together in the 1950s really fundamentally changed that long standing, kind of instinctive animus between Germans and French. I really think that even though during this period, 1993 to 1995, we saw a fair degree of cooperation and good relations between Germany and France. We're only now years later really seeing the full implications of the German and French working together. We see it again and again in diplomatic reactions or initiatives in which Paris and Berlin are part of the same position often with the United States in some other position.

Q: I guess you weren't dealing with the economic policy or maybe you were as we were moving towards the world trade organization. Did that come across your desk?

THIELMANN: That was really more in the area dealt with by the economic officer on the desk. So I noted, tried to cooperate in, but wasn't directly responsible for that part.

Q: Did you see Germany extending itself into the east. I mean this is when Germany was unified. One of the thoughts was "oh my God, they will take over Eastern Europe basically economically and eventually sort of politically because they're well positioned compared to the rest of the west and also have the power." Is this something you were looking at and concerned about?

THIELMANN: Yes, it was something we were looking at. I think we had lesser concern in a way. To a certain extent, if one has a notion of a limited power pie, then German inroads into Eastern Europe were in competition with U.S. power and control over what was happening in Eastern Europe. In fact in the economic world that was very much often the case. It was either German investments and ownership or American investments and ownership in some of the countries of Eastern Europe. But I was really struck during my time on the Germany desk by the vitality and the relevance of this notion of central European culture. It was something that ironically the State Department organization kind of reflected even in the depths of the Cold War when you had the Communist part of Europe being dealt with in one bureau or one side of a very sharp bureaucratic division except for East Germany, which was still part of Central European Affairs and dealt with by all those people who were dealing with NATO affairs. It was kind of an odd little artifact of that Central European notion. But John Kornblum, who had such an important role in handling Germany in the State Department from policy planning staff, from the European bureau, from Brussels and eventually as ambassador in Germany, always spoke about Central European identity as rooted in its historical knowledge. He always pointed out that this Central European identity meant that Czechs and Slovaks and Hungarians and to a certain extent even Poles saw a German cultural center there that extended from the business community into the cultural realm in so many ways after the Cold War ended and Europe was united. The Czechs and the Hungarians were enormously influenced by the Germans, and the Germans had a lot of influence in these other places they once had in German history. So a lot of that shift continued, and, of course, it also extends to Russia and a historic German commitment to and involvement in Russia that the U.S. really doesn't appreciate. I mean the Germans always had a much longer-range view of Russia and I think Americans tend to think of the German-Russian relationship as the terrible conflict between Nazism and Communism, a very brutal German occupation, the holocaust. They forget about the centuries old settlement of Germans under Catherine the Great, the significant German industrial investments in Russia, and even the German or Prussian soldiers that fought under the czars in the Napoleonic era. All of that should not be exaggerated, but it's all there and helps account for a much deeper German-Russian relationship than an American-Russian relationship. I noticed even as recently as a couple of days ago in the Washington Post's Jim Hoagland talking about Germany as just a spokesman for the West or the United States in dealing with the Russians, which really doesn't capture the relationship that I see as the Germans having a very distinct interest in relations with Russia that doesn't correspond completely with the U.S. interests and relations with the Russians. I mean it was manifested earlier in the Soviet era when they had a gas pipeline into Germany, and the U.S. had a fit and said this is unacceptable. The Germans had a different point of view about that. There

really is a different relationship. Even though there is clearly direct economic competition in terms of Eastern European markets and other things, I see this as being a friendly competition. I don't feel a sense of alarm about German influence in Eastern Europe and Russia, because I think for the most part their political values are our own values as well.

Q: Well, was there any concern at this time about I'd say the diminution of American interests in Germany? It was no longer the frontline state and things were happening all over. A considerable number of American males myself included served in Germany as soldiers. All of a sudden this is beginning to dissipate, and I was wondering whether Germany was so much faded on our radar. Was this—

THIELMANN: That was very much a concern during my era on the Germany desk because we were seeing the departure of half of the soldiers that were stationed in Germany going to fight in the Gulf—

Q: And then left.

THIELMANN: And then they went home rather than going back to Germany. They just went home so that the troop strength was cut in half, and, of course, now it's even less, and with Rumsfeld talking about old Europe and looking lustily at Eastern Europe you have a different situation. But our concern then was exactly what you were talking about. You had more than one generation of Americans that had intimate contact with the Germans. They had lived in their midst. They had mixed with them. A whole lot of marriages resulted from that contact. There were very big exchange programs with Germany, and then with the ending of the Cold War there was a sense that it had become passé and we had new frontiers to explore. There was a real concern in the State Department about this loss of initiative and priority and what were we going to do to replace that automatic massive contact between our two cultures that resulted from our heavy military investment in Germany. There were various things that were conceived and programs implemented to try to move into a new era without losing the kind of connectivity we had. But I think the concern was real and continues to this day.

Q: Yes, I have a feeling that not as many people are taking German, and if you're going on vacation, Germany is pretty far down the list.

THIELMANN: That's right. That's right.

Q: There's France, Spain, Italy, Britain or a cruise in the Baltics or something, but Germany is pretty far down the list. So the contact is lessening in a way.

THIELMANN: That's right. I think it's less of a concern. There's still plenty of German contact with the United States partly because of the relationship between the Euro and the dollar. I mean the U.S. is still a very popular tourist destination. I mean there are enormous number of Germans in Florida and so forth. Germans are still or even more capable in English than they ever were. So that's not so much a problem. But it's the Americans being exposed to Germany and learning German and traveling in Germany. That's the tough one. We were working hard during that period on it and I think are still working on it now. I should also mention that that was the period

when Richard Holbrooke was first ambassador to Germany, and then he came back to become head of the European bureau. So I saw Holbrooke from both perspectives as sort of our man in Germany and then back as boss.

Q: What was your impression of Holbrooke in this particular—

THIELMANN: Holbrooke was very capable and impressive in terms of his energy level, his ability to work the system and this a bit of a reluctant witness because I thought he had some serious character flaws. But I found myself so frequently in agreement with his policy instincts and his sense of where U.S. interests lay. So that's my reluctant witness, but he was such an egomaniac. He had such non-admirable character traits from my perspective that it was hard for me to see him as a model senior diplomat nor someone that I would be happy to see as Secretary of State.

Q: While you were there, what was the situation in former Yugoslavia? I mean, Germany played a rather crucial role with Genscher but was that during your time?

THIELMANN: I think I missed the really critical period when Germany from retrospect jumped the gun and recognized the various component parts of Yugoslavia and at least from what I've heard from those who know the area much better than I kind of precipitated some of the crises.

Q: It was a significant move.

THIELMANN: Yes, so I think that Germany had played a role there that it should not be particularly proud of. But in some respects it tried to make up for it later by committing significant forces to the very unpleasant and thankless task of creating order and some foundation for the birth of democracy and the rule of law there.

Q: Well, were there any particular events or something that particularly sticks in your mind during this '93 to '95 period?

THIELMANN: There were a lot of little anecdotes. I'll just mention a couple. One is in terms of interesting State Department dynamics. There was a secretary in the office that was not performing adequately, and I remember, when I first came in the office, an attempt to remove her from a position had been underway for almost two years. During the time I was in the office, she was finally separated for reasons of non-performance. But I looked back on it as being an extraordinary effort by a series of foreign service officers basically to do their job, take seriously their supervisory responsibilities and document someone who was not performing adequately. It was obviously something that caused the office significantly because none of the offices had the secretarial support that we would've liked to have had. So when you had one that was not functioning up to standards, it was a heavy burden. But in this case after I think three years the office was eventually successful. I remember that personnel rewarded this kind of bureaucratic heroism on the part of the sustained efforts of a number of officers by basically taking away the position, by saying, "well, you obviously don't need this person because you've been getting along without him." I thought it was sort of a tremendous and of course terribly damning example of the State Department internal management and the personnel system doing exactly

the wrong thing. So that was one little piece.

Another thing that I remember well was an effort to try to talk the Coast Guard into a port visit in Northern Germany by the Coast Guard training ship Eagle. This is a tall ship, big sails.

Q: Tall ship.

THIELMANN: I was just remembering with amusement about trying to talk the Coast Guard into doing this when, there was some sort of inconvenience for their schedule even though they were going to be in European waters. It seemed like it was a real chance of them doing this, but I couldn't quite make it happen. The irony of this really struck me too since the Eagle was previously a German ship, which was seized as war booty. It was the Horst-Wessel, which was a Nazi song.

Q: Nazi martyr.

THIELMANN: Yes, Nazi martyr. I thought it was very funny that not only did we steal their ship but we wouldn't visit. I mean the Germans really wanted it as part of Bremer-hoffen or some local event. So that was just an amusing little occurrence. But I guess that's all I'm coming up with at the moment.

Q: Okay, well this is probably a good place to stop. In '95 where did you go?

THIELMANN: After the Germany desk I was planning on going to Germany. But alas in the strange ways of personnel, of two jobs that I had my eye on, one was eliminated. The sure fall back went to the special assistant to the head of the European Bureau, and I ended up going back to Brazil as a political officer.

J. D. BINDENAGEL
Deputy Chief of Mission
Bonn (1994-1997)

Born and raised in South Dakota, Ambassador Bindenagle attended the University of South Dakota and the University of Illinois and entered the Foreign Service in 1975. He served in Korea and held several posts in Germany. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: You were in Bonn from '94 till when?

BINDENAGEL: September 1997.

Q: With this encouragement of business, here in the US we've heard about Germans having become during this period less and less competitive because of the social cost of the social problems and then the high wages and the fact that any German worth his soul gets, I don't

know, six weeks of paid vacation, and so forth. They just priced themselves out of the market. I think caution to any American firm trying to do business with them. Did you talk about this?

BINDENAGEL: Certainly those social factors and fringe benefits for labor that you mention are crucial economic factors in the kinds of investment that would come into the country. High wage costs mean that you can't come in with a labor-intensive investment, it would not work. You have to hire people, you hire them for a very long time. Firing them is prohibitively expensive with a rule of thumb of a month's salary for each year of service for severance. New investments in Germany were like a Motorola investment to build cellular phones with less than five-percent labor content. GM built a new engine factory in Russelsheim also with very little labor content. General Motors also built an assembly plant in Eisenach. GM bought the Wartburg company that had 20,000 employees in the GDR times and built a new factory, trained a work force of 1600 to produce two of three times the number of much higher quality cars than in the East Germany. Indeed, if Americans to invest they had to come in with a product in demand that was high quality and low labor cost. If the labor content was low and the product was high quality, Americans could be competitive. That was the strategy.

Q: This is what we were telling people? People came and you were laying it out on the line about if you want to deal with Germany you have to do this and this.

BINDENAGEL: Absolutely. In fact the Embassy offered excellent facilitative assistance to American business negotiations. We tried to help them develop their strategy and to encourage them to see that it could be successful. Hardest to overcome was the initial look as you just said, and the difficulties of doing business would overwhelm new investors, who would just say, "Forget it." However, if the investor could get past the initial obstacles, there were lucrative incentives for investments in eastern Germany and the Germans began to promote them. There were tax holidays, investment discounts and rebates, all kinds of incentives to invest. As these American companies began negotiations with the Federal German Government, they would often come to us and make sure that they were talking to the right people and that their arguments could be heard by decision makers. The embassy played an important role in coordinating and facilitating discussions with the German government, particularly on investment issues. Overall, we were really focused on trying to get American business to come in and be present and give us the strengthened role be an actor in Germany for the long term.

Q: There was a real political reason, obviously for the U.S. We wanted East Germany not to be restive, to be part of the whole German sovereignty, not to become a weak link. But at the same time, the Soviet Union fall apart, satellites have gone away, and I would have thought that there would have been competition from Poland and from Russia and from the Czech Republic and Hungary for some of the same investment. Did you find yourself as American diplomats on the business angle sort of competing with our Embassy people in those places?

BINDENAGEL: No. The East German experience was really quite different. First, the West Germans, if I can still use those two terms, the Federal German government, began to invest a hundred billion dollars a year in eastern Germany. Some 60 to 70 billion dollars of that money went to direct payments to individuals; transfers for unemployment compensation, retirement and training programs. The rest of it, 30 billion plus dollars, went into German investments. The

results were impressive. Eastern Germany soon had better infrastructure such as fiber-optic cables, new railroads, new freeways and new airports. The infrastructure that would normally have hindered or encouraged lower grade investments, were upgraded very quickly. But more important was the fact that they had a policy of trying to equalize the wages. That policy was devised in order not to have a big migration from East Germany to West Germany, but it meant that East German workers were priced out of the market. If you had a project that you wanted in East Germany that would have a higher labor content with lower labor cost than West Germany, at the beginning it was 70% and it has moved steadily up to 100%. And of course, correspondingly, unemployment has gone up in the eastern part of the country as wage equalization happened. The U.S. was not really have much competition for the West Germans.

We did have competition in French investment. The French had some large investments such as Minol, which they bought with it took over a great number of gas stations. This competition made it harder for Esso, BP, British Petroleum, and some others to compete for market share in that sector, but for the most part we didn't have serious competition.

Q: As you were dealing with this did you find that you were up against, American firms by inference your work, up against all habits. What I'm thinking of is the socialist workers. We know the old saying, "We don't pay you well. That's all right, we don't work well." This is the sort of the Soviet system, and also holdovers from the old socialist bureaucracy, which essentially was designed to say "No."

BINDENAGEL: That mentality - the socialist worker problem: "We pretend to work and they pretend to pay us" - is still a problem. Galleries Lafayette, the French retailer, built a store in East Berlin and was forced, after a very short period of time, to fire all of their East German workers and hire French workers, because they didn't have the same customer friendly attitudes needed in capitalist society. That happened. But, it happened along a generational divide. If you were over 50, your professional career had ended at unification. If you were a woman and the market changed from 98% of women in the workforce in the GDR to something closer to what the West Germans had, around 55, or 60%, the market for working women dried up. Unemployment was endemic. For the 30 to 40-year-olds, employment was a mixed picture. Among the workers, some had excellent work attitudes, some were able to integrate, and some were able to retrain. Those twenty-year-olds and under were really a different generation, which was socialized differently. They were being challenged differently; they have ambition and drive needed to succeed. There are really three generations: the lost generation of over 50s, the questionable generation and the new generation. That process will take probably until those 20-year-olds are 50, two more generations, before the new socialization process has a full affect on the economy and the society. But things do change in Germany.

Attitudes are the hardest to change and not just work ethics. One of the saddest reminders of the Second World War was in Dresden. When I was posted in East Germany it was the most vivid scene of remaining destruction and one of the most vivid political discussions I repeatedly had was over the bombing of Dresden.

Q: This is bombing during World War II, and it was bombed at the very end of the war, seemed to be a gratuitous bombing.

BINDENAGEL: The date was February 13, 1944. In the firebombing of Dresden, 30,000 or 40,000 civilians were killed; it was a terrible event. In the center of the city was the Frauenkirche, the Church of our Lady, which was bombed, burnt and a day or so after the bombing collapsed. The church simply imploded on that site and the rubble was left by the GDR, accompanied with a propagandist plaque decrying the “Anglo-American bombing of Dresden caused this destruction.” This anti-American propaganda repeatedly spoiled every discussion about Dresden. At the end of my assignment in the GDR in September 1990, we established a Consulate General in Leipzig, with Consul General Todd Becker, an excellent Germanist, who shared my concern about the constant drum beat of Anti-Americanism – Anglo-American bombing destroyed all that was good. Todd and I talked about to do to help change that East German attitude about the role of the United States in the war and about Nazi terror that led to the senseless bombing. One of the things that Todd and I agreed before I left, was reconciliation with the East Germans over the bombing and the GDR propaganda. One of the first things that he did was to arrange a benefit concert by the U.S. Air Force Band in Dresden, for the benefit of reconstruction of the Frauenkirche. The decision to rebuild the church had not been taken at that time and the benefit concert was a very nice gesture. In ensuing years construction began on the church and should be completed in 2006. The fund raising campaign in the mid-1990s was impressive. They sold commemorative watches; I have several and in fact all of my kids have one. In 1994, under Ambassador Holbrooke, a close friend Dan Hamilton who was in Holbrooke’s staff, created a fiftieth anniversary commemoration event. Dan met with Mr. Blobel in New York, who had come originally from Dresden and became a wealthy medical researcher in New York. He also met others in Cleveland and together they created a “Friends of Dresden” organization, contributed money, and raised additional funds to make a contribution for the reconstruction of the Frauenkirche. On the 50th anniversary of the bombing we met in Dresden. I was there for this occasion with Mr. Holbrooke, and Minister President Kurt Biedenkopf, who was CDU member actually from Westphalia and had studied at Davidson College in the U.S. Holbrooke and Blobel presented Biedenkopf a 100,000-dollar contribution for the reconstruction of the church. We even shamed the British into participating separately, and they chose to symbolically reconstruct the cross as their contribution. It was after all the British that bombed the city on February 13, 1945, not the U.S. We bombed it before and after, but not on that day; but that’s a technical point.

Dealing with Anti-American attitudes, which were very strong among the 40- and 50- year olds and older in the GDR was very important goal for us. We also were honest about our own behavior and confronted our role in the bombing and history of World War II. We tried to also seek reconciliation by participating in the reconstruction.

Q: What about during this three year period in particular, the problem of the right wing, but also, right wing almost isn’t the right word for, the skinheads. I mean the unemployed, could you explain, what was seen as the movement and how it developed in East Germany?

BINDENAGEL: It is good that you differentiate between East and West Germany, because right-wing extremisms are really two phenomena. In West Germany it really was a neo-Nazi movement, and it was a movement that had come with a long history, sense of disillusion with what had happened in post war period. In the East the phenomenon was somewhat different, and

that is discussion of the fascist Hitler period was forbidden. Therefore it was new, and it was something to protest. Whatever your ideological point of view, you could protest. And you could shave your head, and you could do something. You had a group of alienated, unemployed, particularly youth that had nowhere to go.

Q: Particularly male, too.

BINDENAGEL: Particularly male, too, who obviously wouldn't turn to the communists; they hated them, they had delivered the right wing extremists into this new world. They didn't like the West Germans either and they wanted to protest. There was no better protest than to be Hitler-oriented. The extremists were not necessarily very thoughtful or politically motivated, but they were socially alienated, and found sport in beating up on minorities. The problem was that there weren't any minorities in the East. The only minorities that were in East Germany were the guest workers from Vietnam and Cuba. The Cubans were all sent back and Vietnamese stayed. Consequently, there were a few Vietnamese, but they were less than one percent of the population, there just weren't any number of foreigners in the East.

Q: There weren't any Turkish gastarbeiters? They didn't move in there?

BINDENAGEL: No, the Turkish immigrants were in the West. There were no Jews in the East, either. There were a 150 Jews in East Berlin. The extremists did not need real people to have their protest movement. Certainly if you looked out of place, you could be attacked. The potential violence was volatile. In fact an American was attacked in Suhl. He was a bobsledder and his team was practicing in the Thüringian Forest. The team went to a bar and were drinking a beer after working all day when some thugs, these skinheads came in, and ruffed up this American. When a black and a Jewish American intervened they were beaten by the skinheads. The U.S. media covered the incident in detail. NBC news coverage of this incident, and indeed it was a horrible incident, was full of commentary about right wing extremism; it was certainly a disturbing political incident. Its cause was attributed to frustration and alienation that had led to lashing out at foreigners. However, it was very hard to find any foreigners, so you had to find a visitor to fit the stereotype.

The serious neo-Nazi movement, where people were killed, occurred for the most part in West Germany, in Möln, Solingen, and Lübeck. Those incidents were very serious, in the sense that they were attacks on Turks and on the synagogue in Lübeck. Those extremists were politically motivated and very serious. If you carry that extremism to today, the most recent election in Saxony-Anhalt, a few months ago in 1998, the Bavarian right wing leader and very rich publicist, Mr. Frey, spent much money in Saxony-Anhalt campaign. Saxony-Anhalt is a very small state with a couple of million population, but with a small, active group of 30 or so people who identified themselves as German People's Union, DVU, Deutsche Volksunion. The DVU was elected to the Parliament and it seems they have more seats than they have people. I think they had about fifteen people in the party and they won more seats in the Parliament. You can see the potential for protest, which has grown out of this social discontent. It is a very serious problem, but it's a hard problem to solve.

Q: What about American influence? I mean people of my generation and even somewhat

younger are used to the Amerika Häuser all over the place, and American studies were popular. Here is a new and a very influential generation coming up. Do you feel we were doing enough for them?

BINDENAGEL: The next generation was not on our screen. In fact, we had 50 America Houses in your time. When I left we had four and with only one in the eastern part of the country and one in Berlin. The whole nature of what we were doing changed from the cultural center of the 1950' Germany, which introduced Germans to many of the international views that they came to endorse to the America Häuser today where we have a very different cross-cultural exchange of German-American ideas. We have not been able to sustain the kinds of connections that America-Houses had produced in the 1950s and 1960s. On the other hand, with an open media, personal visits and academic exchanges, we had a rich connection to our friends, but not systematically enough for a country that is as important as Germany.

Q: This is one of those sort of neglects, would you say? I mean, taking Germany for granted, cutting there in order to boost up our presence in Belarus or something like that?

BINDENAGEL: That's in fact exactly what we did. When we opened 25 new Embassies at the end of the Cold War, as the Soviet Union broke up, we took all the positions from posts in the European Bureau to reorganize and redirect our energies to Central Asia and the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union. Most of the positions came from Germany. That was not all bad, but we needed to have strategy how to prioritize what was important in transatlantic affairs and to continue exchanges, policy debates and cooperation with the younger generation. These new/old priorities were absolutely crucial. Embassy German had as many as 100 international visitors grantees each year, young leaders that can be very useful to us, if we keep up with them. But we had to fight every year for that. We had to fight every year for funding for the Congress-Bundestag exchange program for high school students, which linked Congress with the Bundestag for the students who spent one year in the member's district. When I was chargé that program reached a total of 10,000 students since it began in 1983 when we established that program. To keep America-Houses themselves, to redirect their interests and activities, to reach out to new people, not just taking care of the old stalwarts who grew up with America-House, was a major effort.

Q: What about Congress? I mean, one of the bete noires of the foreign service is congressional delegations, but at the same times, these are the way you really can sit down and talk to people in Congress, so to sell the importance of your country. And one thing is if congressional delegations are headed of to London and Paris, sort of the flash-spots, but did you find a fall-off coming to Germany and looking at it?

BINDENAGEL: Congressional visits did not "fall-off," they disappeared. We had, in my first two years only Senator Lugar came. He came again a year and a half later. That was it for visits. Lugar was so embarrassed that he called up Senator Kerry and said, "Would you go to Bonn please? We need a Democrat and we only had two visits by Republicans in this year and a half period, and I was both of them." There were a lot of other visits to Germany by Congressmen, but they went directly to U.S. Forces, and then on to Bosnia. We tried very hard, after the 1994 election when the Republicans took over the House, to convince them to spend some time in

Germany. There was an aversion to travel, partly because of campaigns. There was an aversion to having a passport, it was sort of a badge of honor not to have the passport, which is a very troubling concept.

Q: There was a sort of a “know nothing” attitude at the very beginning.

BINDENAGEL: Yes, very much so, although we did have a big group of 25 or 30 members from the House, prepared to come in January 1995. We had a wonderful program laid on, the delegation included Ben Gilman, Chairman of the House International Relations Committee and Tom Lantos, accompanied by a large House group, the old ones in particular. Then the House shut down the government.

Q: This is an American shut down of the Government.

BINDENAGEL: Right. They cut us off: the Congress refused to appropriate money to the government, and the government had to shut down. The Congressional Delegation thought it was probably not appropriate that they come, so they canceled the visit, which was even worse. The Germans didn't understand closing down of government at all, and all of our preparations were for naught. The German hosts were lined up and waiting for the Congress Members. They just dropped the visit and did not return for a year.

Q: Oh, God! Really shocking, isn't it?

BINDENAGEL: That cancellation was really disappointing. I was furious and angry and upset but there wasn't much you could do except keep working on a new visit. At the end of that year, in the year and a half that I was chargé, we did get visitors. And we worked very hard to draw them. There was another consequence of the government shutdown. We could not pay our local employees. The non-payment of employees was simply not acceptable in Europe. I was called into the Foreign Office to explain why the U.S. would not pay its employees, a visit I found quite embarrassing since we would in the end pay.

The government shutdown would also affect the interim election in 1996. After the election, I urged the leader of the Congressional Study Group on German, Bob Wise of West Virginia to visit and he came out with a delegation almost immediately. I was concerned that the over emphasis by Congress on security questions and NATO led to visits to American troops to the neglect of other American interests. I talked to Congressman Wise from West Virginia, I said, “Do you have any German to foreign direct investment in your district?” He said, “Actually we have BASF,” which is a chemical company. I said, “That's wonderful. I hope they are doing well, but they are your constituent, and wouldn't you like to see their home office? And I would be glad to try to arrange a meeting with the Chairman.” He said, “That is actually a very good idea and I would like to do that.”

His five-member delegation came to Bonn and met with politicians. I had called the CEO of BASF, Mr. Strube, and he graciously invited them down on a Friday afternoon in Germany, to see the BASF operation and for a discussion followed by dinner. It was absolutely the right thing to do. Americans and Germans had interest in the same environmental, chemical, and investment

issues. BASF had a 600 million-dollar investment in West Virginia, which was not a bad thing. The Congressman found that he could sell West Virginia coal for one-fourth the price of German coal, even landed in Dusseldorf. I was delighted to see this economic definition of interests, which were always there, even when they were not a part of the security debate.

More visitors came. We had John Chaffee, who examined the Magnetobahn and the high-speed rail as one of the issues that were part of the congressional transportation bill debate. The political debates in Congress and in Germany were on the same issues. Ben Gilman came with a large delegation. Unfortunately at that point they had passed Helms-Burton legislation against investment in Cuba, and the Members of Congress attacked their hosts in Germany on their relations with Cuba. We had legislation on Iran-Libya sanctions, and some of the Germans quietly left the briefing not wishing to offend the guests. I found this important policy debate on economic sanctions useful, especially with Congressmen who has passed the legislation to defend it. We had some other visits as well.

Q: How long was Charles Redman there?

BINDENAGEL: Charles Redman came in October, November 1994 and left in June of 1996, about 18 months.

Q: What was his approach to running the Embassy, towards the Germans?

BINDENAGEL: Ambassador Redman had been a spokesman for the Department and had been Ambassador in Sweden. He came to Germany with the view that the Ambassador should be the public person for the U.S. So he gave a lot of speeches and appeared in a lot of activities. I was very lucky, in the sense that he delegated a lot of issues to me in running in the Embassy and to participate in the policy debates as well, which was a great opportunity. I'm very thankful for the support Ambassador Redman gave me in preparation for my time as chargé after he left. But his view was to present America particularly in the press, speaking locally as well as nationally.

Q: How did it work?

BINDENAGEL: I think it worked well. He was widely recognized and attended many events, and the representational part was very well received. In terms of policy, the policy debate's very hard in Germany, it was very internal German thing and the lines of communication to Washington were very good. So lot of that debate, particularly on the NATO issues were conducted directly.

Q: Between top, top, top levels?

BINDENAGEL: Right. In fact, however, the U.S. Embassy in Germany played an important diplomatic role in winning German support for NATO enlargement. Ambassador Holbrooke's close ties with Minister Rühe continued after he returned and became assistant secretary. However, Holbrooke's main priority was ending the fighting in the Balkans through the Dayton Accords. In Bonn, we continued to report German concerns about NATO enlargement, particularly German sensitivities toward Russia. Whenever National Security Advisor Bitterlich

traveled to Moscow, the Russians would press them hard to block NATO enlargement.

In the summer of 1996, during a stopover flight in Frankfurt, Deputy Secretary Talbot, who was traveling with Vice President Gore, discussed at length with me strategies for winning German support for NATO enlargement. This led to a cable to him outlining specific steps to be taken. I was delighted to see that many of my ideas had stood the test of the bureaucracy and were included in an instruction cable from the Department. My political-military officer, Nancy McEldowney, kept the reports to Washington flowing; I sent e-mails to Talbot as a backchannel to report my own personal views, especially on the German-Russian dialogue.

In September 1996, Secretary Christopher came to Germany to give a major address on the fiftieth anniversary of his predecessor, James F. Byrnes' 1946 speech of hope, given to set the path for Germany to return to the international community of nations. Christopher met with Chancellor Kohl and on the top of his priority list of issues was NATO enlargement. The Germans seemed nervous about the upcoming NATO summit to welcome new members and were pressing us to delay it. Christopher had language in his speech about scheduling the summit for March, but wanted to check with Kohl to ensure that the Germans would support the proposed date. I called Bitterlich to smooth the way to acceptance; John Kornblum, then assistant secretary, also called to press the point. Bitterlich did not commit Kohl. During the meeting Christopher raised the date and put Bitterlich on the spot. The Chancellor was clearly not pleased with the early date and when pressed stated ambiguously that he could see a properly prepared summit in the spring or summer. On the way to the plane to Stuttgart for the speech Christopher asked me if Kohl's statement was an approval of the date; I told him that he could certainly say spring, but the Chancellor did not agree to March. On the plane Christopher turned to all his aids, noted my comment and asked for theirs. All agreed to the change in the speech. Of course, if the comment drew criticism, they were protected by my comment!

The speech was a smashing success. The audience cheered, ignored the NATO enlargement summit date comment and applauded at the Christopher statement regarding working closely with the Russians. Christopher was surprised and pleased.

As an aside, I must tell you about the Christopher speech on climate issues later in the visit at a Stuttgart school. Christopher, whose home may be California now, was really from North Dakota. He was also known as the most dour speaker in the State Department. As he was reading his climate speech I watched closely to see if he would react to the line I added about the temperature experiment the students were conducting. They were reporting on temperatures to help create a database in the U.S. to measure climate change. Sure enough, when Christopher reached the sentence about personally understanding extreme temperatures from his youth when they measured + 40 degrees Celsius to - 40 degrees Celsius in his home state of North Dakota, he grinned and chuckled. I considered this a small coup.

But back to NATO, if I may. As the Washington preparations for the summit intensified, so did the concern about the Germans, the Russians and the French. Talbot seemed to have the Russian role well ironed out. However, the French wanted to include the Romanians in the first group of new members. Italy argued that NATO had to take Slovenia to connect NATO territory. Chancellor did not reveal his position. Embassy Bonn continued reporting, but Washington was

increasingly nervous. The date for the summit slipped from spring to summer. Chancellor Kohl set a visit to Washington to meet with President Clinton in June. I accompanied Kohl to Washington. We reported on the German position on new members: Kohl would join the consensus. That position made no one happy, especially Deputy Secretary Talbot. I met with Talbot upon my arrival in Washington before the Oval Office meeting and briefed him on the German position to join the consensus. He pressed me to say that they would join our proposal for only three new members, not five. I could not. The meeting with President Clinton went well until the NATO question was popped. Would the Germans join us in supporting three new NATO members – Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary? Kohl replied that he would join the consensus. Our team was not happy.

Back in Bonn we kept very close watch on the NATO debate with our friends Wolfgang Ischinger at the Foreign Office, Joachim Bitterlich in the Chancellery, and Admiral Ulrich Weisser at the Defense Ministry. We seemed to be on track until the Romanian President visited Kohl on the Thursday before the Tuesday Madrid summit. At the end of the visit somewhere around midnight the Chancellor's office released a statement. I went to bed blissfully ignorant of the statement, which we would have normally reported the next day anyway. At three in the morning my phone rang and the Deputy Secretary was calling to ask what this Kohl statement meant. Did it mean that the Germans now supported Romanian membership and would do so at the summit? I had to admit that I had not seen the statement, but would check and report immediately. Talbot pressed for my instant assessment. I told him that I thought nothing had changed, that Kohl would support the consensus, and that the consensus would be three. He said; "You better be right. Let me know in the morning what you learn."

Of course I could not sleep. I checked the Internet to find the statement and at five o'clock called the press section, which came in early to prepare the Embassy daily press briefing. They went to work on the statement. Overnight the Department Operations Center was doing the same. We reported the text of the statement and then I went looking for Bitterlich and Ischinger. Ischinger I found at the airport meeting French Foreign Minister [Hubert] Vedrine and asked him point blank whether this statement was a change in German policy. He had not seen the statement, but promised to get back to me. I called Bitterlich. His secretary, Inada Johnson, was very pleasant, but told me he was preparing for his morning meeting with the Chancellor and could I call back. No, I insisted to speak with him; it was urgent. When I asked Joachim about the statement, I was greeted with a snide (but not unfriendly) comment about how well I spoke German and just what did I not understand if the statement's comment that Germany supported Romania's "baldige Eintritt in der NATO (early entry into NATO)." I, in my best diplomatic tone, said, "Just what does 'baldige Eintritt mean?'" He replied: "Just what it says." Okay, I knew it was to be difficult, and pressed for an answer about next Tuesday's summit meeting. He repeated himself. I then said tell me if I am wrong to report to Washington that the statement does not mean next Tuesday. He did not reject my statement, leaving the responsibility for interpretation to me.

I thought it best to call Talbot before writing any of this exchange in an official report. I did not have to wait long. At six o'clock Washington time, I was having lunch with an old friend of mine, Fred Kempe, the managing editor of the *Wall Street Journal Europe* when my cell phone rang. It was Talbot and Sandy Berger. Talbot said: "What did you learn? I told him I had spoken to Bitterlich and stood by my statement that Kohl would stick with the consensus, not adding

Romania.” Talbot replied that I had better be correct.

By now I was personally worried. Later Ischinger would relate to me the events on the morning of the Madrid Summit. President Clinton came into the room and Chancellor Kohl went over to greet him. Kohl told the President, according to Ischinger, that Germany was with the U.S. on new members. When the meeting started Kohl asked to be recognized first and announced that Germany was supporting three new members for NATO – Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary.

I had reason to celebrate. When Polish Ambassador Andrzej Byrt decided to party, I was also invited to join in their NATO membership celebration at his residence in Cologne. Ambassador Byrt had a special event in mind. He had a door hung on a frame in the Garden, emblazoned with the NATO crest. Ambassador Byrt, Wolfgang Ischinger, Admiral Weisser and I marched through together. The photo is one of my fondest memories.

At the end of my tour, Deputy Secretary Talbot offered to nominate me for ambassador to one of the Baltic States. My children, however, were high school age and the country had no high school. I did not want to miss those years, thanked Strobe for the offer, and decided to return to Washington instead.

Q: During this period of time, were there any issues that you haven't covered?

BINDENAGEL: I'm sure that there are: let me just add one comment. There are some rare fun moments. I'd mentioned annual meeting of the American Chamber of Commerce when as chargé d'affaires I shared the podium with Dr. Henry Kissinger (who as Secretary of State had sworn-in my Foreign Service Class) and Chancellor, and was praised by both during the meeting; that event was a high point for me personally. The other was the U.S.-based *Wall Street Journal* reporter who came into my office in the fall of 1996 and posed a question about Secretary Warren Christopher. He said, "Warren Christopher, Secretary of State proposed that the State Department would be the America's desk, and promote and support American business." And he said, he was there to check up on that proposition. His tone was: "It was a nice pronouncement, but it can't be true. And we are doing an article and we want to really see if embassies are really 'America desks.'" I said that given what I'd been saying about business, I was absolutely delighted that somebody would pay attention to what we were doing and added I was absolutely delighted to talk to him and tell him about what we are doing.

Then he had a secret question, what the Germans call the "Gretchenfrage," the "key question." He said, "Let me ask you one question. You know, getting a driver's license in Germany is very difficult and American business people are having a very difficult time, because the German system is you have to give reciprocity, and they have federal licenses, and we have 50 state licenses. Their American licenses run out after a year and the German one costs a lot of money. American businessmen are very upset, what have you done about it?"

I didn't want to laugh or smile too much, I said, "Actually, we've done a lot of things about it. In the last year or so, I've written to all of the governors, and I've engaged with visiting governors. We've worked with the American Chamber of Commerce to propose reciprocal recognition. When we started the process there were one or two states, Utah was one of them because they

had several of their missionaries in the country and they cared about them, they worked very quickly, and at that point I think we had eight or nine states that extended reciprocity.” He said, “Is that right?” And I said, “Well, let me call the economic officer who’s responsible for this and I’ll bring down the file, and you can look and see where we stand.” The action officer brought down the file and there were actually 18 or 19 states. Greenberger, the journalist, was absolutely flabbergasted. Then he had a whole series of issues. We talked about investment, what we were doing in promoting for business and so on, and he went away. He said that he would continue to do some research. They were doing interviews everywhere to search out the real story.

Right after the American November election of 1996, I got a phone call from the same *Wall Street Journal* reporter from the U.S. He called up to ask if he could follow me around for a few days. “I guess.” I said, “Actually, what you might want to do, we’re having this investment conference in Potsdam. Why don’t you come a day ahead and a day after, and go with me, and I’ll show you what we’re doing for business.” He showed up, right after the election. The first thing that I had, was a meeting with SPD caucus of the Bundestag, to talk about the election, they wanted to have a political discussion. I said, “Okay, but I have this journalist who is with me.” They said, “Fine, bring him along.” We started to talk about the U.S. election results when the American journalists starts asking me questions. I said, “Wait a minute, whose meeting is this?” We continued the discussion and had a very good session. Afterward I took him to a meeting of Brandenburg representation office in Bonn, where Minister President Stolpe was expected. Although the Minister President was absent, we had some other discussions about U.S. businesses in Brandenburg.

The next day we were off to Potsdam for more meetings. In Potsdam we met with the U.S. investors, and to the journalists delight, he was having a wonderful time interviewing everybody. The Board meeting of the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany followed. I said to the Chairman, Fred Irwin, “You know, there is a journalist and I’m not inviting him in, but if you don’t mind...” Sure enough, the journalist goes into the Board meeting, where the Embassy Commercial Counselor is giving a presentation on the embassy’s promotion of American business and the Embassy Economic Minister, Janice Bay is presenting on market opening strategies for electricity, energy and gas. I spoke on our common project in this business conference to make the U.S. the largest foreign investor in the new German States. We went on through the conference for the next day and one-half. I gave a few speeches, participated in panel discussions, and watched our journalist friend depart. This was in November, 1996.

On January 21, 1997 the day after the Second Clinton Administration began, I held our country team meeting in Bonn at the Embassy as usual. Bob Earle, public affairs officer, was sitting in the place next to me. Bob said as I came into the meeting; “Oh, so you like hamburgers?! Did you like what was in the press today?” I was confused and replied: “I don’t know what you are talking about. I am not sure whether I like it or not.” “Oh, yeah, you should see the article in the *Wall Street Journal*.” Bob handed me the article. The headline reads, “Big Mac Diplomacy, U.S. Embassies Walk Softly, Carry Big Stick for American Business.” It notes that a Bonn newspaper picture shows me at a McDonald’s Restaurant “chomping” a hamburger in Big Mac Diplomacy. The *Wall Street Journal* had taken a lead from a picture that I had allowed at a McDonald’s 25th anniversary at Bonn, run by two graduates of the Bonn American High School. This hamburger chomping envoy became the lead for a front-page *Wall Street Journal* article that went on and

on, about what we were doing to promote business. It was one of those rare and very pleasant moments to have appeared positively on the front page of a major U.S. newspaper; it was very nice.

JOSEPH C. WILSON, IV
Political Advisor – SACEUR
Stuttgart (1995-1997)

Ambassador Joseph C. Wilson, IV was born in Connecticut in 1949. He attended the University of California at Santa Barbara and after working in a variety of fields joined the Foreign Service in 1976. Wilson has served overseas in Niger, Togo, South Africa, Burundi, the Congo, and as the ambassador to Gabon. He has also worked in the Bureau of African Affairs, as the political advisor to the Commander in Chief, US Armed Forces, Europe, and as the senior director for African Affairs at the National Security Council. Ambassador Wilson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2001.

Q: We have now covered Gabon. Where were you assigned in 1995?

WILSON: I went to Stuttgart as political advisor to the Commander in Chief, US Armed Forces, Europe. Stuttgart is in the Schwabian region of Germany, the home of Porsche and Mercedes, I guess.

Q: You were in Stuttgart until when?

WILSON: I was in Stuttgart from 1995 to 1997. As I said, I was the political advisor to the Commander in Chief of U.S. Armed Forces European Command, who is “two hatted” as the Supreme Allied Commander of NATO. So he is SACEUR, Supreme Allied Commander Europe. His headquarters are in Mons, Belgium, and although I worked for him, I worked at his American headquarters in Vahingen, Germany, just outside of Stuttgart - Patch Barracks, it’s called. My daily point of contact was his deputy, also known as the DCINCEUR, or Deputy Commander in Chief U.S. Armed Forces Europe, DCINCEUR, who was an Air Force four-star general by the name of Jim Jamerson. He had been the person who had set up “Operation Provide Comforts” in northern Iraq among other things; so that we had some previous connection over Iraq and the Gulf War.

Q: Let’s talk about what were your principal concerns while you were there?

WILSON: When I arrived at Patch Barracks, we were in the process of focusing on the future role of the European Command. A joint command is responsible for the planning and execution of military operations in its theater. Our command had historically been responsible for defending NATO, defending Western Europe - or the Fulda Gap as we used to say - against an invasion by the Warsaw Pact forces. Despite the fact that the Berlin Wall had fallen in 1990 and the Cold War had been over for five years, the bureaucracy, which was our command

headquarters, was still focused largely on its responsibilities to defend Western Europe against an enemy which may or may not have gone away by this time. When I got there, we were being obliged to respond to threats from elsewhere in our theater which covered something in the order of 89 countries and 112 embassies, consulates and international missions. We covered all of Europe with the exception of Russia. We covered the Near East up to and including Israel.

Q: When you say “except for Russia,” does that mean that you were covering the Ukraine?

WILSON: That’s correct. We were running programs in the Baltic, Ukraine, Belarus, etc. The only country with which we did not directly interface with was Russia, and that was because Russian relations were handled by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs in Washington. It was a Washington-held program. We covered the Near East up to and including Israel, but we did not cover Jordan. Jordan and the Arabian Gulf and Syria were covered by Central Command. We were responsible for Lebanon and Israel, although Israel was also a unique situation because of this historically close relationships between the Pentagon and the Israeli defense forces and between Israel at all levels and the American body politic here in Washington. We covered all of Africa with the exception of the Horn of Africa, from Egypt through the Suez Canal and down around the Horn of Africa; so we had most of the countries of Africa. In the period 1995 to 1997 while I was in Stuttgart, there were a number of very interesting operations. For example, we transitioned from “Operation Provide Comfort” to “Operation Northern Watch” in Turkey.

Q: You’ve got to explain what “Provide Comfort” was.

WILSON: “Provide Comfort” was the operation that was designed to restrict Iraqi use of their air assets above the 34th parallel, I think it was, or the 32nd parallel - I don’t remember. We flew to interdict their flying fixed-wing aircraft in that area.

Q: This was mainly to protect the Kurds?

WILSON: It had the effect of protecting the Kurds, but it was essentially just a part of the cease-fire. It was an interdiction of use of fixed-wing aircraft, and we enforced it. This operation when I first got there in 1995 was operating out of northern Iraq out of a place called Tako, which was a Kurdish support operation; so our air operation insured that the Kurds were not subject to Iraqi air attacks. That, in fact, was the first trip that Jim Jamerson and I took together, to northern Iraq, which was quite interesting.

We also managed during my tour, the deployment to Bosnia. That was a NATO-run operation -NATO-Plus -but the troops belonged to their respective home nations until they got to Bosnia. We owned the assets from the time that we started identifying and training them until the time that they were turned over to the NATO commander in Bosnia. That meant that all transportation was our requirement, all the training was our requirement, all the transiting of foreign countries on the way to Bosnia was our requirement, and we shared the requirement with NATO for the briefing of the various countries that were going to be involved one way or another. I’ll just give you an example because this was an interesting operation. We were going to deploy 20,000 troops. Imagine, if you will, the Commander in Chief U.S. Armed Forces telling the Commander of the Army, “I want you to get 20,000 troops and 300,000 tons of equipment and materiel to

Tuzla, Bosnia, by December 20th.” The Army general would say, “Got it. Yes, sir,” and pulls out a map, drawing a straight line from Kaiserslautern, where his troops were training, to Tuzla. He would get ready to march across Europe to get there. In this scenario, we in the political advisor’s office would raise our hand and make the point that, “In moving these troops you’re going to be moving across a number of sovereign countries, some of which are former Warsaw Pact countries. Perhaps it is in our collective interest to insure that we have prepared the diplomatic groundwork before you go.” That included such things as negotiating status-of-forces agreements, insuring the all countries understood what might happen, what might not happen, how we would deal with incidents, what would happen if an American fell off a train in a foreign country, who would be responsible for the health and insurance, etc., what would happen if an American in transit got drunk and fired off his weapon, how they would carry their weapons armed across these countries - all these various things that needed to be done and which might occur. As I said, some of these countries were former Warsaw Pact countries and, while they agreed in principle with what we were doing, that didn’t mean that they couldn’t make some political hay one way or the other over the fact that American forces, which had been arrayed against them for an entire generation, were now going to be transiting their country and setting up behind their lines - the lines that they had been manning for 34 years.

So we set up an operation which I led; we took majors and lieutenant colonels and flew to a number of capitals, from Paris to Bratislava basically and most places in between including Belgrade. We briefed all these countries on our operational plan; we briefed them on our logistics plan, so they understood what we were planning to do and how we were planning to doing it. The level of briefings was at the level requested by the government. We would just say we’re going to be there and we’re going to brief our embassies, and we will brief you at whatever level you wish to be briefed at. In some countries the level was very high. In Austria we briefed very senior advisors to the prime minister including the minister of interior. In Bratislava we briefed senior political officials who were worried that the opposition was going to accuse them of having sold out to the Americans and basically abandoned 35 or 40 years of principle in doing so.

In the Czech Republic we briefed the guy who had made the trains run on time when they had separated the assets of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. He had run that operation; he was the one who wanted to take this particular briefing because he was going to be required to make the trains run on time during the transit period. Each one of these countries had different issues - different bureaucratic issues - that needed to be resolved, and they had positions that they needed to have considered. We laid the groundwork for all of that. We went to France, because we wanted our friends, the French, to understand precisely what it was that we were doing; this was in the context of a number of other things we were doing with the French.

Q: Technically this would be the military side of NATO, which France was not in.

WILSON: That’s correct, but they were in the NATO-Plus. They were in the “plus” column; they were part of the political organization and then they offered their troops in this as well.

Q: I’d like to go into a certain amount of detail on how something like this happens. Essentially when you were there, was this pulled out of the blue, that the troops were going, or had any

preliminary planning, somebody saying, "Has somebody been doing a plan if we've got to put troops in Bosnia?" The problem in Bosnia had been around for some time.

WILSON: The problem in Bosnia had been around for a long time, and there was a lot of dispute and debate at political levels over what we might do in Bosnia. The die was cast really when everybody met in Dayton and signed on the Dayton Accords. That then obligated us to put together a plan. Essentially the plan we had to put together was the plan dealing with our contribution to the multinational force that was going to be there.

Q: You have a whole bureaucratic organization planning to stop the Soviet at the Fulda Gap. Had that at all been transferred to the planning to what we were going to do in Bosnia? Had somebody been sort of brainstorming this?

WILSON: The bureaucracy was sufficiently large and sufficiently versatile that it could take on contingencies. Certainly within our planning operation we were able to switch rather quickly to took a look at everything. We took a look at cost-effective ways of shipping 300,000 tons of war materiel. We had people on the medical side geared up to go and the same on the logistics side. The legal staff was ready to work on status-of-forces agreements. It took us very, very little time to organize. That said, once we started organizing, we were briefing new versions of the plans on an almost daily basis. The briefings were held at the highest levels within our commands, so that two or three times a week we would brief what we called the CINC, and virtually every day we would have a briefing on the status of our thinking on various issues.

Q: Let's get a feel also for the cooperation. What about, let's say, Budapest? We ended up with quite a large base in Hungary. How about our embassy there, including the military attachés and our embassies other places? Had somebody drawn the line where they would go more or less? Did they figure that they would come through here and through here and here and how they would go? Were our embassies in the game?

WILSON: Yes. What we found early on was that you could not ship the amount of equipment that we wanted to ship on our delivery schedule using only one route; so we had to use a number of different routes to get there. Some of our calculations were purely physical. You could not ship certain items through certain countries because the tunnels in those countries wouldn't permit that size item to get through - real logistical problems. We also had an issue which was rather curious. The Swiss were in the midst of a debate of redefining what neutrality meant in the post-Cold War era. The Swiss chief of defense came over to visit us and pretty much begged us to plan and route a shipment through Switzerland so that they would be able to demonstrate to their population that in fact they could be neutral and yet be supportive of an international operation.

Q: It was basically a peace-keeping operation.

WILSON: It was a peace-keeping operation - peace-making essentially. I don't know what it was in the context of the UN, but it met all the characteristics of a Article 7 operation in that we were able to use force as...

Q: So you did send some stuff through Switzerland.

WILSON: We did. That was particularly difficult to do, because moving stuff through the Swiss mountains required resizing the packages so they would go through the tunnels without major problems. That was important. Now, in the case of Budapest we went there early on. We had a great ambassador there, Ambassador Blinken, who had been working very, very closely with...

Q: Was that Donald or David? They're twins.

WILSON: It was the one who was not in Brussels.

Q: I've interviewed the one who was in Brussels.

WILSON: It was his older brother. I don't think they were twins; I think they were just brothers, but maybe they were twins. In any case, the one in Budapest was most helpful; he arranged for a series of meetings at very high levels of the Hungarian government, during which the Hungarian government expressed its full support of what we were doing and made the offer to host a support base in southern Hungary. So that was not a problem, and, in fact, most countries were helpful, with the exception of the Slovak Republic where the government was very sensitive to what the domestic political fall-out might be, and Italy. When we went to Rome, we met with the Italian J4 and the J3 teams, which were the logistics and the operations staffs. During the meeting with us, I was called away from the meeting unexpectedly by the Italian chief of defense. He called me up to his office and said that he was sorry that he hadn't been able to meet me at the door when we came in. I had expected to meet with him; he had wanted to have a chance to talk with me privately, and he took that occasion to air with me every grievance the Italian military forces had had with the United States since we were "allies together in the Second World War." Far be it from me to remind him that, in fact, we weren't allies in the Second World War.

Q: They declared war on us, by the way.

WILSON: He was dedicated to the principle that we were historic friends from time immemorial. He asked me, of course, to relay all this to George Gawin, who was CINCEUR. The Italians were particularly sensitive that anything we did on Italian territory was to be done under the auspices of NATO and not as American military forces. So even though we owned the forces and were training as U.S. forces, we were training as a NATO or NATO-Plus operation and had to basically call it that. The other country where we had an interesting experience was the former republic of Yugoslavia, Belgrade...

Q: Which was essentially Serbia.

WILSON: ...which was essentially Serbia - greater Serbia - we flew there. Again, we thought we would meet with their planners, but their chief of defense, General Peresech, showed up at the meeting. The General really was not interested in what we had to say, even though the people around him were keenly interested. This was a wonderful intelligence briefing for them. They were going to know what the Americans were going to do and how the Americans were going to

do it. We were going to lay all that out for them. General Peresech didn't want that; he wasn't interested. What he wanted was to sit across the table from me and tell me how the Serbs had been friends of the Americans forever, fought in all the wars together, and how the Serbs had been the aggrieved party and been put upon by their enemies since the battle of...

Q: 1389, wasn't it?

WILSON: ...1389, whatever the battle was.

Q: Kosovo.

WILSON: Yes. He did that, chain smoking all the while. During his diatribe against me I was really struck by the extent to which he tried to impose himself on me and on everybody else at the meeting. I remember having a very conscious thought that this guy had really misread me completely; he didn't know that I had sat across from major-leagued thugs like Saddam Hussein; if he really thought that a minor-league thug like him was going to impress me, he's had it all wrong. After it was over, he got up and walked out. When he walked out, it was a signal to everybody in the room that the meeting was over. So we got up and walked out, and as a consequence the Serbs did not get the benefits of either our J3 or J4 briefings. I got on the airplane and called George Gawin and reported to him what Peresech had done. The CINCEUR arranged to fly four C17s to Belgrade the next morning; he got off the airplane and strode right past General Peresech to see Milosevic and set things straight. Whatever issues may have been outstanding were no longer outstanding after George finished that meeting.

The other discussions were also very interesting. Levels of embassy engagement differed from embassy to embassy. Pam Harriman was probably the most engaged.

Q: She was our ambassador...

WILSON: She was our ambassador to France. Even though she was suffering from the flu, she insisted not only on having a pre-briefing, which I always gave to every interested American ambassador, but she insisted also to be at the briefing for the French, and as a consequence her presence, there was a much more senior presence on the part of her staff; so she gave a level of importance to it. She was, not just in this operation, the key to some other things we were doing with the French, which I'll go into in a few minutes. So that was very, very helpful in getting that high level attention. Other ambassadors were less interested or less engaged, I guess.

Q: How about in Austria? So often there's a political ambassador usually not at the top rung.

WILSON: Our ambassador to Austria at the time was Suwanee Hunt; she was very engaged and she had some good defense attachés around her. She did not attend the full briefing, as I recall, but she was interested. We did do a pre-briefing with her. She had her own interests in Yugoslavia. Her husband was a conductor and he wanted to go to Belgrade to conduct the symphony orchestra there on New Year's, which I think he ultimately did. So Ms. Hunt was keenly interested in what she could do to help us. I think that since she left Austria, she established a foundation to support women in Yugoslavia; so she's done really quite well.

Q: You mentioned Bratislava. I don't have a map in front of me, but looking at train routes did Slovakia play a communications role in this, or was this just being nice?

WILSON: I don't remember. We did send trains through Bratislava, because we had to send them through the Czech Republic, and when they went through the Czech Republic, they ended up going through the Slovak Republic as well. In fact, in the category of "even the best laid plans often do go awry," we had laid out for them precisely how we were going to do this and we promised that we would give them advance notice. We promised that we would take care of all issues. The Slovaks wanted a liaison officer at Kaiserslautern to make sure that the necessary paperwork was done well; we acceded to that. Everything was set for the trains to go through, but the first train was something like 48 hours late. On the Czech side they were terribly disappointed because they had tickertape and balloons to greet the train coming through. On the Slovak side they were disappointed and angry because they had tried to assure everybody that they had this operation was well in hand; it was going to be well managed, but when the very first train went through late, the opposition accused the government of being bumbling idiots. We did send trains through Slovakia.

Q: Were there any problems in these countries? I can see setting up a major supply point, wasn't it, in southern Hungary?

WILSON: Yes.

Q: This means a lot of line-of-supply fruit sitting around to be looked after -maintenance things, supplies and all this, and they're pretty rough-and-tumble people. I would think there would be problems.

WILSON: That's right, but there were surprisingly few problems. The discipline of the American armed forces in this operation was exemplary, as it was everywhere where we deployed. When we deployed, a review team went down to see our troops in Gabon and Brazzaville, where they were deployed with French intelligence troops and English troops. The discipline of our troops was far better by comparison with others; it was good by any standards. There were very few incidents. There were prohibitions on drinking, for example, in Tuzla itself. Hungary was a staging area for R&R, but even in Hungary there were very few problems.

Q: You mentioned what I call Serbia, but Yugoslavia then. Did the line go through there, or did it go through Croatia?

WILSON: Actually both. We had ships that went in through Croatia. We talked to the Croats. We went to Zagreb. The Croatian main concerns were that we might do environmental damage. They felt that we should assume liability for any environmental damage that we might do in the movement of our equipment and troops. I remember thinking at that time, that these were people who have been involved in a civil war for the last 150 years; I bet one couldn't cut one single tree down without finding bullets and shrapnel in every one in that country. But that was their concern. We did, for the purposes of making the point, move stuff through Belgrade. I think the C17 by air was principal way that we did that.

Q: When was this movement started?

WILSON: It started really in the fall of 1995.

Q: So you were right in the...

WILSON: This was pretty much my first task. I can't remember when we ended it, but we had everybody there and then were reducing the resupply operations...

Q: How did the Supreme Commander use you? Were you sort of the point person on the diplomatic side or what?

WILSON: As I said, I was basically reporting to the DCINC. He was responsible for the day-to-day supervision of all operations. We would come up with a plan, get his approval and then we would execute it. In this particular assignment I was pretty operational, because I led the team going to all these countries. We had an airplane, we had briefers, we had a Power Point show, and then we had me to go and...

Q: What Power Point show?

WILSON: We had a slide show which visualized everything that we were planning on doing. That was basically my operation. I would coordinate with the embassies and the attachés, set up the times and places where we would go, and then we would go and do it.

Q: I go back to my experience when I was in Saigon as consul general. The military briefings are so different than State Department briefings when usually a State Department officer would get up and discuss the situation a little more professorial. The military would get up and it would be full of very precise things. Sometimes they were dead wrong, but whatever it was it was very impressive because there was no hedging or...

WILSON: They were very certain of themselves.

Q: Very certain of themselves even if they were on the sticky wicket. How did you find that you fit into this?

WILSON: I found the melding of the two cultures to be very easy. I found that, depending on whom we were briefing, my role would be lesser or greater. Just to give you an example: if we were briefing only military officers, the military would go through their briefings; I might interject or I might answer questions from the participants. In briefings for civilian authorities, who think much more like Foreign Service officers than they do like military officers, there would be need for greater involvement on my part to round out what the military was trying to say; I would add a little bit to what we saying in terms that civilians might more easily understand, making sure that there was enough sensitivity to sovereign interests as we were going forward. For example, when the military briefed the Slovaks that we were going to bring 20,000 troops and 300,000 tons of arms through their country, I would sort of jump in and say,

‘consistent with international agreements and consistent with your own sovereign concerns.’ so that their sovereign concerns were not offended..

Q: This is always one of the great differences between the military and the diplomatic side. We are trying to be sensitive. You don’t do something without being sensitive of the culture in which you’re dealing, the foreign culture and often sovereignty, whereas the military: ‘We have a task to do, it’s a good cause, and of course these people will fall in.’ Was there a new breed of officer more aware of this, or were you acting as sort of a Foreign Service Institute professor from time to time with the military to get them to understand what some of the sovereignty issues were?

WILSON: I didn’t act so much as a Foreign Service Institute professor; I did periodically remind them that as an ambassador I carried the personal rank of a three- or four-star general. They understand that much better.

Q: You had that sense of a rank with them for NATO command?

WILSON: Within the CINCEUR command. Everybody understood that in the manner the command protocol structure was set up, I was the “number three,” even though I did not have any line responsibilities. The top management staff consisted of the DCINC who was a four-star, his boss who was also a four-star, the chief of staff who was the senior operating officer who was a three-star, and myself. There was one two-star who tried to challenge that at one point; he is now retired. That didn’t work. The mistake he made was that he didn’t understand that my office was right next to the DCINC’s office and that the DCINC and I were inveterate cigar smokers and golfers, so we spent 70 percent of our time together. We were either on airplanes traveling somewhere or we were at meetings together or we were on a golf course together smoking cigars every weekend. The two-star made the mistake of not understanding that relationship.

Q: How did the thing go, and what was your impression of how this deployment worked, and what were some of the issues that came to your attention? Did you get involved in the Bosnian issues?

WILSON: I was amazed at how smoothly it went. I was amazed by the willingness of everybody from these various commands to cooperate and coordinate and to iron out any differences, because, when you do start an operation like this, you have not just the joint command planning but you also have the respective services thinking through how they’re going to do it. The Air Force has its responsibilities, which was transport goods and personnel as well as providing private aircraft. The Army has its responsibilities, which are to provide infantry, artillery, tankers, etc.; and the Navy has its responsibilities. It is up to the joint planners to harmonize all these relationships and make sure that you truly do have a joint operation going on at the same time. That required a lot of work, and these guys worked day and night. I was also struck, I must say, by the sophistication of the management of a complex organization, despite the fact that the hierarchy is pretty rigid. When a four-star says you’re going to do something, you salute and you do it. When issues needed to be resolved - when there was a conflict between services or various divisions within a command on implementation - they were resolved quickly, with an emphasis on pragmatism and on getting the job done. When there were issues with foreign governments, the military was quick to respond. The military was good at insuring that it maintained good

relations with ambassadors and that it was responsive when issues arose. When guys got sick, when a guy fell off a train, when people got injured, when people got hospitalized, all these problems were resolved really very quickly and I think to the satisfaction of most. When I was there, there were virtually no issues that came to my attention that remained festering sores. I came away very impressed with the military organization - the way they treat their people, the way they're task oriented, the work ethic within the military. That is not just the officer corps, because we spent a lot of time with the troops in the various operations that they were running - and with their ability to achieve what they set out to do.

Q: Once the troops got to Bosnia, then they moved into a different command.

WILSON: Right.

Q: You arrived there just before this whole movement started. It's almost forgotten today but there was a brief air war against the Serbs in Bosnia. What was the impression at the Air Force? Were they feeling that they had done well?

WILSON: The air war had been principally if not exclusively run by the Navy. It was run off the Adriatic by Admiral Snuffy Smith, who was a very interesting character and whose clashes with George Gawin were the stuff of legend - most of which took place before I got there but I saw the two of them in the ring together a couple of times and it was something to behold. The clash of four-star egos was something to behold.

Q: Was it mainly ego rather than...

WILSON: Oh, yes; it was sort of a manly strutting about - who's got the biggest chest type of thing - but it was very amusing. The one sterling quality of Jim Jamerson, the Air Force four-star, was that he was not encumbered by an oversize ego and he was able to accomplish everything he set out to do with a quiet confidence in a rather self-effacing manner. That's not to say that he just laid down and rolled over for guys, but he didn't need to strut his stuff the same way that Snuffy and George did.

I think that the bombing campaign had been pretty much wrapped up by the time I got there. It was not an operation I had much to do with or knew much about, except that Snuffy would come to brief the DCINC periodically.

Q: Obviously this Bosnian thing absorbed you for awhile, but NATO must have been looking beyond this - looking around for 'what the hell are we here for?'

WILSON: NATO was different. George Gawin had his own NATO political advisor; there was a POLAD SACEUR.

We did most of the stuff that was not done in the NATO context. That is why "Operation Provide Comfort" and all the African operations came under our umbrella and which is why when George went down to Israel I accompanied him instead of SACEUR political advisor because Israel is not a NATO country.

It is important to understand that, at the same time that we were conducting operations in Bosnia, we were also very concerned with “Operation Provide Comfort” and how that was progressing. We had a series of running battles with the Turks over the management of that operation. The French withdrew from the operation early in my tenure. The Turkish parliament had to reapprove the operation every three or six months; that was a constant source of friction as it was a constant source of political debate within Turkey. The Turks nicked and dined us to death in the day-to-day operations of “Operation Provide Comfort.” We spent a lot of time on that. Mark Grossman was the ambassador to Turkey; he had been the deputy there when I had been in Baghdad, and Mark and I also went to the same university. Even though we didn’t know each other there, we had sort of a similar background. So we dealt very, very closely with him. We had constant battles with the Turks. We used to have to get the deputy chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Joe Ralston, to go to Ankara on a periodic basis to break the deadlocks.

Q: Was it the Turks just wanting to extract from us or was it the Kurdish thing that seemed to concern...

WILSON: Some of all of the above. The Turks were concerned about how much money they had lost in cross-border trade as result of the sanctions. They were concerned that by operating “Operation Provide Comfort” we were strengthening the Kurdish hand and that a strong Kurdish element in Iraq would bring forth the specter of an autonomous or independent Kurdistan which might encourage Turkish Kurds to continue to strive to achieve the same thing at a time when the PKK was still...

Q: That was the Marxist...

WILSON: Marxist-Leninist Kurdish terrorist group that has been on our list of terrorist organizations for 15 years. The Turkish concern was that the Kurds would gain some sort of inherent legitimacy through our operations and/or that this sort of decade-long move for an independent Kurdistan carved out of Iranian, Turkish, Iraqi and Syrian territory would come to fruition. So they were concerned about all of that. They were also concerned, I think, more generally about the notion that we would be dropping bombs on Iraqi civilians from airplanes that would be taking off from Turkish territory and that one day we would leave and go home and Turkey would still be there with Iraq.

One of the most telling comments that was made to me, which I repeat to my Turkish friends on a regular basis, came while we were in Turkey for one of our negotiation sessions. After the session we had dinner with the Turkish General Staff; the then deputy chief of the Turkish General Staff was a fellow by the name of General Sevik Beer, who had worked with April Glaspie at one stage. He had run a UN operation in Somalia when April Glaspie had been in Somalia. Beer stood up and in the course of his toast he said, “You might find us difficult on issues related to “Operation Provide Comfort,” but the one thing you really need to understand is that in Turkey we have nine neighbors, we have nine countries with whom we share borders and that in our neighborhood our very best relationships are with Iraq.” That was said to us so that we would have some understanding of the complexities of the issues as they saw it from their perspective. My reaction was “Boy, they really have a problem in their foreign ministry if

they've got nine neighbors and they can't get along with any of them and their best relationship is with Iraq." That told me that they needed to work on their diplomacy a little bit. It was in that context that we would have to deal with them on "Operation Provide Comfort." This was also at a time when the Muslim Fundamentalist Party was gaining some strength and stature and was threatening to form a traditional party block. I can't remember whether it was the Motherland Party or the Reform Party; I can't remember what it was called. The Turkish General Staff was real concerned about this situation and didn't want to give them any fuel for the fire. It was a highly nationalistic party and one that threatened the status quo; ultimately the Turkish General Staff saw it as a threat to their responsibilities under the Turkish Constitution to safeguard both the Constitution and the secular nature of the government of the regime. So at the same time we're working on Bosnia, we're implementing "Operation Provide Comfort," and also at the same time we're beginning to focus on Africa.

Q: Before we leave the Turkish Kurdish issue -did you have any dealings with the Kurdish rulers in Iraq?

WILSON: Not so much with the leaders. We went to Zakhu on our very first trip. Jim and I flew to Interlake, which is where our base was, and then to Diyarbakir which is in southeastern Turkey. After meeting the civilian and military authorities in Diyarbakir, we then helicoptered down to Zakhu, which is just across the Turkey-Iraq border where we met with our people. We had some military people there; we had a headquarters there, and that's where our operation to support the Kurds was based. The Kurdish leaders at that time were all in Irbil; so we met principally with the Americans who were there as well as with a guard force which the Kurds that we had hired to insure our own force protection while we were in Zakhu. We were there at an interesting time because there were some threats on our people and there had been a building that had been blown up...

Q: By the Iraqis or the PKK?

WILSON: Iraqis. At that time the KDP, which is one of the Kurdish factions, and the PKK were pretty much in alliance. The PKK had not posed a threat to our operations in Iraq. In fact, the PKK, to my recollection, hadn't targeted any American assets; they had targeted principally Turkish assets throughout their long terrorist campaign, which had killed a lot of innocent civilians. It was a great homecoming because the Kurds knew that Jim Jamerson was the guy who had set up "Operation Provide Comfort" in the first place. As soon as got off the helicopters, word went out that he was back. That was coupled with the fact that people recognized that I was the last American to have met with Saddam Hussein. I thought it would be in our interest for Saddam Hussein to understand that his nemesis was back in northern Iraq. We put the word out and assumed that Saddam Hussein knew it before we left, given the extent of his information gathering operations. That was an interesting trip and an awful lot of fun for us. We found that we had tremendous support. Our troops who were operating there, even though under some threat, seemed to have a lot of confidence in the Peshmergas around them; they certainly took good care of us when we were there.

Q: Let's turn to the African operations.

WILSON: As I said, the third piece of my work dealt with Africa. All the efforts I described were happening pretty much simultaneously, so that when I wasn't traveling to the Bratislavas of the world or to Turkey, we were traveling to Africa or to the Baltics, where as a consequence of the end of the Cold War, we had put together a number of engagement programs with the former Soviet Union states.

Q: There were U.S., not NATO?

WILSON: These were U.S. efforts. We used the National Guard and the Reservists to help us. We had National Guardsmen based in these countries conducting training and exercise programs. That took us to the Baltics when we weren't in Africa. In Africa, we were doing things like moving the Marine expeditionary unit into position in the Mediterranean to evacuate our people in Sudan if we needed. We drew down our embassy staff in Sudan because we had received a threat to our personnel. We were in Rwanda; we were in Sierra Leone; we moved our troops to Liberia; we conducted some planning operations later for eastern Zaire. In the course of our first trip that Jim Jamerson and I made to Africa, we took The Department's deputy assistant secretary with us and went a number of different places. This was at the beginning of 1996 and we were the third of three envoys going to Angola on behalf of the U.S. government - the first having been Madeleine Albright in her capacity as UN ambassador, the second being AID Director Brian Atwood, and the third was us. Our purpose was to support and advance the peace process which was designed to bring about the end of the Angolan War. That was Jim Jamerson's first trip there. We came back through Cote d'Ivoire and went to see President Houphouet-Boigny to talk to him about guns being smuggled from Burkina Faso through Côte d'Ivoire to the Liberia. This was a piece of pretty serious diplomacy we were trying to advance, and our message to Boigny was, "You need to remember that given the ethnic divisions that you have in your own country, which are very similar to those in Liberia, you should not be sanguine about what you're doing with respect to Liberia. The guns you send over there today may well come back to Côte d'Ivoire tomorrow." They had done in some respects. Jim Jamerson, who had the mandate from George Gawin, realized that there was a lot of interests there. When we came back, we thought long and hard about some things we might do. We came up with a number of ideas. For example, we had historically trained African troops on a bilateral basis. We would undertake a joint exercise with the Malian troops. We came to believe that if we put the Malians and, the Nigerians and the Burkina Faso and the Burkinave together, we might have a multiplier effect that was twofold. One, we would be able to train with three different military organizations at the same time; and, two, these military organizations would be able to train together and get to know each other. George Gawin was very supportive of this idea because he had taken the same approach when he had been in charge of Southern Command - the Latin American command. One of the things he used to always say was that when he had gone to visit there, he had realized that the military leaders from the various countries hardly knew each other. If you don't know each other, the potential for misunderstanding is far greater. So had a lot of support in putting together operations, which we ended up calling the "Flintlock" series of exercises, where we would bring people from different countries together for an exercise program. This was consistent with the philosophy behind the creation of the Marshall Center, which was a post-Cold War idea to education bureaucrats and defense officials from different countries both within NATO and from the former Warsaw Pact together on how to program defense and national security affairs in a democracy. Implicit in this objective was to allow

people of different backgrounds and countries - some of which might have been enemies in the past - to get to know each other in a different way than they might have known each other otherwise. We applied some of same reasoning to Africa.

At the same time, and not altogether for altruistic reasons, I must say, I broached the subject of beginning to work with some of the European countries on how we might work together in the future on issues. The theory behind that was that we would be going to war in the future much like we had gone to war in Iraq or much like we were going to go to war in Bosnia -i.e., with a coalition of friends and allies. Therefore, why don't we start working with friends and allies now in anticipation of future operations together so that, when the operations actually happen, we will have developed the relationships necessary to do things smoothly. Part of this came out of a discussion we had with a master sergeant down in Mali, where there our Special Forces had gone for a three-week training mission. We were talking to him and I asked him how he was doing. He said, "This is great. We live for this sort of stuff. This is terrific, to just fire off guns out in the desert. And by the way - this is our third time here in Mali -last year when we were deployed in Haiti for a policing operation, one day we were walking around and went around a corner and met this fellow in a military uniform. I looked at him and he looked at me, and we realized we had known each other because we had trained together here in Mali the previous year." He said to us, "As a consequence of the training we had done together here in Mali, we were able to coordinate and meld our operations immediately in Haiti. We were up and running. There was no sniffing-armpit time necessary. We knew what we were going to do and how we were going to do it."

I should say that, selfishly, all my career I had wanted to serve in Paris. That is all I ever wanted to do, and it was pretty clear to me that I was never going to get that chance. Stuttgart was probably as close as I would ever get. I thought to myself, "Well, maybe one way of getting to Paris more often is by promoting this idea and suggesting that we use the French as the first target country. I argued that for one, it was pretty clear that we were going to have to deploy in Africa more often than we wanted. We had the strategic lift, the French had historical connections and bases in Africa, we had a congruity of interests - we wanted to save our nationals; we didn't want the security situation to fall into chaos in any of these countries. Why shouldn't we try to work with the French on African issues, develop a relationship that will allow us to deploy in Africa in a more efficient and expeditious manner. Jim Jamerson bought off on it, and as a consequence I got to go to Paris about every three or four weeks. Being a diplomat I didn't feel compelled to fly in in the morning and fly back in the afternoon. I could take two or three days and at my leisure deal with the French generals and the admirals. I never had to deal with the feckless French diplomats at the Foreign Ministry. I was always dealing with the Ministry of Defense or the French armed forces.

Q: My understanding is that the French military has been really very close to our military.

WILSON: When it comes to Africa - I think maybe even generally - the French military culture matches up much more closely to the American military culture than does to the French Foreign Ministry culture to our diplomats. I think I could probably say that American generals get along better with French generals than they do with American ambassadors, just because there's a certain professional fraternity there. It is also true that when you're dealing with the French

military, much like with the American military, you have to understand that they're task oriented and pragmatic. When you're dealing with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the American State Department, there are various interests that are fostered by intrigue and petty jealousies and rivalries, etc., and something called national interest. It was much easier to deal with the French military. I spoke good French, and the French military came to trust me; the American military in Paris came to trust me as interlocutor, I could go and conduct a lot of business at the most senior levels of the French defense establishment including the chief of Defense, including General Duran, who was the Air Force commanding general at the time. We did this. We had intelligence exchanges; we moved the liaison officer to our joint command headquarters; we established a much closer liaison relationship with their intelligence unit in Paris, and we actually began to put some exercises together. We would invite them as observers to exercises that we were conducting in Africa. They would invite us to exercises they were conducting in Africa. Then we began to do exercises together, which turned out to be both timely and very effective. When we went into the Central African Republic to settle a blow-up there, we did it with the French. It was not without its friction, but the fact that we had this relationship allowed us to deal with the issues at a technical level before the friction got out of hand. Equally, when we went into Sierra Leone there were some problems. The French had some ships offshore, and there were some problems over how we were going to manage it. Again, we were able to solve the problems.

Q: What were we doing in Sierra Leone?

WILSON: We were evacuating foreigners at a time of a coup d'état. A major problem arose when Paul Kagame decided to get involved. Paul Kagame was the vice president and minister of defense of the Republic of Rwanda. He was the man who had led the military force that had overthrown the Hutu-dominated government of Rwanda after the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

Q: This was the group that came from Rwanda?

WILSON: They came from Uganda. They were essentially Rwandan refugees who had been thrown out of Rwanda in the 1970s, had grown up in the refugee camps in Uganda, had organized themselves into a military force, and then had entered Rwanda and overthrown the Hutu-dominated government - after the Hutu-dominated government and its most extreme backers had engaged in this genocide against the Tutsis. As a consequence of the Rwandan civil war that had spilled over into eastern Zaire, some refugee camps - the Rwandans alleged - were being used by the Zaireans -Mobutu in particular - and by defeated rebels as a staging area and training ground for a force that was being built to try to overthrow the Rwandan government. Their argument was that the United Nations, which was the protector of these refugee camps, had an obligation to move them further back. But the United Nations was incapable of accomplishing that particular task. I went to see Kagame with Jim Jamerson. He basically said to us, "If you don't do it, we'll do it ourselves; we're going to have to do it ourselves." Nothing happened and the Rwandans invaded Zaire and attacked the camps, and after they did that they just went ahead and marched on to Kinshasa and looked for Mobutu. But in moving the refugee camps, they sparked a return to Rwanda of several hundred thousand refugees and also forced 50,000-100,000 other refugees to flee into the forest. The international community decided it had to do something to protect these several hundred thousand refugees. The United Nations was

debating the kind of authority relationship that it was going to develop to allow an operation to proceed. At the same time that it was doing that, we convoked, with the French and with Belgium and with a number of other countries who had interest including African countries, a planning conference in Stuttgart to map out an operation, which was going to be headed by a Canadian general. We would never have been able to convene such a group in Stuttgart before, had we not actively pursued a whole new set of relationships with these other countries and their military; so this was a real first.

At the same time this was all happening, we and the French, who for their own political reasons had a different interpretation of what was going on from us, were at loggerheads over how many people had fled into the jungle, what was the extent to which there were crimes being perpetrated against these people, etc. Because we had developed the multilateral relationships which included sharing intelligence, we were able to convene at the technical level the intelligence analysts every two or three days to narrow the differences. When you deal in subjects like this, you deal not just in information but you deal in methodology to interpret the information and analyze the information. The discussions became so detailed that we were actually sharing methodologies used to count people, for example. So even though we never did agree completely on the numbers, again, because we had developed these relationships, we were able to contain the parameters of the dispute, and that was really important as we moved forward. We ended up not deploying because most of the refugees returned to Rwanda on their own.

Q: It seems that it actually worked relatively well.

WILSON: The return to Rwanda worked very well. The deployment itself was never going to go forward as long as there were so many groups in Zaire shooting in so many different directions. We had to have a policy which was consistent with our own Presidential Decision Directive 25 which said that the parties involved had to be responsible for insuring that there would be a cease-fire, so that you wouldn't put peace keepers in unnecessary danger - a Chapter 6 type peace-keeping operation. In the case of eastern Zaire, there were so many different groups shooting at each other that you would never going to get anything authoritative on cease-fires. In the end, if you ask the French, you will get a much different interpretation of how well it went because the French counted more the people who might have been lost in the jungle than they counted the people who might have been repatriated back into Rwanda. The bottom line is that we then were able to develop a track record. We ran a multinational planning conference at our headquarters designed to plan for a peace-keeping operation in eastern Zaire.

Q: Let me ask a question because I recall that here in Washington, really at the Foreign Service Institute, they had several conferences on this problem. One of the things that was brought out was that the people who often end up taking care of many problems after the military action has taken place, are the non-governmental organizations - the NGOs. However they are often left out of the planning until after the military has taken action. It makes sense therefore to include the NGOs in the planning because they become the professional organizations which become responsible for feeding, shelter, medicine and all this. Could you talk a little about those.

WILSON: That's a legitimate point of view. We used to call it the melding of the "short- hairs and the earring" set. It was something to which we in our command were very sensitive after

1994 when we went in to Rwanda, spent \$500 million in a few weeks, and had very little to show for it other than burying a lot of dead, purifying a lot of water to keep the living from dying - that in and of itself was a good operation once it happened, but we spent the equivalent of two-thirds of our annual development assistance budget for Africa for that purpose. As a consequence, George Gawin and Madam Ogata, who was the UN Commissioner for Refugees at the time, began to work much more closely together to insure that we had a coordinating mechanism which included the NGO community for those things for which it would be responsible normally. That was something that was in the interest of the military to do, and it was something that was in the interest of the NGO community to do. The military didn't want to take on any more nonmilitary tasks than it absolutely had to do. It wasn't trained for it, it didn't have the resource for it, it detracted from its core responsibilities; so it just didn't like to do it. It couldn't do it very well. The NGO community, on the other hand, as good as it was at feeding people and providing some necessary services once it got the trouble spot, had great difficulty in mobilizing and getting there in an efficient fashion. As Gawin put it to Madam Ogata in one meeting that I attended, "The difference between you and me is that when I give an order, my guys salute and go to get the job done; when you give an order, your people take it as an invitation to debate," which I think is a pretty accurate description of the difference between the ways the military and civilians do things. What we tried to do after 1994, for every operation that we conducted in Africa during the time that I was in Stuttgart, was to establish an office in Geneva. We would send somebody from our command to Geneva, who would be responsible for insuring that the relevant people under Madam Ogata's umbrella in the NGO community would be privy to all the briefings we were giving and would be invited to contribute their ideas on how we could do it better. We did everything we could to have a higher level of cooperation. One of the things that we found was that the NGO community, by and large, was more suspicious of the military than the military was of the NGO community.

Q: That is part of the culture in the United States after Vietnam, I think.

WILSON: That's right. That's why we called it 'the short-hairs versus the earring set'. The military didn't like guys with earrings; the guys with earrings didn't like guys with short hair basically. We had to figure out how to make the cooperation happen, and we worked very hard at it. I'm not sure that we will ever completely succeed, but I think we've gotten a lot better. We've gotten a lot better in the former Yugoslavia, we've gotten a lot better in the Africa. There are two types of NGO communities. There's the "advocacy" crowd, the Human Rights Watch and what-not, who are always looking at what might be done differently given their conception of what is the perfect way of doing things; and then you have the development NGOs who actually get involved and provide the sort of support and assistance that is needed and don't have an obvious overlay of political agenda. So that worked pretty well. Jim and I were down in Africa about every six weeks. We would cycle back through Angola every couple months to talk to the Angolans to try and keep that peace process moving forward. We put together a military action program which came to be known as the "African Crisis Response Initiative." We were already working on the military program when the diplomats in Washington came out with the diplomatic overlay. The "African Crisis Response Initiative" came about as a consequence of international concerns that Burundi was on the verge of a genocide similar to Rwanda which raised the question on how the international community could respond more quickly than it had in the Rwandan crisis. The conclusion was that there should be an African military force

prepared to move quickly to create zones of safety between the various belligerents and to protect innocent civilians. We devised a number of training programs that would enhance African capabilities to serve these purposes -although we came to find out that African forces had a lot of experience in peace-keeping operations. The second thing that we tried to enhance was their ability to operate together; we worked very hard on interoperability and command and control of battalions from different countries. While they were thinking this problem through, we were independently coming up with our Flintlock Series and were already beginning to work on command and control type exercise with militaries from different countries. The two programs actually melded together very nicely.

Q: We saw as our role, as I take it, operational, mainly transport and supplies and getting the troops there.

WILSON: We saw our role as providing unique capabilities. Secretary of Defense Bill Perry said that when he came to see us. We briefed him on our concept for Africa. He bought what we were doing, which gave us a lot of impetus for continuing. But what he said was, "Look, Africa is clearly an issue for this theater. We need to be responsive without having to put our boots on the ground. Any country can put boots on the ground. What we ought to do is what other countries cannot do. That ought to be our contribution." We defined that contribution as training above the battalion level - most of these African countries don't have militaries above the brigade level, so we wanted to be able to train command and control operations above that - multi-brigade or multi-battalion type command and control - as well as providing intelligence, communications and transport. Those were the things that we thought that we could do that other countries probably couldn't do quite as well; those were the things we began to focus on.

Q: Looking at Liberia and Sierra Leone, where there were some really horrible situations - essentially civil war at its most brutal levee -was there concern that intervention on any level didn't seem to work? The slaughter went on for a long time. Correct me if I'm wrong on this. Was this of concern to us?

WILSON: That was true for Liberia in particular, which was the situation that was most acute when I was in Stuttgart. The economic community of West African States had already mobilized, using a preponderance of Nigerian troops, and had deployed into Liberia under the auspices of relevant UN resolutions. They were trying to do some peace keeping in the run-up to the elections that ultimately brought Charles Taylor to power. They were hampered by poor leadership for a while and by a lack of discipline. Eventually, they changed their generals and then they got a lot better. We were operating principally out of Washington to try to support the operation by bringing together a group of donor nations who would provide supplies and support to match the Nigerian contribution. To a certain extent we were hamstrung in our relationship with Nigeria because the Abacha regime was anathema to our administration, for good reasons. It was a dictatorship, it was a kleptocracy that was engaged in a repression of its people; it was just not a very good crowd. But we attempted to figure out ways to work with them on this issue of common concern - the resolution for the Liberian civil war -which had been going on and off for the past 20 years - 10 or 15 years anyway. We had worked very hard. We had a guy by the name of Howard Jeter, as our ambassador in Nigeria - had been our ambassador in Botswana. He was running around trying to get everybody to contribute money and materiel and what-not; we

were working with him on how we could transport the materiel and what we as a command could do to be supportive of his efforts. He would come to Stuttgart frequently. We would meet with him. Jim and I had met him first when he was ambassador to Botswana, so there was a good personal relationship. I had known him for a number of years obviously. We had been in Botswana when he was ambassador there; Jim was able to develop a good personal relationship which allowed us to work more closely with him.

I should mention one thing about these whole Africa-related issues. When I first got to the command, I met a lieutenant colonel who was in the Africa Division of J5, which is the Policy and Planning staff. I met him at an airport because we were meeting somebody coming in - an American ambassador going to Africa. This happened literally the first week I was there. The lieutenant colonel was telling me about what a great Special Forces officer he was, how he had made high-altitude, low-opening jumps; he had been a Special Forces guy all his life, and then he complained that he was now stuck in this backwater operation worrying Africa, sort of lost and forgotten, his career not going anywhere, in an area he didn't understand or know and didn't care anything about. Within six months these guys - there were three of them in this office - were the stars of the command. They were the ones who were traveling with the DCINC every time he went down to Africa. They were the ones who had seats on the airplane, they were the ones who had face time with a four-star, they were the ones who were known by name by the four-star. They were the stars of the command. It was Jim Jamerson's dedication to seeing that the command really reflect the threats that were arrayed against us and that it be able to respond to them that allowed the bureaucracy that was the European Command to shift from defending the Fulda Gap to thinking about the threats that it currently faced. It helped us become more flexible as we looked not just at African threats, but also at European activities and activities like "Operation Provide Comfort." It gave a much different dimension to the way that the command thought about doing its business. Jim and I often still talk about -because we still play golf together - is the defining moment for the post-Cold War command. It was there and then that we actually restructured the command. At one point he and I came back to Washington - it was just right after Tom Pickering had been named undersecretary for political affairs - to lay our vision. Our vision was that in the post-Cold War world you were going to have conflicts that are, by their nature, as bloody as any other war was for a specific geographic location, but would in the grand scheme of things be smaller, and that there was an inverse relationship between the level of diplomacy and political thinking required and the level of military thinking, depending on the size of the war. The smaller the war, the more diplomacy and politics would have to be involved. The bigger the war, the more the politicians would have to stand aside and let the generals took care of business, which meant, as we extrapolated, that in the environment of the next 20 to 30 years, we would witness small, intense conflicts with a political and diplomatic dimension, which made it essential to have political advisors with the military commands who were of sufficient stature and seniority that they could actually have an impact on the way the command was thinking. From the State Department perspective, we being a small and shrinking agency in the foreign affairs arena; this would be a great opportunity to leverage a much larger agency in the foreign affairs arena to do our bidding and to really be an asset, one of our assets, as we went forward. Since then there have been a number of articles in the *Washington Post* about the phenomenon of the CINCDoms created by Goldwater-Nichols - the CINCDoms being the commands that have been set up giving "pro-consul" responsibilities to these generals with all their power and their assets of the enormous American military strength. We actually got Tom to

buy into this, and as a consequence they now name political advisors the same way they name ambassadors. It goes through the deputy secretary's Committee, to insure that people assigned as political advisors are senior enough to have a lot of stature and a lot of authority and yet young enough to still have a lot of energy as well and still have some lift in their careers.

Q: That came to a cropper when an officer who served under me as a junior officer back in Saigon, Larry Pope, became the POLAD to General Zinni...

WILSON: At CENTCOM.

Q: For not reasons for what Larry did, but just for political reasons. He had been an ambassador but was stopped from being an ambassador again by the Helms committee because they wanted him to repudiate Zinni, I guess.

WILSON: That's right. Larry was in charge of Gulf affairs in the Department when I was in Baghdad; he and I are very good friends. It did come a cropper there and he did not get a hearing. It was very clear. The story is, and it's written up and available in the public domain, that the Helms staffer told him. "You will not get a clearing, you will not get cleared until such time as you repudiate Zinni."

Q: It's pretty disgusting.

WILSON: It's disgusting but, you know, part of an ambassadorial job description is that you're going to get hung out to dry. Eagleburger used to say, "Hey, if you can't take the heat of getting fired, then you've got no business being an ambassador."

Q: Going back, how about France and pulling out of the Kurd situation, the "Operation Provide Comfort?" My understanding is that France was one of the main instigators in getting us in there, maybe because Madam Mitterrand, who was the wife of the president of France, was very much interested in the Kurdish issue; so she sort of led a campaign on TV and everything else to get us in there. Why did the French pull out?

WILSON: I don't know why they pulled out. It is true that Danielle Mitterrand was a Kurdish hugger. One of her closest friends was a good friend of ours, a guy by the name of Katzemlu, who was the head of the Iranian Kurdish party; his wife was French and he spoke perfect French. He had been educated in Czechoslovakia. He was later assassinated by the Iranians in Vienna. By the time the French pulled out, there was a difference of opinion on how we ought to be prosecuting a containment strategy against the Iraqis. The French, being French, were looking for ways not to lose their primacy in that part of the world and in Iraq. As you may recall, the French had been principal arms sellers to Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq War including the Exocet missile that landed in the USS Stark and killed 34 American sailors.

Q: One of our destroyers in the Gulf.

WILSON: It's one of our destroyers in the Gulf. So I think that they were probably hedging their bets to a large extent. It also came about the time when the French were professionalizing their

armed services, which meant that they were getting rid of their draft. They were downsizing, and it was a burden on them to continue to maintain this presence in Iraq, although I suspect that it was as much for political reasons as it was for military ones that caused them to withdraw from the operation. In fact, I know it was.

Q: What was the feeling that you were getting at your headquarters? You had to interface with the UN from time to time, particularly in Africa. What was the feeling, that this was a difficult organization, ineffective, or one to be cultivated? How did you feel about the UN?

WILSON: We interfaced with the United Nations on two levels. One, we used to go see Madam Ogata periodically. We would set up liaison offices every time we had an operation, so that we had a connection with her and the NGO community. Then, two, our other principal interface with the UN was in Angola, where the UN secretary general had a special representative, who was the former Malian foreign minister, Blondin Bay, who was later killed in an airplane accident in Cote d'Ivoire, I guess. Part of the Lusaka process had involved a UN operation to disarm and demobilize UNITA soldiers. We liked Blondin Bay a lot. We liked him personally; we liked what he was trying to do. We liked the Lusaka process. We thought that that was the best way forward. So at all levels we were very supportive. We relished the opportunity to go to see him, and Jim and I went there a lot. I was in the White House for our last trip and I made sure that Jim came with us when we took the president to Africa and then he and I went up to Angola for one last time. So this time it was the president's special assistant accompanied by a senior military officer. Before it had always been the DCINC accompanied by his political advisor. But we always welcomed the opportunity to engage Blondin Bay and to be supportive of what the UN was doing there. We tried to be supportive of Ecoum and their operation in Nigeria. I think at the most senior levels of our command we understood the difficulties that some of these African militaries and the UN had. When we were constructing the "African Crisis Response Initiative," we made a point of going to New York and meeting with the UN peace-keeping operations office to learn from them how they had internalized in their own interaction review after Somalia and what procedures they were attempting to develop to make their operation more effective in the future than had been in the past. We went as representing the European Command but then we also sent our Special Forces officer who worked on Africa out of the third group of the Special Forces to meet at a more technical level. We had a series of meetings during which we exchanged stacks of documents on how training was to be done, what sort of procedures you establish, how you think about peace-keeping and humanitarian relief operations. The explicit objective in these exchanges was to get as much harmonization between our schools of thought as we possibly could so that, when we were training, we were training in a way that was consistent with what the UN might ultimately do when it went into peace-keeping operations; we worked very hard at that. Again, I think we had a healthy respect for the constraints under which the UN operated at the most senior levels. Clearly when you went to see some of their operations that weren't working as well as one would have liked, you bemoaned the fact that they didn't have the authority they needed and they had all these problems dealing with it. But the military again is very good at thinking about how do we fix problems.

Q: Rather than piss and moan.

WILSON: Ascribe blame, yes.

Q: There's been talk about the European Union creating its own European force. Was that something that was being bandied about while you were there?

WILSON: Sure.

Q: How did you all feel about that?

WILSON: We went to talk to them in Brussels. We figured, what the hell, we should be talking to them and figuring out what they were doing. This was about the time that Mobutu was being overthrown and we were going to be conducting some operations with the Belgians in any case. So we took the opportunity to talk to European Union at the same time. Obviously there were a number of very serious political issues.

At the same time that we were dealing with this, we were also dealing with France's reintegration to the NATO military command. The French were making unrealistic demands, particularly considering that NATO had survived and had indeed thrived without them for 35 years. They essentially wanted us to give them control of the 6th Fleet. We always used to say the difference between the French and the British is that the French wanted to use our equipment whereas the British wanted to use our equipment and command our troops. We were not going to give the French command of our equipment in the Mediterranean. The French then started talking about the European Security and Defense Initiative; there were some legitimate reasons to do so. The French and the Europeans generally are nervous that one of these days the United States is going to withdraw from European territory and the European collective defense system is going to be the responsibility of the Europeans and, therefore, they ought to begin to think their way through that potential development and staff for it now. Realistically speaking, at a time of shrinking defense budgets, the chances were that they were not going to be able to create a parallel European Security and Defense Initiative without detracting from NATO capabilities and NATO's ability to execute its mission. And, of course, the French response to this was that, 'Well, we will just use NATO equipment if we go and do something under the guise of the European Security and Defense Initiative'. The American position was, 'over our dead bodies, because if you use NATO equipment, then you're weakening NATO's ability to do what it has to do'. The Turkish had a different take, which was what the Europeans are really talking about is that they will provide command and control over Turkish ground troops, because Turkey had the second largest army in NATO. The Turks could see what the European defense budgets and defense policies were; there were very few soldiers on the ground and, therefore, somebody was going to have provide them. So there were all these issues that percolating up to the NATO level. Our concern was really more in the context of combined joint task forces. Combined joint task forces basically means that you have militaries from different countries and from different services combined to operate jointly in a task force designed to solve a problem. That's where we did things, that's what we thought about, how we would be able to do things better with friends, allies, and partners in mission-specific activities.

Q: Was there concern or secret pleasure or something at that time when, the growing disparity between the effectiveness of the American military, particularly in the air with smart bombs and command and control and all, and with the European forces, was so evident?

WILSON: What we were most worried about was that the United States was getting so far ahead of our European allies that fairly soon we were going to be unable to operate together - i.e. that our interoperability was going to collapse. We were concerned that we had just gotten ahead of the Europeans. We were concerned that European budgets for defense and procurement cycles were just not going to keep them at a state of readiness that would enable us to operate together as a NATO force, and I think that remains a legitimate concern.

Q: During the time you were there, were we doing anything from the American side, as opposed to the NATO side, with Russia?

WILSON: Yes, oh, yes. Again, most of this was taken care of out of Washington, but we had a Russian three-star over at NATO headquarters. George Gawin was really proud that the Russian was at NATO headquarters and was working with NATO at the operating level. We had Russian troops in Bosnia. We were always trying to think about ways that we could do things with Russia. We even were trying to figure out how we could get to Moscow from our command to try to build up that relationship, but it was still jealously guarded by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Hugh Shelton, at the time. Very clearly within our command we were looking at ways to work more closely with the Russians to bring the Russians inside the tent at the operational level, and we were pretty successful -George was pretty successful. That was mostly done up in Mons and it was mostly done under the NATO umbrella.

Q: How about the relations with Israel from your perspective?

WILSON: We made one trip down to Israel when I was there. George and I went. George went in his CINCEUR hat. That was the only trip I took with him, because most everything else he did at that time was in a SACEUR hat. So he and I went to Israel. We also had the Israeli chief of defense visit the European Command while I was there and we also had the chief of the air force to our command headquarters as part of his tours. One of the things we found about the Israelis was that they tolerated us as the regional command, but it was pretty clear that, if they didn't get what they wanted out of us, it didn't make much difference because they would go right to the Pentagon. So they were extraordinarily difficult as potential partners, because there was no sense of shared need.

Q: In other words, their political clout was such that they could get what they want.

WILSON: That's right, and the relationship between the Pentagon and Israel...

Q: It really wasn't the Pentagon. It was really between Congress and the Israelis.

WILSON: All the branches of the US government. The Israelis did most of their business directly with the Pentagon if they had business to do. Not having served in the Pentagon, you might be absolutely right. Perhaps the Pentagon guys feel exactly the same way, that they were superfluous...

Q: Well, looking at the mega-picture, the Pentagon has gotten very annoyed when it had to

provide equipment and all when they felt they really couldn't but with Congress holding the purse strings and being the abject slave of the Israeli..., anyway, the political process being what it is. We're both laughing here.

WILSON: I think I'll let that one slide.

Q: Is there anything else we should discuss, do you think?

WILSON: The only other thing we did is was to spend a lot of time with the Brits. The Brits were just setting up their own joint command structure; so we were over there and they were over with us quite a bit, working through how we might work together. We started with the French, we moved over and started working with the Brits, and then we started working with the Belgians, particularly as it related to Kinshasa and the evacuation...

Q: This in the African...

WILSON: Africa was the easiest one because you didn't have the same sort of political constituency groups looking over our shoulders; you could keep the discussions at technical level. We had shared security interests.

Q: And they had their own long-term former colonial interest and experiences there.

WILSON: They had responsibilities that made it easier to call upon them if we needed to. It was in everybody's interest to do so. We ended up putting together operations exercises where we observed and they observed, and we later did joint exercises with them in Africa, in Zimbabwe and in Ghana, where they were the leaders and we were observers in one and we were leaders and they were observers in another. We deployed in a combined fashion in central Africa. We had troops in both Gabon and in the Congo in the event that we had to evacuate Kinshasa. The Brits were in Gabon. We had Belgians and French and ourselves and maybe some Brits in the Congo. It was an interesting operation because we found, once we had everybody there, that there were differences of opinion on how we should use these troops. The French and the Belgians in particular were anxious to secure Kinshasa so that there would be a minimal loss of life and so foreigners could withdraw across the river in relative security...

Q: To Brazzaville or...

WILSON: ...to Brazzaville. We were more reluctant because we felt that by securing Kinshasa preemptively we would really not prevent but only postpone the inevitable, which was the departure of Mobutu. Nobody had the stomach for supporting Mobutu's continued stay in power in Kinshasa. We won out. The fall of Kinshasa was peaceful. The Belgians and the French were unable to move without us and could not keep Kabila from coming in. That was a source of political friction with us later on.

Q: Were the Europeans saying, "You know, we depend on these bloody Americans to use their air lift and all to get us there and support us. Let's get our own," or was the budgetary situation such in Europe that it wasn't going to happen?

WILSON: Air lifts are very expensive and always had to be negotiated. The large issue was not so much that they depended on us but how difficult it was for them to get it at a reasonable price. There was a lot of looking for alternative strategic lifts. What the Europeans found out and what the UN found out as well was that it was cheaper, more efficient, and less of a hassle to go to the Ukrainians to provide the strategic lifts than it was to go to the U.S. Air Force. I used to kid Jim Jamerson that, if you want to charter one of their goddamn Air Force airplanes, you had to pay the Air Force budget for a year in order to get it. It was outrageous. It was incompatible with everything that we were trying to do to develop a sense of shared responsibility for these operations. We took a whack at the cost issue a couple of times - trying to get this problem solved in a way that was satisfactory to all -but it was just too ingrained to deal with. We made no headway.

EDWARD H. WILKINSON
Minister-Counselor for Consular Affairs
Bonn (1995-1999)

Edward Wilkinson was born in Indiana in 1936. Mr. Wilkinson received his bachelor's degree at Purdue University and served in the army from 1957-1959. His career included positions in Philippines, Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina, Taiwan, Ecuador, Korea, Thailand, and Germany. Mr. Wilkinson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in April 2002.

WILKINSON: In 1995 we got the opportunity to go back to Europe. I went to Bonn, Germany, as Minister-Counselor for Consular Affairs. This was sheer good luck, once again.

Q: Ed, what fell apart and what came together to get you to Bonn?

WILKINSON: Oh, it was just a strange series of circumstances, but the person I replaced in Bonn, Michael Marine, went off to another assignment rather unexpectedly, which meant that the MCCA job opened up without much warning. It was rather late in the bidding season and a large number of people at our level had already been assigned during the normal assignment processing. The pool of people who might qualify for that job was rather small. Anyway, I applied for it and got it.

Q: You went to Bonn from '95 to when?

WILKINSON: We were in Bonn for almost four years – I extended for the fourth year as soon as I possibly could. My wife and I had not set foot in Europe in approximately thirty years, and so the opportunity to work and play the tourist on the Continent was just something that we didn't want to pass up.

Q: What did your job consist of?

WILKINSON: The August title of Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs basically describes a person who is in charge of consular operations countrywide. Of course, there are the chiefs of the consular sections in Frankfurt, in Berlin, in Hamburg, Düsseldorf and Munich. The MCCA was responsible for coordinating consular operations all over the country.

The role of the minister counselor under normal circumstances, and to a degree while I was there, was to ensure that there were not different policies in different offices around the country. So that was the real job and, I suspect, the job as it was for years.

However, in Bonn, during my tour, there was a different element to the job because the seat of the German government was moving from Bonn to Berlin. The embassy, of course, was in the process of moving, too.

Actually, quite a bit of embassy Bonn had already moved, or was in the process of moving, to Berlin. So for the vast majority of the time I was there, the American staff of the consular section in Bonn was just a vice consul and I. The office in Bonn basically existed to provide whatever American services work that needed to be done, which was very, very little, because our consular district wasn't very big. It also continued to exist to provide diplomatic visas to foreign embassy staff. So, as one of two people in the consular section, I must say that I learned an awful lot. I did a lot of work that, quite frankly, as a more senior officer, I hadn't had to do for a number of years. One minute I was making what might be called "grand decisions" regarding consular work countrywide, and the next minute I'm out looking at a visa application because the vice consul was elsewhere. I learned a lot and I think that was very useful.

Q: What was the American consular establishment like in Germany at this point?

WILKINSON: Well, there are a number of answers to that question. We had relatively small consular operations in Munich, in Berlin, in Hamburg, to a smaller degree in Düsseldorf, and I'll explain this element in a second. The large operation was in Frankfurt. The consular operation in Stuttgart closed not long after our arrival in Germany.

Don't forget that the large number of American soldiers stationed in Germany, had, I believe, gone down from something in the neighborhood of 300,000 to 100,000 (very, very rough figures) in the years since the fall of the Berlin Wall. So the quantity of citizenship work for the U.S. military establishment dropped off accordingly. Basically, all we did for the soldiers and civilians was to issue passports. There were other operations, but mostly that was the big job. The military, themselves, for example, handled all of the work that had to be done whenever a GI ran afoul of the German law.

Q: Registering births must've been a part of your duties.

WILKINSON: That's true, of course; births and the occasional death. We did different things, of course, with the civilians, i.e., spouses and civilian workers, than we did with the soldier. So there was a great deal of work involved with that.

With regard to American Services, in general, we had a number of cases of U.S. citizen civilians

in jail, people who had broken German law. There also were American business people in Germany who needed passport services and, again, births and occasionally a death or other things. But I must say, it was a rather sophisticated operation unlike other places where you have lots of backpackers and so on.

The Germans dealt with what I might term the “non-businessman,” i.e., backpackers, etc., in a pretty sophisticated and reasonable way, so many of the type of problems we might have to deal with in other countries never even came to our attention in Germany.

And visas were a little different story, as well. For one thing, Germans enjoy the visa waiver, which means that if a German citizen is going to the U.S. for tourism or for business purposes for under 90 days, that person probably doesn’t need a visa. Of course, there were eleven or twelve other countries in Europe that qualified for the visa waiver as well, so if you had a Frenchman or an Italian or a Brit living in Germany, these people didn’t need such visas either. As a consequence, we didn’t do very many non-immigrant visas for Germans or other Europeans.

On the other hand, we had applications for visas from a large number of non-Germans, people from countries that didn’t enjoy the visa waiver. Many of these applications were from applicants who had come to Germany for the specific purpose of applying for visas.

Our biggest workload in this category was from Iranians. We had no consular operation in Tehran, and so an Iranian might get up early one day in Tehran, take the morning flight to Frankfurt, and the next day be in trying to get a visa from us. Now that meant that the Frankfurt visa operation was rather complicated. It’s one thing to adjudicate a non-immigrant visa for somebody who lives in your neighborhood. If he or she says, “I own a clothing store,” you can check on that if you want to or you can check on things by just asking a few questions. Well, that’s not true with people from so far away. Language difficulties, too, cause some problems. So the operation was really quite different.

Immigrant visas in Germany were handled solely in Frankfurt. That operation, too, included a large number of applicants from other countries, so that was a complicating factor, as well.

But, as far as my own workload was concerned, I spent a good deal of time just working with the administrative people regarding the move of our American Services operation to Düsseldorf, our non-immigrant visa processing to Frankfurt and the move of the MCCA office to Berlin.

Q: Was there any thought of putting a consular post in what had been East Germany; in Leipzig or Dresden or something like that?

WILKINSON: There is a consulate in Leipzig. Sorry, I think I failed to mention Leipzig when we were speaking about this a few minutes ago. The Leipzig consulate opened fairly quickly after the wall came down. I think it is fair to say that one of the main reasons the consulate was established there was to demonstrate to Germans, and to the world in general, our support for Germany as one country. The idea was to make clear that there is no East Germany or West Germany anymore; there is just the Federal Republic of Germany. The consulate in Leipzig did not do visas, if I remember correctly. They did passports and American Services work, but

people went up to Berlin or elsewhere if they needed a visa.

Q: You were saying the Germans dealt with the student; the backpacker type who got into minor problems, and this “sophisticated manner,” what does that mean?

WILKINSON: Well, I think it’s fair to say that the German authorities would view your American or your Canadian or your British “backpacker” as simply a tourist. Germans certainly are not willing to accept breaking of the rules, but they would be more inclined to give “backpackers” who break the law a slap on the wrist rather than throw the miscreant in jail, which was quite often the case in other less developed countries.

Q: Did you find yourself dealing with the consular side of the German foreign office?

WILKINSON: Yes, I did. The head of consular affairs during the entire four years I was there was a marvelous diplomat, Herr Born. He spoke English, of course, but also Italian and Spanish. I believe his wife was Italian. We dealt with a variety of issues including Hague convention issues.

Q: Is that The Hague, capital of the Netherlands?

WILKINSON: Yes, the capital of the Netherlands where the Hague Convention was signed. The Hague Convention pertains to the question of children who were taken by one parent against the wishes of the other parent from one Hague Convention country to another Hague Convention country. For example, suppose a German woman is married to an American man and they move to the States to live. Then, let’s assume for whatever reason later on the woman is unhappy with her home life, so she moves back to Germany. And let’s assume they have a child and she takes the child with her, without her husband or a court’s permission when she goes back to her family home to live.

As both parents come from countries that are signatories of the Hague Convention, then this convention was brought into play to deal with the situation.

It was a very complicated business and it took forever to get anything done, so we dealt with Hague Convention details to the degree that we could. I must say that the Office of the Legal Advisor here in the State Department dealt with these things much more than we did, but we – and the attorneys in the Bureau of Consular Affairs – did have Hague Convention responsibilities, as well. So I had a number of dealings with Herr Born on Hague Convention details.

Q: There is a case that was being brought up in the Washington Post about a child or one or two who are, I think, the mother took the children back to Germany and then she either abandoned them or was put into an institution or something, and the children were given to foster parents or something like this and the father was completely cut out. So every time our president goes to Germany or something this case comes up. Was that around during your time?

WILKINSON: No, I read about that in the Post as well, but I have no recollection whatever of

dealing with that particular situation while I was in Germany. The problem there is that there's never any neat answer to these things. You cannot, in good conscience, say, "Well, because this child is the offspring of an American, the American parent has the right to the child." The procedures, by and large, are dealt with by local law authorities, and, as you might suspect, the Germans tended to take the side of their own nationals. The Americans, of course, took the side of their own nationals. I don't really want to suggest for a minute that these people were doing this unreasonably, but it was a point of view that when the question was sort of even on one side or another, then the Germans sort of won the toss, if you will, if a German court was the one tasked to make the Hague Convention decision.

Q: What was happening at the time you were there? Was Bonn going to remain as a post or was it going to be completely phased out?

WILKINSON: Well, when Lisa and I left Bonn in late summer of 1999, there was to be a portion of the embassy that was to remain under U.S. jurisdiction for use of our military people. Although they were going to stay there for a time, I'd be surprised if they are still there now.

Also, when we closed our Bonn consular operation, our Bonn American Services operation moved to Düsseldorf. Düsseldorf had been "downsized" sometime in the 1980s or early 1990s. It became – essentially – an operation that dealt with solely with U.S. commercial issues, so there were no consular operations there during my stay in Germany. But it was decided, as Bonn was closing, that because of the number of American businesses in and around Düsseldorf, we should again have an American Services operation there.

One problem was that about this time the building where the consulate was located was sold to another owner, so the consulate was going to move to another place. But the Department couldn't seem to get its act together in terms of doing the necessary things to finalize this move. So, just as I was leaving, the small American Services operation that had moved to Düsseldorf moved back to Bonn. Düsseldorf's American Services operation had to work out of our consular premises in Bonn for several weeks or months until the new Düsseldorf office was ready.

The American Services operation finally moved back to the city of Düsseldorf. I don't know whether there is any U.S. military presence in the old embassy now, or not.

Q: Were there any cases or problems that caused you particular concern?

WILKINSON: In fact, no. This, in a consular sense, was a very easy job. As I say, I spent a great deal of time thinking about the move to other places and administrative chores. But traditional consular work? No, no problems leap to mind.

Q: I've talked to people who concern the German-American Institute here and all. The head of it was telling me one time that there was concern, because at one point a lot of Americans were taking German, and not many do now. The number is going down, and as far as tourism goes, people, if they go into Europe, it's going to be Britain, France, Italy and Spain. Germany, although it's sort of the major country in Europe, has the reputation of being rather expensive. American attention isn't there, as far as people visiting and getting to know it, as all of us who

were of a certain age, did. Was this a concern?

WILKINSON: Yes, this was a concern. I know a variety of Germans from different stations in life who would mention this one way or another. But, what you described is true. I think it's fair to say that the average American, who looks at his or her bank account and decides that this is the time to take a trip to Europe, does not think about Germany as a destination, at least in the first instance, if at all.

That's another little issue that I might get into, by the way. Most Americans who do know anything about Germany, tend to focus on Bavaria or Baden-Württemberg or other parts of the south of Germany where U.S. military bases tend to be because they or a relative was once stationed in Germany in the U.S. Army or Air Force. I noted that many of these people are, in a certain sense, amazed to find that there exists a huge expanse of the north part of Germany about which they know nothing.

Q: Did you see, in the time you were there, tensions; problems that came to your attention about the melding of East and West Germany?

WILKINSON: Well, there were lots of rather snide comments that "West" Germans themselves would make at, or about, "Eastern" Germans sometimes. To be sure, there were two generations, at a minimum, of people who grew up under different philosophies; they were at a rather different view of life, and there was tension. Now, of course, this is a huge oversimplification, but an Easterner would tend to think, "It's the state's business – obligation – to take care of me." Westerners, too, might look at this in similar terms, but not nearly to the extent of the Easterners. So there is tension. The result of these sorts of difference in thinking was that the country was not becoming one as rapidly as, I think, most Germans thought. It'll take, I would say, another generation or two before this is smoothed over and even then, I don't know.

Q: Did the opening up of the Stasi files create a certain nightmare for the consular side, because if you've got a file and you want to check it, you've got to check on somebody and it would be almost better not to know?

WILKINSON: Well, we didn't have reason to get into these files for most people. The reason why I say that is that the people we might have been interested in, i.e. people who might have had some visa problems because of their World War II experience, were either people who had been vetted long before I came to the scene or they had died.

I did have an amazing experience, though, related to this subject. One day, I got a call from Herr Born, the head of the Consular Affairs Division of the Foreign Ministry, about a German former ambassador who was having some visa difficulties. He asked whether I could look into the matter.

Well, I invited the gentleman in question to my office, and he promptly came. Actually, he only lived a few blocks away from the Embassy. He was a very interesting person who had an absolutely fascinating story, which I would like to tell briefly.

In his youth, he wanted to become a German Foreign Service officer. He did the usual studies and then came, I think, to Brown University, here in the States, to study and to polish his English. After some time in the U.S., around 1935 or 1936 he came back to Germany. Then not too long after, he moved to Japan where he studied Japanese. He came back to Germany around 1938 and applied for an appointment in the German Foreign Service.

He was told that yes, he would qualify, but that there were no openings right then. They said they would let him know, so he went to work for a Japanese organization of some sort that was located in Germany. This gave him an opportunity to use Japanese regularly and to polish his facility in that language. It turns out that while he was there Heinrich Himmler and other worthies on the German side came to him to get information about the Japanese people who worked there or otherwise about people they apparently had record of in their files. They – the Germans and the Japanese – were not really allies at that time, and even when they became allies, basically after the war began, there was a certain amount of distrust between them. Anyway, the future ambassador didn't want to, but he had to provide information to German intelligence authorities about certain Japanese.

Just a few months before the war began, i.e. September of 1939, he was taken into the Foreign Service and was assigned to the German Embassy in Cairo where he stayed for several months.

You remember that at that time, Britain was essentially the overseer of Egypt, so when Germany came into the war, which was just a few months after he was assigned to Cairo, the Germans had to close their embassy. He was then assigned to Tokyo. This was after the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact had been signed, and so the Germans and Russians were, at the time, great friends. He took a train all the way to Vladivostok, and then a boat down into Japan. He spent the entire war in Japan at the German Embassy there.

By chance, at about the time the future ambassador and I were talking, I had been reading a book about the famous German spy, Richard Sorge, who was in Japan before and during the Second World War. Sorge was a German, although he was actually a Russian spy. Sorge's mother was from Baku, Russia. He was born there and grew up largely in the Soviet Union. In the '30s, Sorge went to Tokyo and spied on Germany for Russia. So, I asked the ambassador whether he knew this famous person, Richard Sorge?

He responded, "Of course, I know him. Every German in Japan who was there wanted to know him. He was such a personality." I just found it incredible to actually be gazing upon somebody who had known this person about whom at that time I was reading. And that's just a little part of the story.

As I said, the future ambassador spent the entire Second World War in Japan in the embassy there. After the war, he stayed on as an officer in their embassy, and was there, I think he said, until 1947 or 1948 when he was finally able to come back to Germany.

Of course, there was some question about what he had been reporting to Ribbentrop in the '30s, but the new (post-war) German authorities finally decided that essentially he was a diplomat and nothing more, and so he went back into the Foreign Ministry. He later became the German

equivalent to DCM in the U.S. and later ambassador to other countries.

He was an absolutely fascinating individual. I know that a book was written about him and a there was a film made about his life, although I don't have details on that. But because of the book and film, he needed a visa to travel to the United States to provide details for the making of the film. (I wish I could give you the name of the film, but I can't come up with it.) In any event, although to get diplomatic visas was no problem, because of this having "reported" to Ribbentrop, there was an unfavorable file on him. We were able to work that out, ultimately, so he was able to obtain a regular non-immigrant visa.

The other thing I wanted to talk about, if I may, is that one of the jobs of the head of the consular operation in Germany is to be the U.S. representative to an organization called the International Tracing Service, which is managed by the International Red Cross. The International Tracing Service is an organization that compiled all the information they could get about people who were prisoners in German concentration camps. So, for example, if you had a close relative who had been in a Nazi concentration camp, you could try, through this organization, to find out what information was available about your relative's stay in the camp.

There is a huge repository of information in the town of Bad Arelson, which is in the northern part of the German state of Hesse. There they have files from many Nazi concentration camps. After the wall came down, they got additional information from camps situated behind the Iron Curtain.

The way it works here in the U.S., for example, is that if you had a close relative who was in a Nazi concentration camp, you could request all available information about this relative by making application to the Baltimore Chapter of the American Red Cross, which is the International Tracing Service representative in the U.S. Or if you're in France, you would go to the French representative organization, a veteran's organization, I think, to request all available information about your relative. You have to make a case that you have reason to have this information: basically you have to be a close relative of the person involved. My experience with the International Tracing Service was fascinating, largely because of the people I dealt with.

The Berlin Document Center is a repository of this sort of information, as well, and the International Tracing Service also has access to those files. I had a tour of the Center and it was a little frightening. Of course, this was long before computers, so all of this information is handwritten in wonderful old German script. It was a little frightening to think of this army of clerks sitting around writing all sorts of information about you, your uncle, your relative, or whatever it might be, who is Jewish, was Jewish, might have been Jewish, or rumor had it was Jewish. This, unfortunately, was an important activity from German standpoint at that time. Homosexuals and Gypsies were also badly treated under the Nazi system.

There were the representatives from the different member countries. Lisa and I have kept in contact with a number of them. I thought that was one of the highlights of my career in Germany.

Q: In a way, you were helping close things down, weren't you?

WILKINSON: As far as the Bonn embassy was concerned, yes. When you say it that way, you remind me of a point that, perhaps, is relevant here as well. Germany was unusual, in my experience. I've been in a lot of embassies and consulates, but Germany was unusual simply for the following reason: the U.S. was among the countries that were victorious in the Second World War.

In 1945 we came in there and ultimately ended up all over Germany along with our British, French and other colleagues. From '45 to '49, we were occupiers. The Cold War, as it began to gel, gave us good reason, I think, to get on the right side of the Germans and we did. In 1949, the new Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and his associates ultimately put together modern Germany. That, of course, is a huge oversimplification, but that's a sort of an overview.

The U.S. Embassy in Bonn in 1995 was a product, to a very large degree, of our having gone in to Germany in 1945 as occupiers. For example, we had assigned to the embassy a Catholic priest and two Protestant pastors. I believe a rabbi could have been assigned there, but none was. Just before we got to Bonn, a newly assigned Catholic priest arrived there, Father Steve McNally. He was – and is – just a marvelous individual. He's now down in southern Virginia, by the way, with his own parish.

But I mention Father McNally as an example of the sorts of unique things that went on in Germany, as a result of our having been there as an occupying force. In 1949, the new Adenauer government gave us, for example, the location where apartments and houses were built and a large number of American Embassy people lived. It was a corner, if you will, of a park in Bonn, near the Rhine River. The U.S. acquired a large amount of official property in Germany as a consequence of our having been one of the victors of World War II. So dismantling all this was a part of our job during my tour there. I didn't personally get into this a great deal, but I was involved.

SHIRLEY E. RUEDY
German Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1997-1998)

Shirley Ruedy was born in Virginia and raised in Ohio. She was educated Ohio Wesleyan and Duke Universities and at several universities abroad. Before becoming a Foreign Service Officer in 1987, Mrs. Ruedy accompanied her USIA husband on assignments in Iran and Germany. As an FSO, she served as Political Officer in Bonn and Moscow as well as in the State Department in Washington, where she dealt primarily with Soviet Union and Regional European matters. Mrs. Ruedy was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: In 1997 you're back again where, to Washington?

RUEDY: Back to Washington. I started on the German desk; I was the German desk officer working mostly on Holocaust issues. That was a time when this whole issue of repaying

Holocaust survivors and returning money held in Swiss banks and all that sort of thing.

Q: I've interviewed J.D. Bindenagel.

RUEDY: Oh, yes, you know all about that. I was the point person on the German desk. He came a little bit later. He took over that portfolio after I had gone. The point person when I was on the desk was Stu Eisenstadt. There was a lot that I was working on, also on the whole Scientology issue.

Q: That was one of those third rails that no one wants to touch. You were doing this on the German desk from 1997 until when?

RUEDY: I did it for a year from 1997 to 1998.

Q: During that time what was happening with repatriation and restitution?

RUEDY: The United States was working very hard to make this work finding some problems with the Swiss. The Swiss desk officer could talk about this much better than I, but Swiss banking laws are very strict and so the whole business of how do you deal with the Swiss and get them to open up their records so we could see what really...

Q: There was also an issue that a lot of Swiss bankers had profited by this.

RUEDY: Oh, yes.

Q: They had that money around and had used it for their own advantage. We were breaking a very big rice bowl.

RUEDY: The Swiss desk officer knows this better than I. The Swiss were really embarrassed. They were not used to being on the front pages in a negative way like that. Eisenstadt and Bindenagel had to work very hard to make a lot of progress, and I think the good that came out of that was due to U.S. efforts.

Q: Let's talk about Scientology. What is Scientology and what you were doing with it?

RUEDY: Scientology is a 'religion', according to the United States Government. I have had a lot of contact with Scientology lawyers. I had frequent meetings with them, frequent telephone conferences with them, my inbox was always full of very professional, very in-depth legal material about Scientologists' problems in Germany. I understood it as a human rights issue. It was always mentioned in the human rights report. I also knew that in Germany they were coming at it as consumer protection issue.

Q: It was considered a cult.

RUEDY: It was considered a cult, but the Germans, the German government, was coming at it as a consumer protection issue for which consumer protection law applied. This was sort of like two

ships passing in the night; how our government saw it, how the German government saw it. It was very, very difficult. We did at one point organize a round table and we invited Scientologists, we invited Jehovah's Witnesses, we invited some other groups that had had problems in Germany, and we invited German government representatives, German NGOs, just got everybody together in the same room, for a sanity check. That was supposed to be the start of a series of meetings in which they were going to air their differences and try to come to a working relationship or at least agree on a plan, but I think that fell through. I don't think they ever followed up on that.

Q: My impression of Scientology – I ran across it one time when I was Consul General in Athens – is that it's a cult. Before my time, a ship full of Scientologists had sailed the Mediterranean and had home-ported near Athens. The stories that we got of brain-washing young vulnerable people suggest it's a cult. They recruit young people and they keep charging you money to move to a higher level. Once you're in, 1) you're brainwashed, and 2) you're milked of your money. I'm sure you would have six lawyers on top of me because the Scientologists are inclined to respond by legal means immediately. But I think it would be a little hard to defend this as a religion versus cult.

RUEDY: I have my personal views on that. As a Foreign Service Officer, I had to follow U.S. policy, and that was clearly that scientology is defined as a religion. There were all sorts of rumors about why this was the case, some of them very interesting, about who had friends where. That's about all I want to say about that.

Q: I am surprised because generally things have changed a lot in the States but for a long period of time we were concerned about cults, the brain washing, the removal of young people from their families, and that seems to have died away. I can't believe that would be this would be that popular of a cause within the body politic because I think most people do consider it a cult.

RUEDY: Scientology, as far as I can tell, had friends in high places.

Q: Even the newspapers let it go, I mean investigative reporters.

RUEDY: If you write about scientology in a negative way, you can expect the lawyers to appear so people, I think, think twice.

RICHARD AKER
Cultural Attaché
Berlin (2003-2006)

Deputy Principal Officer
Frankfurt (2006-2008)

Richard Aker was born in Arkansas in 1949. He graduated from University of Arkansas and then attended law school. He joined the United States Information

Agency Foreign Service in 1978. His overseas assignments include Iran; Munich, Germany; Hong Kong; Durban, South Africa and Romania. Mr. Aker was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2010.

Q: Whither?

AKER: To Berlin. This was, from a personal point of view, a great place to go but it was not what I wanted to do. I was promoted to senior Foreign Service while in Geneva. The promotion came after I had accepted an onward assignment that was, because of the promotion, not career enhancing. However, I was not allowed to renege. I went to Berlin as cultural attaché, which I didn't really want to do.

That being said, Berlin is a tremendously interesting city.

Q: You hit at a time when German-American relations were not that great.

AKER: Yes, it was in the summer and fall of 2003. We had invaded Iraq. That was near the lowest point of our relations in quite a while. I talked to you earlier about previous assignments in Germany. I was there during the last round of the Cold War -- the Pershing II and Cruise missile buildup -- when we had big anti-US demonstrations. That was the late '70s, early '80s. I was back in the '90s when the Wall had come down and Eastern Europe was becoming integrated into European and Atlantic structures, as we liked to say. That was a time of relatively little friction. Now, in 2003, we're back to something like the Vietnam or Cruise missile eras. People were looking at the US with a jaundiced eye.

Q: Well, one can be dubious about our going into Iraq. But what about the Islamic fanatics who were hanging around in Hamburg and elsewhere? They were probably the perpetrators of the attack on the Trade Center.

AKER: Yes, the attack on the World Trade Center was supposedly planned in Hamburg, not in the mountains of Afghanistan,. During this stretch in Germany, from 2003 to 2008, we had some major terrorist incidents in Europe: the attack on the train stations in Madrid, which killed several hundred people in 2004, and the attack in the London subway in 2005. Then, in 2007, a terrorist plot was discovered in Germany. I think several suspects were arrested after a shootout with police. The German public was critical of our invasion of Iraq and was increasingly critical of German involvement in Afghanistan. It was concerned, however, about Islamic fundamentalism. This goes back at least to the '70s, when there were already a large number of Turks and other Muslims in Germany, many of them very conservative in their appearance and behavior. Germans did not see our post 9/11 actions as really dealing with the problem. If anything, they saw them as possibly exacerbating the problem and making it more likely that there will be terrorist incidents in Germany and other Western countries.

Q: How did you evaluate, at the time, Islamic Fundamentalism in Germany?

AKER: I think it's an endemic but low-key phenomenon. As I said, there was a plot of some sort that was uncovered in 2007, but it did not result in any civilian deaths. It involved a group that

was allegedly planning an attack against U.S. facilities in Germany but never got that far.

Q: Did you see any difference in sort of the spirit of the university student body coming back this time?

AKER: I think students in Germany and Europe, like those in the US, are not very political at compared to what they were like in my student days. I don't see any great movements or passion sweeping the campuses. People seem to be more concerned about the job situation than about anything else. While in Berlin, I had frequent contact with university faculties and administrators from around the country. The big issue at that time was developing more uniform European-wide standards for recognizing and accrediting courses and grades and making it easier to transfer credit for studies between various European countries. There wasn't much else to discuss. It's not like the '60s.

Q: Well who was the ambassador when you were there?

AKER: Initially we had Ambassador Dan Coats, who had been a senator from Indiana. He was said to have wanted to be secretary of defense under President Bush but lost out to Donald Rumsfeld. He was a very pleasant man. He is now running to get back into the senate from Indiana.

During the time I served under him, from '03 to '05, in his last two years as ambassador, U.S.-German relations did get better. President Bush came to Germany, in February 2005, and tried to improve relations with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. Then, after Schroeder was defeated for re-election in the autumn of 2005, under the current, more conservative incumbent, Angela Merkel, relations have continued to improve.

Schroeder and French President Jacques Chirac were much disliked by the Bush Administration because of their outspoken criticism of the Iraq invasion. Schroeder had managed to win re-election, barely, in 2002 by essentially running against American foreign policy. The relationship got better, as I said, after Bush came to Germany to meet Schroeder in early 2005. Schroeder softened his rhetoric quite a lot, but he lost narrowly to Merkel, who was more overtly pro-American, although our bilateral relations played little or no role in the election outcome; it revolved around German domestic issues. Although there was still a lot of skepticism at this stage about U.S. foreign policy and the involvement in Afghanistan, and particularly Pakistan, the intensity of the anger is long since gone. Germans were generous in their aid and support for victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Q: Did you sense that Marxism or a strong leftist motif was still running in the universities?

AKER: Compared to 30 years ago, no. You would occasionally see posters and graffiti on our near university campuses, but it was not a big issue. Berlin, of course, is an interesting vantage point because half of it was in the east and was the capitol of East Germany. I found little, if any nostalgia for that period at the universities there.

Q: Did you sense that Germany was beginning to feel its independent muscles now?

AKER: People have been saying this for a long time. I don't see any chance of Germany embarking on any sort of loner foreign policy. I think Germans feel that the most successful period in their modern history has been the most recent one, where they've been able to succeed by being a team player and using the system, as opposed to going it alone or actually working against the system. The German public is always irritated that Germany must always play the role of the good guy -- they're the people who save money, who have a low inflation rate, who work hard, whereas other countries in the EU are sponging off them -- they're propping up all these other countries, in a sense. I think, though, that the Germans have been very successful with this policy. I think they will stick with it and not adopt any unilateralist policy in the foreseeable future; they will stay committed to consultation and to a sort of Pan European framework.

Q: So you left there when?

AKER: I left Berlin in early '06 to be the deputy principal officer in Frankfurt.

Q: And you were in Frankfurt for how long?

AKER: Another two and a half years. In total, that was a five year tour in Germany, from August '03 to August '08, and in February or March of '06, exactly in the middle, I went to Frankfurt.

Q: Frankfurt is particularly dear to my heart because that was my first post back in '55. Is the Consulate General still in the same building?

AKER: No, they moved out about a year before I arrived. They moved into the former U.S. Army hospital in Frankfurt.

Q: 97th General.

AKER: Exactly.

Q: I used to be baby birth officer and I was registering, I think, about 300 babies a month there.

AKER: Well that building is now our consulate.

Q: Oh.

AKER: They did a lot of remodeling and built some new sections onto it, including a huge consular section with a glass roof, which is actually quite nice. However, most of it is this vast, building with long, monotonous corridors. It's the biggest consulate in the world. When I was there it had over 900 people.

Q: What were the politics of Frankfurt and Hessen?

AKER: A CDU minister-president, Roland Koch, ran Hessen. The city of Frankfurt was also run

by the CDU. It is a rather conservative state, although less so than its southern German neighbors, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. These are the three wealthiest states in the country and among the most conservative politically.

Q: Were there any particular military issues?

AKER: I was involved in military issues probably more than with anything else, because four of the major US commands in Europe were in our consular district: US European Command (EUCOM); in Stuttgart; US Air Force Europe (USAFE) in Ramstein; US Army Europe (USAREUR) in Heidelberg; and US Africa Command, (AFCOM), also in Stuttgart. There were other substantial military facilities. A particularly important one was the US Army hospital at Landstuhl, which was the first point of evacuation for the wounded from Iraq and Afghanistan -- they were being flown in by the hundreds at that time.

Q: Did you have demonstrations and that sort of thing?

AKER: No.

Q: I'm surprised because German students in the spring kind of like to demonstrate.

AKER: Not in that area. We never had a single demonstrator in the two and half years when I was in Frankfurt. Back in the '60s and '70s Frankfurt had been a hotbed of radicalism, along with Berlin. However, that was no longer true.

Q: Is Frankfurt the financial capital of Germany?

AKER: Definitely. It's where the money is. The culture and the politics are in Berlin, but the financial clout is in Frankfurt.

Q: Well did that mean that you were monitoring the financial side very closely?

AKER: Yes; not only in Germany, but also the Eurozone, because the European Central Bank is in Frankfurt now. Of course, the U.S. mission to the EU felt they should be doing that but unfortunately-

Q: It's not there.

AKER: It is in a different country. The EU is peculiar; while it has multinational institutions, it is still very much a group of almost 30 individual countries, each of them jealous of its sovereignty. It is a fascinating organic growth with layers of shared or disputed jurisdiction.

Q: Well you were there during -- I don't know if you could call it the heyday because there may be another one -- of the Euro, weren't you?

AKER: The Euro was introduced as the exclusive currency of several of European countries in January of 2002. I was living in Geneva, in Switzerland, which did not adopt the Euro, and

which is right on the border with France, which did. We would shop regularly in both Switzerland and France, because some things were better or cheaper on one side of the border than on the other. We lived less than a mile from the border, so it was easy to compare prices. What we saw, from '02 onward, was that, after the Euro came in, things in France became more expensive relative to the Swiss franc than they had been before. This was also the impression of many people in Germany and in other European countries that adopted the Euro -- that things became more expensive. There was a widespread suspicion that people had taken advantage of the change to round off everything upward. I believe it, even though I can't prove it.

We're now eight years into the Euro and it still seems to be a matter of some controversy -- in fact, more so now, perhaps, than before. Look at the debate about whether it would be a good idea for countries like Greece and others whose economies are shaky to get out of the Eurozone: supposedly they'd be better off if they were not tied to the Euro. I think, though, that there is tremendous political will to keep the Eurozone intact.

Q: It would be a tremendous setback for everything to give up on it.

AKER: It would only happen if there if the economic situation deteriorates and there is large-scale unrest and it would be easier on the politicians to bail out of it than to lose their jobs. Otherwise, I think the inertial pressure to keep the Euro will keep most, if not all countries that have adopted the Euro -- which is by no means all the countries in Europe -- will keep them in it unless the economic and political situation gets a lot worse than it is now.

Q: Well being with a USIA background, how stood "The Frankfurter Allgemeine"?

AKER: We had a very good relation with the "Frankfurter Allgemeine." It's still a very establishment, pro-US paper; it always has been. It is still, probably, the closest thing in Germany to "The New York Times," the daily newspaper of record. The only challenger it has on the national scene -- and this has been true for at least 40 years -- is the "Sueddeutsche Zeitung" in Munich. As far as weekly publications go, "Die Zeit" -- a weekly newspaper and "Der Spiegel." -- a magazine, continue to be influential. Not much has changed in all these years and the "Frankfurter Allgemeine" is still the most conservative, more pro-American of the bunch.

Q: Well was there anything ; was there any residue of Baader-Meinhof types wandering around in Germany during this time?

AKER: I don't think so. I think the situation is being resolved biologically, so to speak. It seems like a distant era now. It does not mean, of course, that other bad things can't happen, but-

Q: The thing that's always struck me as an observer, mainly through TV, is that German youth and maybe the French too -- but more so German youth at the university level seem more inclined to put on costumes and get out there and demonstrate and also to take some of this left wing stuff seriously.

AKER: I think that's historically been true but I don't know if it's still true. I have not seen as

much evidence of it in recent years. There was a certain look and style that was still very common in the early '80s, the sort of aging hippie look.

Q: Yes.

AKER: I think that has become less and less visible. In sort of the more exotic parts of Berlin you can still see people looking like that but otherwise not much.

Q: Well it seems that, in our left wing movement, the kids were concentrated a little more on making love, whereas the European types seemed to take issues more seriously.

AKER: I think that's true. It may just be because Germany was the home of Karl Marx, but Marxism seemed to be always taken more seriously in Germany than almost anywhere else. In fact, people would comment during the Cold War that East Germans were probably the only people who could halfway make it work because they may actually believe it. In the US, we grew up being told that communism was pretty close to the devil. Marxism was not held in high public esteem. There were plenty of Marxist professors and others, but people usually did not go around advertising the fact. In Germany, though, even in very conservative Bavaria, there will be streets named Karl-Marx-Strasse. There he was an important, respected philosopher, even if controversial.. People in the U.S. had little idea of that side of things and I think that is still true today.

Q: Well I think American students don't seem to have bought philosophical constructs the way you might say that Europeans do, for the most part.

AKER: Yes, I think it's an observation that people have made over the years that Americans are much less culturally predisposed to accept constructs, but are more pragmatic or practical. I think Europeans and maybe other cultures are perhaps more willing or inclined to accept some metaphysical constructs.

Q: Yes. You were mentioning streets. At one point I lived five years in Belgrade, at the time of Tito, and I used to say well, if we want to get together, why don't we meet at the corner of Kennedy and Lenin Streets. There was also an Anne Frank Street and -- I think -- a Mickey Mouse Street.

Well you left Frankfurt in-?

AKER: '08.

End of reader